

## CHAPTER 3

# Nonverbal Communication and Teamwork

**3.1 Nonverbal Communication**

**3.2 Listening Skills**

**3.3 Teamwork**

# Nonverbal Communication on the Job

Miguel works as a supervisor at a hair salon, Maria's Boutique. He plans to evaluate two relatively new employees tomorrow.

The first employee, Carrie, is from the United States. English is her first language, and she understands it well. Sometimes Carrie does not get to work on time. However, the only time she misses work is when she is sick. Her uniforms are usually a little wrinkled, her shoes are unpolished, and she likes to wear long earrings that jingle. She is quiet and does not talk much with the customers while she works. The quality of most of her work is acceptable. However, sometimes she is a bit careless when using hair dyes because she has not listened or did not understand instructions. She is not very friendly with her coworkers and does not socialize much. She does not seem to care very much about her job.

The other employee, Chi, is from Myanmar. Chi has been in this country for about one year. She speaks English but not well. When she is given instructions on the usage of hair dyes and supplies, she listens intently, smiles, and nods her head "yes." However, many times she does not understand. As a result, she often needs help in learning how to use the chemicals and supplies correctly. Otherwise, Chi's work is very good. Her uniforms are somewhat worn but always clean and tidy. Unlike Carrie, Chi is very friendly. However, she is limited in her ability to socialize and develop friendships with coworkers because of her English skills. Coworkers seem to like her and enjoy her enthusiasm for life in the United States.

## Questions

1. How important are listening skills to helping Carrie and Chi complete work successfully?
2. How important is nonverbal language to helping Carrie and Chi communicate?
3. Which employee seems to be a better teammate, Carrie or Chi? Why?

# 3.1

## Nonverbal Communication

### OBJECTIVES

After completing Section 3.1, you should be able to:

1. Describe the roles of nonverbal communication.
2. Indicate the nonverbal symbols sent in written messages.
3. List nonverbal symbols sent in spoken messages.
4. Identify nonverbal symbols that affect a person's image.

### Key Point

Nonverbal symbols may reinforce, contradict, regulate, or substitute for verbal symbols.

### The Roles of Nonverbal Communication

**Nonverbal communication** is composed of the messages sent without or in addition to words. These messages have a strong impact on receivers. Often, actions speak so loudly that they drown out spoken words. This action happens because people use nonverbal symbols as a means to determine what the sender really thinks or feels. Nonverbal symbols can also indicate the degree of importance the sender attaches to a message.

Spoken or written symbols make up the verbal part of a message and are accompanied by nonverbal symbols. However, a nonverbal message may not have a verbal counterpart. Nonverbal symbols—body language, appearance, touch, space, time, voice—exist in written and oral communication and in the environment.

Receivers interpret nonverbal symbols by using their senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. If you hear a person say, "Great!" and see the person smile while looking at a letter, you will conclude that the letter contains good news. If you hear a frowning person say, "Great!" in a disgusted tone when looking at a letter, you will probably conclude that the letter contains disappointing news. The receiver interprets the message based on sight (seeing the smile or frown) and hearing (the tone of voice).

People's opinions are often based on the nonverbal symbols they see and how they interpret them. Verbal and nonverbal symbols should be interpreted in relation to each other. Nonverbal symbols may reinforce, contradict, or substitute for verbal symbols. They may also regulate the verbal part of a message.

### Reinforcing a Verbal Message

Nonverbal symbols usually reinforce the verbal message. Pointing to a door as you state, "The office is the second door on the left" reinforces the verbal message. Pounding the table while making a statement also reinforces a verbal message.



Nonverbal symbols, such as a smile, can reinforce verbal symbols.

## Contradicting a Verbal Message

Sometimes verbal and nonverbal symbols do not agree. You may say, "That's fine," but if your voice is strained and you look away from the receiver, which symbol will the receiver believe—the verbal or the nonverbal? When verbal and nonverbal symbols conflict, the receiver usually believes the nonverbal message.

## Substituting for a Verbal Message

Nonverbal symbols sometimes act as substitutes for verbal messages. Gritting your teeth or throwing your hands in the air indicates frustration. Clenching your fists indicates anger. Tapping your foot or a pencil indicates impatience. Nodding or smiling indicates agreement.

## Regulating a Verbal Message

Nonverbal symbols may be used to regulate or control oral communication between the sender and receiver. These regulators may signal when you want to speak, when you want others to continue speaking, or when you want to withdraw from a conversation. For example, nodding in agreement encourages another person to continue. However, checking your watch or closing a portfolio means you are through listening.

### Ethics

Is it ethical to agree with someone in words when you really do not agree? How may the nonverbal symbols you send show that you do not agree?

check  
point  
1

1. How are nonverbal symbols used in relation to verbal symbols?
2. Give an example of how a nonverbal symbol may contradict verbal symbols.

Check your answers in Appendix C.



The meanings of body language and other nonverbal symbols vary among cultures.

## Nonverbal Symbols

Though used the same way in most cultures, nonverbal symbols differ among cultures. In some cultures, for example, arriving late for a social or business engagement is polite; in others, it is considered rude.

Another common difference involves personal space. **Personal space** is the nearby area around a person or the area the person considers his or her territory. The personal space North Americans prefer is larger than the personal space people from other cultures generally prefer.

### Nonverbal Symbols in Written Messages

The appearance and correctness of a written document send critical nonverbal messages and deserve careful attention. Letterhead sheets, plain sheets, and envelopes should be made of quality bond paper and be of the same color. The design of the letterhead and company logo should convey a professional image. Drawings, pictures, charts, and graphs should be appropriate to the content. The print should be crisp and easy to read.

Documents should not have errors and should be in an appropriate format. Check capitalization, grammar, and spelling carefully. Make sure all facts, such as dates and amounts, are correct. Error-free documents send a positive message that the sender is reliable and considers quality important.

### Nonverbal Symbols in Spoken Messages

Several nonverbal symbols have an impact on spoken messages. These symbols are described in Figure 3-1 and in the following paragraphs.

#### Body Language

Body language includes facial expressions and gestures. Interpreting body language is complex. A single motion can have many different meanings.

People can reveal their feelings through various facial expressions. A frown usually indicates negative feelings; a smile, happy feelings. Nervous smiles convey weakness or insecurity.

