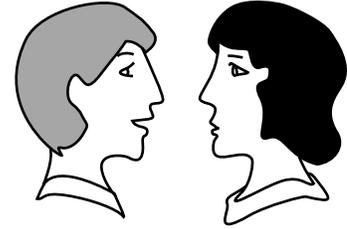


Communication Process



Overview: This lesson teaches learners to define the elements of effective communication and its process. It will focus on communication as the best way to convey meaning and introduce barriers to the communication process. Students will learn the communication process loop and its key elements.

Educational Goal: The goal of this lesson is for each learner to:

- (1) Comprehend the elements of the communication process and
- (2) respond positively to it and how it applies to their goals and lives.

Objectives:

- Cognitive:* — Define effective communication
- Explain the elements of the communication process, the best communication approach (transaction), and internal and external barriers.
- Affective:* — Describe the value of effective communication and its various elements.

Skills Connection: *How it relates:* Learners must talk with respect, listen for understanding, get along with others, and speak so others can understand in order to use the Communication Process effectively as it applies to their life and goals as parents, workers, and citizens. This lesson has connections with the Tennessee KSA – *Listen for Understanding, Talking With Respect* and *Getting Along With Others*; and the EFF Standards – *Listen Actively* and *Speak So Others Can Understand*. (Appendix II)

Teaching Strategy: The concepts of effective communication, the communication process, and overcoming barriers are all critical pieces to our ability to function in the world and cooperate with others and are all tied to our ability to communicate effectively. Learners were introduced to the communication process during the first day introductions.

The Communication Process Loop should be displayed in the room. Throughout *Learning Skills*, teachers can use this visual to review the communication loop and to help students remember the process.

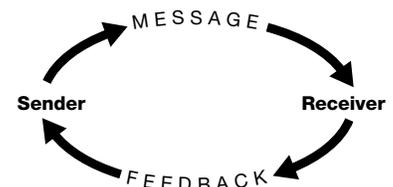
Time: 1 hour

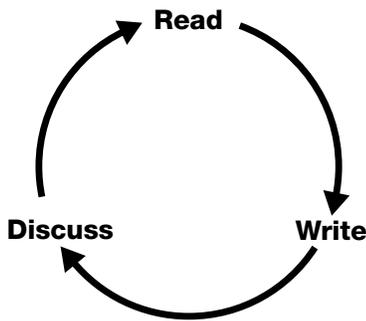
Teaching Materials:

- Communication Loop Visual
- White Board
- Note Taker for Students
- EFF Skill Standards – *Speak So Others Can Understand, Listen Actively, and Observe Critically*

Student Materials:

- Learner Note Taker





The lesson is taught using the Read, Write and Discuss method. The teacher will begin the lesson by defining communication, identifying the elements of the communication process, and explaining why it is important. Direct learners to take notes from the board and draw the visual of the communication loop in their notes.

Teachers will facilitate the discussion by asking students to recall their experiences with communication and participate in a learning activity that demonstrates the problems that can occur with one-way communication.

Lesson Plan

Homework Review: *Academic Survival Guide*

Thought for the Day

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.”

—*Malcolm X*

Prepare for success today. Don’t procrastinate by putting things off. Get educated in order to create a bridge to your future.

Teaching Tip



Begin each day with a review of the previous day’s homework. Give 15-20 minutes to review the homework.

Then begin the “Thought for the Day.” Give students time to answer the four questions. Then discuss the “Thought for the Day.”

Introduction

Communication is the process of sharing our ideas, thoughts, and feelings with other people and having those ideas, thoughts, and feelings understood by the people we are talking with. When we communicate we speak, listen, and observe.

The way we communicate is a learned style. As children we learn from watching our parents and other adults communicate. As an adult we can learn to improve the way we communicate by observing others who communicate effectively, learning new skills, and practicing those skills.

Attention: The ability to effectively communicate at work, home, and in life is probably one of the most important sets of skills a person needs. What would our life and world be like without communication? We cannot get along without it. It is also not easy, and we all have probably had experiences where our communication failed or ran into a barrier. So, if we can understand the communication process better and improve it, we will become a more effective and successful communicator.

