

# **Communications - Interpersonal Skills**

## **Participant Guide**

## NOTES

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# NOTES

# Communications Module 1 – Part 1 – Interpersonal Communications

The Communications Module is designed to be delivered over a two-day period. The first day is Interpersonal Communications and Day Two is Communications Planning.

## **AGENDA**

### **Activity**

Icebreaker

Welcome & Overview

Agenda Review

Communication Process

Types of Communication

- Verbal

- Non-Verbal

- Listening

Factors Influencing Communication

Parking Lot

Discussion/Evaluation

# NOTES

# Learning Objectives

**The learning objectives for the Interpersonal Communications module include:**

- Understand the fundamentals of basic communication
- Identify various types of verbal communication
- Discuss various types of non-verbal communication
- Analyze communication and listening skills and identify and practice ways to improve skills
- Recognize various factors that influence communication

# NOTES





## **Exercise 1: Getting to know you**

### **Objective**

Give participants an opportunity to practice their communication skills

### **Advance preparation**

None

### **Exercise**

Students should pair up to interview each other so that they may learn enough about the person to introduce him/her to the rest of the group.

### **Participant resources**

Pen/pencil and paper

# NOTES

# 1.0 What is communication?

Communicating and communication are complex interactions with a variety of definitions. A short definition is that communication is a process in which a person, through language, signs and symbols, conveys a message to another person.

In order to understand the communication process, it is important to examine the basic elements and their impact on the message. The sender, message, channel, receiver, noise/distortion and feedback and each will now be reviewed and discussed.

## 1.1 Sender

What influences your effectiveness as a sender?

- Language and how you use it
- Credibility
- Knowledge of content, audience and context
- Experience, attitudes and values

## 1.2 Message

- Written
  - Words, sentences, paragraphs
- Oral
  - Use of your voice – tone, pitch
- Non-Verbal
  - Gestures
  - Facial expressions
  - Eye contact

- Environment (office set up)

### **1.3 Channel**

- Verbal
  - Face to face meetings
  - Telephone
  - Video-conferencing
- Written
  - Reports
  - Letters

### **1.4 Receiver**

When receiver receives the message, communication has taken place.

However, there are several characteristics of receivers that can impact the message and thus the communication process.

- Abilities
- Attitudes
- Experience

### **1.5 Feedback**

- Receiver responds in some way
- Key component as it allows sender to evaluate effectiveness of message

### **1.6 Barriers**

Although communication process appears to be simple, there are certain barriers throughout the process. The barriers can have a negative impact on the process.

- Inappropriate medium or channel
- Incorrect grammar, inflammatory words, words that conflict with body language
- Technical jargon
- Noise
  - Can occur at any stage
  - Interference from various sources – radio, chatter, anything that impacts attention

# NOTES



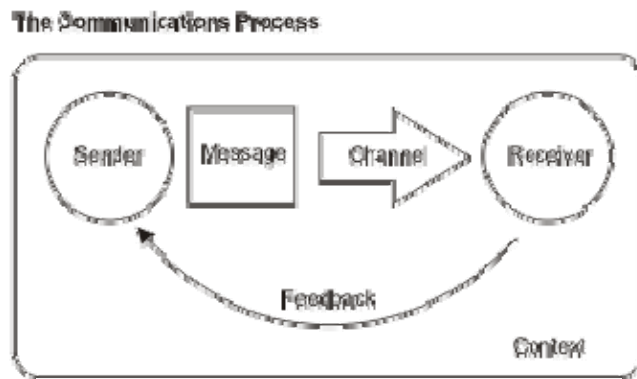
## Additional Material # 1

**Source:**

<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/CommunicationIntro.htm>

### Communications Skills - The Importance of Removing Barriers:

Problems with communication can pop-up at every stage of the communication process (which consists of **sender**, **message**, **channel**, **receiver**, **feedback** and **context** - see the diagram below) and have the potential to create misunderstanding and confusion.



To be an effective communicator and to get your point across without misunderstanding and confusion, your goal should be to lessen the frequency of these problems at each stage of this process with clear, concise, accurate, well-planned communications. We follow the process through below:

#### Sender...

To establish yourself as an effective communicator, you must first establish credibility. In the business arena, this involves displaying knowledge of the subject, the audience and the context in which the message is delivered.

You must also know your audience (individuals or groups to which you are delivering your message). Failure to understand who you are communicating with will result in delivering messages that are misunderstood.

### **Message...**

Next, consider the message itself. Written, oral and nonverbal communications are affected by the sender's tone, method of organization, validity of the argument, what is communicated and what is left out, as well as by the individual style of communicating. Messages also have intellectual and emotional components, with intellect allowing us the ability to reason and emotion allowing us to present motivational appeals, ultimately changing minds and actions.

### **Channel...**

Messages are conveyed through channels, with verbal including face-to-face meetings, telephone and videoconferencing; and written including letters, emails, memos and reports.

Different channels have different strengths and weaknesses. For example, it's not particularly effective to give a long list of directions verbally, while you'll quickly cause problems if you criticize someone strongly by email.

### **Receiver...**

Your message is delivered to individual members of your audience. No doubt, you have in mind the actions or reactions you hope your message will get from this audience. Keep in mind, though, that each of these individuals enters into the communication process with ideas and feelings that will undoubtedly influence their understanding of your message, and their response. To be a successful communicator, you should consider these before delivering your message, and act appropriately.

### **Feedback...**

Your audience will provide you with feedback, verbal and nonverbal reactions to your communicated message. Pay close attention to this feedback as it is crucial to ensuring the audience understood your message.

### **Context...**

The situation in which your message is delivered is the context. This may include the surrounding environment or broader culture (i.e. corporate culture, international cultures, etc.).

### **Removing Barriers At All These Stages**

To deliver your messages effectively, you must commit to breaking down the barriers that exist in each of these stages of the communication process.

Let's begin with the message itself. If your message is too lengthy, disorganized, or contains errors, you can expect the message to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Use of poor verbal and body language can also confuse the message.

Barriers in context tend to stem from senders offering too much information too fast. When in doubt here, less is oftentimes more. It is best to be mindful of the demands on other people's time, especially in today's ultra-busy society.



Once you understand this, you need to work to understand your audience's culture, making sure you can converse and deliver your message to people of different backgrounds and cultures within your own organization, in your country and even abroad.

# NOTES



## **Exercise 2: Discuss communication barriers**

### **Objective**

To discuss barriers in the communication process.

### **Advance preparation**

None

### **Exercise**

Facilitator leads group discussion (brainstorming) on barriers to communication and how they impact the communication process.

### **Participant resources**

Pen/pencil paper if done on individual basis before large group discussion.

# NOTES



## **Exercise 3: Identify and deal with common communication problems**

### **Objective**

Identify strategies to deal with common communication problems.

### **Advance preparation**

Review case studies

### **Exercise**

Break up into groups and review case study on the following pages. Each group assigns a recorder and presenter to report back to the large group.

### **Participant resources**

pen/pencil and paper; flipchart to record discussion and solutions:

# NOTES



## Exercise 3: Case studies

### 1. Harbour View Town Council Development

**Directions:** In your groups identify and discuss some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communication process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Harbour view town council was discussing an application for a housing development adjacent to land to be obtained by the town for economic development. The land for economic development purposes had been discussed at length by the economic development committee and approved by that committee and then by council.

