

The logo features three overlapping, stylized 'C' shapes on the left side. The top 'C' is blue, the middle one is green, and the bottom one is yellow. Each 'C' contains two small dots of the same color. To the right of these shapes, the words 'Collaborative', 'Communication', and 'Cards' are stacked vertically in a sans-serif font, each word corresponding to the color of the 'C' shape to its left.

**Collaborative  
Communication  
Cards**



## **Great Communication. Great Collaboration. Great Results.**

Teams that communicate well produce great work, and they have a lot more fun while doing it. Collaborative Communication Cards help teams practice intentional and open communication that brings out the best in everyone, improves productivity, and unlocks unexpected opportunities.

### **Build Self-Awareness for How You Communicate**

Better understand how you show up and how you're perceived, so your conversations are less frustrating with less work. Expand your communication tools to make conversations and meetings more effective and your team more engaged. Teams who practice collaborative communication don't waste time in unproductive conflict and instead develop more innovative solutions by tapping into the brilliance and creativity of their coworkers.

### **Changing Communication Patterns Takes Effort and Practice**

Each card offers specific and actionable prompts so you and your team can improve communication skills right away. Managers, individual contributors, and senior leaders can all find new strategies and opportunities to have a better experience working together. Engage your team to transform your communication culture and deliver better results.

### **About Navicet**

Navicet is a human-centered management consultancy founded on the idea that the value of any organization can be measured by the quality of human experience they create. We're committed to building teams that love the work they do, and do amazing work. Navicet is a small but mighty boutique firm that delivers services to companies across industry, from as small as a 5 person non-profit to a 155,000+ person multinational company.

## Getting Started Individually

1. Decide when and how you're going to practice building collaborative communication skills.
2. Choose a specific card or select a card at random. Read the description at the bottom of each card and apply the suggestions during your next conversation. You might ask a colleague, manager, or mentor to help you select a card that could have the biggest impact for you.
3. Practice using each card for a specific amount of time (one week to one month).
4. Decide when and how you will reflect on your experiences to notice what's different about your conversations.

## Getting Started as a Team

1. Ask your team to dedicate time and practice to collaborative communication.
2. Decide if your team will work on the same card together or if individuals will choose different cards that could have the biggest impact for them.
3. Read the description at the bottom of each card and apply the suggestions during your next conversation. Practice using each card for a specific amount of time (one week to one month).
4. Reflect on your experiences with your team each week or month.
5. Pair cards with facilitated training to maximize hands-on learning and engagement.

## Helpful Hints for Collaborative Communication

1. Focus on strengths and what's working well. Instead of focusing on what's not working, consider what's possible and build from there.
2. The change starts with you. You can't control how others show up, what they say, or how they behave — but you do get to choose how to respond and what you're going to do next. If you find yourself feeling frustrated take a moment to pause, look inward, and consider what you can learn.
3. Progress is rarely linear. Give yourself and others time and space to practice. Making a mistake can be just as valuable as "getting it right." Consider how the communication challenges that show up can be ongoing opportunities to practice and learn.

## Helpful Hints for Collaborative Communication

4. Share your work. Let people know what you're doing and invite them to join you on the collaborative communication journey. One of the fastest ways to make progress is to learn together.
5. Think big, start small, move fast. What if our whole company strengthened our collaborative communication muscles? What if my team starts to practice and talk about this? What is one thing I can do today? The change starts with you. As a result, you can build a culture of learning and deliver meaningful, sustainable impact by continuing the practice.

## Commitments to improve any conversation:

1. Assume people are doing their best and have good intentions.
2. Suspend the impulse to judge yourself and others.
3. Be willing to give more than you get.
4. Let go of the idea that someone is either right or wrong.
5. Be willing to say “I don’t know.”

Collaborative communication requires more than just following the steps, using a framework, or applying pragmatic tools. It requires a shift in mindset, which takes practice. Use these commitments in meetings, or ask the team to commit to these with you. You will be understood — and understand others — in a new way.

## When you want to say:

1. "That won't work because..."
2. "You should..."
3. "They just..."
4. "What you don't understand is..."

