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# **ProCommunication**

# Trainer Manual

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Developed by the FutureDRV consortium <u>www.project-futuredrv.eu</u> This document is a summary of how the Professional Driver Communication (ProComm) eLearning can be used in driver training, with technical information, detailed description of content and the correct answers. This Truck Driver Training Pilot has been produced as a part of the project FutureDRV, funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. Read more about the project: www.project-futuredrv.eu

# How to use the application in training

The ProComm eLearning can be used individually by drivers to assess their communicative skills. A clear communication is crucial in the professional driver job role. This test is designed so that drivers can test and reflect upon their communication towards management, colleagues, customers and other road users. This test also gives some advice on the subject.

This training does not provide a full training in these subjects but highlights the importance of this competence. The course takes about 60 minutes to complete. There are 4 different language versions: English, German, French and Hungarian.

In this eLearning you'll discuss the following areas:

- How to be an ambassador for your company
- Communicate efficiently and professionally
- How to give and receive feedback
- How to handle and solve conflicts

The course has a narrative story, which encourages completion of all 5 levels/days. The course can also be used in classroom, where the teacher shows an example and the group jointly discusses the issue and agrees on an answer. A driver can compete against his colleagues with help of a high score list.

The pilot can be used in several different ways, or in combinations:

- In classroom: ProComm can be used as a tool to start a dialogue with the class. The instructor can choose a suitable scenario and ask the class to help out in solving it. They can also be used as a motivating competition to finish a training session in a fun and memorable way.
- In group: It's also possible to divide the class in several smaller groups and make them compete against each other to increase interest and motivation. First group to finish a challenge can present their strategy for the whole class.

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• Using the app individually would probably work in classroom session when used as a Post test at the end of the lesson.

Of course, this training can be **used individually** before training (to prepare before class) or downloaded after training, as a repetition. Why not compete against colleagues?

# How to play

You will face a number of questions where you can choose one of three answers. If you answer correctly, you will get 100 points. If your answer is wrong, you'll have to start over that same level again. If your answer is "somewhere between" right or wrong, - you'll get 50 points.

If you manage to answer all questions in a level correctly, you'll get an extra bonus. If you manage to answer all five levels correct, you'll get a final extra bonus.

After the game your name will show up on the high score list!

As a training instructor you should go through the levels and learn how to solve the challenges before training session. Correct answers for the challenges are presented in the manuscript like this:

- A. The first answer is always correct, (worth 100 points)
- B. The second answer is not right, but "OK" (worth 50 points)
- C. The third answer is incorrect = "Game over" (Worth 0 points)

(Note: The answers are presented in random order when playing the game)

# Content manuscript with correct answers

#### Day 1: You Are an Ambassador

#### Game intro:

You are a professional driver – you really know how to handle that truck!

But working as a professional truck driver also means that you have to handle customers, colleagues and management in a positive way. And for that, you need to be aware of different ways to communicate, and how to do it in the best possible way.

Communication is key to your role as a professional truck driver. Through communication, you manage all the daily challenges – both large and small – that come with your profession.

Now, you are applying for a job and the company suggest you do a "test week". Over the next five days you will do your best, and you will be scored based on how you choose to communicate.

Now's your chance to show you're a pro!



#### Introduction level 1

The focus of your first day is on behaviour and communication with colleagues, customers and other road users. Out on the road, you represent your company and a huge community of professional drivers. Acting as an ambassador is important – even at times when you think nobody is around to see you.

In this chapter, you will learn:

- Why your behaviour and the way you communicate is important from an ambassador perspective and how it affects the perception of your company brand and the truck driver community
- How to be aware of what you are communicating and how to act as an ambassador
- The road hero-aspect and how to act to be thought of as a professional driver
- What information you need to possess in order to communicate professionally and effectively

#### (1\_1A) A Bad Start

It is morning and you enter the office. The boss tells you that you are going to "Grumpy", the well-known customer who always complains.

- Our old "friend" Grumpy Graham has called three times already! He's definitely our worst customer and as always, he's complaining about a delivery yesterday. You are the first one here today, so I guess you are the lucky one to deal with him... (Boss smiles and hands you the information)

- A. OK, I 'll do it. A customer is a customer I'll just show him that we do a good job at this company!
- B. Ah, I understand... It's a test right, putting me on the worst customers? Well, I'll just treat him the same way I treat all the customers and hope he doesn't get too upset with this delivery!
- C. Aha, I see, one of those guys... Some customers just can't stop complaining! OK, let's see what he'll come up with this time!

#### Coach Feedback

- A. It's great that you did not follow your boss' example. Every customer is valuable, and even if some of them can be grumpy, negativity is not the right approach and should be avoided.
- B. It's good that you really try to make all customers happy! However, talking about a customer in a poor way will spread the bad reputation and promote negativity.
- C. Don't follow your boss' bad example! There is no need to talk negatively about customers. At the end of the day they all contribute to your salary, so they deserve respect.

#### (1\_1B) Outcome



Uhm, well, you're right to be positive. Even when going to the worst customers, it doesn't hurt trying to be nice. It's good that you don't listen too much to your old grumpy boss... Now, off you go – let me know how it went!

#### (1\_2A) Road Maniac

Out on the road the traffic is hectic, and you focus on the driving. You have plenty of time to get to...

– HEY! That car cut me off! That was a really close one! That guy is downright dangerous on the road! Did he even see me? He needs to wake up!

- A. No, never mind, everyone can make a mistake sometimes.
- B. Sigh! He looked quite old. Why are old drivers so bad at driving? Well, I'll just let it go this time.
- C. I'll honk the horn to really show him that he made a mistake. He needs to learn how to behave!

D.

#### Coach Feedback

- A. It's good that you are patient with fellow road users even bad drivers. Honking the horn could upset others and give your company a bad reputation.
- B. It's good that you kept your thoughts to yourself. But remember that negative thoughts may impact your way of interacting with people in the future.
- C. Honking the horn in this situation is really not necessary. It can be seen as aggressive and may upset people. With your company name on the trailer, that's not what you or your boss wants!

## (1\_2B) Outcome

Nothing really upsets you in traffic. You stay calm, continue your drive and arrive at your destination, safe and on time!