During the council meeting, the staff person responsible for economic development was not present. The housing development was approved but several councilors raised concerns about land acquired for economic development and the process the Town was following in its acquisition. Several councilors who know about the process did not speak up to address their colleagues' concerns and questions about the land acquisition. The media was present at the meeting as well as several residents and the local media then produced an article on the issue.

## 2. Midland Lake Park Association Funding

**Directions:** In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The president/chairperson of the board of directors of Midland Lake Park Association hears that a local similar organization may soon receive funding for a similar wetlands related project for which the Association has applied for funding. The president/chairperson calls the office to request that an email be sent to the board asking for feedback on their position on what he has heard, as he feels that he should raise a concern about funding for the other project.

The president/chairperson is on her way to a meeting and the executive director is at lunch so her assistant hears the concern and passes on the message to the executive director when he returns. The executive director immediately sends out the email to all members stating that president/chairperson is concerned that funding has been provided to a similar organization. Several board members are upset with the funding and start calling the local government office to express concern about the funding. It is discovered that the funding was not announced but was contemplated and the Association would have been consulted before any decision was made. The president/chairperson does not explain where she got the information, and insists the problem was the administrative assistant. The assistant says she gave her the impression funding was announced and they were reacting to that and showed the executive director her notes.



### 3. Timberland Development Association

**Directions:** In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Timberland Development Association is pursuing ownership of a large marina which generates significant revenue and has potential for waterfront tourism development. The executive director is very well versed in the project, where similar projects are located and the government departments and processes involved. During preparation of a board meeting, an executive member contacts him to advise him that he's heard that a similar project encountering some of the same government hurdles has had them resolved so he should follow up immediately. The executive director knows that the member is misinformed and suggests that they wait for a few days. The board member is insistent and then contacts the chair who directs the executive director to drop what he is doing and follow up on the information. The executive director has to defer working on the board package and spends the afternoon following up to find he is correct. The board meeting that evening does not have full documentation due to the afternoon project. The other board members are complaining and the executive director is unable to place blame for the problem on the chair and board member so takes the blame.

### 4. Economic Development Corporation Funding Proposal

**Directions:** In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Executive Director of the local Economic Development Corporation is working with a Town official on a funding proposal for a trail in the town. The group working with the Corporation on the trail has also taken on taken the cleanup of the lake that will be part of the trail and is confronting the Town with allegations that they feel that the town is not

putting enough funding into the cleaning up of the lake and that they continue to pollute it. The group has to write the Town to ask for support for the funding proposal.

The Town official, in a telephone conversation with the Executive Director, discusses how a confrontational approach is not always the best approach and that the group's letter should address the funding issue and not the other issues. The Town official asks the Executive Director if he could try to work with the group in writing the letter to the Town. The town official knows that support and funding for the trail will get better support if the group approaches the town about the project and not the other issues and relays this to the Director. The Town official is surprised to see later in the day an email from the Director to the group stating that the town official suggests that the letter should be non-confrontational.

## 2.0 Types of communication

Now that we have a better understanding of the communication process, we will now focus on the various types of communication – some of which we have already mentioned above.

- Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Listening

# NOTES



## Exercise 4: How we communicate

### Objective

Understand how verbal, vocal and visual elements contribute to the total message.

### Advance preparation

Select participants for role play.

### Exercise

Role play a brief conversation between two people and participants will observe and interpret the sender and receiver's verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Select two participants to participate in a three to four-minute role play – an Exchange between a resident and town clerk.

The resident is refusing to pay interest on a business tax account despite repeated bills and statement stating that interest is now accruing as bill not paid on time. The resident is angry and challenging the clerk who is trying to explain the fact that policy has been in place, ways to appeal, etc. The resident decides to pay only the business tax amount and not the interest and then leaves the premises, leaving the clerk frustrated and having to prepare a report for council to discuss the interest.

**Participant resources:** Sample communication log in Appendix.

## 2.1 Verbal communication

Verbal communication is what we say and how we say it. There are various ways in which we use our verbal communication skills – we use them to talk, to listen, to give and receive feedback, to question.

### ➤ Speech

- Range
  - Musicality of your voice
    - Make musical type sounds when you speak
    - Average person has a range of 7 to 11 notes when they speak
    - Speech that is interesting to listen to has at least 7 to 11 notes
  - Monotone is less than 7 notes
    - Someone speaking with less than 7 notes had a monotone voice
    - Speech that is monotone is difficult to listen to and does not maintain attention
- Pitch
  - Point within range where voice is placed for speaking
  - Deeper voices easier to hear than high squeaky ones
- Volume
  - Loudness or softness
  - Depends on location
- Enunciation
  - Clearness of your speech

- Pronunciation
  - How you pronounce your words
  - Dialect is important factor in some areas
- Inflection
  - Change in pitch to emphasize word(s)
- Tone
  - Convey a range of emotions

## 2.2 Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is what we say with our body. It includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups. It may also include the way we dress, our silence and other mannerisms.

Knowledge of non-verbal communication is important for those who work with others as it enables them to interpret actions and understand feelings and attitudes of others.

### ➤ Examples of non-verbal communication

- Body language
  - Body position (slouching, arms folded)
  - Body orientation (face to face, side to side)
  - Eye contact (direct, downward)
  - Gestures (pointing, swaying)
  - Facial expressions (communicate emotions)
  - Touch
  - Personal space
- Written Communication
  - Provides medium when we are unable to communicate verbally
  - Can provide opportunity to convey message

- Can be interpreted for meanings or impressions
- Appearance/image
  - How we dress
  - How we present ourselves
  - How we network or act in public
- Environment
  - office set up
  - location of desk
  - boardroom seating arrangement
  - personal space





## Additional Material #2

### Verbal Communication – Using your voice

#### Range

Anytime you speak, you are making sounds that are more or less musical. The average man, for example, has a range of from seven to eleven notes. Speech that is interesting to listen to uses this range of at least seven to eleven notes. Use less than seven, and you have the boring old monotone style that put people off.

#### Pitch

Pitch is the point within the vocal range where the voice is placed for speaking. If your pitch is too high or too low your voice will tire easily and is not flexible enough to be used to its best advantage.

**TIP . . .** Keep your pitch a little lower than normal. Slightly deeper voices are easier to hear than high squeaky ones

#### Volume

The volume or loudness of your voice will depend upon the conditions under which you are talking. The size and acoustics of the room, then number and location of participants, and the level of noise in the immediate area all are factors which can affect the volume. Volume, the range, should not become monotonous. Very effective emphasis can be achieved by speaking softly which you are talking. The size and acoustics of the room in the immediate area or very loudly as the occasion demands.

**TIP . . .** Make sure that you vary your volume BUT be sure to be heard. Project your voice and consider the volume of your music and the acoustics of your exercise room.

#### Enunciation

Enunciation demands that each letter, syllable or word you use be uttered definitely, audibly and distinctly

#### Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way of sounding words. Mispronunciation, especially of key words, can mislead a listener or just as bad, lower your credibility as a fitness leader.

**TIP . . .** Take some time before your class to discover the pronunciation of and practice using words that are unfamiliar or familiar words that are often mispronounced

### **Inflection**

Inflection is basically a sliding change of pitch. When accompanied by a sudden and wide change of volume or range, you get emphasis on single words or phrases than can be effective and interesting to hear.