**Figure 3-1 Nonverbal symbols affect spoken messages.**

NONVERBAL SYMBOLS	
Body language	Facial expressions, gestures, and posture
Touching	Shaking hands, back slapping, placing a hand on someone's shoulder, and hugging
Space	The physical distance between individuals
Time	Being punctual for appointments or completing tasks by the date requested
Paralanguage	Qualities of voice (such as pitch and volume), rate of speech, and actions (such as laughing or sighing)

Eyes provide revealing facial expressions and often are called “the windows of the soul.” Eyes reveal feelings, such as excitement, boredom, and concentration. Eyebrows also send various messages. Raised eyebrows may mean nervousness, surprise, or questioning. Pinched together they may imply confusion or indecision.

Direct eye contact conveys interest, friendship, or confidence. A lack of eye contact may mean disinterest or boredom. In business, the amount of eye contact varies depending on a person’s status. Because subordinates want to tell their supervisors that they like them, they generally make more eye contact.

A **gesture** is the use of your arms and hands to express an idea or feeling. Crossed arms may indicate concentration or withdrawal. A hand placed against the side of the head can imply forgetfulness. Trembling or fidgeting hands sometimes indicate nervousness.

Leaning toward a person who is speaking conveys an open attitude. Nodding confirms listening and sometimes agreement. However, folding your arms or shaking your head from side to side indicates a closed attitude or disagreement.

People use gestures to determine the real meaning in a message. No matter what words you may use, your eyes and your face reveal what your true feelings are. When people attempt to use gestures to deceive or hide the truth, they will undermine the message.

## Touching

A handshake is the most acceptable form of touching for both men and women in the American business environment. It is a gesture used to greet someone and to close a discussion. A person who gives a firm handshake and makes eye contact projects a cordial, confident image. However, a weak, soft



## Diversity

Facial expressions and gestures are very culturally oriented. For example, an Asian generally greets one with a bow of the head; the American offers to shake your hand.



## Ethics

Sexual harassment is an ethical issue because it infringes on personal freedom and can have a demeaning or demoralizing effect on the victim.

handshake suggests listlessness or mental dullness. A cold, wet handshake may indicate nervousness and possibly a feeling of inferiority.

Other forms of touching, such as hugging or backslapping, are generally not acceptable in business. A person of higher rank, however, may put his or her hand on a subordinate's shoulder as a sign of encouragement or support. A coworker could do the same thing with another coworker. A coworker should not put his or her hand on the shoulder of the supervisor. Such action could be considered too familiar. Everyone should avoid touching that could be interpreted as condescending or as sexual harassment.

### Personal Space

One aspect of personal space is the physical distance between individuals. In general, people stand relatively close to people they like. People tend to leave more space between themselves and people they fear or do not like. When unable to arrange space comfortably, as in a crowded elevator, people adjust by using other nonverbal symbols, such as avoiding eye contact. They may stare at the passing floor numbers or remain silent. People avoid speaking or making eye contact in these situations because their territory, or their own space zone, is being violated. The size of this space depends on the activity and the relationships with the other persons involved. Typical space zones for North Americans are shown in Figure 3-2.

#### Key Point

A comfortable personal space zone for talking with colleagues is 18 inches to 4 feet.

The social zone is common for most business meetings or social gatherings. When people converse in their social zone, they have some reason for speaking. If a stranger enters a social zone, people usually break eye contact or turn away. For example, if you notice a stranger as you walk on the sidewalk, you watch the stranger from a distance of about 20 feet. As the stranger approaches, however, you break eye contact. If you speak to a stranger who is within your social zone, you use a formal, businesslike voice.

**Figure 3-2 Use of personal space sends a nonverbal message.**

NONVERBAL SYMBOLS	
Intimate Zone 0 to 18 inches	Comfort zone for talking with close friends or relatives
Personal Zone 18 inches to 4 feet	Comfort zone for talking privately with colleagues and acquaintances
Social Zone 4 to 12 feet	Comfort zone for talking with others at most business meetings or social gatherings
Public Zone 12 feet or more	Comfort zone between a speaker and an audience at a meeting or presentation

Communication between a speaker and an audience is within the public zone. From a distance of more than 12 feet, people may look at each other, but they do not maintain eye contact. Interaction is avoided.

When a coworker stands too close or too far from you, he or she probably thinks your relationship is on a different level than you do. You may think the relationship is on a personal level, but he or she thinks it is on a social level. Consistently standing too close to a coworker could be interpreted as sexual harassment.

In an office setting, the size, location (corner office, distance from the top manager's office, and so forth), and use of space may be a sign of a person's status. Generally, the more spacious a person's office is, the higher the person's status is.

## Time

The use of time is another aspect of nonverbal communication. Suppose someone asks you to do a task as soon as possible. If you complete the action right away, you send a positive message to the other person. Ignoring an urgent request can send a negative message.

In American culture, promptness is considered important. Being on time for a meeting shows your respect for others. In some other cultures, arriving several minutes after a stated time may be considered appropriate.

## Paralanguage

Maybe you have heard the saying, "It's not what you say, but how you say it that counts." **Paralanguage** is the nonverbal symbols that accompany a verbal message and reveal the difference between what is said and how it is said. Paralanguage includes pitch, stress, rate, volume, inflection, rhythm, and pronunciation. It also includes laughing, crying, sighing, grunting, yawning, and coughing. Even silence, pauses, and hesitations are part of paralanguage. Paralanguage is critical to the correct interpretation of a message.

## Key Point

Paralanguage involves how a message is said rather than the words spoken.

### check point 2

1. What are some examples of nonverbal symbols sent in written messages?
2. What are some nonverbal symbols sent in spoken messages?
3. When judging attitudes, do people give more importance to how words are spoken or to the words themselves?

Check your answers in Appendix C.

# Nonverbal Symbols and Your Image

Your nonverbal communications are extremely important. Whether you realize it or not, you use them to establish your image. If you ask yourself, “What kind of worker do others think I am?” you are examining your image. Important aspects of your image are based on level of confidence, friendliness, enthusiasm, sincerity, appearance, eye contact, and posture.

## + Ethics

Showing self-confidence is important for your professional image. However, it is unethical to make claims about your skills or abilities that are not true.

## Level of Confidence

Confidence means trust or freedom from doubt. **Self-confidence** means belief in yourself and your abilities. “No one knows you as well as you do.” Because this statement is true, others use your self-confidence level as a basis for determining your competence and abilities. If others think that you have confidence in yourself, they will believe that you are competent unless you prove otherwise.

