

Agnes Mxolisi on Building Community ANSWER KEY

A. Pre-listening

Building community means helping people grow together as a group. Before you listen to Agnes talk about what she does to build community where she works, think about three things your teacher does that helps you and the other students in your class work better together.

Answers can include: The teacher makes us work in groups, learn each other's names, do things together, treat each other with respect, we don't interrupt each other, the teacher lets the students help each other, etc.

Guessing what you think you will hear helps you listen better. What do you think Agnes will say about helping people at a company work better together?

People work together on projects, have meetings together, do volunteer work together, have activities at lunch time, have challenges with other companies, anything that sounds reasonable will work here.

B. After the First Listening

When listening in English, it helps to listen for the main ideas first.

1. Circle anything that you wrote in Part A that Agnes talked about in the recording.
2. Write down any ideas that you didn't guess but that you heard.

Can include: drop by someone's desk, talk to staff, make personal connections, understand the things that are important to her staff, learn what they value, she brought chocolates, she thanked them for a good year, she organizes social events, she knows people's birthdays.

3. How much did you understand of the recording?

Almost nothing Less than 30% About 50% More than 70% Almost all

4. What part was the hardest to understand?

5. What can you do to enjoy the listening more?

C. After the Second Listening

1. Write down what you did not hear the first time:

2. Can include: drop by someone's desk, talk to staff, make personal connections, understand the things that are important to her staff, learn what they value, she brought chocolates, she thanked them for a good year, she organizes social events, she knows people's birthdays.

3. What did you do the second time that helped you listen better?

I concentrated harder on the listening task.

I tried to see if my guesses were true.

I paid attention to important words.

I used what I knew about building community to understand new words.

Other _____

D. Vocabulary

Learning more words helps you listen better. Write a word from the box that matches the definition. The first one is done for you.

leadership	community	connection	value	staff	environment
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1. leadership Noun. The ability to lead other people.

2. staff Noun. A group of people who work in a company.

3. community Noun. A group of people with something in common.

4. environment Noun. What surrounds a person or animal, where it works or lives.
5. value Noun. What is important or useful about something.
6. connection Noun. A feeling, understanding, or similarity that joins people.

Here is the transcript of the recording. Fill in the blanks with the words from the boxes. You can use the words more than once; the box tells you how many times the word is used. The first one is done for you. Listen to the recording again to see if you are right.

leadership (once)	community (4 times)	connections (once)	Value/values (once each)	staff (5 times)	environment (once)
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Agnes Mxolisi on Building Community

Interviewer: Today on our show we are interviewing Agnes Mxolisi who has agreed to talk to us about leadership and communication and building community in the workplace. So thank you very much, Agnes for joining us today.

Agnes: Thank you for having me.

Interviewer: So can you tell me a little bit about how you build community for your staff at work?

Agnes: I try to create community for all the staff. I generally do talk to them quite a bit. I can't talk to all the staff, but I try. I have a large staff. I every so often drop by somebody's desk, and see how they're doing, what's happening in their life. I do try to sort of make personal connections with them. You know some people are sports people, some have children, some people like to volunteer, and some people like to travel. So I hope to build community with them by understanding things that are important to them by learning their values. Yesterday, in my environment (I've been in this organization for a year) I brought chocolates. Went around to all the

staff and said, “Thank you very much for the great year!” You know, try to put social events into place if you happen to know somebody’s birthday; you make a point of it. And when it comes to work, then it’s a lot easier for me to present the work and say what’s the value in it—like why we are doing it. If you don’t know why you’re doing it, then you say it’s just another job.

E. Idioms

Idioms are groups of words or phrases that have special meanings.

1. Find the phrases in the transcript above and underline them.
2. Match the phrases with the number of their meanings.

Phrases:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| A) Thank you for having me | <u>2</u> |
| B) every so often | <u>3</u> |
| C) drop by | <u>4</u> |
| D) make a point of | <u>1</u> |

Meanings:

1. Make a special effort to do something or always do something
2. A polite reply for “Thank you for coming here.”
3. Sometimes
4. To visit someone for a short time

F. Idioms

When you listen, you have to listen for what is said and **how** it is said. When native English speakers talk about two or more things in a row, a list of things, their voice pitch (intonation) goes up at the end of each item, but goes down at the end of the list.

Go to the 45 second spot on the recording and listen to the sentence below. Put an up-arrow over the words where Agnes’s voice goes up. The first one is done for you.

You know  some people are sports people,  some have children,  some people like to volunteer, and some people like to travel. 

G. Implied Meaning

At the end of the recording, Agnes says: “If you don’t know why you’re doing it, then you say it’s just another job”.

What does *it’s just another job* mean?

- Working because you *have* to, not because you *want* to.
- It is another job that a person has.
- More work than a person usually does.

H. How about you?

1. If you feel that you are part of a group at work and you are connected to the people around you, do you enjoy your work more?

Yes No

2. Do you feel more connected to people when they celebrate your birthday at work?

Yes No

3. Put check marks in as many boxes as you want.

Now that you know about building community, you will:

- Thank people that you know who have built community.
- Talk about community building in an interview.
- Think of ways that you can build community in your classroom.
- Think of ways that you can build community in your family.
- Volunteer so that you can be part of a community here in Edmonton.
- Say hello to people you meet in the hallways.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

I. After Listening

Reflect on your listening experience. What did you do well? What surprised you? What will you do next time?