**TIPS** • Don't overuse this technique. Your words will sound affected and insincere.

- Do practice using inflection wisely as it is a certain way to improve the interest - holding quality of your speaking

### **Change of Pace**

This one involves both rate of speed of the presentation and pauses in speaking.

**TIPS** • The larger the class-the slower the rate should be

- The lower the ability level of the class the slower you must speak. Beginners are at a disadvantage - they are unfamiliar with the activities and the language.
  - Difficult or new material requires a slower rate of presentation.
  - Pauses should be clean, definite breaks in the presentation of material. They give people time to let what was just said "sink in". ALSO pauses can be used to help you think on the fly especially if you've been asked a difficult or embarrassing question.
- This one involves both rate of speed of the presentation and pauses in speaking.

### **Verbal Mannerisms**

Verbal mannerisms should always be avoided. Here are the most common examples:

- Use of "pet" words or expressions over and over again in a lesson: e.g. "Right"? "You know what I mean?". "OK".
- Word Whiskers: e.g. "Er-r-r" or "and-a-a-a-", i.e. audible pauses.
- Constant repetition of certain phrases is also annoying

Source:

College of the North Atlantic (2006). *Interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution*.  
College of the North Atlantic and Municipal Training and Development Corporation.



## Additional Material #3

### Non-verbal Communication

When Demosthenes was asked what was the first part of oratory he answered, "action"; and which was the second, he replied, "action"; and which was third he still answered, "action." People tend to believe actions more than words!

Have you ever heard anyone say, "His actions spoke so loudly I couldn't hear what he said?" Have you ever wondered whether anyone has said this about you? What we do is a means of communication, subject to interpretation by others. Did you ever stop to think that even failure to act is a way of communicating?

Today, many researchers are concerned with the information sent by communication that is independent of and different from verbal information; namely, the non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is organized by language; non-verbal communication is not.

Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another. Most of us spend about 75 percent of our waking hours communicating our knowledge, thoughts, and ideas to others. However, most of us fail to realize that a great deal of our communication is of a non-verbal form as opposed to the oral and written forms. Non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups. It may also include the way we wear our clothes or the silence we keep.

In person-to-person communications our messages are sent on two levels simultaneously. If the nonverbal cues and the spoken message are incongruous, the flow of communication is hindered. Right or wrong, the receiver of the communication tends to base the intentions of the sender on the non-verbal cues he receives.

### Categories and Features

G. W. Porter divides non-verbal communication into four broad categories:

**Physical.** This is the personal type of communication. It includes facial expressions, tone of voice, sense of touch, sense of smell, and body motions.

**Aesthetic.** This is the type of communication that takes place through creative expressions: playing instrumental music, dancing, painting and sculpturing.

**Signs.** This is the mechanical type of communication, which includes the use of signal flags, the 21-gun salute, horns, and sirens.

**Symbolic.** This is the type of communication that makes use of religious, status, or ego-building symbols.

Our concern here will be with what Porter has called the physical method of non-verbal communication.

Knowledge of non-verbal communication is important managers who serve as leaders of organizational "teams," for at least two reasons:

- To function effectively as a team leader the manager must interact with the other members successfully. Non-verbal cues, when interpreted correctly, provide him with one means to do so.
- The team members project attitudes and feelings through non-verbal communication. Some personal needs such as approval, growth, achievement, and recognition may be met in effective teams. The extent to which these needs are met is closely related to how perceptive the team leader and team members are to non-verbal communication in themselves and in others on the team.

If the team members show a true awareness to non-verbal cues, the organization will have a better chance to succeed, for it will be an open, honest, and confronting unit. Argyle and his associates have been studying the features of nonverbal communication that provide information to managers and their team members. The following summarizes their findings:

### **Static Features**

**Distance.** The distance one stands from another frequently conveys a non-verbal message. In some cultures it is a sign of attraction, while in others it may reflect status or the intensity of the exchange.

**Orientation.** People may present themselves in various ways: face-to-face, side-to-side, or even back-to-back. For example, cooperating people are likely to sit side-by-side while competitors frequently face one another.

**Posture.** Obviously one can be lying down, seated, or standing. These are not the elements of posture that convey messages. Are we slouched or erect? Are our legs crossed or our arms folded? Such postures convey a degree of formality and the degree of relaxation in the communication exchange.

**Physical Contact.** Shaking hands, touching, holding, embracing, pushing, or patting on the back all convey messages. They reflect an element of intimacy or a feeling of (or lack of) attraction.

### **Dynamic Features**

**Facial Expressions.** A smile, frown, raised eyebrow, yawn, and sneer all convey information. Facial expressions continually change during interaction and are monitored constantly by the recipient. There is evidence that the meaning of these expressions may be similar across cultures.

**Gestures.** One of the most frequently observed, but least understood, cues is a hand movement. Most people use hand movements regularly when talking. While some gestures (e.g., a clenched fist) have universal meanings, most of the others are individually learned and idiosyncratic.

**Looking.** A major feature of social communication is eye contact. It can convey emotion, signal when to talk or finish, or aversion. The frequency of contact may suggest either interest or boredom.

The above list shows that both static features and dynamic features transmit important information from the sender to the receiver.

Tortoriello, Blott, and DeWine have defined non-verbal communication as:

". . . the exchange of messages primarily through non-linguistic means, including: kinesics (body language), facial expressions and eye contact, tactile communication, space and territory, environment, paralanguage (vocal but non-linguistic cues), and the use of silence and time."

Let's review these non-linguistic ways of exchanging messages in more detail.

### **Kinesics**

Lamb believes the best way to access an executive's managerial potential is not to listen to what he has to say, but to observe what he does when he is saying it. He calls this new behavioral science "movement analysis." Some of the movements and gestures he has analyzed follow:

**Forward and Backward Movements.** If you extend a hand straight forward during an interview or tend to lean forward, Lamb considers you to be an "operator"- good for an organization requiring an infusion of energy or dramatic change of course.

**Vertical Movements.** If you tend to draw yourself up to your tallest during the handshake, Lamb considers you to be a "presenter." You are a master at selling yourself or the organization in which you are employed.

**Side-to-Side Movements.** If you take a lot of space while talking by moving your arms about, you are a good informer and good listener. You are best suited for an organization seeking a better sense of direction. Lamb believes there is a relationship between positioning of the body and movements of the limbs and facial expressions. He has observed harmony between the two. On the other hand, if certain gestures are rehearsed, such as those made to impress others, there is a tendency to separate the posture and the movements. The harmony disappears.

Studies by Lamb also indicate that communication comes about through our degree of body flexibility. If you begin a movement with considerable force and then decelerate, you are considered a "gentle-touch." By contrast, if you are a "pressurizer," you are firm from beginning to end. The accuracy of Lamb's analyses is not fully known. However, it is important that corporation executives are becoming so sensitive to the importance of non-verbal messages that they are hiring consultants, such as Lamb, to analyze non-verbal communications in their organizations.