Objective: (To demonstrate the many problems of misunderstanding that can occur in a one-way communication.)

Motivation: As you continue to reach your goals, specifically your educational goals, communication will become increasingly more important. The ability to effectively communicate is a primary skill. The more you become an effective communicator the more likely you are to achieve what you want. Over 80% of your waking life is spent sending or receiving information. Poor communication can waste time and energy and cause conflict between people. Let's think of how you can benefit by improving your communication skills: You will have a clearer understanding of what people are saying to you, others will be less likely to misunderstand you, problems will be solved quickly, you will be able to identify others' needs and you will be able to resolve conflict.

At another time we will take a more in-depth look at the EFF Communication Standards of *Speaking So Others Understand* and *Listen Actively*. At this point we are putting those communication skills into the larger context. This lesson provides a foundation for developing effective communication skills at work, at home with the family, and in our everyday activities.

Overview for Learners: This lesson will cover what effective communication is, the key elements of the process, the various ways we communicate, and a brief look at barriers that get in the way. Let's begin by looking at the definition of effective communication.

Body of the Lesson

Main Point 1. Effective Communication

A good working definition for effective communication is to share meaning and understanding between the person sending the message and the person receiving the message. The key element is "understanding."

Lead-off Question: How have you had a communication problem or failure to communicate?

Anticipated Responses: — *Students will offer a variety of personal experiences that illustrate difficulty in communicating.*

Follow-up Question: Was there a miscommunication because of a lack of understanding?

Anticipated Responses: — *Yes, explore the student's responses.*

Teaching Tip



Develop the student responses and connect them to the lesson objective.

So in order to be an effective communicator, we must first and foremost be understood in our various communications.

Main Point 2. Communication Process

Now that you understand the purposes of effective communication, let's take a closer look at the elements in the communication process. By analyzing the parts of the process, we are better able to understand the whole.

Teaching Tip



Students will sometimes forget to mention nonverbal communication.

A learning styles inventory could help students identify how they receive or learn information in a certain way: verbal, visual, kinesthetic/tactile.

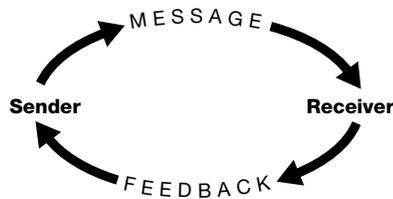
The communication process is a simple model that demonstrates all the factors that can affect communication. Communication is effective if the message that is received is the same one that is sent.

Communication Process and the Key Elements: *Tell students to look at the communication loop. Explain that the Communication Process breaks down effective communication into the following steps:*

A. Sender – The communicator or sender is the person who is sending the message. There are two factors that will determine how effective the communicator will be. The first factor is the **communicator's attitude**. It must be positive. The second factor is the **communicator's selection of meaningful symbols**, or selecting the right symbols depending on your audience and the right environment. *Talk about a few wrong examples.*

Question: Name some of the ways we communicate.

Anticipated Responses: —Talking, speaking
—Writing
—Pictures, symbols, diagrams, charts, etc.



B. Message – A communication in writing, in speech, or by signals

C. Receiver – The receiver is simply the person receiving the message, making sense of it, or understanding and translating it into meaning. Now think about this for a moment: the receiver is also a communicator. How can that be? (When receiver responds, he is then the communicator.) Communication is only successful when the reaction of the receiver is that which the communicator intended. Effective communication takes place with shared meaning and understanding.

D. Feedback – Feedback is that reaction I just mentioned. It can be a verbal or nonverbal reaction or response. It can be external feedback (something we see) or internal feedback (something we can't see), like

self-examination. It's the feedback that allows the communicator to adjust his message and be more effective. Without feedback, there would be no way of knowing if meaning had been shared or if understanding had taken place.