## Too Much Self-Confidence

Being too self-confident can hinder your communications and hurt your image. Others may see you as arrogant, inflexible, or a “know it all.” They may think you are unrealistic about your own abilities. They may have serious questions about your ability to work with others or complete tasks. They may wonder whether you have a personality that allows you to learn and grow.

Displaying self-confidence can help you communicate successfully.



## Too Little Self-Confidence

Having too little self-confidence can also hinder communication and hurt your image. If people think you do not believe in yourself, they will question why they should believe in you. Being too nervous in a normal situation shows low self-confidence. This nervousness is reflected by a quivering voice, shaking hands, perspiration, or the inability to think or respond clearly. When people think you are not confident about your message, they will be less likely to believe you.

Negative thinking and unrealistic expectations are two causes of a lack of confidence. Remember that everyone makes mistakes—forgetting details, overlooking things, and so forth. However, people need to feel positive about themselves. No matter who you are, you can make a contribution. Identify your strengths and build on them. Identify your weaknesses and make a plan to improve on them.

## Friendliness

Friendliness is an important aspect of an effective image. **Friendliness** is defined as being supportive, helpful, or kind. When you are cordial, pleasant, or kind to others, they are more likely to respond to you in a positive way. This positive response may make communication easier.

To be perceived as friendly often means that you must focus on the needs of others rather than on your own needs. You send nonverbal messages that say “friend” when you smile, when you have a relaxed approach, and when you desire honest, open feedback.

## Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is an aspect of image that can set you apart from others.

**Enthusiasm** means showing excitement or a lively interest. Real enthusiasm is contagious. When you enthusiastically present your ideas, receivers will sense your enthusiasm and feel positive about those ideas and you. When you are truly excited about an idea and eagerly present it, your feelings spread quickly to others. Smiles, raised eyebrows, and eyes that are wide open and sparkle are nonverbal symbols that show enthusiasm.

## Sincerity

**Sincerity** means being open and genuine or earnest. Being seen as sincere helps you build a positive image. For you to be credible, you must be perceived as sincere—which may take time. Open, honest communication sends a nonverbal message that you are sincere. In order to think that you are sincere, receivers need time to observe you. If your actions and words contrast with one another, you will be viewed as insincere. If they match, you will be considered credible and sincere.



Do you know someone who is phony or insincere? How do you feel about that person? Many unethical people are judged so because they are seen as phony or insincere.

## Key►Point

Your appearance is critical to your image. This does not mean that you should always dress in a formal fashion. Dress appropriately for the particular work or social situation.

## Appearance

Your appearance is critical to your image. It helps to create the first impression others have of you. Proper diet, rest, and exercise can help you maintain a healthy body and present a confident image. Being clean and neatly dressed and wearing clothing and accessories that are tasteful generally create a favorable impression. In addition, your clothing should be appropriate for your work and for your organization. In many businesses, appropriate clothes are conservative in fabric, color, and style. Being poorly groomed or dressed in a way that is not appropriate can create a negative image.

## Eye Contact

Eye contact is one of the most important nonverbal symbols. As already mentioned, eye contact can send a message of confidence, interest, honesty, or sincerity. It can also send a message of the lack of confidence, weakness, boredom, fear, insincerity, or dishonesty.

In one-to-one situations, effective eye contact builds interpersonal trust and confidence in each other. In small-group situations, look each person in the eye, keeping eye contact long enough to give that person a feeling that you are talking with him or her personally. In large-group settings, make sure that you look at individuals in all parts of the room. This action makes members of the group feel that they are being included and not ignored.

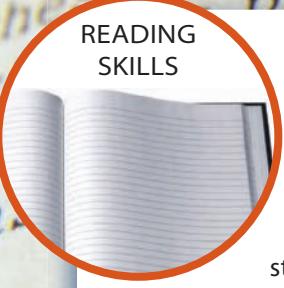
## Posture

**Posture** is the way you stand or sit. It can convey your confidence level or your interest in a situation or topic. Poor posture may be a sign of timidity, laziness, or lack of interest. To project a positive self-image, sit and stand naturally but straight and tall. Sitting or standing erect and leaning in can signal that you are interested in the topic being discussed.

### check point 3

1. What are some nonverbal symbols that affect a person's image?
2. Why is having the right amount of self-confidence important?
3. Why is it important to dress appropriately for your work setting?

Check your answers in Appendix C.



## READING SKILLS

### Reading for Comprehension

Reading comprehension means understanding what you have read. A reader's mental state or physical well-being can affect the ability to focus and to understand a message. To overcome internal barriers when reading:

- Clear your mind of distracting thoughts.
- Attempt to ignore tiredness, minor aches, or physical discomforts.
- Be open to new ideas.
- Avoid letting biases or previous experience prevent you from considering other viewpoints.

Open the Word file *CH03 Reading* from the student data files. Read the message once at a comfortable rate. Without looking at the message, answer the questions about the message. Look at the message again to see if you answered the questions correctly.

## Nonverbal Symbols in the Environment

Characteristics of a physical setting can send nonverbal messages. Furnishings and decor; the arrangement of tables and chairs; the level of lighting, temperature, and sound; and the use of color contribute to the way people feel in a setting.

Furnishings and decor often are a part of a business strategy. For example, in a typical fast-food restaurant, the tables are close together, the lighting is bright, and the seats are molded plastic. The environment is carefully planned to encourage fast turnover of customers. In contrast, a fine restaurant may have a more spacious setting, dim lighting, padded armchairs, fine china, tablecloths, and fresh flowers. This setting encourages diners to linger.

Color establishes a mood within an environment. Soothing colors, such as beige, off-white, or light yellow, are especially suitable where people perform stressful or tedious work. Excessive use of light blue can have a dulling effect, tending to make workers feel sluggish. Red and orange are stimulating colors, appropriate for areas where people spend a short amount of time (a cafeteria, for example) or perform creative work.

### Ethics

Do you think it is ethical for businesses to use color, lighting, and music to influence the behavior of customers? Why or why not?

