

Lesson B2-2

Understanding Effective Communication Techniques

Unit B. Employability in Family and Consumer Sciences

Problem Area 2. Developing Communication Skills

Lesson 2. Understanding Effective Communication Techniques

■ **Illinois State Goal and Learning Standard.** This lesson is correlated with the following State Goal and Learning Standard:

State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

Learning Standard A: Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

Performance Descriptor H: Recreating the demonstration: Identify key points given in the instructions; organize key points in correct sequence and recreate the demonstration.

Workplace Skills: D1: Communicate orally with others. F1: Determine and respond to customer requests and needs. F5: Receive and direct visitors and vendors. F12: Identify and respond to customer requirements. F13: Merchandise products and services. F14: Close the sale. F15: Process incoming and outgoing telephone calls and wire orders.



- **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Identify the techniques of effective communication.**
- 2 Discuss effective feedback.**
- 3 Examine ways to improve communication.**
- 4 Explain the types of nonverbal cues.**

- **List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities**

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Transparencies from attached masters
- ✓ Copies of student lab sheets

- **Terms.** The following terms are presented in the lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ action language
- ▶ context
- ▶ decoding
- ▶ feedback
- ▶ filtering
- ▶ interference
- ▶ nonverbal communication
- ▶ nonverbal cues
- ▶ object language
- ▶ paralanguage
- ▶ scanning
- ▶ sign language
- ▶ skimming
- ▶ summarizing
- ▶ total communication

- **Interest Approach.** Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches based on their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Give students a copy of a relevant news article. Explain the importance of skimming and scanning when reading. Give the class five minutes to read the article and come up with a mental summary. Call on several students to give their summary. Explain to the class how skimming, scanning, and summarizing are all examples of the communication process.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Identify the techniques of effective communication.

Anticipated Problem: What can be done to become a more effective communicator?

- I. Effective skills in listening, speaking, writing, and reading enhance your communication abilities.
 - A. Effective listening skills are important in communication.
 1. Listen with a purpose or interest. Know why you are listening and what you are listening for.
 2. Identify listening cues introduction, main idea, examples, details, and conclusion.
 3. Recognize common patterns of organizing information.
 4. Concentrate on the message rather than the speaker.
 - B. There are three important steps to follow in effective speaking.
 1. Select the message to match the receiver.
 2. Organize the message in a pattern the receiver will recognize.
 3. Use proper technique in delivering the message.
 - C. Effective reading skills will improve your ability to communicate.
 1. **Scanning** is the process of locating specific detail mixed with other material in text.
 2. **Skimming** is reading to determine only the main idea.
 3. **Summarizing** is putting all the writer's ideas into your own words.
 - D. Developing good writing skills is the foundation of effective communication.
 1. Plan your writing by asking yourself the following:
 - Who is the audience?
 - What is the purpose?
 - What do I want to say?
 - How should I organize the information?
 - What examples will help my audience remember the main points?
 - What is the most effective format?
 2. When writing remember the five w's who, what, when, where, and why.

Many techniques can be used for the students to master this objective. Use VM-A to help explain listening cues. Use VM-B to demonstrate to students the various patterns of organizing information. Show VM-C to help explain some

simple reading techniques. Have students complete LS–A to inventory their own communication skills, LS–B as a writing activity, and LS–C as a reading activity.

Objective 2: Discuss effective feedback.

Anticipated Problem: Why is effective feedback important?

- II. An important tool for maintaining total communication is the proper use of feedback.
 - A. During feedback there is reversal in the direction of the communication process.
 - 1. **Feedback** is the way the receiver responds to the message the sender is expressing.
 - 2. **Filtering** is the group of perceptions that a message passes through when it is being exchanged.
 - 3. **Total communication** exists when the exact information the sender intends to convey is understood completely by the receiver.
 - 4. Individuals interpret messages using their perceptions, including their values, needs, feelings, and experiences.
 - B. The object of feedback is to report to the sender what the receiver sees, hears, and feels toward the transmission.
 - 1. The receiver must give feedback as soon as transmission of the message takes place.
 - 2. The receiver should use the same channel for feedback as the source used.
 - 3. **Decoding** is when the receiver takes the message and converts it into a form that can be understood.