## (1\_3A) Meeting New Customers

When leaving the cargo at the customer, "Grumpy" Graham himself comes up to you and thank you for the delivery.

-Hi there! I'm Graham. You must be the new driver – I notice you're good at keeping time! The others are always late, and not very cooperative either!

- A. Thanks! I'm sorry to hear about my colleagues though. I'll talk to the company about your experience. All of us should be on time and service minded!
- B. Hello Graham! Yeah, I'm new. Thanks for your positive feedback. See you next week I'll be here on time!
- C. Thanks Graham! I know we are all asked to drive carefully with your goods. Maybe they are just a little tired in the morning. I should know, I was the first to arrive today.



#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Great answer! You show that you listen to the customer and take action over his issues, instead of trying to explain someone else's bad behaviour.
- B. It's good that Graham likes you. But, ignoring his comment about the other drivers tells him that you don't care about his problem. Address it instead!
- C. That's too bad. You just missed a great opportunity to use the information Graham provides and improve his view on the company and its services. Furthermore, talking bad about your colleagues probably enhances his already negative opinion

#### (1\_3B) Outcome:

Graham was actually a very nice guy! I'll make sure to discuss his issues with my boss when I get back.

#### (1\_4A) Police Inspection

On your way to today's second customer, a police officer stops you for a check-up at a traffic control. You inspected the cargo when leaving and you found it was OK, but the officer explains harshly that you don't have enough load security lashings

- A. Sorry officer, I was in a hurry and may have miscalculated the lashing straps. Thanks for noticing. I'll check it at once!
- B. Sorry officer, but I'm driving this truck every day and I don't think there's need for more lashing. But I guess I can do it just to do it "by the book".
- C. Sorry officer, I was told the cargo had been secured sufficiently. It was a mistake to trust my colleague, but I'll fix it right now. Thanks for noticing!

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Great! You cooperate and show respect by thanking the police officer. Even if the police officer had it wrong, you are doing the right thing by letting it go.
- B. Well, it is good that you agree to check again. But you clearly show that you don't respect the policeman's opinion by arguing. That is bad for your company, and if you get a fine you'll probably have to pay it yourself.
- C. That's really not ok. Never blame someone else for your own shortcomings. After all, the law says that the driver of the vehicle is responsible for securing the cargo correctly.

#### (1\_4B) Outcome:

- Well, I understand, these things can happen. Just make sure to secure the load sufficiently now, and you can continue your journey. Have a good day!

#### (1\_5A) Looking for a Job

While you are filling up your truck, another driver starts talking to you.



- Hi! Can I ask you something? I see that you work for Trucker Pro Inc. Well, you see, I'm looking for a new job. Do you know whom to call if I want to apply?

- A. Oh, a professional driver? Well, we always look for good drivers. You can call Gary at the office; I'll get you his number. Also let me take yours, and I can ask someone to call you... I hope I see you again soon then!
- B. So you're a professional driver? Well I know we need more drivers. You could probably call the office and ask for Gary. Good luck with the job searching!
- C. So you're a professional driver? I'm just a trainee. I'm new myself so I wouldn't know... But hey, call and ask! Good luck!

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Great answer! You took the opportunity to show management that you're helping out by finding professional drivers! Make sure to follow-up this fellow driver could actually be your new colleague soon.
- B. There is one problem. How do you know this driver will call? Not offering more help might even send the signal that your company isn't recruiting drivers at the moment. Maybe you're missing the chance to get a great new colleague and to help your employer!
- C. You really turned down your company now. That fellow driver could have been your next colleague. Never miss an opportunity to be friendly among other drivers and spread goodwill for your company.

#### (1\_5B) Outcome

- Great, thanks! We'll see then, maybe we meet again soon!

You start walking to the restaurant and the driver smiles at you.

- Hey, are you having lunch here? Take my advice: Stay away from the burgers...

#### (1\_6A) Social Media

You step inside the restaurant to meet your colleague for lunch. When you start eating, she brings out her phone:

- I took this hilarious photo at the party last Friday. Look, it's the boss. Can you believe how drunk he looks! It's so funny – let's post it on Instagram!

You glance down at the photo and start laughing – it's really a silly picture.

- A. Ha ha, yeah, it's really a funny photo, and I guess the boss would laugh at it. But posting it online? Maybe that reflects negatively on the company?
- B. Well, I don't think we should post it. Our customers might like a good laugh, but the boss may not understand of our joke...
- C. Sure, let's show that our company has a sense of humour. This could even give some publicity!

#### Coach Feedback:



- A. Great answer! It's not relevant whether the boss likes the photo or not. A picture like this does not reflect professionalism. It could even make the customers think less of your company. Always think about what's best for the company!
- B. Good choice not to post! But the boss is not the real reason for not publishing stuff on social media. A photo that doesn't reflect professionalism could make the customers think less of your company. You have to put your company's interest first.
- C. No, don't do that! You should never publish things that can reflect negatively on your company. Not even if it's funny! Social media can be dangerously effective and a bad reputation is difficult to wash away.

#### (1\_6B): Outcome

- Ah, yeah, you're right I guess. I better ask the boss before posting. Maybe the marketing guys can do something fun with it!

You colleague climbs into her truck and turns the ignition.

- You need to hurry now; your next delivery is waiting! Drive safely!

#### (1\_7A) Handling Problems

When you arrive at a delivery, you notice that the pallet protection cover is broken. You tell the customer who is not impressed, to say the least.

- I can't believe this! Again! Honestly, how often does this happen?
  - A. Well, I don't know, but it is not supposed to happen at all! I'm reporting every incident to my manager; let me check what we can do. I can help you go through the cargo and sign a damage report if needed.
  - B. Just relax! It's most probably just damage on the cover! Check that everything is OK. If it isn't, I can sign a damage report for you.
  - C. Well I don't know really I'm just the driver. You can call our customer support; they will help you.

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Good answer! You focus on problem solving instead of discussing damaged covers. The customer will appreciate your help and associate your company with good service and helpful drivers.
- B. Well, you're trying to comfort the customer, but at the same time you're confirming a delivery problem. With your relaxed attitude, you will also leave the customer with the impression that this delivery is not really that important to you.
- C. No, you're wrong there. As a professional driver, you need to be professional and take responsibility all the time. You are not "just a driver", you represent your company and should act accordingly.