## Section 3.1 *Applications*

### A. Analyze Speaking Behavior

Robert spoke to his coworker, Sherry, this morning. "Good morning, Sherry," Robert said in a quiet voice as he slouched by Sherry's desk. "I think I can complete the reports you requested by Thursday," he added as he looked down at her with a frowning face. "I will appreciate it if you can get the data to me by this afternoon," Robert said with a sigh as he walked away.

1. What nonverbal symbols were part of Robert's communication with Sherry?
2. Do Robert's nonverbal symbols indicate that he is pleased to prepare the reports Sherry requested? Explain your answer.
3. Rewrite the conversation. Change the nonverbal symbols to alter the meaning of Robert's message to show that he is pleased to help with the reports.



CRITICAL  
THINKING

### B. Identify Nonverbal Symbols in Written Messages

The appearance and correctness of a written document send nonverbal messages to the reader. Writers should consider the appearance of documents as well as the content before sending them to others.

1. Open and print the *Word* file *CH03 Letter* from the student data files.
2. Do you think this document will make a favorable impression on readers? Why or why not?
3. What nonverbal symbols does this document contain?



REAL WORLD

### C. Identify Nonverbal Symbols in the Environment

Aspects of a physical setting can send nonverbal messages. Furniture, the level of lighting, temperature, sound, and the use of color can affect people in the setting.

1. Identify a public setting that you will use for this activity, such as your school cafeteria or a fast-food restaurant.
2. List all the nonverbal symbols you can identify in the setting. Consider furniture, lighting, temperature, sound (music or noise), and colors. Tell how you think each symbol affects people in this setting.

# 3.2 Listening Skills

## The Listening Process

What is the most frequent form of communication—reading, writing, speaking, or listening? If you said listening, you are correct. Research indicates that many people spend more than half of their waking time communicating. Much of this time is spent listening. Managers often spend much of their workday listening. Generally, the higher your position in a company, the more time you may spend listening to others.

The listening process involves hearing, focusing attention, understanding, and remembering. These steps are described in Figure 3-3. Listening also requires noticing nonverbal cues. The speaker's tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions, and posture can add meaning to a message. The following situation provides an example of the steps used in listening.

1. Jose sends a message by speaking to Betty.
2. Betty listens to Jose's words and to the way he uses them. She also watches the nonverbal cues sent by Jose's face, hands, and so forth.
3. Betty analyzes the verbal and nonverbal messages and decides what she thinks Jose is saying.
4. Betty summarizes to Jose what she thinks was his intended message.

### OBJECTIVES

After completing Section 3.2, you should be able to:

1. Explain the listening process.
2. Identify types of listening and describe the reasons for which they are used.
3. List barriers to effective listening.
4. Describe effective listening techniques.

**Figure 3-3 Listening involves hearing and understanding a message.**

THE LISTENING PROCESS	
Hearing	Detecting sounds. In an office, you may hear people talking, telephones ringing, a door closing, or other sounds.
Focusing Attention	Concentrating on the speaker and what he or she says. You must ignore unrelated sounds, background noise, and other distractions.
Understanding	Attaching meaning to the speaker's message.
Remembering	Recalling a message you have seen or heard.

5. Jose decides whether Betty's summary is correct. If Betty is correct, Jose signals that it was correct. If Betty's summary is incorrect, Jose restates the message. At this point, Betty repeats steps 2 through 5. This process is repeated until Jose agrees with Betty's summary.

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1. What activities are involved in the listening process?
2. What is the difference between hearing and listening?

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Types of Listening

### Key Point

People listen to relax, obtain information, express interest, and discover attitudes.

People listen for many reasons—to relax, obtain information, express interest, and discover attitudes. When you listen to music, usually you are listening to relax. Listening to directions for a task, taking part in an interview, and getting feedback from a customer are examples of listening to obtain information. You listen to let people know that you are interested in what they have to say and that they are important. Listening and responding to friends during lunch sends the message that their thoughts and feelings are important to you. Attitudes often are expressed in the nonverbal cues of a message. Alert listeners observe these cues and try to identify the speaker's real feelings.

People use different types of listening when listening for different purposes. The listening may be casual or active.

### Casual Listening

**Casual listening** is hearing and understanding a message but not trying to remember the message in the long term. Casual listening is sometimes called passive listening. Listening while watching a movie or making small talk at lunch are examples of casual listening. The casual listener expends little energy or effort. Although the listener may understand the message, remembering it for a long time is not important. Casual listening is relaxed. When you are talking with others, however, you must be careful not to listen so casually that others think you are not paying attention.

### Active Listening

**Active listening** is hearing and trying to understand and remember a message. It has purpose. Active listening may be informative, evaluative, emphatic, or reflective.



Casual listening is relaxed and involves little energy or effort.

### Informative Listening

**Informative listening** is used to obtain specific information or understand a message. Doctors use informative listening when talking with their patients. Interviewers actively listen to what an applicant says. These are examples of informative listening. Recall a time when you listened very intently because you had something to gain from what was said. You listened actively because you were motivated by your interests.

### Evaluative Listening

**Evaluative listening** involves judging the importance or accuracy of what a speaker is saying. Suppose you listen to a presidential candidate's speech. As you listen, you judge the sincerity and truthfulness of the message. You are using evaluative listening. This type of listening is also called critical listening.

### Key Point

Critical listening involves judging the importance or accuracy of what a speaker says.

### Emphatic Listening

**Emphatic listening** involves trying to understand the speaker's point of view, attitudes, and emotions. The listener is trying to understand something about the person as well as the spoken message. This type of listening can be important in resolving conflicts or disputes. Suppose a customer calls a help support line to complain about a printer that does not work properly. The support person might say, "I understand how disappointing it can be when a new product does not work properly. Let me ask some questions to learn what the problem might be." The support person is showing understanding of the customer's frustrations with the new printer. This understanding makes resolving the problem easier.



## Diversity

Cultural differences make effective listening—understanding and recalling a message—more challenging.

## Reflective Listening

**Reflective listening** involves understanding and restating the speaker's message. A reflective listener responds to the speaker with genuine concern. However, the listener does not try to give a different point of view or judge the speaker or the message. The listener simply lets the speaker know that the message has been understood. The listener may repeat or paraphrase what was said or make statements that reflect the speaker's feelings. This type of exchange is also known as parallel talk. Parallel talk can help the listener understand the speaker and help the speaker clarify thoughts or feelings. A guidance counselor may use reflective listening when talking with a student about career goals. This approach may help the student clarify his or her thoughts about this topic.

