



Generating Messages for Message Banking

How do I generate messages to record?

There are many different types of messages. Your starting point will depend on your own priorities. For example, some messages will help you:

- To feel close to family and friends.
- To communicate your preferences throughout the day.
- To keep a conversation going.

The overall aim is to keep your unique style of communication and to capture phrases and ways of saying things that matter to you.

Initially, it can be difficult to decide on the phrases you feel are important and that would carry **additional meaning**. Consider what phrases would be really important to you or your family and friends to play using **your own speech** as opposed to a computerised voice on an electronic communication device. For example, it may be helpful to consider the following factors when generating messages, particularly if you come up with a lot of messages you are thinking about recording and you need to prioritise them.

- *Greetings and nicknames* for family might have a special meaning in your own speech.
- Saying something like you are *thirsty* may not carry special meaning so could be done using an electronic communication device's built-in computerised voice.



It is not necessary to record everything you might ever want to say because your recordings can be used alongside a system that allows you to type any message as you think of it.

Ways to generate messages

Thinking of the messages you want to record can be challenging. This document provides some suggestions for generating messages. Working through these ideas with your family, friends, speech & language therapist (SLT) and care team can help you through the process.

Some ways to generate messages ...





Keeping a communication diary

A helpful starting point can be to think of the range of phrases you use with different people in the places you typically visit. Keep a diary for a week or two to track this. Note your different communication styles. For example:

- Conversation in a shop will be very different from one you have in the pub with friends.
- In public places, you may use language to introduce yourself, to ask for things, etc., but when chatting with friends or family you might use more informal words and phrases, talking about your feelings or commenting on news etc.

For more information see: *Communication Diary for Message Banking* 



Making a list of phrases and words

It can feel very daunting to sit down with a dictaphone to start recording. People who have done *message banking* report that starting is the hardest part of the process but once you have the first few phrases or words recorded, more seem to flow naturally. Prepare some phrases as a starting point. Write them exactly the way you would say them, we all speak differently and use different phrasing.

- Review your *communication diary*. Pull out phrases and note any more that occur to you.
- Keep the list of what you record. Reviewing this can help to identify missing categories.



Themed questions

It can be hard to think of phrases you use as you probably say them without thinking. People who have done *message banking* report that having a generic list can make it harder to think of their own phrases so we have suggested some themed questions to help you to spark **your own** ideas. The **categories** include: 'Personally meaningful phrases', 'Feelings and concerns', 'Help and control', and 'Chit chat'.

For more information see: *Themed Questions for Message Banking* 



Legacy messages & stories

Legacy messages capture information about **you as a person** and/or events in your life. They can include specific messages you would like to record for loved ones. They are not intended for use in two-way direct conversation.

For more information see: *Legacy Messages for Message Banking* 

Other Ideas

Other ways to generate messages include:

- Asking **family and friends** for suggestions. They are often more aware of your particular ways of saying things than you are. Involving them can also make the project more fun as you debate the phrases they associate with you.
- Listening out in your community or to the local radio/television can spark ideas, especially if there are specific regional or generational phrases that not everyone you know uses.