#### (1\_7B) Outcome

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OK, well, I guess we have been very unfortunate then. It has happened three times this month, and we don't want any damages at all! It's nice of you to check if there is a way to minimize handling error. OK. Have a good day. Drive safe!

#### Day 1 - Outro

#### Day 1: Conclusions

A haulage contractor with a good reputation attracts competent employees and the right customers. And it's not only the logo on your trailer that paints the picture.

#### It's in your hands

You and your colleagues are important in building and preserving the company's image. How you choose to interact and communicate with others immediately affects the company's reputation, its customer relations, and in the end its profit.

#### Be a Road Hero

As a professional driver, you are among the most experienced road users. People on the road look up to you. You know the regulations, you understand the importance of safety, and you predict the traffic better than other drivers.

If a less capable driver makes a mistake, you show patience. If someone creates a difficult situation, you adapt. If an accident happens, you stop and help out.

Professional drivers are true Road Heroes.

TIP: Answer the following questions

- What signals do I want to send out to others?
- How are my actions, my words and my attitude perceived by others?
- What does my company brand represent? What do we stand for?
- What experience do I want to give our customers?
- When am I representing my company, and when am I not?
- How can I make sure not to let personal feelings show, for example when someone makes a mistake that has an impact on me on the company?

#### Information you need to possess to be an ambassador

To be able to do your job in a professional way, there are some things you need to know. If you don't possess the information listed below, it's up to you to ask managers to provide it.

- Laws and regulations in countries or regions where you operate
- Risks and safety aspects of your role
- The company's regulations, policies, and customer agreements



- Boundaries when acting in the company name
- Your role definition: What is expected from you, and what is not?

#### **Day 2: Solution Oriented Communication**

#### Introduction level 2:

Professional and effective communication is essential in your work. Not only when you interact with customers, but also internally in the company. Clear communication is key when it comes to knowing what is expected from you. It is also an important tool when facing and solving your daily challenges.

In this chapter, you will learn:

- What it means to be solution oriented when it comes to communication
- · Why solution oriented communication is beneficial to your professional role
- What knowledge and information you need to possess in order to be solution-oriented
- Tips and tricks regarding solution oriented communication

#### (2\_1A) Handling a Difficult Colleague

It's your second day at work and you're eager to get going. You are supposed to take over from Stephen who drove the night shift. As he says hello and gives you the keys, you realize the cab is a mess – and it will take some time to clean up!

- Hi, you're the new driver? Nice to meet you! Oh yeah, I forgot... I had a hectic night and didn't have time to clean up. Can you do that for me later?

- A. Oh no I'm afraid I won't have the time today. But I'm starting with the safety check now maybe you can help me and clean the cab while I do the check?
- B. Ah, I'm sorry... I don't have time I have a safety check to do you know. You have to come up with another plan.
- C. Well, no. You'll have to clean up your own mess. I'll be late but I can wait...

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Now that's a great way to handle the problem. You act friendly and at the same time you come up with a solution that suits both parts.
- B. OK, it's good that you come across as nice and ask your colleague for an alternate solution. However, wouldn't it be better if you came up with a suggestion to actually solve the problem?
- C. This is not a good start. Not only are you unwilling to help your new colleague, you will start your day already late. Help Stephen to find a solution instead!

#### (2\_1B) Outcome

- OK, you got me... You may be new here, but you know what you're doing. I'll clean up the cab while you do the safety check.

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## (2\_2A) Saying No to Management

When checking the trailer, you notice that the load is not properly secured. You realise that something needs to be done before you can leave. At the same time, the dispatcher comes up to you.

- Hey, why are you still here? You need to hurry; the client is waiting!

- A. I can't go just yet, there is a shortage of cargo lashing straps. I'll secure it I need to get some more lashes though. Meanwhile, could you maybe find someone to help me? I'll be out of here as soon as we're ready!
- B. I can't go just yet, there is a shortage of cargo lashing straps. Just give me some more lashes and some time and I'll make it safe. Please tell the customer I'll be a bit late, will you?
- C. Sorry, I can't go. The cargo is not properly lashed! Who did this? Let them fix it!

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. That's great! You provided a solution to the problem. By asking for extra resources while starting on your own you don't leave the customer waiting longer than necessary.
- B. Good! You step up and solve the problem without complaining. It's no use blaming someone else for making a mistake. However, working alone takes time and now the customer will have to wait for you.
- C. Whoa! Yes, a mistake was made when securing the load. But putting the blame on someone else won't solve the problem. Why don't you try to be a part of the solution instead?

## (2\_2B) Outcome

The dispatcher takes a look at the lashes and nods.

- Yeah, you're right. Good thing that you noticed! I'll get some guys to help you out real fast and let the customer know that we had a mishap here.

## (2\_3A) Temporarily Closed Road

The road ahead is temporarily closed. A man with a stop sign keeps you waiting and doesn't let you pass. After several minutes, you roll down your window and ask:

- What are we waiting for? What's the reason for this?

It turns out there is maintenance work ahead and the road is closed for at least 45 more minutes.

- A. Ok, I see! Thanks for the information. I'll try another route!
- B. Oh, my! 45 Minutes? How is it even possible to close the road for that long? Can't you see I'll be late? Please, just let me pass. I'll be quick!
- C. Wow. 45 minutes!? Why didn't you tell me when I got here? I've been waiting for ages already! What a waste of my time!

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#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! Thanking the workman and not questioning the information shows that you respect him. Furthermore, you quickly think of a solution and a way forward instead of wasting time on the problem.
- B. Ok good. You ask if it is possible to pass, that could be a solution. However, you question the workman's information. That is not only disrespectful but also a waste of time. Xx your energy for more constructive matters.
- C. No, this is not a good way to handle the situation. You focus only on the problem and do not even try to find a solution. That won't get you out of the situation any time soon. Besides, you don't show respect to the workman's job and situation.

#### (2\_3B) Outcome

You manage to safely turn the truck around and eventually find a small road that takes you past the roadwork. Glancing at your watch, you realize that you probably xxd half an hour.

## (2\_4A) Solve the Problem

Finally you're back at the company's premises. The dispatcher waves you in and wants to give you one last tour for the day. Unfortunately, you don't have enough driving time left.