### check point 5

1. How is casual listening different from active listening?
2. Describe four types of active listening and give an example of when each type may be used.

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Barriers to Effective Listening

Missing an important appointment, overlooking the feelings behind the words, and interpreting a situation incorrectly are just a few examples of problems that occur because of poor listening. Deafness or a partial hearing loss is a physical barrier to listening. Various other conditions and actions create barriers to good listening. As you read about these barriers, evaluate yourself as a listener.

- **Attitudes About the Speaker.** Attitudes about the speaker can be a barrier to listening. A speaker's appearance, mannerisms, tone of voice, and body language can distract the listener. Poor grammar or inappropriate word choice also can cause individuals to stop listening and mentally criticize the speaker. When listeners let their attitudes be a distraction, they miss what the speaker is saying.
- **Attitudes About the Topic.** "I can't program using C11; programming is too complex." "Oh, insurance! Don't talk to me about that dull subject." Messages that sound technical often intimidate listeners. Uninteresting or boring messages cause people to tune out the speaker. In a similar

manner, listeners often lose patience with messages that are too detailed or too long.

- **Prejudices or Differing Opinions.** Most people have preconceived ideas about certain topics. If a speaker challenges a strongly held belief, the listener may simply tune out the speaker. Often the listener begins preparing a response even before the speaker has finished.
- **Assumptions.** Assumptions made in advance can account for a decline in listening. People often disregard messages when they think they already know the information.
- **Environmental Distractions.** Have you ever attended a luncheon at which the speaker began a presentation while the desserts or beverages were being served? Have you ever tried to finish a conversation with the telephone ringing in the background? If so, you know that unrelated activities and noise can interfere with your ability to listen.
- **Physical Discomfort.** A headache or another temporary physical discomfort can inhibit listening. Room temperature that is too warm or cool can also be distracting.
- **Divided Focus.** Failing to focus on the message hinders effective listening. Worrying about a personal problem or daydreaming about more interesting ideas can cause your mind to wander. Note-taking techniques can create a divided focus. The listener is dividing his or her focus between listening and recording information. While writing notes about one point, the listener may miss the speaker's next point.

## + Ethics

Some people allow prejudices to color their remarks about a person or group. Making unfavorable and untrue remarks about a person or group is unethical.



DIGITAL VISION/GETTY IMAGES

**Worrying about a personal problem can keep you from listening effectively.**

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point  
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1. List eight barriers to effective listening.
2. How can note-taking become a barrier to listening?

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Listening Effectively

Listening affects the quality of your relationships with others. Through listening, you can better understand your own feelings and beliefs, as well as those of others. Friendships thrive when people take the time to understand each other. Likewise, effective listening helps businesses develop an important resource—their employees.

Employees who believe their opinions count develop greater self-esteem. They want to contribute to the organization. Customers who think a company understands and meets their needs will return for future business dealings. Customers who feel ignored will not return.

To be productive, people need to become effective listeners. Understanding the listening process and knowing the barriers to effective listening are not enough. To become a good listener, you must practice good listening habits. Suggestions for improving your listening skills are discussed in the following paragraphs.

### Share the Responsibility

The speaker has most of the responsibility for conveying meaning during the communication process. Listeners have the vital role of attaching meaning to what has been said. People typically talk at a rate of about 100 to 150 words a minute. People can process information mentally at a rate of about 300 to 500 words a minute. Thus, the listener has spare time available. Rather than letting their minds wander, effective listeners use this spare time in ways that increase understanding.

### Focus on the Main Idea

Some speakers develop their points in a disorganized manner, mixing the unimportant with the important. Therefore, to be a good listener, you must be willing to wait for the main idea and not be distracted by unimportant details. Separate fact from opinion. When taking notes, record the main

ideas and enough supporting information to make the main ideas meaningful. Concentrate on the message, not on the speaker's delivery or appearance.

### Evaluate the Message

Compare the speaker's message with the information you already know or believe about the topic. When you have some knowledge of the topic, do not ignore the speaker by assuming you already know what he or she will say. Instead, relate what you already know to what the speaker is saying. Do not judge a speaker until he or she is finished.

Observe the speaker's nonverbal symbols. A natural, relaxed style and good eye contact show that the speaker feels confident about the message. On the other hand, nervous mannerisms may cause you to question the validity of the message.

### Provide Feedback

When you understand the message, smile or nod your head to give the speaker feedback. Feedback tells the speaker that you are listening and that you understand the message. To assure understanding, ask questions, summarize main ideas, paraphrase the message, or restate the message as you understand it. Statements such as, "If I understand you correctly, you mean that . . ." can provide valuable feedback and aid understanding.

### Take Notes

Effective notes can be an important aid to remembering messages. Notes are especially important when you need to remember specifics of a message. For example, you may need to follow spoken instructions for completing a task.

When you take notes, write the main points of the message. Then write supporting details as time allows. Do not become so focused on taking notes that you miss something the speaker is saying. When listening to instructions, ask questions at the appropriate time to be sure you have understood the instructions.



The International Listening Association (ILA) is a professional organization. Its members seek to learn about the impact that listening has on human activity. A link to the Web site for the ILA is provided on the Web site for this book that is shown below. Use that link to go to the ILA site and explore the site.

1. When was ILA formed?
2. In what areas do the members of ILA work?
3. What are some activities of the ILA?

• [www.cengage.com/school/bcomm/buscomm](http://www.cengage.com/school/bcomm/buscomm)

### Key Point

Do not become so focused on taking notes that you miss something the speaker is saying.

When taking notes, you may be writing quickly, and your notes may be somewhat disorganized. Later when time allows, you may want to organize the notes in outline form with details listed under main points. Use phrases, abbreviations, and subject titles rather than complete sentences to save time when taking notes. Later, spell out any abbreviations and add details you think you may have trouble remembering.

Another note-taking technique uses two columns for notes. Main points are written in the left column. Supporting details or questions are written in the right column. Again, save time by using phrases to express your ideas rather than complete sentences.

### Overcome Poor Listening Habits

#### Key Point

Becoming an effective listener requires changing attitudes and habits that result in poor listening.

### Listening in Specific Situations

In the business world, you will find two common listening situations—listening in a small group and listening in a conference setting.

