

Public Speaking Skills

Unit: Employment and Professionalism

Problem Area: Communication Skills

Lesson: Public Speaking Skills

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

- 1 Explain the keys to good communication.**
- 2 Describe how to communicate with customers, associates, and supervisors.**

- **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>.

Booher, Dianna. *Communicate with Confidence! How to Say It Right the First Time and Every Time*. McGraw-Hill, 2012.

"Effective Communication in the Workplace," *FMLink™*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. <http://www.fmlink.com/article.cgi?type=how%20to&title=effective%20communication%20in%20the%20workplace&pub=bomi%20international&id=31179&mode=source>.

"How to Effectively Communicate with Your Boss," *essortment*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. <http://www.essortment.com/effectively-communicate-boss-36161.html>.

Sun, Calvin. "Ten Ways to Communicate More Effectively with Customers and Co-Workers." *TechRepublic*. Accessed Sept. 7, 2012. <http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/10things/10-ways-to-communicate-more-effectively-with-customers-and-co-workers/207>.



■ 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):

- communication
- enunciation
- feedback
- paralanguage

■ 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 students to discuss how they communicate differently when dealing with their close friends versus their grandparents. Create lists on the board detailing the differences. For example, the type of language they use might differ (e.g., using swear words or slang with friends but reverting to more proper grammar with grandparents). They might text friends but call their grandparents on the phone. Explain that understanding the need for such differences is the key to communicating with others in the workplace.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Explain the keys to good communication.

Anticipated Problem: What are the keys to good communication?

- I. **Communication** is the exchange of information; it requires at least one person to send the message and at least one person to receive the message.
 - A. Effective communication involves:
 1. Speaking
 2. Listening

3. Nonverbal cues, which is communication that does not use words
 - a. Body language (e.g., good posture, slumping in chair, and fidgeting)
 - b. **Paralanguage**, which is the tone, pitch, and volume of a person's voice
 - c. Gestures (e.g., pointing a finger at someone)
 - d. Facial expressions (e.g., smiling or frowning)
 - e. Eye contact
 4. Writing
 5. Reading
- B. Keys to improving speaking skills:
1. Preparation
 - a. The speaker should research and learn about the subject.
 - b. The speaker should organize notes and visual aids (if using any).
 2. Practice
 - a. The speaker should role-play common situations, such as interactions with customers.
 - b. The speaker should practice speeches or presentations in front of the mirror. **Enunciation** (speaking words clearly and loudly) is critical.
 - c. Practice reduces nervousness and makes the speaker seem more confident. It also helps reduce the use of nervous gestures and filler, such as saying "um," or "you know."
- C. Keys to improving listening skills:
1. The listener should give the speaker his or her complete attention.
 - a. The listener should minimize or ignore distractions (e.g., turn off or ignore the phone or close the office door to reduce noise).
 - b. The listener should make eye contact and use appropriate body language.
 2. The listener should offer **feedback** (a method in which the listener demonstrates understanding by restating the message to the speaker).
 - a. The listener can ask questions.
 - b. The listener can offer praise or suggestions.
 3. The listener should not interrupt the speaker.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–A to review the keys to effective communication. You may want to select four students to role play. One skit can have a person who mumbles, and the other skit can have a person who over-enunciates everything. Discuss their comments as a class after the skits.

Objective 2: Describe how to communicate with customers, associates, and supervisors.

Anticipated Problem: How do you communicate with customers, associates, and supervisors?

- II. Sometimes the way a person communicates depends on the audience. There may be different guidelines for communicating with customers, associates, and supervisors in a professional setting.
 - A. Speakers should represent the company well when communicating with anyone, such as:
 - 1. Proper grammar
 - 2. Well-written emails
 - 3. Professional behavior (e.g., proper etiquette)
 - B. Speakers should consider the preferred form of communication (e.g., face-to-face, phone call, email, or memo).
 - 1. Customers/clients may prefer face-to-face meetings or phone calls.
 - 2. Associates may prefer face-to-face conversations (with no scheduled meeting required) or email messages.
 - 3. The boss may prefer emails or quick conversations for less important matters and scheduled meetings or written reports for more important issues.
 - C. Speakers should show respect.
 - 1. Time
 - a. Meetings should start and end on time.
 - b. Only necessary people should be invited to meetings.
 - c. During the meeting, it is important to stay on topic.
 - d. The speaker should be prepared (e.g., know how to use the projector and have handouts ready).
 - 2. Appropriate level of formality
 - a. It is best to call customers/clients and supervisors by their formal names, unless instructed to use their first names (e.g., Mr. Johnson and Mrs. Smith instead of Frank and Anna).
 - b. It is usually acceptable to call co-workers by their first names.
 - 3. Acknowledge audience and their level of understanding
 - a. It is essential to avoid the use of complicated vocabulary that would confuse customers. However, employees should not “talk down” to customers.
 - b. It is appropriate to use industry terms or abbreviations when communicating with co-workers.

