

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Skills

Unit: Employment and Professionalism

Problem Area: Communication Skills

Lesson: Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Skills

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

- 1 Demonstrate verbal communication skills.**
- 2 Demonstrate and interpret nonverbal communication skills.**
- 3 Practice active listening skills.**

- **Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc.
<http://www.mycart.com>.

“Actively Listening,” *Study Guides and Strategies*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012.
<http://www.studygs.net/listening.htm>.

O’Neil, Dennis. “Hidden Aspects of Communication,” *Palomar College: Anthropology*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. http://anthro.palomar.edu/language/language_6.htm.

Pearson, Charles. “Characteristics of Verbal Communication,” *eHow.com*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. http://www.ehow.com/about_5379632_characteristics-verbal-communication.html.

“Verbal Communication,” *University of Louisville: College of Business*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. http://cobweb2.louisville.edu/faculty/regbruce/bruce/mgmtwebs/commun_f98/verbal.htm.



■ Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- active listening
- body language
- nonverbal communication
- paralanguage
- verbal communication

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

Ask your students to define communication. Write their answers on the board. Encourage them to discuss the different parts of communication, such as sending a message and receiving it (listening). Once you have determined that words and actions (e.g., body language) work together, ask students to demonstrate interest, boredom, sarcasm, anger, and happiness without using words.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Demonstrate verbal communication skills.

Anticipated Problem: What are verbal communication skills?

- I. **Verbal communication** is the exchange of information using words.
 - A. Types of verbal communication
 1. Spoken words (oral communication)
 - a. Conversations with other people

- b. Speeches or presentations
 - c. Webcasts
- 2. Written words
 - a. Letters
 - b. Emails
 - c. Memos
 - d. Publications (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, and blogs)
- B. The importance of verbal communication
 - 1. The speaker can share information.
 - 2. The speaker can express opinions and feelings.
 - 3. Good communication skills make a good impression.
- C. Clarity is the key to excellent verbal skills.
 - 1. Words should be chosen carefully to avoid misunderstandings.
 - 2. Proper terminology should be used.
 - 3. The audience should be considered.
 - a. Explanations should be simple when speaking to children.
 - b. Many details should be provided when giving a technical presentation.
 - 4. Emotions should be expressed when appropriate.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–A during a discussion.

Objective 2: Demonstrate and interpret nonverbal communication skills.

Anticipated Problem: What are nonverbal communication skills?

- II. **Nonverbal communication** is the exchange of information without the use of words.
 - A. Types of nonverbal communication
 - 1. **Body language** is a set of nonverbal signs, such as physical movements, used to convey a message. Examples are:
 - a. Posture
 - b. Gestures
 - c. Facial expressions
 - d. Eye contact
 - 2. **Paralanguage** is the tone, rate, and volume of a voice.
 - 3. Appearance is part of nonverbal communication.
 - B. The importance of nonverbal communication
 - 1. It helps people determine the meaning or feelings behind the words.
 - 2. It helps people detect sarcasm.
 - 3. It helps a speaker gauge the interest of the audience.

- C. Communication is most effective when verbal and nonverbal methods are combined.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–B to review the types of nonverbal communication. You may want to divide the class into small groups and have the students create skits to perform in which the class takes notes on body language and paralanguage.

Objective 3: Practice active listening skills.

Anticipated Problem: What is active listening?

- III. **Active listening** is the process in which the listener offers feedback to the speaker to ensure he or she understood the message.
- A. The importance of active listening
 1. The speaker feels his or her message was heard.
 2. The listener is confident he or she understands the message.
 3. Additional communication is encouraged.
 - B. The keys to active listening
 1. It is important for the speaker to receive the audience’s full attention. Eye contact is essential.
 2. Verbal and nonverbal cues from the speaker should be considered.
 3. The message should be restated to demonstrate understanding.
 4. Relevant questions should be asked.
 5. Feedback should be provided, when appropriate.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–C. Share some videos on active listening. Then you may want to show a few short video clips. Have the students evaluate whether the characters are actively listening to one another. Tell them they need to explain why or why not. Assign LS–A.

■ **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may be used in the Review/Summary.