**Figure 3-4 Practice listening skills to become a better listener.**

LISTENING STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find common interests with the speaker or topic.</li><li>• Judge the content—not the delivery—of the message.</li><li>• Delay judgment until the speaker is finished.</li><li>• Listen for the main ideas of the message.</li><li>• Take notes on the important points.</li><li>• Concentrate on listening; stay alert.</li><li>• Avoid or ignore physical and environmental distractions.</li><li>• Listen with an open mind. Do not let prejudices or assumptions cause you to miss the message.</li><li>• Ask questions or give feedback, if appropriate.</li><li>• Review and evaluate or analyze the message after the speaker is finished.</li></ul>



## Diversity

Be aware of cultural differences when communicating in a small group. Appropriate eye contact and desired personal space may vary by culture.

## Listening in a Small Group

When in a small group, all of your communication skills, including your listening skills, are important. Practice active listening. Listen for both ideas and feelings. Use effective eye contact and body language that indicate to others that you are listening. Check your understanding by asking questions or restating ideas as appropriate.

## Listening in a Conference Setting

As an employee, you will continue to learn new skills and information related to your job. You may attend meetings, seminars, or conferences designed to improve your skills and knowledge. In such a setting, you will need to listen effectively in order to learn. Follow these guidelines for taking part in a seminar or conference.

- Clearly understand your reasons for being at the conference. What do you need to learn or accomplish at the conference?
- Choose comfortable seating.
- Choose seating where you can see the speaker and any visual aid that may be used.
- Avoid judging the speaker's subject, ability to present, and appearance before hearing the message.
- Take notes effectively.
- Ask questions when permitted.
- Review the content of your notes and add more details after the session.

### check point 7

1. List four techniques for improving listening skills.
2. Describe two ways to organize notes taken during listening.
3. What steps can you take to practice active listening when in a small group?

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Section 3.2 *Applications*

### A. *Follow Spoken Instructions*

In the workplace, spoken instructions are often given for a task or procedure. In this application, you will practice listening to and following spoken instructions.

1. Listen to instructions for a task read by your instructor. (Instructions are provided in the *Instructor's Manual*.)
2. When listening to the instructions, note the task or procedure to which they apply. Record the main points as they are given.
3. After you have finished listening, add details to your notes. Organize the notes so they will be easy to follow.
4. Ask questions of your instructor to clarify any point you did not understand.
5. Complete the task following the spoken directions and using your notes.

### B. *Analyze Listening Behavior*

Joyce is a customer service associate for a retail company. She is attending a seminar to learn how to use a new software program for her job. The software will allow her to access information to answer customers' questions and to record details of the calls. Joyce has already seen a demo of the software and thinks she probably will not learn anything new. She wishes she did not have to waste her time at the seminar.

As the seminar begins, Joyce notices that the presenter seems nervous. She wonders whether the speaker has much experience with the software. As the seminar continues, Joyce takes notes, trying to record almost everything the speaker says. When the speaker asks whether there are questions, Joyce has several because she missed some points while she focused on taking notes. Because Joyce has so many notes and they are somewhat hard to read, she never puts them into an organized form. When she refers to them later, she has to scan several sections to find the information she needs.

1. What behavior contributed to listening effectively?
2. What behaviors were barriers to effective listening?



CRITICAL  
THINKING

# 3.3 Teamwork

## Workplace Relationships

In the workplace, individuals may have relationships with managers, co-workers, and customers. Knowing your role in each type of relationship is important.

### Employee and Manager Relationships

Most employees, even those who are managers themselves, report to a manager or supervisor. What is your role in your relationship with your manager? What should your manager expect of you? Your manager is in a position of authority. You should respect this authority by being an honest and loyal employee. Your manager should expect that you will do your work to the best of your ability, keep confidential information secure, and support the efforts of your company and workgroup.

Part of keeping a good relationship with your manager is respecting lines of authority in communicating with other employees. For example, suppose you learn about a problem that will affect several people in the company. You may think the problem is too far-reaching for your manager to handle. However, your manager is the person to whom you should give information about the problem. Your manager will, in turn, let her or his manager know about the situation. Thus, the information travels up through the company along lines of authority until it reaches the person who can handle the problem. Suppose a problem or issue affects only a few coworkers or people who report to you. Handling the issue and letting your manager know the action that has been taken would be appropriate.

What can you, an employee, expect of your manager? Your manager should provide you with the appropriate direction and support to do your job well. What this direction consists of will vary from job to job. In some jobs, an employee may receive very detailed instructions for completing tasks. In other jobs, only general instructions may be given with the employee being expected to decide the best way to handle the tasks or projects. Your manager should treat you with respect and give you regular feedback.

### OBJECTIVES

After completing Section 3.3, you should be able to:

1. Identify types of workplace relationships and discuss roles in them.
2. Describe various types of teams and roles of team members.
3. Describe advantages and disadvantages to using workplace teams.
4. Describe techniques for working effectively in teams.

### Ethics

Your manager should not expect you to do anything that is illegal or unethical. If you think that you are being asked to do something illegal, discuss the issue with your manager or an employee advocate in the Human Resources Department.



## Diversity

Be aware of cultural differences when dealing with coworkers. Get to know each person as an individual—not just as part of a group.

about your work and how well you have completed your duties. If you do not receive feedback about your work, tactfully ask your manager how you are doing. Having good feedback may allow you to avoid repeating mistakes and to improve your work in the future. Open and honest communication is essential for good employee and manager relationships.

## Coworker Relationships

A coworker may be considered anyone who works for the same company as you do. You may work closely and regularly with some coworkers. Other coworkers may work with you only occasionally. Follow these guidelines for dealing with coworkers.

- Be fair and honest in your dealings with coworkers. However, remember to keep confidential information secure, even from coworkers.
- Be helpful. If a coworker requests your help with a rush project, give your help if you can do so without creating problems for other projects that have a higher priority.
- Be tactful when communicating with coworkers. If work has errors or must be redone, state this information in a positive and constructive way.
- Acknowledge your mistakes. Do not attempt to hide your mistakes or blame others for your errors.
- Show appreciation and acknowledge good work done by others.
- Try to resolve conflicts with coworkers before the problem becomes serious. A **conflict** is a disagreement or quarrel. Figure 3-5 lists strategies that can help resolve conflicts.