Have the students practice giving messages and providing instant feedback in a simulated telephone setting where they cannot see each other. Have students explain how to make a sale to a friend or family member, who will then attempt to repeat the explanation. Assess how well they communicated. Have the students complete LS–D to describe a communication problem.

Objective 3: Examine ways to improve communication.

Anticipated Problem: How can communication be improved?

- III. **Interference** is anything that is or could be a blockage in the communication process.
 - A. Interference may come from sources outside the receiver (e.g., noise in the classroom), or it may come from the receiver (e.g., not paying attention or doing another activity).
 - B. There are three major ways to improve communication.

1. Improve perception by putting yourself in the other person's position and assume his or her emotions and separate the facts from opinions.
2. Improve the physical process of communication by providing feedback, improving listening and speaking skills, and simplifying language.
3. Improve relationships by building trust and confidence.

Use a range of teaching strategies to enhance student mastery of this objective. Use VM–D to explain the three ways to improve communication.

Objective 4: Explain the types of nonverbal cues.

Anticipated Problem: What are examples of nonverbal cues in communication?

- IV. **Nonverbal communication** is exchanging information without the use of words.
- A. Nonverbal communication requires a sender, a receiver, a message, and a medium.
 - B. In nonverbal communication the sender may not be aware the message is being sent.
 - C. **Nonverbal cues** are the signals we use to tell others about our emotional state, our attitudes, and information about ourselves.
 1. There are four major forms of nonverbal cues.
 - a. **Sign language** includes forms of communication that take the place of spoken words (head movements, shoulder shrugs, etc.).
 - b. **Action language** includes action or body movements that transmit a specific meaning.
 - c. **Paralanguage** is vocal sounds that influence the expression of spoken words.
 - d. **Object language** includes physical items that convey messages.
 - D. Nonverbal cues can send several messages.
 1. Cultural and contextual factors affect the way messages are interpreted.
 - a. Research should be done to understand cultural differences and similarities.
 - b. **Context** refers to all the things in the environment that help to determine the meaning of the cue.
 2. There are six commonly used nonverbal cues: eye contact, facial expressions, distance, tone of voice, appearance, and body movements.

To reinforce this objective, have students practice giving and receiving nonverbal messages with one another. Is it easier or harder than they thought? Show students VM–E and have them identify the message in each facial expression.

- **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives as the basis for review and summary. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Use their responses in determining which objectives and concepts need to be retaught. The anticipated problems can be used as student review questions.
- **Application.** Use the included transparency masters and lab sheets to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should be based on student comprehension of the learning objectives. This can occur during instruction, review, or later as students apply the information. The attached sample written test can also be used.

■ **Answers to Sample Test**

Part One: Matching

1. d
2. a
3. g
4. h
5. f
6. b
7. c
8. e

Part Two: Completion

1. skim
2. Total communication
3. Summarizing
4. who, what, when, where, why

Part Three: Short Answer

Select the message to match the receiver, organize the message in a pattern the receiver will recognize, and use proper technique in delivering the message.

Understanding Effective Communication Techniques

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| a. scanning | d. filtering | g. decoding |
| b. paralanguage | e. feedback | h. interference |
| c. object language | f. sign language | |

- ___ 1. The group of perceptions that a message passes through when it is being exchanged.
- ___ 2. The process of locating specific detail mixed with other material in text.
- ___ 3. When the receiver takes the message and converts into an understandable form.
- ___ 4. Anything that could be a blockage in the communication process.
- ___ 5. Includes forms of communication that take the place of spoken words.
- ___ 6. Vocal sounds that influence the expression of spoken words.
- ___ 7. Includes physical items that convey messages.
- ___ 8. The way the receiver responds to the message the sender is expressing.

► Part Two: Completion

Instructions: Complete the following statements.

1. When you _____, you are only determining the main ideas.
2. _____ exists when the exact information the sender intends to convey is understood completely by the receiver.



3. _____ is putting all the writer's ideas into your own words.
4. When writing, remember the five w's _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____.

► **Part Three: Short Answer**

Instructions: Answer the following question.

What are the three steps to follow in effective speaking?

