

Lesson Five: Developing Communication Skills for the Workplace

Being able to communicate effectively in the workplace among colleagues as well as customers is a crucial skill for success in your career. Effective communication involves both verbal and non-verbal, as well as written, especially via email. Qualities of effective communication include clarity, accuracy and interaction. This lesson will help participants improve skills necessary to communicate effectively.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

North Carolina Guidance Essential Standards:

- I.SE.3.2 Use communication strategies that emphasize clarity and precision to achieve desired outcomes.

North Carolina Career Development Coordinator Standards:

- Standard V.b. Help students develop global employability skills.

North Carolina Community College System College and Career Ready Adult Basic Education Standards

- R.3 Comprehension: The student will develop and demonstrate knowledge of a variety of comprehension strategies to derive meaning from literary, functional, and informational text. R.3.1 Grade Level 0.0-1.9
- W.5 Composition: The student will develop and apply the writing process to communicate in writing for a variety of purposes.
- S.1 Comprehension and Collaboration: The student will develop and apply skills to demonstrate comprehension and collaboration of oral and aural information.
- S.2 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: The student will develop and apply skills to demonstrate presentation of knowledge and ideas of oral and aural information.
- T.6: Internet and Telecommunications: The student will demonstrate an ability to utilize Internet and other telecommunication resources.

Workforce Development Standards

- 20 CFR Parts 676, 677, and 678: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Programs are based on eligibility.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

At the close of the lesson, learners will be able to say... I can:

- Identify both positive and negative verbal and non-verbal communication in the workplace.
- Identify the components of effective communication in emails and use them to write effective emails.
- Effectively use positive verbal and nonverbal communication skills in the workplace among my colleagues
- Effectively use positive verbal and nonverbal communication with customers

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Computer, projector, internet access, YouTube access, screen to show video
- Cards with verbal positive communication behaviors, nonverbal positive communication behaviors, negative verbal communication behaviors and negative non verbal communication behaviors. Use tape to post cards on whiteboard.

DELIVERY SUGGESTIONS

These are two 50-minute lessons. Groups of 4 with computer/internet capability required. Maximum number of participants is 16-20.

The following lesson is appropriate for:

- high school students
- adult learners

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Communication among colleagues at work

You may wish to begin with introductory video:

<https://bit.ly/3IGxtRC>

Ask participants: How do you know someone is NOT listening to you? Have participants brainstorm negative listening behaviors and actions. Ask: *“How do you know someone IS listening to you?”* Have them brainstorm positive listening behaviors and actions. Place the words positive and negative on the white board.

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Have students identify verbal positive and negative communication behaviors by placing them under the correct term. Repeat the activity with nonverbal positive and negative communication behaviors. Follow up the activity with the following questions: How does it make you feel when someone engages in positive communication with you? How does it make you feel when you are addressed negatively? What do you think are the results of using positive communication techniques at work? Include the following discussion: How should you respond when something comes up in conversation that you don't agree with. For instance, you like low lighting in the workplace, but your colleague prefers the fluorescent lighting. Have students discuss ways to carry on a conversation about office lighting.

2. Communication between employee and customer

Remind participants of the positive and negative communication behaviors from activity 1. Have participants pair up to be the employee or the customer. Give them the attached scenario to role play. Have some of the pairs share their role play if they feel comfortable. Ask them to share their reactions and feelings during the role play. Write on the board what the clerk could have done to make the communication more effective. Have them identify specific behaviors he/she should not have done.

3. Writing an effective email

Have participants discuss do's and don'ts of professional emails. Share a list of general do's and don'ts (attached). Remind them that communication should always be pleasant and polite. Give them the attached work scenario and have them send you the email as if you are a customer.

Optional activity: Have participants watch the YouTube video of a Fawlty Towers clip and identify negative communication behaviors, if you did not use the video as an introduction.

5. Gauge participant understanding by returning to the “I can” statements.

Read each aloud asking for a hands-up if they felt the objective was met. Thank participants for their participation.

6. Refer participants to short, formal survey in evaluation link below.

<https://conta.cc/3Cx9sSO>

LESSON CONTRIBUTOR

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