- A. Well, I want to help out, but I'm afraid my driving time will run out half way there. Maybe you can check if there's another driver I can change with?
- B. Oh, ok. Let's see. It will take me an hour to get there, so I won't have enough driving time to get home. What do you propose?
- C. Well, it will take me an hour to get there... Sorry, I don't have enough driving time left! And you know, rules are rules...

#### Coach Feedback:

- A. Great! You just came up with a solution that might help the client to get the delivery already tonight. That is good for the business!
- B. Well, being a professional driver means being solution-oriented at all times. It's good that you're open for suggestions, but it would be even better if you contribute with ideas on your own.
- C. Wrong! Being a professional driver means focusing on solutions instead of problems. Collaborating to solve difficult situations is key for the business and in the end also for you.

#### (2\_4B) Outcome

- That's a great idea, you can swap with Michael! I'll talk to him!

#### (2\_5A) Telling Bad News

On your way to the last delivery of the day the traffic gets heavier than expected. You realize you won't make it to the customer before the end of the working day. You call the dispatcher and tell him that you're running late.



- Oh no! You need to hurry up! The customer is already waiting outside and the workers will go home soon

- A. Sorry, I will get there, but I'll be late. Could you call the customer and tell them I'll get there eventually? I'll help them unload if necessary.
- B. I see, but I will run out of driving time soon and won't make it. I'd better return. Can you check with the customer if they can wait for tomorrow?
- C. Sorry! It's the traffic. Even if I could make it, I'll run out of driving time before I'm there. Please call the customer and tell them what's going on!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! You make sure the customer knows what's going on, and you also offer to stay as a compensation for the delay. That's really professional!
- B. Ok, it is good that you suggest a solution. But is it really the best way for the customer?
- C. Now, that is not solution oriented at all. You are forcing your colleague to come up with a solution for you.

#### (2\_5B) Outcome

You arrive late, but the crew is still there, ready to help you. Since you're the last truck, the unloading is done fast, and you're able to leave almost as scheduled. When passing the gates, the customer gives you thumbs up.

Your first workday is over and finishes with a happy customer makes you feel good!

#### Day 2 Outro

#### **Day 2: Conclusions**

As a professional driver you're always in a hurry – which is why it's so important to spend your time and energy on the right things.

#### Focus on the solution

When it comes to communicating, the solution-oriented approach is by far the most effective approach. It it's all about focusing on possible solutions instead of difficulties.

In your role as a professional driver you will run into problems – and for things to work you have to be a major part of the solution. You don't have to do everything yourself – solutions can also include colleagues, business partners, clients and other people on the road.

#### Other benefits

Being solution-oriented is not only time saving, changing your mind-set is beneficial in other ways too:

- Enables new ideas and innovative solutions
- · People around you are affected by your positive approach
- · Communicating with clients and colleagues will be easier

You'll be more motivated in your job

#### So, how does it work?

Instead of asking: "Why do I have to do this?", "Who's responsible?" or "Who caused this?", try to ask, "Why is this important to solve?", "How can I contribute to a solution?" or "What can I do?". Everyone will benefit from a solution-oriented approach!

Tip: When new challenges arise, ask yourself this:

- Why is it important to find a solution?
- How can I solve this?
- What is the first step to solve this problem? •
- Will my solution solve the whole problem, or only parts of it?
- What else can I do to help in this situation?

Information you need to possess to be able to do a solution oriented communication

- Laws and regulations in countries or regions where you operate
- Risks and safety aspects of your role
- The company's regulations, policies, and customer agreements •
- Boundaries when acting in the company name ٠
- Your role definition: What is expected from you, and what is not?

#### **Day 3: Give and Receive Feedback**

#### Introduction level 3

This is the third day of your test. You are going to show how you - as a professional driver handle the challenge of giving feedback to colleagues, management and customers.

In this chapter you will learn:

- Why it is important both to give and receive constructive feedback
- How to give and receive constructive feedback, including tips and tricks
- What knowledge you have to possess in order to give and receive constructive • feedback
- Where to find more information about the topic and where to go to learn more

## (3 1A) Giving Feedback to a Colleague

Just like yesterday, you are taking over the truck from nightshift-Stephen. And just like yesterday, he tries to hand you a truck with cab that's a total mess.

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- A. You know Stephen; I'm losing valuable time doing your job for you. I know you're a good driver, but you should really try to be professional about this too!
- B. Hey Stephen. I see that the cab is messy again today. Can you please clean it up?
- C. Well Stephen. I guess you didn't understand me yesterday. I'm not a cleaner! Just take your garbage with you, and don't do this again.

#### Feedback

- A. Great! You explain why Stephen's behaviour is a problem for other people, and you also tell him how he should act to be seen as a professional driver.
- B. OK, you try to be polite. But to make Stephen understand, you should try to explain why this is a problem for you. Knowing that, Stephen will probably make an extra effort.
- C. Wrong! Instead of being hostile, try to explain why this is a problem for you. And it's not only that you think it's boring to clean, right?

#### (3\_1B) Outcome

- Yeah, ok, you're right. I'm sorry... I'll try to do better with the cab in the future.

#### (3\_2A) Giving Feedback to a Manager

At pre-departure check you notice that the tyres are badly worn down. You inform the supervisor, who replies that there is no time at the moment to change the tyres.

- We'll do it some day when we have more time!

- A. No, this can't wait. Do you think it'd be possible to use another truck? I can come back and collect this one in the afternoon. That should give you time to swap the tyres.
- B. But it's against the law to take this truck out on the roads. I won't do that!
- C. Well, you must have known this for weeks? What is the reason for stalling?

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! It is clear that you want to follow the law. At the same time, you show that you are a problem solver by coming up with a solution that should work.
- B. Well, that's straightforward and true. But you are not being very solution oriented, are you?
- C. That's not very good. Blaming others seldom solves anything, does it? Try to be more objective and maybe suggest a solution instead.

#### (3\_2B) Outcome

- Well, I guess you are right; this can't wait. I think Sarah is parking her truck as we speak, so start out with that one instead. I'll let you know when this one is ready for you – shouldn't take all day.

## (3\_3A) Receiving Feedback



Because of the change of trucks, you're on a tight schedule. Bad weather conditions force you to slow down and you realize after a while that your chances to keep the schedule are shrinking. You call the dispatcher and tell him you're going to be late. He's not happy...