■ **Application.** Use the included visual master(s) and lab sheet(s) to apply the information presented in the lesson.

■ **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Matching

1. d
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. e

Part Two: Completion

1. how
2. interest
3. clarity
4. misunderstandings
5. communication

Part Three: Short Answer

1. The two types of verbal communication are spoken words or oral communication (i.e., conversations, speeches or presentations, and webcasts) and written communication (i.e., letters, email, memos, and publications—books, newspapers, magazines, and Internet blogs).
2. Answers will vary but should include some of the following information: posture, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact.
3. Answers will vary but should include some of the following information: Give the speaker your full attention; make eye contact; consider the verbal and nonverbal cues from the speaker to determine his or her true meaning; restate the message in your own words; ask relevant questions; and provide feedback when appropriate.

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Skills

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- a. active listening
- b. body language
- c. nonverbal communication
- d. paralanguage
- e. verbal communication

- ____ 1. The tone, rate, and volume of a voice
- ____ 2. The process in which the listener offers feedback to the speaker to ensure he or she understood the message
- ____ 3. The exchange of information without words
- ____ 4. A set of nonverbal signs, such as physical movements, used to convey a message
- ____ 5. The exchange of information using words

► Part Two: Completion

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

- 1. Paralanguage is not what you say, it is _____ you say it.
- 2. You can use nonverbal communication to help you gauge the _____ of the audience if you are making a speech or a presentation.
- 3. The key to good verbal skills is _____.



4. Choose your words carefully to avoid _____.
5. Active listening is an important part of _____.

► **Part Three: Short Answer**

Instructions: Answer the following.

1. List the two main types of verbal communication, and give two examples of each.

2. What are some examples of body language?

3. What are the keys to active listening?

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Verbal Communication is the exchange of information using words.

◆ Oral communication

- Conversations with other people
- Speeches or presentations
- Webcasts

◆ Written communication

- Letters
- Emails
- Memos
- Books
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Internet blogs



NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication is the exchange of information without words.

- ◆ Body language
- ◆ Gestures
- ◆ Facial expressions
- ◆ Paralanguage (e.g., tone, rate, and volume of voice)
- ◆ Appearance



ACTIVE LISTENING

◆ **Active listening** is the process in which the listener offers feedback to ensure he or she understood the message.

◆ Keys to active listening:

- Give the speaker your full attention.
- Make eye contact.
- Restate the message.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Listen to clarifications.
- Provide feedback.



Active Listening

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to evaluate nonverbal cues and to assess how they may change the meaning of the verbal communication between two people.

Objective

Recognize and evaluate nonverbal communication.

Materials

- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ notes from class
- ◆ paper

Procedure

1. Read the following scenarios, and answer the questions about the nonverbal communication.
2. You may work with a partner and discuss the how the nonverbal cues change the meaning of the verbal communication.

Scenarios:

- A. Two friends are discussing which movie to see. Emily wants to see the new vampire movie, but Allison wants to see a comedy. Finally, Allison says, “Fine, I’d love to go see the vampire movie.” As she says it, she sighs, crosses her arms over her chest, and looks down at the ground. What does Allison’s nonverbal communication say?



- B. Michael is giving a presentation at work. He has a lot of information to present, and he is worried the speech will be too long. About halfway through his speech, Michael looks at the audience. Most of the members are slouched down in their seats, and some are looking down at their hands or fidgeting. What can Michael assume? What could he do to improve his communication?
- C. Susan asks her daughter for her opinion on an outfit. Samantha responds to her mother by rolling her eyes and saying “Oh, that outfit is *fabulous*,” in an exaggerated tone. What do Samantha’s nonverbal cues say?
- D. James is new to school, and he hasn’t met many people yet. After science class, a girl comes up to him and says, “I’m Julia. It’s nice to meet you.” As she says it, she smiles widely and touches his arm. What message is Julia trying to convey?
- E. One of Mrs. Vinton’s math students comes up to her desk to tell her that his dog ate his homework. As he speaks, the student is shifting his weight from one foot to the other, wringing his hands, and looking all around the room. What does his body language tell Mrs. Vinton?