Identify Key Ideas and Facts

Performance Standard 4A.H

After listening and taking notes on a classmate's presentation of a demonstration on a procedure that contains at least 10 points, each student will be paired with one peer demonstrator and use his/her notes to recreate the instructions of the demonstration. The peer demonstrations will be compared accordingly:

- ◆ *Recreating the demonstration:* Identify key points given in the instructions; organize key points in correct sequence and recreate the demonstration.

Procedures

Prior Student Learning Opportunities

1. *In order to listen effectively in formal and informal situations (4A)*, provide students with sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
2. Appraise the situation and assume the appropriate listening mode.
3. Separate main ideas, supporting facts, and details while listening.
4. Record appropriate notes and rough outlines with editorial comments.
5. Critique the relationship between a speaker's verbal communication skills (word choice, pitch, feeling, tone, voice) and nonverbal messages (eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, posture, spatial proximity).
6. Analyze, paraphrase and summarize information, in both oral and written form, information from formal/informal presentations.
7. Follow a multi-step set of instructions to complete a task.
8. Modify, control, block out both internal and external distractions.

Student Task

1. Provide each student with a copy of the task sheet and the rubric. Have students review and discuss the task to be completed and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
2. Prior to the assessment, students will be familiar with active listening techniques.
3. Each student will prepare a demonstration.

4. The demonstration will be organized with ten or more steps or procedures in the demonstration (List will be given to teacher prior to demonstration).
5. Each demonstration will be numbered and each student will be paired randomly with a numbered demonstration and told to record the instructions for that particular demonstration.
6. As part of a classroom audience, the randomly assigned student will listen to and record a peer's instructions. (One recorder per demonstration).
7. The student will record notes (steps and procedures) from the demonstration so he/she will have enough information to recreate the demonstration.
8. The student's notes will be collected immediately after his or her randomly assigned demonstration has occurred.
9. The student who took the notes on the original presentation will then reenact the demonstration using verbal instructions that are read to him or her by the teacher, who will read the notes that he or she was just given.
10. Each student's reenactment will be evaluated based on how well his or her notes and demonstration correspond to the ten steps (or more) submitted by the original demonstrator as a guide.
11. Evaluate each student's performance using the rubric. Add each student's scores to determine the performance level.

Evaluation

Evaluate each student's performance using the rubric. Add each student's scores to determine the performance level.

Time Requirements

Two to four class periods for demonstrations and writing instructions.

Resources

- ◆ Materials for demonstrations
- ◆ Identify Key Ideas and Facts Student Worksheet
- ◆ Identify Key Ideas and Facts Rubric
- ◆ Lined Paper
- ◆ Pencil/Pen

Identify Key Ideas and Facts

1. Students will prepare demonstrations. Examples:
 - a. How to properly set a table.
 - b. Cross stitching techniques.
2. The demonstration will be organized with ten or more instructions in the demonstration (List will be given to teacher prior to demonstration).
3. Each demonstration will be numbered and each student will be paired randomly with a numbered demonstration and told to record the instructions for that particular demonstration.
4. As part of a classroom audience, the randomly assigned student will listen to and record a peer's instructions. (One recorder per demonstration).
5. The student will record notes from the demonstration so he/she will have enough information to recreate the demonstration.
6. The student's notes, instructions, and questions will be collected immediately after the peer demonstration.
7. The peer will present his/her demonstration using verbal instructions and the student will record the instructions.
8. Using the ten steps submitted by the original demonstrator as a guide, evaluate steps recorded and demonstrated by the second student.



Identify Key Ideas and Facts

- ◆ Exceeds standard (4 points)
- ◆ Meets standard (3 points)
- ◆ Approaches standard (2 points)
- ◆ Begins standard (1 point)

	Instructions for Demonstration
4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student consistently identifies all 10 key points given in the instructions.2. Key points are consistently organized in correct sequence.
3	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student identifies most key points given in the instructions.2. Key points are usually organized in correct sequence.
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student identifies some key points given in the instructions.2. Key points are occasionally organized in correct sequence.
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student identifies few or no key points given in the instructions.2. Key points are seldom/never organized in correct sequence.
Score	

LISTENING CUES

Words or phrases that tell you what to expect.