- A. Hey, I'm so sorry I'm late. The weather is slowing me down, but I'll do my best. Oh, wait, maybe I can take this alternate route and actually xx some time!
- B. Well, the weather is bad and the traffic is worse. I could be stuck here for hours and there's really nothing I can do!
- C. Whoa! This is not my fault! You could have checked the weather forecast when you planned the route.

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer. As a professional driver you always do your best. Even though you can't come up with a solution at once, you show good will by promising you'll try to find one. Just don't forget your promise!
- B. OK, so you are not the one to blame but does it solve the problem to hold the weather responsible? Try to see the solutions instead.
- C. Well, that was quite hostile, wasn't it? Blaming others doesn't open up for new solutions.

#### (3\_3B) Outcome

- Yeah, well... There's nothing either of us can do about the weather. Just do your best and look for solutions as you go. The customer will probably understand – after all they are stuck with the same weather!

#### (3 4A) Handling Feedback

You did xx a few minutes on that back road – but your day was rough and you're tired when you hand over the keys to Stephen for his shift. Suddenly, he starts yelling at you...

- Hey, that tyre is flat! How long have you been driving with that? Don't you understand it's dangerous? It's your job to check the vehicle before and after your shift, and obviously you didn't! What more have you missed? You want to see me dead or what?

- A. I'm so sorry! That's not good at all; I understand that you are upset. I'll change that tyre right now!
- B. I'm so sorry Stephen. I didn't know we had to do a security check when finishing the dayshift. What should we do?
- C. Ah, sorry! I forgot about the safety check I was so tired!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! You listen, you tell Stephen that you understand him and respect his opinion, and you do your best to help him. That's a professional colleague!
- B. Ok, it's good that you say you are sorry, but is it not your job to know what's expected of you? Try to think of a way to help Stephen start his shift!
- C. No, that's not a good way to answer. Being tired is not a good reason to be sloppy. Try to acknowledge Stephens problem instead. Show him that you care about his safety.

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#### (3\_4B) Outcome

FutureDRV:

**ProCOMM** 



- Well, I guess these things happen. And I've been sloppy with the cab, so maybe we are even. I'll help you change the tyre.

#### (3\_5A) Giving Positive Feedback to a Colleague

While changing the tyre Stephen opens up. He explains that he's having a bit of a hard time at work right now.

- So, I'm sorry if I've been a little negative for the last couple of days. I just don't know how to find the time to do everything.

- A. In my opinion you're a very professional driver. Is it the messy cab you're thinking about? That's easy; just clean it continuously during the shift. It'll take no time at all!
- B. Is it the messy cab you're thinking about? We all have bad days, Stephen it'll be better!
- C. You do a great job; keep up the good spirit Stephen!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! You show respect for Stephen by acknowledging him as a professional driver. Also, you help him by giving an advice on how to solve his situation at work.
- B. It's good that try to give comfort. But you should really try to help Stephen by giving him advice on how he can improve things.
- C. No, this is too general. Not being specific and defining what's good is simply not good feedback.

#### (3\_5B) Outcome

- Thanks. I'll do better with the cab in the future. And hey, good job with the tyre! We're a good team after all!

#### Day 3 Outro

Day 3: Conclusions

#### What is feedback?

Feedback is giving or receiving both positive and negative critique. The whole point with feedback is to strengthen or improve each other and together create a better and more effective working environment. Constructive feedback is a great tool when it comes to bring about change. The key to constructive feedback is to be as specific as possible and avoid vaguely formulated statements. It is important to create an understanding of the situation and the way forward for the person receiving the feedback.

#### Why is feedback important for a professional driver?

It's difficult to criticise people. You don't want to upbraid, start a negative discussion or make anyone feel bad. Using constructive feedback helps you discuss a situation matter-of-factly and avoid personal attacks. It can even be difficult to acknowledge when people do something great, especially being specific about it. But it is equally important to give constructive positive feedback when the chance arises.



Constructive feedback is a powerful tool. Using it bring about real change in your everyday work life. Not only does it help you handle your customers and colleagues in a better way, it can actually help them to get better at their jobs. So, don't be afraid to give it

#### Tip: How to give constructive feedback

#### What do you want to achieve?

Figure out what you want to achieve giving the feedback. Knowing the desired consequence helps you to be relevant and clear. Before addressing the other person, ask yourself:

- Is this strengthening for the other person?

- Is this constructive and clear regarding the behavioural changes that you are looking for?

Concentrate on the most important and concrete changes that you would like to see.

#### Describe your view

The way feedback is given determines how well it is received and hence what it can achieve.

Describe your view; express how you look at the situation, how you perceive someone's behaviour and how that makes you – or someone else – react. Explaining your honest view minimizes the risk of defensive talk or hostility – because you are simply describing how you feel and react.

#### Three steps to give good feedback:

- Describe the situation and the other persons actions what you see and hear
- Explain the consequences what you feel and why you react like you do
- Suggest what could be done differently what you change you'd like to see

#### Make sure to

- Describe the problematic behaviour clearly
- Describe the effect of this behaviour in a tangible way
- Not generalize or simplify
- Not interpret or filter information
- Be objective don't moralize or master anyone
- Show the desirable behaviour don't judge or make personal attacks

#### How to receive feedback

Receiving feedback in a good way is equally important as giving it. It's chance to improve yourself and your work situation. If you are not regularly given feedback regarding your job role and your work tasks – ask for it!



#### When receiving constructive feedback

- Listen with an open mind even if you don't agree
- Remember the positive feedback do not diminish it!
- Avoid rejecting, defending or explaining yourself
- Ask for clarifications and details but do not start discussions

#### Information you need to possess in order to give and receive feedback

You need some initial knowledge in order to know right from wrong:

- Laws and regulations in countries or regions where you operate
- Risks and safety aspects of your role
- The company's regulations, policies, and customer agreements
- Boundaries when acting in the company name
- Your role definition: What is expected from you, and what is not?

#### Day 4: Handling Conflicts

#### Introduction level 4

Conflicts are inevitable, and when they occur it is important that you handle them in a professional way. Conflicts are not necessarily a bad thing – you can actually learn a lot about your own behaviour and actions by handling conflicts in a good and friendly way.

