

CLD1-3-4H



Facilitator's Guide

Communication Essentials for Good Impressions

Communication is the real work of leadership. — Nitin Nohria

Rationale:

Communication is the key to effective leadership as well as fulfilling both the vision and mission of organization.

Program Goal:

To demonstrate the role of effective communication in leadership development

Program Objectives:

- Recognize the importance of what you are saying through non-verbal communication.
- Distinguish the importance of effective speech for influencing others.
- Critique the elements of active listening in effective communication.

Pre-Program Preparation

- Copy the “Communication Essentials for Good Impressions” fact sheet for each participant.
- Secure highlighter, markers, flipchart/wall poster, role play description cards, one sheet of paper and pens/pencils for each participant.

Introduction

Communication plays an important role in the leadership process. Communication helps a leader build relationships, delegate tasks effectively, and share the organization's vision with its members. But effective communication doesn't necessarily come naturally to a person; it takes work and practice to become skilled at communicating. In this lesson, we'll explore both non-verbal communication (body language) and active listening.

Introductory Activity:

Read the following two quotes out loud to the group.

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”—Epictetus

“What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say.”—Ralph Waldo Emerson

What messages are Epictetus and Emerson communicating? What additional quotes or expressions have you heard that express the relationship of effective communication to making a good impression?

Objective 1: Recognize the importance of what you are saying through non-verbal communication.

Non-verbal communication can be as powerful as the spoken word. Just as what is said creates an impression on people, so does the speaker's appearance, posture, gestures and manner of acting toward the audience. Understanding what the speaker is communicating with his or her body, gestures and appearance is important, particularly when the speaker is trying to make a good impression.

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Having an active awareness of non-verbal communication can help the speaker:

- Project an image of confidence
- Demonstrate power or influence
- Express sincerity, interest or cooperativeness
- Create trust
- Recognize personal tension

Learning Activity 1: Acting it Out

Engage participants in the role playing exercise in order to learn how people communicate through body language.

Situation: Your county is holding a 4-H membership drive. Several members have volunteered to staff a display at your club's membership booth. A prospective 4-H member comes up to the booth to find out more information about joining.

Have three youth in your club play the roles of the following people working the booth.

- **Harry (or Hannah) Hillthorn** - Non-verbal Tendency Description - frowning, staring people down, arms crossed
- **Lisa (or Larry) Happyday** - Non-verbal Tendency Description - smiling, good eye contact, shoulders held back, confident
- **Sam (or Sally) McNervous** - Non-verbal Tendency Description - sporadic eye contact, chews on lower lip, fidgets
- **Doris (or David) Disinterested** - Non-verbal Tendency Description – bored, tired, yawning; no eye contact, talks on cell phone or texts, speaks only after spoken to, totally disinterested.

Discussion Question:

What impression do you think the prospective homemaker will have after encountering Harry/Hannah, Lisa/Larry, Sam/Sally, and Doris/David?

Objective 2: Distinguish the importance of effective speech for influencing others.

The way in which you speak has a powerful effect on the impression that you first make. Poor grammar, profanity, derogatory comments, gossip, and rambling needlessly can create a negative reaction.

Learning Activity 2: Let's Pretend

Facilitator will role play the following situation in two ways using exaggerated speech and body language:

- **Speaker 1:** Hey y'all. So glad you're here. Hope you are having a better day than me. My day is dang rotten. I tried gettin' my butt here today on time but my lazy sister-in-law who was out all night with her sorry boyfriend kept me awake all night with the whole crappy story. I ain't sure if we are going to get anything done today but here we go.
- **Speaker 2:** Welcome everyone. I am so excited to be with you today as we explore the power of communication toward making a good impression. Each of us has the ability to influence others through the way we speak, listen, and express ourselves through appearance and body language. We are going to have so much fun sharing and learning from each other. Let's get started.

What were your impressions of speaker 1? What aspects of his/her speech made a negative impression?

What were your impressions of speaker 2? What aspects of his/her speech made a positive impression?

Objective 3: Critique the elements of active listening in an effective communication process.

Reflect back throughout your experiences in 4-H. Do you remember a member who was a great listener? Think of the qualities that made him or her a great listener. What are the qualities found in a good listener?

A good listener:

- Works at listening; stays focused and attentive
- Helps the speaker to convey thoughts
- Listens to understand, not to disprove

Active listening is defined as "actively trying to understand what the other person is trying to communicate." There are four components to active listening:

- Hearing – the physical process of taking in sound. How do I decrease distractions that interfere with or prevent me from concentrating on the speaker?
- Interpreting – to understand or perceive what is being communicated. What point is the speaker trying to make?

- Evaluating – to judge or determine the significance. Is the speaker expressing an opinion or is he/she discussing unbiased facts? What can I learn from what the speaker is saying?
- Responding – to reply or answer back. Do I understand the ideas enough to make a supportive response?

Learning Activity 3: Be Careful, Little Ears, What You Hear

This activity demonstrates the importance of active listening. Display the active listening process for reference during the activity. Ask participants to select a partner and decide who will be the speaker (the person doing the talking) and who will be the listener (the person receiving the message).

First, the speakers will share with their partners either a positive or negative 4-H experience. When the speakers finish telling their stories, the listeners must repeat the story back to the speakers. The speakers will then tell the listeners how accurate their recounting of the story was and clarify any incorrect information.

Discussion questions:

To the speakers:

- Did your partner repeat your story back accurately?
- Did you get the impression that your partner was actively listening? Why or why not?

To the listeners:

- How did you use the active listening process during the storytelling?
- What role did verbal and non-verbal communication skills play in effectively telling and listening to the story?

Summary

Communication has many important aspects. Today we have focused on non-verbal and verbal communication, particularly speaking and active listening. To effectively communicate, a speaker must consider both verbal and non-verbal aspects and apply active listening. These tips will help a speaker become the best communicator possible by creating the best possible first impression.

References:

- Chamber of Commerce of St. Joseph County. (2004). *Communicating with Public Officials*. Retrieved on March 20, 2010 at: <http://www.sjchamber.org/policy/communicating.htm>.
- Ricketts, K. G. (2010). *Connecting Successfully – Effective Communication between Leaders & Volunteers*. Invited presentation at the MEAL conference March, 2010.

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My First 4-H Club Meeting

1. What year did you attend your first 4-H meeting? _____

2. Who invited you to attend your first 4-H meeting? _____

3. Where was your first meeting held? _____

4. What do you remember most about your first 4-H meeting? _____

5. What activities were conducted at your first 4-H meeting? _____

6. What business was discussed at your first 4-H meeting? _____

7. Were refreshments served? _____ And if so, what was served? _____

8. Who took you to your first 4-H meeting? _____

Did that person stay at the meeting with you? _____

9. Were you excited to attend the meeting? _____

Were you nervous about attending? _____

What do you remember most? _____
