

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?

	Positives	Negatives
Word Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you for doing X• I recognize you have already done Y• I appreciate you saying Z	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• X might have been forgotten• Based on Z, it seems like we misunderstood each other

-
-
-

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

Word Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This makes me feel X• I would like for us to do Y instead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• X isn't working for me• I need you to stop doing Y
------------------	--	---

-
-
-

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

Word Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could you do half of X today?• How about we schedule a time to work on Y together?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you have needs of your own? Maybe we can find a compromise.
------------------	---	--

-
-
-

Answer Sheet

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!