Good luck today - go out and prove that you can handle conflicts professionally!

#### In this chapter, you will learn:

- Why it is important to take action when a conflict appears
- That a conflict can lead to something positive
- What knowledge and information you need to possess to act professionally when a conflict appears?
- Some important tips and tricks how to handle conflicts and how to tell bad news and
- Where to find more information about the topic and where to go to learn more

#### (4\_1A) Goods Missing

You are unloading the entire truck at today's first stop. The number of palettes equals the number on the waybill, but the warehouse worker starts yelling at you when checking the goods.

- Hey, I'm missing one pallet!! Have you left it somewhere on the road or what?

A. Oh, I'm sorry about that. What goods are you missing? I'll check with the dispatcher right away!



- B. Oh no, I'm so sorry! From what I can see, the waybill matches the goods, but please check with our dispatcher to see if anything is wrong!
- C. Hmm, are you sure? It looks like the waybill matches the goods. Maybe someone made a mistake? Or maybe you forgot to order it?

#### Feedback

- A. Very good answer! Taking actions to help sort things out shows that you care about the customer and that you're really a professional driver.
- B. Well, it is good show empathy. But why not help sort things out instead? Don't ask the customer to contact the dispatcher show that you are service minded and make the call yourself.
- C. That's not good. Sure, it looks like someone made a mistake, but it's not very professional to start blaming others especially not the customer. Help solving the problem instead!

#### (4\_1B) Outcome

You call the dispatcher who tells you that the missing pallet is on its way. The warehouse worker signs the papers and is grateful for your help.

- Thank you! Sorry that I was so... unfriendly to you. It's just one of those days you know!

#### (4\_2A) Bad Quality Pallets

When starting to load the pile of exchange pallets, you notice that most of them are damaged. You know that your company only accepts pallets of a certain quality, but you start to wonder if you really should go ahead and complain. You don't want to start an unnecessary conflict...

- A. Sorry, guys. We only use pallets in perfect condition for our customers. I'd need exchange pallets for ones that look better than these. If it's extra work for you, I'll help you get new ones.
- B. Sorry guys. These pallets are in a very bad condition. I can't take them back. We'll have to add some documentation that I didn't get any exchange pallets this time. I'll take some photos.
- C. Sorry guys, my boss doesn't get happy at all if I bring damaged pallets. I need good quality it's the company policy you know?

#### Feedback

- A. Great! You explain why you need good pallets and show that you respect all your customers. It's nice of you to offer help for any extra trouble they need to go through.
- B. Well, ok. Maybe you should explain why you need better quality? It is good that you suggest a solution but maybe there is a better way?
- C. No, that's not really ok. Blaming your boss and the policies makes your superiors and the company look bureaucratic and rigid. You simply need good pallets to do a good job, that's it.



#### (4\_2B) Outcome

- What damaged pallets do you mean? Oh, these? No, they are not yours – we'll get your pile from the warehouse in a minute!

#### (4\_3A) Damaged Goods

You're just about to leave with a full load from the customer when you're stopped.

- Hey, wait! One of the craters looks broken! You know, if something is damaged the whole load will be sent back!

You take a look, and he's right; the damaged crater looks really bad. How could you have missed this when checking the goods? It can't have been damaged when you left the docking bay, can it?

The customer dispatcher continues complaining: - How on earth did this happen?! It's almost cut in half!? What have you done?

- A. Oh, you're right. Something must have happened since I left the docking bay I'm sure it was ok! Let's file a damage report. Since we don't know what happened, we can both give an explanation. I'll help you out!
- B. Oh, you're right. I'm so sorry about that... I'll help you file a damage report right now!
- C. Ah, yeah, you're right. I'm in a hurry though... Could you just call our customer support? They'll help you out in no time!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! Helping the customer with the paperwork could reverse the negativity. The customer might even remember you as a really helpful driver instead of a sloppy one.
- B. Well, that is rather polite of you. You take responsibility for the damaged goods but are you sure you should? Sometimes it's better to act neutral, file a complaint, and let the company deal with the following action.
- C. That's not the way to solve this! Both you and the customer have a problem here. Instead of leaving an angry dispatcher take action! It'll be well worth the extra time to document the damage and listen to the customer's story!

#### (4\_3B) Outcome

While still talking, someone comes up to you.

- Hey guys, sorry about that! I damaged a crater with the forklift. I came back to pick it up, but you were gone. Is it broken?

The dispatcher quiets down, his face turning red:

- Oh. Ah, well, thanks for your assistance then. We'll take care of this ourselves! Have a good one!



FutureDRV:

#### (4\_4A) Someone Else's Garbage

You just parked outside the truck stop, when the restaurant manager comes up to you.

- Hey driver, pick up that garbage of yours!

You look down and see a pile of trash on the ground, just below your window.

- A. Hi there! Oh, it's not my waste there I didn't even see it until now. But of course, I can help you dispose of it, if you want me to.
- B. Well, hi! I didn't throw that pile on the ground, and I'm about to leave for lunch now. I guess I can pick it up after if it's still there.
- C. Well, that is not mine. Someone else threw it on the ground; someone else can pick it up too!

#### Feedback

- A. Great job! You had time to help, so you did and the situation go better immediately. Kind actions tend to stick in people's minds, and your company logo on the trailer will now be associated with responsibility and positivity.
- B. Well, ok. You got away from the pile of garbage for the moment but would it hurt you to help out? Remember to always act responsibly and friendly when driving around with your company name on the trailer!
- C. Not helping! The restaurant manager thought that pile of waste was yours. Leaving the scene with a negative attitude reflects badly on your company name on the trailer. You don't want to give your company a bad reputation, do you?

## (4\_4B) Outcome

The restaurant manager picks up the trash himself and says:

- Oh! Uhm, well, sorry... I thought I saw you throw it there – I didn't mean to jump to conclusions. You have a good day now!

#### (4\_5A) A Misunderstanding

It looks like it's about to start raining heavily when you unload a pallet at a customer. At the entrance, you realize that door is too narrow to get the pallet inside. You put it down and start looking for someone to help you out. Suddenly someone comes running and starts shouting angrily...

- What on earth are you thinking...?

