

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE FOR *THE ART OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION*

OVERVIEW

Opening with a typical office meeting scene, this video begins by identifying common communications difficulties. Situation role-play is used to demonstrate four basic types of communication: verbal, nonverbal, listening, and written.

Each category is broken into the demonstration of an inherent problem, discussion, and tips for improvement. The verbal communication section discusses conversational skills, public speaking, and telephone and voice mail etiquette. The nonverbal portion addresses body language and attitude issues. Understanding and interpreting instructions are a part of the listening section. Business letters, e-mail, and faxes are covered in the written communication component. Emphasis is placed on the use of proper grammar in all forms of communication, and suggestions are provided if assistance in this area is necessary.

PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS

After all students have entered the classroom and settled, begin with the following paragraph or something similar:

“Hello all you students. Since we ain’t got all day, we’ll jump right into today’s topic. I was thinkin’ ’cause you was modern students, we could have us a kickin’ rap about all the new ways people communicate in society.”

Stop for a moment to see if the students will comment on the use of incorrect grammar and slang. If they comment on their own, continue the discussion by allowing them to share their impressions of a person who speaks this way all the time. If they do not comment on their own, ask, “What do you think an employer will think of someone who speaks this way in an interview or in the office during the workday?” If this speech pattern reflects the way the students in the class speak consistently, they may not notice the problems. It may be helpful to explain that slang terms and poor grammar, while accepted in many social circles as the norm, do not belong in the workplace.

Complete the **Anticipation Quiz** prior to viewing the video, *The Art of Effective Communication*. Have the students set aside the completed quizzes during the viewing. Encourage them to take note of correct responses as they appear in the context of the video presentation.

At the conclusion of the video, ask the students to take out their **Anticipation Quizzes** and review the correct responses. Allow time for students to add or delete information to make each response correct. Discuss the responses. Follow the discussion with one or both of the follow-up **Activities**. Complete the **Quick Quiz** and correct the quizzes together as a group. Assign the **Homework Option** if desired.

ANTICIPATION QUIZ

Note: The questions for this quiz may be read out loud, allowing time for student responses, or they may be copied and distributed as a written exercise.

Directions: Respond as honestly and completely as possible to each question or statement.

1. Name as many types of communication as you can.
2. Which information should you always include in a voice mail message?
3. When is listening an important form of communication?
4. Why is written communication often more focused than any other type of communication?
5. If someone sighs loudly when you ask a question, what do you think about that person?

ACTIVITIES

Activity #1

Title: “Minus One” Charades

Format: Small group (teams)

Time: 20–25 minutes

Materials: 3×5 index cards, shoebox, digital timer

Procedure:

1. Prior to the class meeting, write the names of approximately 30 office items on separate 3×5 index cards.
2. Place the cards in the shoebox.
3. Explain to the class that they will be playing a form of charades. In each round, one type of communication will be subtracted.
Round #1 and #2: Students may write a word or phrase as a clue (not the exact word that appears on the card), say a word or phrase as a clue, and act or use gestures to give clues to their team.
Round #3 and #4: Students may say a word or phrase and act out the clue.
Round #5 and #6: Students may only act out the clue.
4. Continue to play until all students have participated at least once.

Activity #2

Title: Business-to-Business

Format: Individual

Time: 10–15 minutes

Materials: Paper, pen

Procedure:

1. Provide students with a sheet of paper or access to a computer.
2. Explain that they are to use the standard business letter format to write a business letter (format below).
3. They will be writing to the Arpeggio Company
5726 North Hills Drive
Minneapolis, Minnesota 60673
They will be requesting information about the company's new, state-of-the-art bookkeeping software.
4. These letters may be peer edited or read orally in class.

BUSINESS LETTER FORMAT

Heading (Company name and address centered at the top of the page.)

Inside address (The name and address of the company that is being contacted; below the heading and at the left side of the page.)

Salutation (Use the company name. Place it below the inside address at the left side of the page.)

Body (What you are going to say in the letter; center this.)

Closing (“Sincerely” or “Cordially,” below the body, placed at the left side of the page.)

Signature (Typed and hand signed, placed below the closing at the left side of the page.)

QUICK QUIZ

Note: This quiz may be read out loud, allowing time for the students to respond, or copied and completed as a written exercise. If the quiz is to be read out loud, write the response choices on the board/overhead.

Directions: Fill in the blank with the best choice from the word bank.

WORD BANK

E-mail	Verbal	Voice mail
Reply	Telephone	Spelling/grammar
Delivery	Fax	Voice quality
Public	Listening	Nonverbal

1. _____ is often monitored for content by the company.
2. Hearing and understanding are key to good _____ communication.
3. A _____ should never exceed 10 pages.
4. _____ communication includes body language, eye contact, and hand gestures.
5. Preparation and voice projection are tips for successful _____ speaking.
6. Background noise, eating, and gum chewing should be avoided when using the _____.
7. A _____ message must be brief and specific, with attention paid to leaving a contact phone number.
8. When writing a business letter, _____ errors must not be present.
9. Use the _____ feature to respond to a business e-mail.
10. Mumbling is an example of poor _____ and _____.

ANSWER KEY

1. E-mail
2. Listening
3. Fax
4. Nonverbal
5. Public
6. Telephone
7. Voice mail
8. Spelling/grammar
9. Reply
10. Voice quality, Delivery

HOMEWORK OPTION

Using a blank audiotape, record a conversation with a partner. The conversation may be about anything you choose. Be sure to include several questions and answers in the conversation. Record the conversation for several minutes. At the conclusion of the recording, rewind the tape and play it back, listening carefully to the way your voice sounds on the tape. Are you speaking clearly and at a good tempo? Are you answering the questions directly? Write the ways you feel you could improve your communication skills based on this recorded conversation experiment.