Communicating Your Needs: Scenario Handout

*Use our Scenario Handout to practice how to communicate your needs in various areas of student life with the 3-step approach.* Then, reflect on how you would communicate your own needs in those situations.

**Scenario 1: Asking for remote accessibility for an office hour**

(To the class) Professor Matthew: Make sure to attend office hours this week! You can gain a couple of bonus participation points if you attend and present any questions you may have about class.

Tim: Professor Matthew, thank you so much for this opportunity to gain participation points.

Professor: Of course! I am always willing to increase everyone's chances to get a good grade in this class.

Tim: I was just wondering, is there any way I can attend office hours in the afternoon? I noticed that the current office hour availability is really early in the morning.

Professor: That won't be possible as I have classes in the afternoon. The morning is when I am most free.

Tim: I see. The availability for the office hour unfortunately clashes with my ability to arrive to school really early as I take transit. If it is possible, could we set up a time to meet on Zoom in the morning for virtual office hours so I can get the bonus participation mark?

Professor: Sure, that should be fine!

Tim: Thank you so much!

**Questions:**

1.) What did Tim do to acknowledge the situation?

2.) How did Tim communicate his boundary?

3.) How did Tim suggest a compromise?

4.) How would you communicate your needs in this context? Are there other compromises you’d suggest in this situation? What are they and why?
**Scenario 2: Feeling under the weather and not wanting to invite people over**

Melanie: I can't believe today is the last day of classes! We are thinking of doing something fun to celebrate!

Christie: Oh! What were you planning?

Melanie: We were thinking a movie night! Could we use your projector again like last time?

Christie: Oh, that sounds like so much fun. Honestly, usually I would be fine with having you all over, but I am not really feeling like it tonight.

Melanie: What! Why? You have to be there though!

Christie: I am just feeling under the weather.

Melanie: It’s not as fun without you! Please come!

Christie: I am not feeling up for it tonight, but have a great time. You can always use my projector though, if you want?

Melanie: Okay! I’ll come by later and pick it up? We will miss you, let me know if you need anything.

Christie: Thanks!

**Questions:**

1.) What did Christie do to acknowledge the situation?

2.) How did Christie communicate her boundary?

3.) How did Christie suggest a compromise?

4.) How would you communicate your needs in this context? Are there other compromises you’d suggest in this situation? What are they and why?
**Scenario 3: Talking to your roommate about shared chores**

Now that you’ve had some practice with analyzing situations, let’s practice how you can incorporate this into your own communication. Following the ACT approach, write 1-3 things that you could communicate to address the situation. If you feel stuck, use the word bank as a template or as inspiration.

**Scenario:** You and your roommate have a shared chores plan, but recently you’ve noticed that their tasks have gone uncompleted. How would you approach the situation?

1. **Acknowledge the situation.** What has happened here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Bank</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Thank you for doing X</td>
<td>• X might have been forgotten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I recognize you have already done Y</td>
<td>• Based on Z, it seems like we misunderstood each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I appreciate you saying Z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Communicate your boundary.** What is your need, how does the situation make you feel, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• This makes me feel X</td>
<td>• X isn’t working for me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I would like for us to do Y instead</td>
<td>• I need you to stop doing Y</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. **Try to meet them halfway.** If you’re able to suggest a solution or compromise, give them options.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Word Bank</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Could you do half of X today?</td>
<td>• Do you have needs of your own?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How about we schedule a time to work on Y together?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe we can find a compromise.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Scenario 1: Asking for remote accessibility for an office hour**

1.) First, Tim acknowledged the situation by expressing his gratitude for the bonus participation mark option. [“Thank you so much for this opportunity to gain participation points”]

2.) Then, Tim communicated his boundary. [“The availability for the office hour unfortunately clashes with my ability to arrive to school really early as I take transit”]

3.) Finally, he suggested a compromise. [“If possible, could we set up a time to meet on Zoom in the morning for virtual office hours so I can get the bonus participation mark?”]

**Scenario 2: Feeling under the weather and not wanting to invite people over**

1.) First, Christie acknowledged the situation by expressing her interest. [“Oh, that sounds like so much fun!”]

2.) Then, Christie communicated her boundary. [“I am just feeling under the weather”]

3.) Finally, she suggested a compromise. [“You can always use my projector though if you want?”]

**Scenario 3: Talking to your roommate about shared chores**

*This is a only suggestion for how the interaction could go - everyone’s approach be different.*

Amanda (Roommate 1): Hey Joyce, I know that we’ve created our shared chores plan and you are in charge of cleaning the dishes, but I noticed that our sink is always dirty.

Joyce (Roommate 2): Sorry, I’ve been really busy with work and school.

Amanda: I totally understand that, but I have been really busy as well, and I still find the time to follow through with my errands as much as I can.

Joyce: I know. Hm, I can do them tomorrow? I am really busy for the rest of the day.

Amanda: I am finding the mess to be really distracting when I’m working from home. Is there any chance you can get it done today?

Joyce: How about I finish half of them before I got out this afternoon, and do the rest tomorrow?

Amanda: I’m okay with that. If you want, we can alternate our errands if that makes things easier? I can clean dishes one week, and you can vacuum and take the garbage out the next week?

Joyce: That would be really helpful. Sometimes it takes longer than I expect to wash all the dishes.

Amanda: Yeah, I understand!