## Try this instead:

1. "What I hear you saying is \_\_\_\_\_, does that sound right?"
2. "It sounds like what you want might be \_\_\_\_\_, is that right?"
3. "What if I \_\_\_\_\_, would that be helpful?"

Consider what they think, feel, and want, so you can align your interests and find common ground. Exploring possibilities for a moment doesn't cost anything and can prevent you from missing important information or opportunities.



## Say less relationship detractors:

1. "You always/never..."
2. "Actually, ...."
3. "You just..."
4. "Have you thought about...."
5. "You should..."

## Say more relationship builders:

1. "What if..."
2. "That makes me think about..."
3. "How might we..."
4. "Tell me more about..."
5. "How are you thinking about...."

The words we choose can either bring out the best in others, or create unproductive conflict. When collaborating, try using more relationship builder phrases and consider how you might build on other people's ideas and respond to unexpected circumstances in a positive, productive way.

## Ways to promote trust:

1. Practice openness and honesty about how decisions are made and why.
2. Live up to promises and commitments.
3. Act with care when it comes to other's feelings and interests.
4. Find common objectives and shared goals.
5. Be willing to examine assumptions.
6. Recognize other's contributions and celebrate success.

Trust is key to collaboration and high-performing teams — it can be given, earned, or built. Trust multiplies — once you have it, it's easier to get and give more.

## Do:

1. Adopt a mindset of curiosity.
2. Find ways to empathize with thoughts, feelings, or concerns.
3. Be fully present and focus on what the other person is saying.
4. Seek to understand before being understood.
5. Demonstrate to the other person that you're listening.

## Don't:

1. Interrupt or talk over the person.
2. Defend.
3. Dismiss their opinion, idea, or feelings.
4. Assume you know what they're going to say.
5. Finish someone else's sentence for them.

When they feel heard, your conversation will go better and be more impactful.

## 3 steps for delivering bad news:

1. Share the facts objectively: "Here's what happened."
2. Show empathy: "Here's what might be difficult or hard moving forward."
3. Make sense of the news in a productive way: "Here's what this means for us, here's the plan, and here's what we need to do next."

Delivering bad news takes balance. Show too much optimism without recognizing the reality, and you might be perceived as out of touch and lower the morale of the team. Show too much pessimism without sharing a plan of action, and you run the risk of bringing the team down without offering them a path forward.

## Instead of assuming, just ask:

1. How can I help?
2. Would it be helpful if I offer some ideas for what to do next or would you prefer me to listen?
3. Are you looking for advice, direction, guidance, or something else?
4. Would it be helpful if I ask you some questions to see if we can pinpoint the problem together?
5. What are some next steps?

Ask questions to avoid making assumptions about what someone else is looking for from you. Giving someone advice when that's not what they're looking for, offering a solution when someone was just sharing a story, or telling someone what to do when they already feel confident is a recipe for frustration and miscommunication.

## Watch out for biases when:

1. There is too much information.
2. There is no clear meaning behind events or information.
3. We feel the need to act fast.
4. We need to decide what to remember for later.

## When you notice biases:

5. Recognize your point of view might be incomplete or inaccurate.
6. Acknowledge and name them.
7. Pause and consider an alternative.
8. Find a way of getting closer to the data and test your assumptions.

When we act on our biases as if they're true, we risk making decisions based on false information. Biases at work erode teamwork, reduce the quality and impact of the things we create, and increase the risk of doing harm.

## **You made a mistake:**

1. Acknowledge and name the mistake.
2. Apologize to those most impacted.
3. Share what you learned with someone else.
4. Identify concrete actions you can take.
5. Ask for help or offer help.

## **Someone else made a mistake:**

1. Talk about the mistake, not the person.
2. Resist the urge to make jokes.
3. Consider the ways you might be at risk of making a similar mistake.
4. Offer help and support.
5. Rally as a team – today it's not you but tomorrow it could be.

The mistake has already happened, the opportunity on the table is to decide what to do next. Everyone makes mistakes, what counts is how we respond to them. Put your energy into making progress instead of blaming or shaming.

## Before you say it, ask yourself:

1. Could this hurt someone's feelings?
2. Could this be misinterpreted or taken the wrong way?
3. Could this come across as insensitive, dismissive, or insulting to someone else?
4. Is this ultimately about someone else's race, gender, appearance, sexual preference, intelligence, or life choices?
5. Does this imply an assumed commonality that might not be true?