### **Facial Expressions**

Facial expressions usually communicate emotions. The expressions tell the attitudes of the communicator. Researchers have discovered that certain facial areas reveal our emotional state better than others. For example, the eyes tend to reveal happiness or sadness, and even surprise. The lower face also can reveal happiness or surprise; the smile, for example, can communicate friendliness and cooperation. The lower face, brows, and forehead can also reveal anger. Mehrabian believes verbal cues provide 7 percent of the meaning of the message; vocal cues, 38 percent; and facial expressions, 55 percent. This means that, as the receiver of a message, you can

rely heavily on the facial expressions of the sender because his expressions are a better indicator of the meaning behind the message than his words.

### **Eye Contact**

Eye contact is a direct and powerful form of non-verbal communication. The superior in the organization generally maintains eye contact longer than the subordinate. The direct stare of the sender of the message conveys candor and openness. It elicits a feeling of trust. Downward glances are generally associated with modesty. Eyes rolled upward are associated with fatigue.

### **Tactile Communication**

Communication through touch is obviously non-verbal. Used properly it can create a more direct message than dozens of words; used improperly it can build barriers and cause mistrust. You can easily invade someone's space through this type of communication. If it is used reciprocally, it indicates solidarity; if not used reciprocally, it tends to indicate differences in status. Touch not only facilitates the sending of the message, but the emotional impact of the message as well.

### **Personal Space**

Personal space is your "bubble" - the space you place between yourself and others. This invisible boundary becomes apparent only when someone bumps or tries to enter your bubble.

How you identify your personal space and use the environment in which you find yourself influences your ability to send or receive messages. How close do you stand to the one with whom you are communicating? Where do you sit in the room? How do you position yourself with respect to others at a meeting? All of these things affect your level of comfort, and the level of comfort of those receiving your message.

Goldhaber says there are three basic principles that summarize the use of personal space in an organization: The higher your position (status) in the organization,

- a. the more and better space you will have,
- b. the better protected your territory will be, and
- c. the easier it will be to invade the territory of lower-status personnel

The impact of use of space on the communication process is related directly to the environment in which the space is maintained.

### **Environment**

How do you arrange the objects in your environment - the desks, chairs, tables, and bookcases? The design of your office, according to researchers, can greatly affect the communications within it. Some managers divide their offices into personal and impersonal areas. This can improve the communication process if the areas are used for the purposes intended.

Your pecking-order in the organization is frequently determined by such things as the size of your desk, square feet in your office, number of windows in the office, quality of the carpet, and type of paintings (originals or copies) on the wall.

It is obvious that your personal space and environment affect the level of your comfort and your status and facilitate or hinder the communication process.

### **Paralanguage**

Is the content of your message contradicted by the attitude with which you are communicating it? Researchers have found that the tone, pitch, quality of voice, and rate of speaking convey emotions that can be accurately judged regardless of the content of the message. The important

thing to gain from this is that the voice is important, not just as the conveyor of the message, but as a complement to the message. As a communicator you should be sensitive to the influence of tone, pitch, and quality of your voice on the interpretation of your message by the receiver.

### **Silence and Time**

Silence can be a positive or negative influence in the communications process. It can provide a link between messages or sever relationships. It can create tension and uneasiness or create a peaceful situation. Silence can also be judgmental by indicating favor or disfavor - agreement or disagreement.

For example, suppose a manager finds a couple of his staff members resting.

If he believes these staff members are basically lazy, the idleness conveys to him that they are "goofing off" and should be given additional assignments.

If he believes these staff members are self-motivated and good workers, the idleness conveys to him that they are taking a well-deserved "break."

If he is personally insecure, the idleness conveys to him that they are threatening his authority.

Time can be an indicator of status. How long will you give the staff member who wishes to speak to you? How long will you make him wait to see you? Do you maintain a schedule? Is your schedule such that your subordinates must arrange their schedules to suit yours? In a healthy organization, the manager and his subordinates use time to communicate their mutual respect to each other.

### **Closing Thoughts**

Regardless of your position in the organization it is important for you to develop some sensitivity to nonverbal messages. Cooperation improves as we recognize and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues. Of course you have been aware of non-verbal communications all of your life, **but how much thought have you given them?**

Source:

<http://www.zeromillion.com/business/management/non-verbal-communication.html>

# NOTES





## **Exercise 5: Interpreting Non-Verbal Behaviour**

### **Objective**

Discover what you know about non-verbal behaviour

### **Advance preparation**

None

### **Exercise**

Participants should think about some non-verbal behaviours they have observed.

*See appendix for additional information on body language.*

# NOTES



## **Exercise 6: How are your listening skills?**

### **Objective**

Identify listening skills

### **Advance preparation**

Complete checklist

### **Exercise**

Participants complete the checklist and discuss their findings.

### **Participant resources**

checklist

# NOTES



## Exercise 6: Rate your Listening Skills

1. I take notes to help me remember the points  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
2. I am not easily distracted  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
3. I keep my emotions in check when I don't what is being said  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
4. I wait until someone is finished talking before I decide how I feel  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
5. When someone is talking, I smile, nod, and try to keep eye contact with my speaker  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
6. I watch the speaker's body language  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
7. I judge what was said, not the speaker  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
8. I don't interrupt  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_
9. If I'm not sure, I will put what the speaker said into my own words  
Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

10. I listen not only for what was said but also for why it's said

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

11. I listen for the speaker's emotions

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

12. I allow for silences

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

13. I don't finish someone else's sentences for them or fill in words unless I'm asked

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

14. I ask questions when I don't understand

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

15. I ask questions to get more information

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

16. I'm a patient listener. I'm not thinking about what I'm going to say while someone else is talking

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Sometimes\_\_

How to rate your answers

If you have ticked any **no** answers you may want to work on improving your listening skills. If you have ticked **sometimes** answers you may want to think about the situations that cause you to do those things.

With practice, we can all become better listeners, as listening skills are important in our daily personal and professional lives.

Good listeners use these ideas

- Take notes
- Be ready to tell someone what you've heard
- Listen with your mind, body and heart
- Don't be quick to judge

- Ask questions
- Paraphrase
- Make contact
- Let the speaker finish
- Judge the issue and not the person

Source: Parker, Barbara. J. (2001). Tea you can trot a mouse on. Volume 1. Hubbards, NS: The Wee Society.

## 2.3 Listening

Listening is the cornerstone for good communication and is often the least developed skill. Often the sender is more concerned with the message and how they appear, than listening to the receiver.

The exercise just completed provides you with some insight into your listening skills and whether you need to improve them.

We will now further discuss listening.

### Types of listening

- **Pseudo**
  - Listen to meet some other need
  - Make people think you are interested
  - Keep alert to see if you are being rejected
  - Get some time before your next comment
  - Pretend to be listening to be polite
  - Natural to be pseudo listening some times
- **Active**
  - Listen without barriers (time, emotional)
  - Listen to the entire message by focusing on verbal and non-verbal message
  - Listen using your non-verbal communication skills
  - Listen to the person without interrupting, judging or arguing
  - Clarify and ask questions or paraphrase



## Improving Listening through Feedback

Feedback can help you better understand yourself and another person. How you encourage or receive it depends on your level sensitivity level – some are very sensitive and others are unaffected.

Skills used in providing feedback include:

- Paraphrasing
- Perception Checking
- Describing behaviour
- Making “I” statements

Feedback is an important feature in interpersonal communication.