Discuss that communication is a two-way process. The information goes out to a person on the other end. There is a sender and a receiver. Simply put, effective communication is getting your message across to the receiver. It is the sender's responsibility to make sure that the receiver gets the message and that the message received is the one sent.

Communicating is not an isolated series of one skill, it involves several skills. For example, speaking involves not only getting your message across but also being able to listen and understand what others are saying (active listening) and observing the verbal and nonverbal clues in order to monitor the effectiveness of your message.

Main Point 3. Barriers

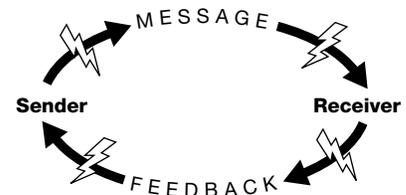
Have you ever been talking to someone and they misunderstand what you were saying? Why do you think that happens? (Give learners the opportunity to share their experiences.) At any point in the communication process a barrier can occur. Barriers keep us from understanding other's ideas and thoughts. Barriers can appear at any point of the communication loop.

There are two types of barriers—internal and external. Examples of internal barriers are fatigue, poor listening skills, attitude toward the sender or the information, lack of interest in the message, fear, mistrust, past experiences, negative attitude, problems at home, lack of common experiences, and emotions. Examples of external barriers include noise, distractions, e-mail not working, bad phone connections, time of day, sender used too many technical words for the audience, and environment. Barriers keep the message from getting through. When communicating, watch out for barriers. Monitor the actions of the receiver. Watch her body language; check to make sure the message the receiver received is the one sent—ask questions and listen.

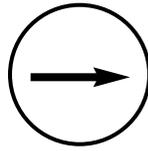
Teaching Tip



Tell students to draw the communication loop on their Note Taker.



