(Joint) Reflection on Difficult Communications Episode

This template can be used by individuals who have experienced a difficult communications episode with a colleague. It can be helpful to write this down after the event, to reflect and you may wish to discuss your reflection with a mentor. You may feel after this that you do not wish to take things further and that this has been an isolated misunderstanding with extenuating circumstances. Alternatively, you may wish to use this ahead of a meeting with the colleague to reach a shared understanding of the situation and a way forward for future working. This is intended for your own confidential records with a view to enabling a resolution to the situation.



Date and time of the difficult communication episode:

Date of start of this reflection:

Date joint reflection written (if at all):



# What happened?

(Describe what actually happened in detail AND the difficult communications. Consider

1. the context, for instance, how it happened, where it happened, who was involved and what the impact or potential impact was on the patient, the team, organisation and/or others).
2. What made the communications difficult

# Why did it happen in the way it happened?

(Describe the main and underlying reasons – both positive and negative – contributing to why the communications were difficult.   
Consider, for instance, what was said, how it was said. If others witnessed the exchange, it may be worth asking them what they thought.

# How did it make you feel?

Be honest. If this becomes a joint reflection, it’s value will be increased if the other party understands how you

# How would you behave differently next time? How might the other person behave differently?

(this part of the document may be revised when both parties have seen the others version, to create a single agreed version)

# What might be the impact of that change in behaviour?

# If you had to capture this learning event by advising another person or other people in the same position what would your summary be?