### ▪ **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing allows you to test whether you understand what you heard from another person. You can restate what was said, or state their idea or information in your own words to show that you know what was said.

- Tests your understanding of communicator’s message
- Allows communicator to clarify a misunderstanding
- Provides climate where communicator can feel understood
- Provides communicator with sense that what they are saying is important
- Provide example and ask for examples

*I don’t think this office is doing to do it for me.*

*You want to move to another space?*

*Yes, that is what I would like.*

- **Perception Checking**

Perception checking is stating in your own words what you perceive the other person is feeling.

- Describe other's feelings or behavior
- Indicates to person that you want to understand their feelings
- State interpretation of behavior
- Ask if interpretations are accurate
- Provide example and ask for examples
  - Were you disappointed that your team wasn't selected?*
  - You didn't say anything in the meeting about the new policy – do you agree with it?*

- **Describing Behaviour**

Describing behaviour states only what has been observed and not what was said so is a good check of your ability to observe and report what you observed.

- State what has been observed
- Does not judge behaviour
- Use it when you want to let person be aware of their behaviour
- Use it when you want someone to be aware of a negative behaviour
- Provides a non-threatening opening to further communication
- Provide example and ask for examples
  - Say: Andrew, Bill has not had a chance to finish the presentation*
  - Do not say: Andrew you are always interrupting*

- **Making I Statements**

- Use when you want to explain your feelings
- Use to reduce level of tension in conflict situation
- How to make an I statement
- When (description of behaviour, not person), I feel (description of the feeling, because (tangible or real effect) or how about if (suggestion for change)
  - Pushes speaker to define what disturbs him/her about the situation
- When – separates person from problem
- I feel – speaker is taking responsibility for his/her actions and clarifying his/her feelings, and indicating trust in the listener
- Because – pushes the speaker to look inside to define what bothers him/her about the situation
- Provide example and ask for examples:

*Reaction may be: You make me so mad when you arrive late for the meeting.*

*Say: When you arrive late I feel frustrated because I find it difficult to continue the agenda when some matters have been discussed.*

# NOTES



## Additional Material # 4

### **Giving and Receiving Feedback**

Feedback can help you:

- to better understand another person
- to be understood

There are four basic interpersonal communication skills that will help when it is important that people understand each other.

### **Paraphrasing**

**What is it?** Paraphrasing is one way to test your understanding of what another has said. Stating the idea, information or comments of the other in your own words or giving an example that shows what you think a person is talking about is paraphrasing.

**When to Use it?** Anytime you want to check your understanding of what you have just heard.

### **Why Use It?**

- To test your understanding.
- To let the other person know you are interested in them and what they have to say.
- To reveal that you understand the others view so they may be more receptive to your ideas.

### **Perception Checking**

**What is it?** Perception Checking is stating in your own words that you perceive the other to be feeling. A good perception check conveys the message "I want to understand your feelings- is this (making a statement about the others feelings) the way you feel about it?"

**When to use it?** Use perception checking anytime you need to:

- check on whether your inference (guess) on how the other person is feeling is correct.
- get the other's feelings out in the open.

**Why use it?**

- feelings need to be recognized and acknowledged.
- to test for accuracy of perception
- to show your interest in the person and develop rapport

**Describing Behaviour**

**What is it?** This skill capitalizes on your powers of observation and your ability to report clearly and accurately what you have observed. There are two tests a statement you make must pass before it can be considered a behaviour description.

1. It states only what is observed rather than inferences or generalizations about the other person's motives, feelings, attitude, personality traits.

Behaviour Description	Possible Inference
1. David walked out of training session 20 minutes before it finished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David was annoyed</li> <li>• David had an appointment</li> </ul>
2. Betty did not answer when Mary asked her a question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Betty was embarrassed</li> <li>• Betty didn't hear the question</li> <li>• Betty resented the question.</li> </ul>

2. A behaviour description is non-evaluative. It does not say or imply what was good, bad, wrong or right.

Behaviour Description	Evaluative Statement
1. David walked out of training session 20 minutes before it finished.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David is rude</li> <li>• David doesn't care</li> </ul>
2. Betty did not answer when Mary asked	

her a question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David is irresponsible</li> <li>• Betty doesn't like Mary</li> <li>• Betty is rude</li> <li>• Betty doesn't know the answer</li> </ul>
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**When to use it?**

- When you want another person to know you are responding to a particular behaviour of theirs by describing it clearly enough that they know what you have observed.
- When you observe behaviours that you feel are having a negative impact or have affected the group in some way.

**Why use it?**

- It is non-threatening opening to further communication.
- It makes communication easier because you can more clearly convey what the other person is doing or has done that affects you or the group.

**Making "I" Statements**

**What is it?** When you make clear what feelings you are experiencing by naming or identifying them you are using or making "I" statements.

"I" statements must:

- a) refer to "I", "me", or "my"
- b) specify or describe some kind of feeling.

They must not be confused with expressing feelings. Expressions can be misread.

**EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS**

**DESCRIPTION OF FEELINGS**

"Yesterday's meeting was a disaster".

"I am disappointed about the way I handled yesterday's meeting".

"You are one of my better groups".

"I like working with you. I appreciate the way everyone participates in the exercises and discussions".

**When to use it:**

- When it is important for others to understand how you feel.

**Why use it?**

- To avoid any mis-interpretation of your feelings
- To give information to others about what is going on inside you that is necessary for understanding and the further development of your relationship.

**Tips for Giving Feedback:**

Effective verbal feedback that is meant for constructive personal improvement should focus on:

- specific (here and now) information rather than general (there and then) commentary.
- the behaviour rather than the person.
- observations (what, how, when) rather than inferences (why)
- constructive change (positive) rather than destructive commentary (negative).
- behaviour descriptions which are in terms of "more or less" rather than "either/or".
- an appropriate amount on information for the receiver to use rather than how much information may have to the receiver rather than the "release" experienced by the sender.
- behaviour which is changeable rather than fixed.
- sharing of ideas and information in order to generate alternatives, rather than giving advice which suggests specific solutions.

In learning to give feedback, it is helpful to have a pattern in mind that will organize your thinking. Here is one to remember.

"When you/I

I felt



How about if you

Source:

College of the North Atlantic (2006). *Interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution*.  
College of the North Atlantic and Municipal Training and Development Corporation.

# NOTES



## **Exercise 7: Review paraphrasing**

### **Objective**

Discuss some ways to provide feedback through paraphrasing.

### **Advance preparation**

None

### **Exercise**

Discuss the paraphrasing exercises below.

# NOTES



## Exercise 7: Paraphrasing Exercise

Pick the most appropriate paraphrase:

1. Council has decided to deny a staff member a professional development request and advises the town manager to write the staff member and advise her of the decision but do it in a nice way.
  - a. What do you want me to say?
  - b. Do I tell her the truth?
  - c. So I should explain tactfully that there is no money in the budget despite the knowledge and skills she will get from the course?
  - d. I should encourage her to apply again next year and we'll consider it.
  