- A. Oh, hi there. I'm sorry I can see you're upset I'll do my best to help you out in a second. I'll just cover the pallet first, so it doesn't get wet.
- B. Oh, I'm sorry! I understand you're worried about the rain I'm covering the pallet in a minute, nothing will get wet!
- C. Hey, calm down! Can't you see I'm about to cover it up? It won't get wet!

#### Feedback

**ProCOMM** 



- A. Really good! Reflecting on the customer's feelings and listening to his problems shows that you are respectful and professional. Understanding his situation, you can help him find the right solution.
- B. Well, it is good that you confirm the customer's feelings. But you didn't ask what he was upset about - there is a risk that you miss out on some details!
- C. This is not a good way to handle this conflict. You don't respect the customer's feelings when you tell him to calm down and not to worry. How do you know there's nothing to worry about? Make sure you understand the actual problem first!

#### (4 5B) Outcome

The man suddenly stops shouting. He picks up a sign from the ground and shows you: "No deliveries at docking bays today."

He

mumbles

- I guess this explains why no one cared about my sign...

While you help him move the goods indoors, he explains:

- We're doing support work on the docking bays today. Thanks for helping me out with this pallet - I'll remember that!

#### (4\_6A) A Conflict with a Colleague

Finally, you're back at the company yard. Now let's park the truck and call it a day!

While reversing you hit a wrongly parked car. The owner, who turns out to be a colleague, runs up to you. He screams angrily:

- Don't you look before reversing? What's wrong with you?

- A. I'm so sorry! I was in a hurry and didn't look carefully enough. My apologies -let's just do the paperwork, ok?
- B. Oh, I'm so sorry! Totally my mistake. But... you're actually in a non-parking area -I should be able to trust that nothing's in my way here.
- C. Please calm down! You're in a non-parking area- if you hadn't put your car here, we wouldn't have this problem!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! You take responsibility for your mistake and suggest a way forward. That's an efficient and professional way to handle a conflict.
- B. Well, it is good that you take responsibility. But at the same time, you are putting blame on your colleague? Is that really a professional way to handle the conflict?
- C. No, this is not good. Asking someone that is upset to calm down is not very respectful towards his feelings. And to also blame that person for your mistake is not an efficient way to handle a conflict - and not very professional either.

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#### (4 6B) Outcome

Your colleague starts looking at the damage and calms down a bit.



- Ah, you know what, never mind who's fault this is. Let's just get on with the paperwork, shall we?

#### Day 4 Outro

Great job! You have successfully handled all conflicts that occurred at work today!

#### Day 4: Conclusions

#### **Conflicts do happen**

When two people disagree, a conflict may occur. Regardless if you think it is your fault or not, you need to take action to solve things. Remember that you always represent your company – and that a conflict with you is a conflict with the company. Also remember that you – as an operative – are often the first one to see a conflict coming.

#### Don't keep conflicts alive

If you have a conflict with someone and don't do anything about it, there is a risk that it spills over. The person remembers the bad things or angry words and may pass that negativity forward to others. That is not beneficial for you – or your company.

On the other hand, you can reverse a conflict and make something good out of it. Your willingness to find a solution to a conflict and stay positive through the process will also spill over – in a good way!

#### Conflicts are good!

Try to look at conflicts as something positive – a chance to listen, learn and maybe change. Conflicts make you stronger and can deepen your relations to both colleagues and customers.

#### Tip: Telling bad news

#### Don't wait

Warn for bad news in good time. Pass information on as soon as you get it, if possible.

#### Take responsibility

Never blame someone else. By taking responsibility you will appear straightforward and trustworthy. Claiming company "policies" only makes your company look bureaucratic and rigid.

#### Empathy

Show that you care about the other person's problems, feelings or situation. Acknowledge the other persons anger or sadness. Ask about the consequences and how you can be of help.

#### Tip: How to handle a conflict

Remember that a conflict may be avoided with good planning!

If a conflict appears, you should always act and react professionally and try to put your own feelings aside. A solution-oriented approach to conflicts is often beneficial. Here are some tips on how to de-escalate and handle a conflict:

#### Act now

#### FutureDRV:

**ProCOMM** 



If you find yourself in a conflict, you are a part of it. You can't run away from it, wait for it to disappear or ask someone else to step in and solve the problem. By acting, you show that you care and take responsibility.

#### Keep calm

Don't get caught by someone's aggressiveness. It' easy to get respond to the stress and make bad decisions. Try to look at the situation from another angle. What is the real problem here?

#### Courage

Have the courage not to blame someone – or something – else. That's never helpful when approaching another person in a conflict.

#### Listen

Before you try to discuss solutions to the problem, listen to the other person. Prioritize letting the other part talk about his or her view and feelings. Try to dig deeper and find the real problem and its cause.

#### Show understanding

Aggressiveness is easily beaten by agreement. Tell your counterpart that you care about and acknowledge his or her situation and feelings, and that you are willing to find a solution.

#### Negotiate

Offer alternatives and negotiation. It's always best if both parts are happy with the outcome – so strive for that if possible. However, it's important that you know where your limits are. It's easy to negotiate – and to say no – if you know where you stand.

#### End positively

Always finish the conversation in a positive way. Make sure that you're not leaving an angry person behind!

#### Information you need to possess in order to handle conflicts efficiently

You need some initial knowledge in order to know right from wrong.

- · Laws and regulations in countries or regions where you operate
- Risks and safety aspects of your role
- The company's regulations, policies, and customer agreements
- Boundaries when acting in the company name
- Your role definition: What is expected from you, and what is not?

#### Day 5: Tying It Together

#### **Introduction level 5**

So, this is your last day of the test. You made it here, today we will test everything you've learned so far!

#### After this chapter you should know how to

• Be an ambassador



- Communicate efficiently and professionally
- Give and receive feedback
- Handle and solve conflicts
- Where to find more information about the topic and where to go to learn more

# (5\_1A) Problem Solving

You're loading the truck for five different delivery points at a customer premises. Doing so, you noticing a problem with the weight distribution. When asking the warehouse loader responsible about it, he tells you that it's always done like this, and that you are the first one to complain. He doesn't want to change the distribution.

- 1. Sorry, but for safety reasons we really need to change the distribution of weight. Maybe it's possible to change the order of delivery?
- 2. I won't drive like this; I don't care what others do. Either we change the distribution, or I don't drive.
- 3. Ok... well, if others drive like this, I guess I can do it too!