If you answered "yes" or "maybe" to any of these, choose something else to be funny about. Humor can bring people together but it can also create ingroups and outgroups. Humor can be a way to connect, but it can easily go awry. Consider the power dynamics and the potential implications of what you communicate through your humor. Use humor with care.



## Questions to consider:

1. How can I find out and be of service to the goal of this conversation?
2. What can I say/do that will help us move forward together?
3. How can I make sure everyone feels like they're getting the most out of this conversation?
4. What can I say/do that will help us feel like we're on the same side?
5. Is what I'm about to say in service to myself or the conversation?

The conversation isn't about you or them — it's about us. Pause, reflect, and notice the dynamics happening in the conversation. In every conversation you get to decide how you'll show up to bring out the best in others. When you focus on being in service, you'll go further together and ensure everyone arrives at the same place.

## Consider:

1. How are other people reacting to my power and authority?
2. Given my level of perceived power and authority, how can I be intentional about the role I play in this conversation?
3. What can I do to make it easier for everyone to effectively contribute?
4. What can I learn from this conversation?

Power is the ability to affect change. If you aren't paying attention to power dynamics you might be missing out on the great ideas and energy that people can bring to the team. Teams who encourage meaningful contributions from every person on the team deliver better results and build power together.

## Practice the following:

1. Focus on being present in this conversation — let go of what's happened in the day or what you need to do next, be here right now.
2. Be willing to offer kindness and compassion, even if it's only one-sided.
3. If an unrelated thought or feeling arises, ask yourself "is this helpful?" If not, set it aside for now.
4. Focus on and be specific about what's working well so you can repeat it.
5. Make time to say "thank you" to build a culture of gratitude.

Gratitude is an opportunity for you to increase the number of positive, authentic interactions at work. The more you practice gratitude, the more you feel it. It's easy to become distracted by what's wrong. Teams that practice being present and appreciative build on their success to create more of what's working well.

## Consider:

1. What would be a great outcome of this conversation?
2. Is there something I could say/do that would help surface the goals of this conversation?
3. Are our goals the same? If not, how can we understand each other's goals?
4. Check to see if everyone's goals have been met.

Hidden assumptions and misaligned expectations about conversation goals can show up in behaviors, comments, or attitudes that feel irritating. When we understand each other's goals, we can help each other make progress and have a better experience along the way.

## Sharing appreciation:

1. Address the person you are appreciating.
2. Name the specific action or behavior instead of using general compliments like “you are amazing.”
3. Share the impact this had on you.

## Receiving appreciation:

1. Focus on what the person is saying.
2. If they offer a general compliment, ask for specifics.
3. Resist the urge to compare this to past behaviors.
4. Take a moment to say “thank you.”

When we offer appreciations we let people know that what they've done matters to us. Appreciating others in public gives everyone an opportunity to celebrate. Appreciating our coworkers unique contributions amplifies our successes and builds a culture of trust and collaboration.

## Steps for giving feedback:

1. Plan your feedback and identify a few good outcomes.
2. Tell them you have feedback, and ask when would be a good time to share.
3. Say what you notice — talk about specific, concrete behaviors. Be cautious of using language that implies judgment (say “3 times this week” instead of “always”).
4. Describe the impact this had on you or your work.
5. Invite discussion about the feedback and explore alternative behaviors together.

Delivering feedback takes courage. It implies that you think the person is capable of change and may not be aware how their behavior impacts you. High-performing teams give and accept feedback — it's everyone's responsibility.

## Steps for receiving feedback:

1. Decide if you are ready for feedback — if not, offer a specific alternative time.
2. Take a deep breath, focus on listening, and don't say anything until they're done talking.
3. Paraphrase what you heard and check for understanding.
4. Remember this feedback doesn't define who you are – feedback is a data point about someone else's experience with you.
5. Consider if/how you want to align your intentions with the impact you're having on this person.
6. Thank them for sharing feedback.

Receiving feedback is an opportunity to understand if/how your intentions match other people's experiences with you. High-performing teams give and receive feedback with intention and care.