- ◆ **Introduction:** let me begin
- ◆ **Main idea:** one main point, a central idea
- ◆ **Examples:** for instance, for example, like, such as
- ◆ **Details:** specifically, an important part of
- ◆ **Conclusion:** in summary, finally



PATTERNS OF ORGANIZING INFORMATION

- ◆ **Chronological order:** first, next, then
- ◆ **Order of importance:** most important, least significant, priority
- ◆ **Comparison and contrast:** similar, like, different, in contrast
- ◆ **Cause and effect:** because, so, therefore



STEPS TO FOLLOW IN SCANNING

- ◆ Read down the page (rather than across).
- ◆ Read section and column headings.
- ◆ Use a reading aid such as a bookmark.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN SKIMMING

- ◆ Note the titles and subtitles.
- ◆ Read the introduction and the conclusion.
- ◆ Read boldface and/or italic type.
- ◆ Look at illustrations.



THREE MAJOR WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

- ◆ Improve perception, trade places with the receiver.
- ◆ Improve the physical process of communication.
- ◆ Develop a relationship of trust and confidence.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE MESSAGES IN THESE FACIAL EXPRESSIONS?



Communication Skills Inventory

Purpose

1. To inventory personal communication skills.
2. To identify strengths and weaknesses in communication skills.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil

Procedure

1. Review the list of communication skills and circle the appropriate letter which applies.
2. Use the following key: A=Always, S=Sometimes, R=Rarely, N=Never, U=Unsure.

Communication Skills Inventory

1. I use natural facial expressions and gestures to convey ideas and feeling.
A S R N U
2. I am aware of the barriers that affect communication (deadlines and interference).
A S R N U
3. I try to reduce factors that negatively affect communication (prejudices, environmental noise, message errors).
A S R N U



4. I am able to switch easily from sender to receiver when I communicate.

A S R N U

5. I am able to select the best mode (speaking, writing, visual, or nonverbal signals) for communicating.

A S R N U

6. I use standard patterns of organization (chronological order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect) to present information orally or in writing.

A S R N U

7. I listen with a purpose so I can concentrate on the message.

A S R N U

8. I adjust my spoken or written message to the needs of the people listening to or reading the message.

A S R N U

9. I use reading techniques like scanning, skimming, and summarizing to assist me in my work.

A S R N U

10. I write with attention to conventions of accurate content, grammatical and mechanical correctness, and proper layout and design.

A S R N U

Writing Activity

Purpose

To practice writing a memo that provides requested information.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil

Procedure

1. Read the facts given in the following scenario.
2. Respond with a short memo.

Scenario

Cindy Cooper, a community parent of a three-year-old, is comparing area preschools and has asked for more information about the high school operated preschool program. Using the facts below, write a memo to Cindy.

1. The local high school will be offering preschool classes operated by the juniors and seniors in the advanced Child Development program.
2. Two preschool classes will be offered in the fall for children ages three and four.
3. The program provides large and small motor activities, large group story and circle time, and small group art, cooking, and dramatic play.
4. The morning class will meet from 9:15 to 10:30, and the afternoon class will meet from 1:05 to 2:20.



5. The fall classes will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning Tuesday, October 3, until Tuesday, December 12.
6. The lab fee is \$50.00.
7. Families living in the school district can register by calling the preschool director at 554-1000.
8. An appointment will be made to fill out an information form and to take pictures of the children for the preschool classroom.
9. Each family will also need to provide a copy of the child's most recent medical form, family photos, and photos of the person(s) authorized to pick up the child.

Writing Activity

To: Cindy Cooper, Parent

From: (Student's name)

Subject: Preschool Program

Date:

In response to your request for information, the following information should assist you in comparing area preschool programs. Our local high school will be offering a preschool program staffed by juniors and seniors enrolled in the Advanced Childcare Program. Two preschools will be offered in the fall for children ages three and four, and encompasses such activities as circle time and small group art. Fall classes will begin on October 3 and run until Dec. 12. Morning classes will meet from 9:15 to 10:30 and afternoon classes will meet from 1:05 to 2:20. There is a \$50.00 lab fee and this service is available to families living in the school district. Should you be interested, you may call 554-1000 to make an appointment with the director and to complete the necessary information. Each family will need to provide a copy of the child's most recent medical form along with pictures of family members authorized to pick up the child.