**Figure 3-5 Being able to resolve conflicts is important for coworker relationships.**

### STRATEGIES FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS

- Listen and talk with coworkers to be sure you all have the same information about the situation.
- Identify the real reason or the underlying cause of the conflict.
- Center your discussions on the issues or behaviors involved, not on the people involved. Be tactful.
- Think objectively about your role in the situation. Be willing to admit your mistakes and apologize when you hurt someone's feelings.
- Focus on resolving the problem, not on assigning blame. Discuss possible solutions with coworkers or managers.
- Be willing to do your part to make the proposed solution work.

## Customer Relationships

In some jobs, employees deal with customers or others outside the organization. For example, a teacher may talk regularly with parents of students and develop relationships with them. Communicating effectively is important for developing these relationships. Be honest and respectful in dealing with others. Know your employer's policies and what you are (and are not) allowed to do for customers or other people. The guidelines given earlier for dealing with coworkers also apply to your relationships with customers and others. More about dealing with customers is presented in Chapter 14.

### check point 8

1. List three types of workplace relationships.
2. Describe what a manager should expect of an employee and what an employee should expect of a manager.
3. List five guidelines for dealing with coworkers.

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Workplace Teams

**Teamwork** is two or more people acting together to achieve a goal. Various types of teams are common in the workplace. An employee and a manager may be considered a team. They work together to complete tasks and projects as discussed earlier. The employees in a department of a company, such as the Marketing Department or the Accounting Department, may be considered a team. Their combined efforts accomplish the goals of the department.

Workgroup teams are a trend in American companies. These teams may have members from one or several departments of the company. The goals of the team are related to accomplishing the work of the business. For example, a publishing company may form a team to handle the writing, production, and marketing of a book about how to use a software program. The team may include technical writers, desktop publishers, manufacturing associates, and marketing managers. Each person is part of a different department and reports to a different manager. However, they work together as a team to complete the tasks needed to produce and market the book.

### Key Point

Workgroup teams are a trend in American companies. The goals of the team are related to accomplishing the work of the business.

## Special Teams

Other workplace teams may be organized to accomplish more specific or specialized goals. A team that is set up to work on an ongoing basis is often called a committee. A committee may handle various projects or tasks

**Workplace teams are a trend in American companies.**

BLEND IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES



### Key Point

Workplace teams may be formed to handle an ongoing task or to handle a short-term project.

related to its primary goal. For example, a committee may be formed to deal with employee benefits, such as vacation time and health care insurance. The team members may be from several departments of the company. The goals of the committee may be to identify benefits that the company might offer and to discover which benefits employees need or want. Because the benefits available will change and the employee needs may change, the work of the committee needs to be ongoing.

A project team is formed to handle a specific task or assignment. This type of team typically operates for a set period until its goals are achieved. For example, a project team might be formed to design procedures and training for using a new telephone system the company has installed. Once the procedures are written and the training is complete, the team is no longer needed.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Teams

### Key Point

Synergy is the interaction of people or things that creates or accomplishes more than the sum of the individual efforts or parts.

Using teams to achieve goals can have several advantages. Members of a team bring different skills and knowledge to the group. Team members who work well together often create synergy. This **synergy** allows the team to be more creative and productive than the individuals would be working separately. Team members may be able to help one another if a part of the project is behind schedule or not working as planned. A team with culturally diverse members may be better able to understand the needs of culturally diverse customers.

Using teams to achieve goals can also have disadvantages. If the team is disorganized or the members do not understand their goals or tasks, the team may accomplish little. Poor communication among team members can

also be a problem that limits the team's accomplishments. This situation is especially true for a virtual team. A **virtual team** is one with members who do not share a physical workspace. The members work together using communications technology, such as telephone and e-mail.

### Key Point

Members of a virtual team work in different locations and communicate by telephone, e-mail, or other means.

#### check point 9

1. List three types of workplace teams.
2. Describe advantages and disadvantages of using workplace teams.

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Working Effectively in Teams

Effective workplace teams do not just happen. Team members must be selected who have the skills and knowledge needed to accomplish the goals of the team. Once the team is formed, the team members may need to learn about each other. The team needs to know the skills and experiences of each member. Some teams may be formed of employees who have worked together in the past. These team members have the advantage of knowing each other from the beginning. Workgroup teams whose members are of about the same rank in the company are known as peer group teams. Other teams may include people of different ranks. One person is typically identified as the team leader. This person may or may not be the one of the highest rank.

### Team Roles

To be successful, a team has several roles that must be filled. Teams are made up of individuals who have different skills and backgrounds. Each person who is part of a team fulfills some sort of role on that team. Figure 3-6 describes those roles and how each one contributes to the team. Aside from the leader and the recorder, these roles are usually not assigned. However, most groups include people who naturally assume these positions. Some people may fill more than one role or may fill different roles at different times.

### Learning to Work Together

Learning how to work together is the most challenging part of team development. It begins with establishing ground rules and procedures. For example, the team may decide to hold meetings on a regular schedule and to call additional meetings to discuss critical issues. Members may determine that only one person can talk at a time, with no side discussions, and that



### Diversity

Teams are made up of individuals who have different skills and backgrounds. This can make the team more creative and productive.

**Figure 3-6 Team members assume different roles to ensure team success.**

TEAM ROLES	
Leader	This person makes sure all members understand the goals of the team and their tasks and duties.
Challenger	This person tries to improve the team's methods or plans by asking questions and offering new ideas.
Doer	This person keeps the team focused on its goals and tasks.
Thinker	This person carefully considers other members' ideas and makes tactful suggestions.
Supporter	This person eases tensions and helps members have a good working relationship.
Recorder	This person keeps a written record of the team's meetings and plans.

the content of meetings is confidential. The team leader should encourage all team members to take part in discussions.

The team members need to understand how decisions will be made. On some teams, such as peer group teams, the members may discuss options and reach a consensus or agreement. On other teams, members work together and make suggestions regarding decisions. However, the leader may be a person of higher rank. The leader may make final decisions after considering comments from the team members. Once decisions are made in whatever manner, all team members should support the decisions.

### Key Point

In some teams, decisions are reached by consensus. In other teams, the leader makes decisions with input from team members.

## Guidelines for Team Success

Workplace teams are formed for many reasons and have many different goals. Communicating openly and tactfully is one of the most important guidelines for the success of any team. Other guidelines that can help team members work together effectively are stated in the following list.