2. You are working on a deadline and a co-worker comes to you looking for some time to discuss a project. You quickly respond that you don't have time as you are on a short deadline and the co-worker says sarcastically "well I don't want to interrupt your important work," and leaves the office. You have relied on him recently for some assistance and sense he is feeling rejected. You go to his office:
  - a. You are a little testy today aren't you?
  - b. I don't appreciate it when you judge the importance of my work
  - c. It appears that you felt that your project is very important and my input is required at this time
  - d. I am working on a major deadline and hope that you can appreciate it that and will talk to you later
  
3. The board chair calls you asks you to get quotes on a computer that he thinks should be purchased. He knows the computer expense is not allocated in the budget but states that you to find the money to get the computer.
  - a. You realize that we don't have the money right now
  - b. Where would you like me to call?
  - c. You want me to take the time on an item that is not approved in our budget

- d. I understand you want to get a computer but you realize that the expense is not allocated and perhaps we should run it by the board first



## **Exercise 8: Practice Giving and Receiving Feedback**

### **Objective**

Review and discuss some effective ways to provide feedback through Paraphrasing, Perception Checking, Describing Behaviour and Making I Statements

### **Advance preparation**

None

### **Exercise**

Break into smaller groups and review exercises on next page. Review individually and create a response within your group, discuss and decide upon.

Be prepared to share your response with the larger group.

# NOTES





## Exercise 8 – continued

### Paraphrasing Exercise

**Write an effective paraphrase for the following statements, and remember to include the facts and feelings.**

A coworker has been going through a difficult time with a family problem, which she has shared confidentiality with you. You are sensitive to her moods as well as her lack of effort on joint projects. You have a final report due on Friday and on Monday when you mention it to her she retorts angrily “I am not having a good week so I’ll see what I can do and besides it is only Monday, what’s the rush?”

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### Perception Checking

Provide a perception check for the following:

Why is it that everyone seems to tune out when I try to discuss some new approaches to getting volunteers for the tourism project?

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### Describing Behaviour

Write a positive and negative response for the following issue.

John regularly interrupts others when they are speaking and then takes over the discussion with his opinions.

You don't

say: \_\_\_\_\_

You

say: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Making "I" statements**

Respond to the following with an "I" statement. Remember to take responsibility for your feelings and to include the behaviour and effect.

You feel that you are taking on new responsibilities as whenever something needs to be done that doesn't fit into someone's job description it gets passed on to you. You already take work home and not being paid any overtime for it. Today a board member asks you to do a favor and you have a difficult time refusing the request as that is the way you are! At the end of the day, a staff person asks you to do something that she could easily do. You respond with an "I" statement.

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## **3.0 Ways we communicate**

We use our verbal, non-verbal, listening, paraphrasing and feedback skills when we communicate on one on one and group settings, formal and non-formal settings, at home, at work, in our volunteer capacity.

In the next section, we will explore some common ways in which we communicate and will focus on some new methods of communication such as voice mail and email.

# NOTES



## **Exercise 9: Public Speaking Strategies**

### **Objective**

Learn about public speaking strategies

### **Advance preparation**

### **Exercise**

Discuss why you fear public speaking – list reasons on flipchart

Discuss some strategies that have worked for you as a public speaker

### **3.1 Speeches**

- Ranked among highest of fears
- Requires using voice characteristics
- Provides immediate feedback
- Excellent communication strategy to get message to particular audience
- Effective speech tools
  - Preparation
  - Performance
  - Post-Presentation

### **3.2 Presentations**

- Less formal than speeches
- Allows wider use of variety of tools
  - Multi-media
  - Handouts
  - Discussion

### **3.3 Correspondence/Office Communication**

- Letters
- Memos
- Policies
- Reports

### **3.4 Telephone**

- One-on-one
- Conference calling

### **3.5 Voice Mail**

- Allows flexibility in personal and professional life
- Requires commitment to return calls
- Does not replace one-on-one conversation

### **3.6 Email**

- Popular form of communication
- Lack of attention to detail, spelling, and other standards
- Encourages instant feedback
- Lack of privacy
- Replace formal communication

### **3.7 Websites**

- Provides information on person or organization
- Enables individual or organization to control/edit material

### **3.8 Blogs**

- Provides new method of communicating
- Provides venue to post thoughts, interact with people

# NOTES





## **Exercise 10: Email Practices**

### **Objective**

Discuss some advantages and disadvantages of email

### **Advance preparation**

### **Exercise**

Brainstorm a list of advantages and disadvantages of email.

# NOTES

# Factors influencing effective communication

This last section of the interpersonal communication skills module will be an opportunity to discuss some of the factors that influence our daily communication in our personal and professional lives. These factors are certainly not inclusive and are meant only to generate discussion and further reflection on what impacts our communication skills and practices.

## 4.1 Special needs / accessibility

- Recognize that some participants with visual, aural and physical disabilities
- Ensure that you provide an accessible location and environment for all participants

## 4.2 Environment / setting

- Room size
- Seating arrangement
- Temperature
- Lighting
- Audio/visual
- Group size
- Side conversations
- Chairpersons abilities

## 4.3 Literacy skills

- Recognize different literacy levels
- Present using various methods

#### **4.4 Cultural factors**

- Learn cultural background of participants/audience
- Reveal your cultural needs to speaker
- Adjust to differences

#### **4.5 Email etiquette**

- Treat email like written correspondence
- Potential for immediate distribution

#### **4.6 Tone**

- Way you communicate can impact the message

#### **4.7 Respect**

- Respect organizational structure and protocols

#### **4.8 Gender neutrality**

- Respect gender-neutral guidelines in writing and communicating

#### **4.9 Jargon**

- Minimize jargon
- Avoid acronyms

#### **4.10 Others**



## **Additional Material # 5**

### **RESPONSES THAT CAN BLOCK EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

#### **Evaluation Response**

The phrases "You should...", "Your duty...", "You are wrong," "You should know better," "You are bad," "You are such a good person" create blocks to communications.

There is a time for evaluation, but if it is given too soon, the speaker usually becomes defensive.

#### **Advice-Giving Response**

"Why don't you try...," "You'll feel better when...," "It would be best for you to ...,"

"My advice is..." are phrases that give advice.

Advice is best given at the conclusion of conversation and generally only when one is asked.

#### **Topping Response, or My Sore Thumb**

"That's nothing, you should have seen...," "When that happened to me, I...," "When I was a child...,"

"You think you have it bad..." are phrases of "one-upmanship."

This approach shifts attention from the person who wants to be listened to and leaves him or her feeling unimportant.

#### **Diagnosing, Psychoanalytic Response**

"What you need is...," "The reason you feel the way you do is..." "You don't really mean that," "Your problem is ..." are phrases that tell others what they feel.

Telling people how they feel or why they feel the way they do can be a two-edged sword. If the diagnoser is wrong, the speaker feels pressed; if the diagnoser is right, the speaker may feel exposed or captured. Most people do not want to be told how to feel and would rather volunteer their feelings than to have them exposed.

#### **Prying-Questioning Response**

"Why," "who," "where," "when," "how," "what" are responses common to us all.

But such responses tend to make the speaker feel "on the spot" and therefore resist the interrogation. At times, however, a questioning response is helpful for clarification, and in emergencies it is needed.

### **Warning, Admonishing, Commanding Response**

"You had better," "If you don't," "You have to," "You will," "You must" are used constantly in the everyday work environment.

Usually such responses produce resentment, resistance, and rebellion. There are times, of course, when this response is necessary, such as in an emergency situation when the information being given is critical to human welfare.

