UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

BULETIN APB

EDUCATION FOR BETTER FUTURE



EDISI 17

OKTOBER 2026

AKADEMI PENGAJIAN BAHASA
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
CAWANGAN NEGERI SEMBILAN
KAMPUS SEREMBAN

Building Communication Skills for Future Sports Managers

MOHD NUR FITRI MOHD SALIM, SITI AIDA LAMAT, UMMI KALTHUM MOHD MOKHTAR, NURUL SYAFAWANI HALIM, NIK MAHFUZAH NIK MAT
UiTM CAWANGAN NEGERI SEMBILAN KAMPUS SEREMBAN

Sports management students undertaking placements may be required to explain changes to event plans, brief volunteers and participants, respond to questions, and ensure that updated information reaches the appropriate individuals. Although these situations may appear routine, they require more than an understanding of event management procedures. Students must also communicate effectively with individuals whose roles, expectations, and understanding of the circumstances may vary considerably.

Consider the range of people involved in an event. Volunteers need to know what they are expected to do next, while sponsors may be more concerned with their involvement, the value of their sponsorship, or how a change affects the agreed arrangements. Participants generally require timely information about how a change affects them. Although the information may derive from the same event plan, it cannot always be communicated in the same way. Students must determine what is relevant to a particular audience and how much information that audience needs. In this respect, communication forms an integral part of applying sports management knowledge.

This highlights the interpersonal abilities often described as soft skills. Their relevance to sports management is evident. Managing events and programmes involves working with people, responding to problems, explaining decisions, and addressing differing expectations. For example, Ryder et al. (2024) found that supervisors identified deficiencies in sport management interns' soft skills more often than in their technical skills. This finding raises a practical question for educators: before students enter placements and are expected to manage these situations in real time, to what extent have they had opportunities to practise these skills? Knowing how to prepare an event plan does not necessarily mean that a student can explain it effectively to the people responsible for implementing it. Similarly, preparing a fundraising proposal differs from discussing it with a sponsor who has questions or concerns. Salim et al. (2025) highlighted communication needs related to how students interact, respond, and communicate in professional situations. Students must therefore consider more than what they intend to say. They must also consider who is receiving the information, what that person needs from the interaction, and what may remain unclear afterwards. In some situations, listening carefully to the other person is as important as explaining the original message.



Classroom learning provides an opportunity to practise these skills. Students might prepare a briefing, role-play a workplace interaction, or pitch an event idea to someone acting as a sponsor. Project-based tasks are particularly suitable because students communicate while working towards an outcome, rather than practising communication in isolation. Salim et al. (2026) discussed how project-based tasks can develop communication through collaborative, purposeful activities. A classroom task can also extend beyond a prepared presentation. For instance, a "sponsor" might pose an unexpected question,

requiring the student to listen, respond, and adapt the message. Feedback can then assess whether the explanation was clear, whether the student understood the question, and whether the other person understood what should happen next.

Other classroom approaches offer similar possibilities. Song et al. (2021) demonstrated an interdisciplinary, problem-based learning activity to develop oral communication skills in a sport management course. Beyond the sport management context, Wan Mustapha et al. (2019) also demonstrated that learning activities can extend beyond the conventional language classroom. Taken together, these studies indicate that communication practices are associated with a particular task, situation, or experience rather than being confined to a standalone classroom exercise.

Practice, however, is only one part of the process; feedback is also essential. Lecturers can provide feedback, but peers can play a valuable role as well. A peer's role should extend beyond listening to another student's presentation. If something is unclear, the peer can ask for clarification. If information appears to be missing, the peer can explain what additional information is needed. A question from another student can quickly reveal whether a message that seemed clear to the presenter was equally clear to the listener. Asking questions, seeking clarification, responding, and adapting an explanation are all meaningful forms of participation. They also reflect workplace communication, which rarely follows a prepared script from beginning to end.

This dynamic interaction directly underscores the importance of audience and situational awareness. Mohamed Khalil et al. (2025) found that students valued opportunities to develop ideas about using English in different contexts. Sports management encompasses a range of situations, yet the underlying questions remain consistent: Who am I addressing? What does this person already know? What information does this person need at this point? How should I communicate it? Addressing these considerations



shifts learners' focus from delivering an idealised, rigid presentation to communicating purposefully and in context.

These communicative demands often arise in collaborative environments, such as event planning, creating distinct challenges in assessing individual performance. In a study by Salim et al. (2024), students acknowledged the benefits of group work but expressed concerns about how contributions were allocated. Therefore, the group's overall outcome provides only a partial account of each student's contributions and learning. This issue could be addressed by asking students to prepare individual planning documents, respond to specific questions, and maintain brief reflective entries. These materials would enable the lecturer to gain a clearer understanding of each student's contributions and learning throughout the course.

This same cycle may also apply to work placements. Before a placement begins, students can practise preparing and delivering a briefing for volunteers. During the placement, the supervisor can help students identify what needs to be communicated and recognise when a message should be adapted in response to changes in the environment. After the placement, students can reflect on the interaction by considering the following questions: What did they believe was being communicated? What did they feel was overlooked? If they were to communicate again under similar circumstances, what would they say differently? This form of reflection enables students to integrate classroom learning with the unpredictable nature of workplace communication.

References

Mohamed Khalil, M. I., Salim, M. N. F. M., Mohd Salim, M. S. A., Mohamad Shah, D. S., & Othman, S. (2025). Visual merchandising t asks and their impact on English communication and aesthetic awareness. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 9*(9), 7522–7530. https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.909000615

Ryder, A., McNiff Villemaire, J., & Behl, T. (2024). Hard or soft: An exploration of what skills a sport management student is lacking. *The COSMA Journal, 1*(1). https://doi.org/10.25035/cosma.01.01.02

Salim, M. N. F. M., Abdul Karim, A., Husnin, H., & Purwarno, P. (2025). A behavioural needs analysis in professional communication education. *Environment-Behaviour Proceedings Journal, 10*(33), 65–70. https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v10i33.7311

Salim, M. N. F. M., Mohamad Yusuf, A., Halim, N. S., Nik Mat, N. M., & Mohd Nor Rizan, M. I. (2026). Developing communication skills through project-based tasks. *Buletin APB Seremban*, 16. https://ir.uitm.edu.my/id/eprint/144934/

Salim, M. N. F. M., Mohamad Yusuf, A., Mohd Salim, M. S. A., Murnin, N. E. A., Zailani, I. N. M., Azamee, N. A. M., & Effendy, N. D. M. K. (2024). Student preferences, challenges, and strategies in group work: A case study. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Society, 6*(4), 269–284. https://doi.org/10.55057/ijares.2024.6.4.24

Song, C., Riddell, H., & Ryan, S. (2021). Improving students' oral communication skills through an interdisciplinary problem-based learning opportunity in a sport management course. *International Journal of Physical Education, Fitness and Sports, 10*(3), 17–28. https://doi.org/10.34256/ijpefs2133

Wan Mustapha, W. Z., Mohd Salim, M. N. F., Ahmad, I., & Paramasivam, S. (2019). A case study on Week without Walls (WWW) in UiTM Negeri Sembilan: Critical reading and creative writing beyond the second language classrooms. *KnE Social Sciences, 3*(19), 958–969. https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v3i19.4920