Reading Activity

Procedure

Skim or scan the information on “Illinois Early Learning Standards” and answer the questions which follow.

Information

Illinois Early Learning Standards

Illinois State Board of Education:
Division of Early Childhood Education
March 2002

The Illinois Early Learning Standards, developed by the Illinois State Board of Education with the assistance of hundreds of educators, were first introduced in draft form in June 2000. Among those playing a major role in formulating the draft standards were the Chicago Public Schools, DeKalb Community Unit School District, Indian Prairie School District, and Rockford Public School District.

Since publication of the draft, hundreds of educators and parents, and a wide array of national, state and local experts, have commented on the standards. This final draft of the standards is a synthesis of their many views.

The standards are organized to parallel in content the Illinois Learning Standards for K-12 education. Included are benchmarks for learning in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development and Health, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and Social/Emotional Development.



Introduction

“Standards are an essential first step for designing effective preschool curricula since they represent an agreed upon agenda for teaching and learning. The Illinois Early Learning Standards are excellent because they recognize the interconnectedness of emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development and learning—the whole child. Like all good standards, they should be used as the base for reflective teachers as they create learning experiences that build on what children already know and capture their interest in learning.”

Barbara Bowman, Erikson Institute

The goal of the standards is to provide teachers and caregivers useful information that is directly needed as part of their daily classroom work. For those who are interested, the complete Illinois Learning Standards for K-12 may be found on the Illinois State Board of Education web site, www.isbe.net.

ISBE acknowledges with great thanks the very thoughtful and knowledgeable comments that have helped shape these standards. A list of contributing school districts and early childhood programs appears at the end of this document. There is no doubt that without this assistance, the standards would not exist today.

Guiding Principles

Early learning and development are multidimensional. Developmental domains are highly interrelated. Development in one domain influences development in other domains. For example, a child’s language skills affect his or her ability to engage in social interactions. Therefore, developmental domains cannot be considered in isolation from each other. The dynamic interaction of all areas of development must be considered. Standards and benchmarks listed for each domain could also be cited in different domains.

Young children are capable and competent.

All children are capable of positive developmental outcomes. There should be high expectations for all young children, regardless of their backgrounds and experience.

Children are individuals who develop at different rates.

Each child is unique. Each grows and develops skills and competencies at their own pace. Some children may have a developmental delay or disability that may require program staff members to adapt expectations or experiences so that individual children can successfully achieve a particular benchmark.

Children will exhibit a range of skills and competencies in any domain of development.

All children within an age group should not be expected to arrive at each benchmark at the same time or to show mastery to the same degree of proficiency.

Knowledge of how children grow and develop, together with expectations that are consistent with growth patterns, are essential to develop, implement and maximize the benefits of educational experiences for children.

Early care and education program staff members must agree on what they expect children to know and be able to do within the context of child growth and development. With this knowledge, early childhood staff members can make sound decisions about appropriate curriculum for the group and for individual children.

Young children learn through active exploration of their environment in child-initiated and teacher-selected activities.

Early childhood educators recognize that children’s play is a highly supportive context for development and learning. The early childhood environment should provide opportunities for children to explore materials, engage in activities and interact with peers and adults to construct their own understanding of the world around them. There should, therefore, be a balance of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities to maximize learning.

Families are the primary caregivers and educators of young children.

Families should be aware of programmatic goals, experiences that should be provided for children and expectations for their performance by the end of the preschool years. Program staff members and families should work collaboratively to ensure that children are provided optimal learning experiences.

Adapted from Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks for Children in Preschool Programs

Questions

1. Skim: What is the purpose of this selection?
2. Scan: What is the goal of the standards?
3. Scan: Who was involved in drafting the standards?
4. Scan: What does ISBE stand for?
5. Write a brief summary of the Guiding Principles that were the basis in developing the Illinois Early Learning Standards.

Describing a Communication Problem

Purpose

1. To identify problems that cause poor communication.
2. To identify skills that will improve communication.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil

Procedure

1. Describe a recent communication problem you believe was the result of poor listening skills—yours or someone else's.

2. Who was the sender?



3. What was the message?

4. Who was the receiver?

5. What were the specific barriers that prevented effective listening?

6. How could the communication problem have been solved?