### **Logical, Lecturing Response**

"Don't you realize...," "Here is where you are wrong...," "The facts are...," "Yes, but..." can be heard in any discussion with two people of differing opinions.

Such responses tend to make the other person feel inferior or defensive. Of course, persuasion is part of the world we live in. In general, however, we need to trust that when people are given correct and full data they will make logical decisions for themselves.

### **Devaluation Response**

"It's not so bad," "Don't worry," "You'll get over it," or "Oh, you don't feel that way" are familiar phrases used in responding to others' emotions.

A listener should recognize the sender's feelings and should not try to take away the feelings or deny them to the owner. In our desire to alleviate emotional pain, we apply bandages too soon and possibly in the wrong place.

Whenever a listener's responses convey non-acceptance of the speaker's feelings, the desire to change the speaker, a lack of trust, or the sense that the speaker is inferior or at fault or being bad, communication blocks will occur.

## **5.0 Parking Lot**

Discuss any issues that arise throughout the day that are not part of the workshop.

## **6.0 Discussion/Questions/Summary**

## **7.0 Evaluation**

Ask participants to complete an evaluation which covers the material, the facilitator and the space/resources.

## **8.0 Appendices**

- **Stimulating Discussion**
- **The Seven Secrets of Attractive Body Language**
- **Communications Glossary**
- **Communications Log**

# NOTES



# STIMULATING DISCUSSION

The success of any discussion depends upon participation. An atmosphere of free exchange can be created only when people see that a mutual sharing of opinions and ideas is welcome. The skillful use of questions will encourage discussion.

You should be constantly on the alert for cues from the group that suggest problems. If people begin to fidget, look bored, or show by their expressions that they don't understand or disagree, you should ask questions to find out what is going on.

Questions are of four basic types:

- General - which elicit a broad range of potential responses.
- Specific - which focuses in on an idea, leaving a limited range of responses.
- Overhead - which are asked of the group allowing volunteers to respond.
- Direct - which are asked of a selected individual.

General and overhead questions are less threatening and therefore are better to start a discussion. Direct and specific questions are best used after peoples become comfortable with group discussion.

The following examples provide some useful guidelines for generating discussion.

## 1. Ask For Feelings And Opinions

Use a method of asking questions that will help people express their ideas, draw people out, and encourage discussion. For example:

- What is your reaction to ...?
- How do you feel about...?
- What is your thinking on...?
- What brings you to conclude that...?
- What are some other ways to get at...?
- What prompted your decision to...?
- How did you happen to learn that...?
- How did you feel when you found out that...?
- Would you say that...?

## 2. Paraphrase

One way to help people reach mutual understanding is to paraphrase; that is, to ask one person to repeat what someone else said to state what that person meant:

- Are you asking me to...?
- Let me see if I understand your position. Are you saying that...?
- I'm not sure I understand. Are you saying that....?

- Before we go on, let me paraphrase what I think you are proposing....?
- Let me restate your last point to see if I understand.
- What I am hearing is....Is that right?
- Before you go on, do you mean that ...?

### **3. Encourage Participation**

Sometimes people tend to hold back. They can be encouraged to participate by such questions as:

- Steve, how do you feel about this ?
- Mary, how would you answer John's questions?
- Before we go on, I'd like to hear from Bill on this.
- We have heard from everyone but Jane. Jane, what is your feeling on this?
- Abe, do you understand what Maria said?
- We haven't heard from Sylvia yet. Sylvia, how do you feel about this?

### **4. Ask For A Summary**

- A lot of good ideas have been presented in the last few minutes. Will someone please summarize the major points before we go on?
- I have heard a number of proposals. Will someone summarize what has been agreed upon?
- It is clear Jim does not agree. Jim, will you summarize your major objections?
- I have lost track. Will someone summarize what has been done so far?

### **5. Ask For Clarification**

- I didn't understand that last comment. What would you do if...?
- The examples you gave concern week day operation. Do they also apply to weekends....?
- I saw Maureen shaking her head. Maureen, would it help if we took a minute to explain how these new instruction apply to your department?
- It is still not clear to me. What do I do when.....?

### **6. Ask For Examples**

- Dorothy, will you give some examples of what you mean?
- John, can you expand on that? I'm not sure I understand

### **7. Test For Consensus**

- It seems that we have come to agreement on this issue. Let me ask for a show of hands on this. Does everyone accept the idea that....?
- Glenda, is that your feeling too....?
- Before we go on to the next issue, let me check to make sure that all have agreed to .....?

## **8. Initiate Action**

- How do you think we should .....?
- Frank, how would you suggest that we proceed on this?
- I'd like some suggestion on possible ways to get started. Pierre, how would you propose we get started?

## **9. Explore An Idea In More Detail**

- What are some other ways to approach this problem?
- Are there other things we should consider?
- Otto, what would you add to what has been said?

## **10. Do A Quick Survey**

- Let's see a show of hands. How many are for this proposal?
- Beverly, why don't you ask the others how they feel about your proposal?
- How does everybody feel about this? Let's start with Barry.

## **11. Suggest A Break**

- We have been working on this problem for about an hour. I propose we take a 10 minute break.

## **12. Suggest A Procedure**

- I noticed that Carla has done most of the talking on this issue. I suggest we go around the table to see how others feel.
- Would it help if we put the agenda items in rank order of importance before we started.

## **13. Suggest They Try Something**

- Bridget, I don't think you heard what Willie was trying to say. Why don't you tell us what you heard her say before you state your objections.
- Let's go around the table so that everyone gets a change to comment on this.

## **14. Stop The Action & Ask The Group To Talk About Something**

- Let's stop the discussion for a few minutes. I think it might help if each of us told the group what he or she is feeling, right now.

## **15. Share Your Feelings**

- I feel you are not giving Harry a chance to explain his position.
- I'm frustrated. I think we should take this problem up next week when we have more facts. How do the rest of you feel?

## **16. Reflect What You Think Someone Is Feeling**

- George, I get the impression that you are not satisfied with my answer. Is that right?
- Kim's comments tell me that he needs to ask some questions on this • is that right, Kim?

## **17. Be Supporting**

- Let's give Tony a chance to tell it the way he sees it.
- Dave, you had your say, now it's Janice's turn. Give her a chance to explain.

## **18. Question Assumptions**

- Your proposal assumes that unless we use threats, they won't cooperate. Is that right?
- Your suggestion assumes that we cannot meet the schedule. Is that right?
- Your objection assumes that we will not get promised deliveries. Is that a good assumption?

## **19. Check Targets Or Orientation**

- Are we asking the right question?
- Are these the most important goals?
- Is this the best way to get their cooperation?
- Is this the only way to get it done?

## **20. Confront Differences**

- Nick, you haven't said so but it is clear to me that you don't agree. Is that right?
- Martha, you seem to be holding back on this. Is there something here you disagree with?

## **21. Role Reversal**

- Why don't you take the role of a customer for a few minutes. Now, as a customer, how would you react this proposal?
- Pretend you are the district manager for a moment. How would he react to this proposal?
- How would you feel if I treated you that way?

## **22. Look Into The Future**

- If we did it this way, what is the worst thing that could happen?
- If it doesn't work, what have we lost?
- If it works, how will it effect next week's schedule?