Main Point 4. Types of Communication

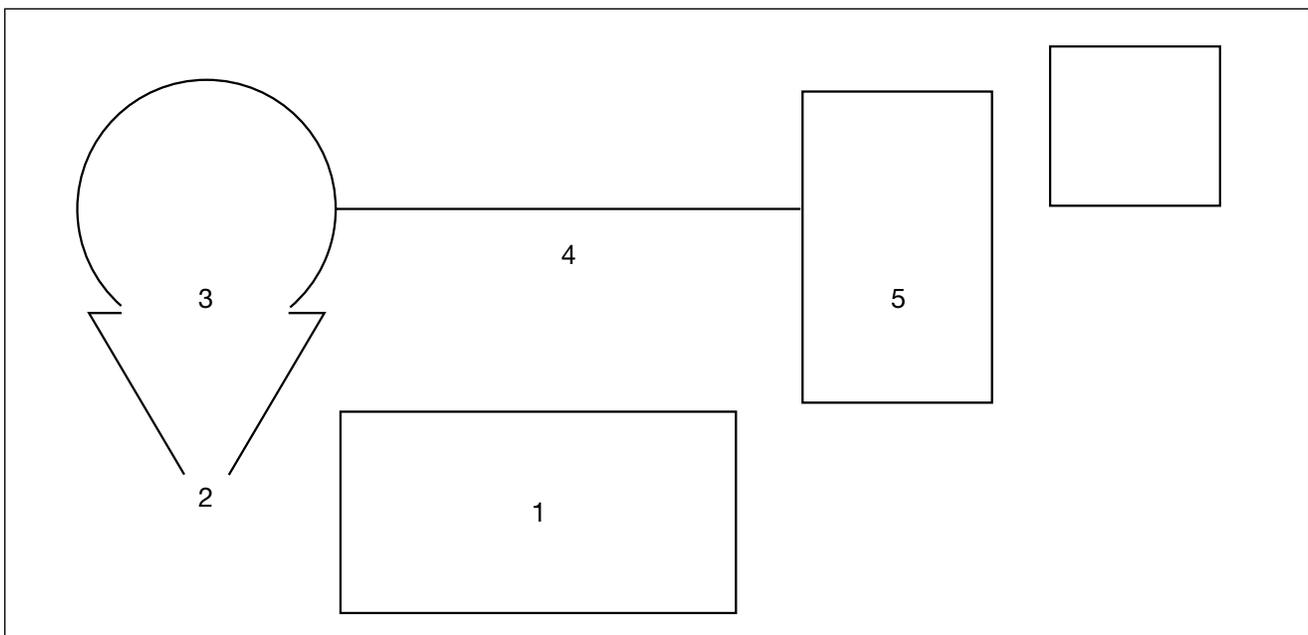


A. Self-Action or One-Way Communication is focused on getting the message to the receiver. Self-action treats communication as a manipulation of others. It is very message centered. There is no way to know if the meaning is shared between the sender and the receiver. (To demonstrate one-way communication, do the following activity with the class.)

Procedure: (Using the attached diagram, ask for a student volunteer from the class to assist in this demonstration about communication. Explain to the other students that the volunteer is going to describe something to them and their task is to simply follow instructions in sketching out exactly what is described.)

Take the volunteer outside of the classroom to explain the following directions. Provide the volunteer with the diagram shown. Tell the volunteer to describe the diagram to the rest of the class. However, the volunteer must keep his or her back toward the rest of the class. There can be no eye contact. The volunteer can only use verbal communication to describe the diagram, i.e., no gestures, hand signals, etc. Further, no questions are allowed on the part of the other students. In brief, only one-way communication is allowed.

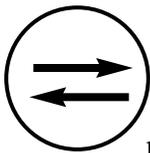
When the activity is completed, show the correct diagram to the students. Have the students show each other their drawings. Students get a laugh at their attempts and how they misunderstood the words they heard.



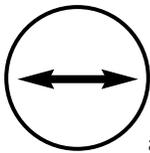
Teacher will indicate that the activity was constructed to prove a point, and only a few students ever come close to drawing the actual diagram. Explain how easy it is for miscommunication to occur.)

Discussion Questions:

1. How many of us got confused and just “quit” listening? Why?
2. Why was the one-way communication so difficult to follow?
3. Even two-way communication cannot ensure complete understanding. How can we make our communication efforts more effective?



B. Interaction or Two-Way Communication. This approach recognizes the role of the receiver as a communicator through feedback. It is message centered and is a very simplistic view of the communication process. Feedback allows senders to see if their message got across.



C. Transaction. This approach focuses on meaning and sharing by accounting for all other factors in the communication process. It is concerned with the barriers that might affect the communication. Transaction is best described as effective communication. This is when the communication process is applied and carried out completely. The sender gives a message that is passed on to the receiver. In return, the receiver can give clear feedback that allows the sender to know whether or not the message was perceived as intended. If the message wasn't received as intended, then the sender will continue the communication process again in order to ensure effective communication.

Now that you know all three types of communication, we can reflect and evaluate our own communication approaches in different roles and situations. Knowing the three approaches to communication will help us to be aware of our types, when they occur, and how to improve our communication and create clear transactions.

Conclusion

Effective communication is a major part in achieving your educational goals. Effectively communicating with your teachers and peers is essential when it comes to your learning. Many times your instructor is the sender. Her job is to send you messages that include information about the skill you need to learn. Your instructor's messages might include lectures or handouts for you.

Your peers can also be the senders of a message. Many times learners are asked to work together as a team. You might be asked to work on a specific activity that would require you to receive messages from other team members or an appointed leader. Sometimes you may be asked to be the sender. Remember that communication involves speaking, listening, and observing.

Summary: Communication is a two-way process that involves getting your message across and understanding what others have to say. Communication involves active listening, speaking and observing. Now that you have learned the communication process, you can begin to evaluate your communication skills. Begin to watch yourself in action. Each time you communicate observe what you do, how it went, what went well, and what could have been better.

Re-Motivation: The ability to effectively communicate is a critical skill. The more you become an effective communicator the more likely you are to achieve what you want. Remember, you can improve your communication skills by observing people who communicate effectively, learning new skills, and practicing those skills. Acquiring effective communication skills will help you be a better student, parent, family member, worker, and citizen.