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# Communication Problems

Video: What could possibly go wrong?

Many of our misunderstandings in life are due to poor communication- verbal, nonverbal, written,

Rarely are problems at work related to skill level, mostly they are related to getting along with co-workers, superiors, or those you supervise. **Any examples?**

First step to good communication is to understand what the goal is and is not.

Goal is not to:

* To convince everyone you are right (argue until you prove your point)
* Keep the peace by not expressing your feelings/opinions

Goal is:

* To understand and be understood

Video & Discussion: Susan Boyle audition

What is your first impression of Susan? The audience? Judges?

What assumptions did people make? Why?

What are all the ways Susan was communicating? Dress, walk, hair, etc.

What do we learn about how often messages we interpret messages right? Wrong?

# Listening

The average adult has an attention span of only 7 minutes. After 25 hours most people remember only 10% of the original message. The brain can process 400-800 words per minute and speak 200.

# Oral Communication

Teens are often more comfortable communicating over text or social media, but the art of talking face to face is important. Teens need to how to initiate conversation, pick up when conversation lags….., know when to stop talking as well.

Activity: Telephone

Play a few rounds of telephone by whispering a phrase down a row of students and see how the message changes.

Speaking on the phone and giving immediate responses is a necessary communication skill.

When answering:

* Identify yourself and company.
* Ask the right questions?
  + Can I ask who is calling?
  + Is he/she expecting your call?
  + Where are you calling from?
* Assume someone else from your company is listening in. Be professional.
* Be prepared to take notes and leave a message if necessary.

When calling:

* Identify yourself.
* Ask to speak with someone who can help.
* Be clear in stating your purpose.
* Show gratitude.
* Restate all details to confirm at the end of the phone call.

Remember to be professional. Don’t argue or interrupt. Remember you’re talking to a human on the other side.

Assignment: Telephone call

Write a script to order Subway sandwiches for your office meeting. Include details about the date, time, amount needed, and additional options like utensils and delivery.

# Written Communication

## Notes: E-mails

Think of an e-mail the same as you would a letter coming to your mailbox. E-mails are different than a text message. Use capital letters and NO acronyms.

* Start with a greeting or salutation. Dear Mr……To Whom It May Concern……
* Be careful about the TONE of your e-mail, since they can’t hear it like a conversation. All caps indicates you are yelling at someone. Include niceties so e-mail sounds pleasant.
* Error toward writing to formal rather than too casual.
* Be careful to include enough information, in conversation people can ask additional questions, but not in e-mail.
* Have a business-like address. Snowboardjunkie, gagachick33, or tylermobile.zoomzoom won’t do.
* Don’t ever send an angry e-mail. You can’t retrieve when you calm down.
* Careful not to pass jokes on company e-mail (waste of company time) be EXTRA careful not to pass around inappropriate racial, gender or age jokes.

GRAMA (Government Records Access Management Act) Things done on a work computer are public record. Whatever you do on company time, phones or computers is company business and they can look at it.

### Assignment: Review the following e-mails and comment on what needs improvement.

* THE MONTHY REPORT IS DUE NOW! PLEASE GET IT TO ME TODAY!
* Can you tell me more about your Computer Science Major? I am trying to prepare for college next year?
* Dear Mr. Jefferson,
* My son is failing your third period class! Teachers have such a cake job you’d think you could at least get a student’s grades right! Get it together or you will soon be dustin off your resume and looking for a new job!

### Social Media, Facebook

Be careful what you post! Once on the internet it is there forever!

Be careful what you say about your boss or co-workers.

Be careful what others post on your page.

Go to your Facebook page and see what content you would be comfortable and uncomfortable with a future employer seeing.

List a few examples below:

### Assignment: Clear & Concise Directions

Write out instructions how to drive from the high school to your internship. Include all directions and enough details. Have a friend read over (or even try it!) Did they get there? Did you forget some steps? Did you include too many steps?

# Starting Conversations

Teens are not given enough chances to learn to start conversations! Some text because they are scared of real contact. Starting conversations are as easy as asking people about themselves. The ability to talk to other and network is a great skill to have. Having a few topics (other than the weather) to get conversations going is valuable. Avoid politics and religion in many new circles. Keeping up to date on news is valuable. Consider subscribing to an e-mail newsletter (Morning Brew or Daily Skimm) or scrolling news outlets for conversation topics.

### Activity: Table Topics

Find someone in the class you don’t know well and spend time getting to know them with Table Topic Conversation starters.

# Nonverbal Rotations

### Activity: Charades

In a group, play a few rounds of charades. Divide into teams before playing. Players from each team take turns pantomiming for their teammates. The first team to guess the word or phrase gets a point. Keep track of the points earned by each player or team. The one with the most points at the end of the game wins.

### Activity: Telestrations

All players start with a spiral bound booklet and draw a card with 12 words on it (6 on “This Side” and 6 on “That Side”). Players choose which side to use and roll a die to see which word to use. Then each player writes the word in the front of the booklet and the drawing begins.

Play alternates between drawing and guessing the drawing. After each sketch or guess, players flip one page in the booklet and pass it on to the next player. Then everyone takes the booklet in front of them flips back one page to see the previous player’s sketch or guess. If it’s a sketch, that player then guesses what it is. If it’s a guess, that player then draws it out.

It keeps going like this until everyone gets his or her original booklet back. Then one person will go first to flip through and show everyone what evolved.