## **23 Focus on Action Choice**

- We have considered every possibility, we must choose from these three alternatives.
- We have discussed both sides carefully. It's time we made a choice.

## THINGS TO AVOID

### **1. Unanswerable Questions**

Be sure that the questions you ask can be answered by the group or by some member of the group.

### **2. Question of Simple Assent Or Dissent**

Unless followed by other questions of the Why, When, Where, How, What, Who sort, a yes or no answer leads nowhere.

### **3. Vague, Indefinite, Ambiguous Questions**

To get satisfactory answers, you must ask good questions. Sometimes you may need to rephrase your question or break it down into sub-questions if not immediately understood. Above all never try to play with words or trap a person into an incorrect or misleading answer.

### **4. Witness-Chair Interrogation**

You may have to ask a person questions in the interest of clarification, but remember that you are not out to prove anything. Your conduct should never be that of a courtroom cross-examination where the person answering feels threatened.

# NOTES

## The Seven Secrets of Attractive Body Language

**Face:** Have an animated face and making smiling part of your regular repertoire. Make sure you flash your teeth.

**Gestures:** Be expressive but don't overdo it. Keep your fingers closed when you gesture, your hands below chin level, and avoid arm or feet crossing.

**Head Movement:** Use Triple Nods when talking and Head Tilt when listening. Keep your chin up.

**Eye Contact:** Give the amount of eye contact that makes everyone feel comfortable. Unless looking at others is a cultural no-no, lookers gain more credibility than nonlookers.

**Posture:** Lean forward when listening, stand straight when speaking.

**Territory:** Stand as close as you feel comfortable. If the other person moves back, don't step forward again.

**Mirror:** Subtly mirror the body language of others.

Source: Pease, A & B. (2004). *The definitive book of body language*. New York: Random House.

# NOTES



# Communications Glossary

## **Advertising**

Advertising is bringing a product (or service) to the attention of potential and current customers. Advertising is focused on one particular product or service. Thus, an advertising plan for one product might be very different than that for another product. Advertising is typically done with signs, brochures, commercials, direct mailings or e-mail messages, personal contact, etc.

## **Body Language**

Body language is an outward reflection of a person's emotional state as each movement or gesture can indicate what a person may be feeling or thinking at the time. For instance, folded arms may indicate that the person is feeling defensive or fearful. Body language is an important part of the communication process.

## **Blog**

A blog (short for web log) is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order.

## **Branding**

Branding involves a strong, consistent message about an organization, product, service or community which differentiates it from others. It is an image and feeling that people have and consists of their perceptions and experiences, some of which you can influence.

## **Channel**

Messages are conveyed through channels which can be face to face meetings, telephone calls, letters, emails, and reports.

## **Describing Behaviour**

Describing behaviour is a communication tool in which you state only what was observed and not what was said.

## **Email**

An electronic message sent via internet to another person. Can be basic message or can include attachments such as letters, reports, photos, etc.

## **Enunciation**

Enunciation is how clear you speak.

## **Feedback**

Feedback is what you get from your audience in reaction to your message.

## **“I” statements**

A communication tool to use when you want to explain your feelings. The tool is good for reduce tension and conflict.

Making an “I” statement:

When (describe behaviour and not person)

I feel (describe the feeling that you get)

Because (tangible or real effect) or how about (a suggestion for change)

Making I statements pushes the speaker to define what disturbs him/her about a situation.

## **Inflection**

Inflection is the change in the pitch of your voice to emphasize words.

## **Listening**

Listening involves listening to what another person is saying. Active listening is a way of listening that focuses entirely on what the other person is saying and confirms understanding of both the content of the message and the emotions and feelings underlying the message to ensure that understanding is accurate. Hearing is a passive skill.

## **Marketing**

Marketing is the wide range of activities involved in making sure that you're continuing to meet the needs of your customers and getting value in return. Marketing is usually focused on one product or service. Thus, a marketing plan for one product might be very different than that for another product. Marketing activities include "inbound marketing," such as market research to find out, for example, what groups of potential customers exist, what their needs are, which of those needs you can meet, how you should meet them, etc. Inbound marketing also includes analyzing the competition, positioning your new product or service (finding your market niche), and pricing your products and services. "Outbound marketing" includes promoting a product through continued advertising, promotions, public relations and sales.

## **Medium**

The medium is the way to get your message across to your audience. More than one medium is media.

## **Media**

Media are the medium to carry message and include traditionally include radio, television, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and now include websites, electronic newsletters, etc.

## **Media (press) release**

A media or press release is a newsworthy announcement that is sent to your media list.

## **Message**

The message refers to what you are communicating and can be written, oral and can be impacted by the sender's tone, method of organization, what is communicated, and the individual's style of communicating.

## **Non-verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication is what we say with our body – includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, etc.

## **Noise**

Noise refers to noise in a message and can include interference from various sources and impacts the receiver's attention.

## **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing is a communication tool that allows you to restate or state in your own words, what was said in order to understand what you heard.

## **Perception checking**

Perception checking is stating in your own words what you think another person is feeling.

## **Pitch**

The pitch of your voice is the point within range where voice is placed for speaking. Some people have a deep voice and some have a high pitched or squeaky voice.

## **Promotion**

Promotion keeps the product in the minds of the customer and helps stimulate demand for the product. Promotion involves ongoing advertising and publicity, such as mention in the media. The ongoing activities of advertising, sales and public relations are often considered aspects of promotions.

## **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation refers to how you pronounce your words.

## **Public relations**

Public relations includes ongoing activities to ensure the organization or company has a strong public image. Public relations activities include helping the public to understand the organization or company and its services or products. Often, public relations are conducted through the media, that is, newspapers, television, magazines, etc. As noted above, public relations is often considered as one of the primary activities included in promotions.

## **Publicity**

Publicity is mention in the media. Organizations usually have little control over the message in the media, at least, not as they do in advertising. Regarding publicity, reporters and writers decide what will be said.

## **Public service announcement (PSA)**

A PSA is a brief announcement about an upcoming event that is publicized by local media at no cost.

## **Range**

The range of your voice refers to the musicality of your voice.

## **Sales**

Sales involves most or many of the following activities, including cultivating prospective buyers (or leads) in a market segment; conveying the features, advantages and benefits of a product or service to the lead; and closing the sale (or coming to agreement on pricing and services). A sales plan for one product might be very different than that for another product.

## **Sender**

The sender is the person who sends the message and who must be credible, must know the subject, the audience and context in which the message is delivered.

## **Target Audience**

A target audience is the audience your message is intended to reach

## **Verbal communication**

Verbal communication is what we say and how we say it. It includes the range, pitch and volume of our voice, our enunciation and pronunciation, inflection and tone of our voice.

## **Website**

A website is an internet site containing information on a government department, business, organization or individual for public viewing.

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# NOTES



## Communications Log

This simple log will assist you to determine the percentage of time you spoke, listened or were silent.

Time	Activity	% speaking	% listening	% time silent
8 a.m.				
9 a.m.				
10 a.m.				
11 a.m.				
12 noon				
1 p.m.				
2 p.m.				
3 p.m.				
4 p.m.				
5 p.m.				
6 p.m.				
7 p.m.				
8 p.m.				
9 p.m.				
10 p.m.				
11 p.m.				
12 p.m.				

# NOTES

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