#### Feedback

- 1. Great answer! You are referring to why you are concerned it's a safety risk. You also suggest a potential solution that can be further discussed at a professional level.
- 2. Well, you are right. You can't drive like that, but is it a good idea to start threatening? Try to suggest a solution instead!
- 3. That's not good. You prevented a conflict, but what about safety? As a professional driver, you have a responsibility to drive safely at all times!

## (5\_1B) Outcome

- Well, it may actually be a good idea to change it... Do you have a suggestion of an optimal delivery order? Could you write it down for me please? I'll do the calculations and call the customer for confirmation.

## (5\_2A) Solution Oriented Communication

You approach a traffic control, and a police officer stops you for a vehicle check.

- There are too many headlights on your truck. I'm sorry to tell you that you're not allowed to continue until the vehicle is in the correct legal condition. I also need to issue you a fine for this.

- A. I see. Could I suggest another solution, so I don't have to fix it here in the parking? If I take out the bulb here, and remove the headlight in the garage on Saturday? I'll make sure a confirmation is sent to your office.
- B. Can you please make an exception? I can't be late! And I don't even have the right tools here... But... the truck is scheduled at the garage on Saturday they can fix it then. It's just a couple of days!

FutureDRV:

**ProCOMM** 



C. Do you really mean I should fix this all here, at the parking area? And my truck is not even the worst one! There are so many others out there that have even more headlights, but still you stop me?

#### Feedback

- A. This sounds great! You acknowledge that you made a mistake and want to fix it. At the same time, you offer a solution that can go in line with the policeman's guidelines.
- B. Hmm, that's not good idea. Excuses and asking for exceptions from the law of course the policeman can't agree to that. Try to think of a solution the policeman can accept instead!
- C. No, that's not ok. The fact that other drivers are worse doesn't change your own wrongdoing, does it? Try to think of a solution to suggest to the policeman instead.

#### (5\_2B) Outcome

- Well, yes, I guess I can agree to that... It's a little bit out of what I normally do, but if you fix the lights on Saturday you can keep driving now. Just make sure to send that confirmation!

#### (5\_3A) Giving and Receiving Feedback

You are on your way to a customer that you have never delivered goods to before. You arrive shortly after the expected delivery time, and the warehouse worker is irritated when meeting you

- So, you're late again?

- A. I'm sorry about that. I hope the delay does not cause too much inconvenience. It's my first time on this route; I guess that's why everything took me a bit longer. Sorry again.
- B. I'm sorry I am late. This is my first delivery here, and I had to double check the route a couple of times. Also, there was an unexpected traffic jam this morning.
- C. What do you mean "again"? It's my first time here, and besides I'm not actually that late!

#### Feedback

- A. Great answer! Both apologizing and acknowledging the customers view on the situation is what a professional driver should do!
- B. Well, it is good that you apologize. But your excuses are not relevant for the customer. Try to acknowledge his view on the situation instead! That's always a good way to get past an argument before it even started.
- C. That's not a good way to start off with a new customer. Talking back to him just won't do any good at all.

#### (5\_3B) Outcome

- Oh, sorry... I didn't know you're new here – I just saw the truck and thought you were someone else... It's actually just a couple of minutes, so I guess it's ok. Let's unload!



## (5\_4A) Solution Oriented Communication

You are loading packages at a client's warehouse. At loading you notice that some of them are damaged. When you tell the responsible warehouse worker, he responds:

- Thanks, but it's ok like this.

- 1. Ok, if you are sure it's ok. We need to document this before it is loaded though. I'll take some pictures and you sign the documentation protocol.
- 2. OK, no problem! Your responsibility then!
- 3. Either you change the pieces, or I won't finish loading. It's always troubles with damaged goods.

#### Feedback

- 1. Great! Documenting the damage is a very good solution. You have avoided a possible future conflict for the company, and it wasn't too uncomfortable to ask for a signed damage report, was it?
- 2. Ok, that's a short time solution. What if there are damaged goods in those packages? For your own and the company's sake, you should document the damage and ask the customer to sign a damage report.
- 3. Well, that's not very nice or solution oriented. Instead of just refusing, try to suggest something that could help you both to solve the situation and finish loading the pallet.

#### (5\_4B) Outcome

- Yeah, I can sign a damage report if you want me to. But I assure you it's not a problem; we do this all the time. But, hey, give me that sheet! I understand you want to cover your back.

## (5\_5A) You Are an Ambassador

Parking after your last tour, the dispatcher comes up to you.

- Can you take Anthony's last delivery? He's late and won't make it!

Unfortunately, you do not have enough driving time left. Besides, you already have other plans for the evening.

- 1. Well, I want to help out of course, but it doesn't fit my driving time. I only have half an hour left and the tour probably takes at least two hours, right? Maybe there is someone else who can take the tour?
- 2. I started earlier today since I have plans tonight, so I really don't want to do this. Also, I have no driving time left. Do you want a fine for exceeding the limits? Well, don't blame me if you get one, I tried to say no!
- 3. I have plans tonight, so no; I can't take another tour. Especially not to cover up for someone else that can't do a proper job!

#### Feedback

1. Great answer! You explain the situation and show your dispatcher your good will. You are even suggesting a solution!

FutureDRV:

**ProCOMM** 



- Well, it is good that you explain why you don't want to or can't continue the drive. But threatening your dispatcher? Try to think of a solution that works for both of you instead – maybe someone else can help out?
- 3. Refusing to help out and blaming colleagues for not doing their job properly won't get you very far, will it? It can lead to a bad temper on all sides and call for a negative reply from dispatcher.

#### (5\_5B) Outcome

- Well, if you don't have driving time left, I guess I can't send you. I'll try to find someone else. Do you know if any of the other drivers have more time left?

#### Day 5 Outro

Day 5: Conclusions

Almost there!

You have completed the five-days trial at the company. During this week, you have excelled in several areas:

- Communicating efficiently and professional both with colleagues, management and customers
- Giving and receiving feedback in order to improve
- Avoiding and handling conflicts and time and energy in the process
- Behaving as an ambassador for your company and for all profession drivers

Congratulations! You're hired!

For further information on this application please get in touch with:

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