D. Speakers should provide and accept praise and criticism.

1. Praise should be sincere and specific (i.e., “Your presentation this afternoon was very informative,” rather than “Great job.”).
2. Praise should be accepted with a simple “Thank you.” Individuals should not deflect the praise or downplay their achievements (i.e., “It was no big deal.”).
3. Criticism should be prefaced with a compliment and should include helpful suggestions whenever possible (i.e., “You’re great with customers, but some of these orders weren’t processed correctly. Let me help you with this one.”)
4. Criticism should be accepted with an open mind rather than with defensiveness.

Teaching Strategy: Use VM–B during a discussion. 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: Completion

1. Communication
2. Paralanguage
3. nonverbal
4. Feedback
5. compliment
6. preparation

Part Two: True/False

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. T
5. F

- 6. F
- 7. T

Part Three: Short Answer

1. Answers may vary but should include three of the following: body language, paralanguage, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact.
2. Answers may vary but should include two of the following points: Respect time (e.g., start and end meetings on time), invite only necessary people to meetings, stay on topic, and be prepared; show the appropriate level of formality (e.g., call customers/clients and supervisors by their formal names, unless instructed to use first names); acknowledge the listener's level of understanding (e.g., don't use complicated vocabulary that would confuse a customer, but don't "talk down" to them).
3. Listeners can ask questions and offer suggestions or praise.

Public Speaking Skills

► Part One: Completion

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

1. _____ is the exchange of information.
2. _____ is the tone and volume of a person's voice.
3. Effective communication includes speaking, listening, reading, writing, and _____ cues.
4. _____ is the method in which the listener demonstrates understanding by restating the message to the speaker.
5. Criticism should be prefaced with a/an _____ and include helpful suggestions whenever possible.
6. The keys to improving speaking skills include _____ and practice.

► Part Two: True/False

Instructions: Write *T* for true or *F* for false.

- ____ 1. Listeners should make eye contact with the speaker when possible.
- ____ 2. Speakers should show respect by starting and ending meetings on time.
- ____ 3. Individuals should deflect praise or downplay their achievements.
- ____ 4. Practice reduces nervousness and makes the speaker seem more confident.
- ____ 5. Calling customers by their first names always makes them feel more comfortable.
- ____ 6. If you are criticized by your boss, you should immediately defend yourself.
- ____ 7. It is helpful to practice speeches or presentations in front of the mirror.



► Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions: Answer the following.

1. List three examples of nonverbal cues that communicate a message.

2. Describe two ways in which speakers can show respect for listeners.

3. List two ways a listener can offer feedback to a speaker.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- ◆ **Communication** is the exchange of information. It requires at least one person to send the message and at least one person to receive the message.
- ◆ Effective communication involves:
 - Speaking
 - Listening
 - Nonverbal cues
 - Writing
 - Reading



COMMUNICATING RESPECT

- ◆ Speakers should show respect, whether dealing with customers, co-workers, or supervisors.
- ◆ Respect others' time:
 - Start and end meetings on time.
 - Invite only the necessary people to meetings.
 - Stay on topic during meetings.
 - Be prepared (e.g., know how to use the projector and have handouts ready).
- ◆ Show appropriate level of formality:
 - Call customers/clients and supervisors by their formal names, unless you are instructed to use their first names (e.g., Mr. Johnson and Mrs. Smith instead of Frank and Anna).
 - It is usually acceptable to call co-workers by their first names.
- ◆ Acknowledge the listener's level of understanding:
 - Avoid complicated vocabulary that would confuse customers.
 - Don't "talk down" to customers.
 - Use the proper industry terms or abbreviations when communicating with co-workers or supervisors.

Decoding Nonverbal Cues

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to practice decoding nonverbal cues. *How* you say something can be as important as *what* you say. Therefore, it is important to be able to use a person's nonverbal cues to determine the true message.

Objective

Demonstrate how nonverbal cues change communication.

Materials

- ◆ paper
- ◆ writing utensil

Procedure

1. Work with a partner to write three scenarios that take place in a business setting.
2. For each scenario, write two short skits that show how nonverbal cues change the way in which the people communicate. For example, one scenario might be a supervisor giving a performance review to an employee. In one skit, the employer might speak in a loud, stern tone while pointing a finger at the employee, indicating displeasure. In the other scenario, the employer might use the same words but speak in a softer voice and pat the employee on the arm in a friendly gesture.
3. Perform the skits for your classmates. After each set of skits, invite the rest of the class to discuss the nonverbal cues you used. Ask them to point out the differences in how the message was received.