- Identify the goals of the team. State clearly what the team plans to accomplish. State how the team will know when the goals are achieved.
- Determine tasks or steps needed to accomplish the goals. The team may need to break large tasks into small parts.
- Identify resources needed to complete the tasks. Get any approvals that are needed before proceeding.
- Assign duties and tasks to team members. Set times for when each task should be accomplished.
- Communicate regularly with team members about the progress of tasks.

### Key Point

Team members should identify resources needed and get any needed approvals before committing to tasks.

- Resolve conflicts that arise. (See Figure 3-5 on page 90.) Do not let prejudice and assumptions that may be incorrect hinder communication.
- Brainstorm ideas for solving problems that arise. Figure 3-7 gives basic steps for solving a problem.
- Evaluate procedures. Periodically, look at how the work has progressed. Individual team members should reflect on the procedures used and ways to improve them. The team should consider how well the members work together and how procedures and relationships can be improved.
- Celebrate success. When significant parts of the project or an entire project is completed, recognize efforts of group members.

#### OCCUPATIONAL SUCCESS



## Leadership

**Leadership** is providing guidance and inducing others to act. It is a vital skill that companies seek in employees. Leadership is important for managers and for employees in many non-management positions.

Some people are more naturally prone to be leaders than others. However, leadership skills can be developed. Good leaders have these qualities:

- Leaders are committed to their work. They show discipline and initiative.
- Leaders have integrity. They are honest and live by high ethical standards.
- Leaders are enthusiastic. They take on assignments and tackle problems eagerly.
- Leaders have self-confidence and inspire others to trust them.
- Leaders care about others. They have good communication and teamwork skills.

A good way to begin building your leadership skills is by joining career-related student organizations. One organization for high school students is FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America). By taking part in organizations like FBLA, you learn to work with others, set goals, improve communication skills, and build self-confidence. Many student organizations provide information about their goals on a Web site. Search the Internet using the term *student organization* and a career area (such as *nursing*) to find groups that interest you.

**Figure 3-7 Following logical steps can help teams solve problems.**

PROBLEM-SOLVING STEPS
1. Identify the problem. Write a statement that clearly describes the problem.
2. Describe effects of the problem. What situations or behaviors are occurring because of the problem?
3. Brainstorm ideas for how to solve the problem. At this stage, record all ideas without spending time evaluating them.
4. Evaluate the possible solutions. Identify the one that seems most practical and most likely to solve the problem.
5. Test the solution. Apply the proposed solution for the problem.
6. Evaluate the results. Is the problem solved satisfactorily? If not, evaluate and test other possible solutions.

## Standout Team Members

### Key Point

Each team member should do his or her best to make the team successful.

Some teams you belong to will be effective and some will not. Many facets of a team are outside your control, but your own attitudes and actions are within your control. Strive to be a good team member and have a professional attitude. Your positive example is likely to help the team improve. Follow these guidelines for being a good team member.

- Set aside personal goals and focus on the team's goals.
- Do your work as well as you can. Be reliable and responsible.
- Contribute your ideas and opinions to team discussions.
- Find roles that you can fill and be ready to step into other roles, including leadership roles, when you are needed.
- Be supportive of your team members. Keep the team's affairs confidential.
- Do not take it personally when others disagree with you or criticize your ideas.

check  
point  
10

1. List guidelines teams can follow to help them be successful.
2. List things you can do as a team member to contribute to team success.

Check your answers in Appendix C.

## Section 3.3 **Applications**

### A. **Participate in a Group Discussion**

1. Work in a team with three or four other students to complete this activity.
2. As a team, select a current business topic and ask your instructor to approve your choice. Identify one or two questions related to the topic that the team will consider. Examples of topics and questions are listed below.
  - What *green* (or *greening*) practices are being used by businesses? Are they really beneficial to the environment? to the business?
  - Is the U.S. economy currently growing stronger or weaker? What indicators support your position?
  - Is the use of telecommuting for employees increasing or decreasing? What are the advantages of telecommuting to a company? to the employee?
3. Use the Internet or other resources to do research on the selected topic. Read articles from magazines, newspapers, or the Internet. Each team member should do research independently.
4. Discuss the selected topic with team members. Share the information you have found with the group. Give your position on the topic, making your points tactfully.
5. Reach a consensus on the answers to the questions posed about the topic. Key the questions and answers your team has discussed.



TEAMWORK



INTERNET



REAL WORLD

### B. **Evaluate Workgroup Procedures**

Jason Roberts has been part of a workgroup team for four months. The team's primary goal is to develop a marketing plan for a new product. Tami Wong, a marketing manager, typically assumes the leadership role in the team. However, the team has not formally identified a leader. The team members meet twice a month. They discuss ideas for how to sell and advertise the product. Team members have volunteered to do research or other tasks. Jason and two other team members have reported on their progress. Others have said they have not yet had time to do their part of the project. The deadline for completing the marketing plan is only two months away, and much work remains to be done. Clearly, the team needs to evaluate its methods.

1. What questions should Jason consider as part of a self-evaluation of his work with the team?
2. What suggestions could Jason make to the team members for improving the way the team functions?

# Chapter **Summary**

## **3.1 Nonverbal Communication**

- Nonverbal communication is composed of the messages sent without or in addition to words. Nonverbal symbols may reinforce, contradict, regulate, or substitute for verbal symbols.
- Nonverbal symbols, such as body language and use of personal space, and their meanings differ among cultures.
- The appearance and correctness of a written document can send critical nonverbal messages.
- Important aspects of your image are conveyed by nonverbal symbols.
- Characteristics of a physical setting, such as furnishings and color, can send nonverbal messages.

## **3.2 Listening Skills**

- The listening process involves hearing, focusing attention, understanding, and remembering.
- People use different types of listening when listening for different purposes. The listening may be casual or active.
- Active listening may be informative, evaluative, emphatic, or reflective.
- Deafness or a partial hearing loss is a physical barrier to listening. Various other conditions and actions create barriers to good listening.
- To become a good listener, you must practice good listening habits.

## **3.3 Teamwork**

- In the workplace, individuals may have relationships with managers, coworkers, and customers.
- Teamwork is two or more people acting together to achieve a goal. Various types of teams are common in the workplace.
- Team members should be selected who have the skills and knowledge needed to accomplish the goals of the team.
- Communicating openly and tactfully is one of the most important guidelines for team success.
- Individuals should strive to be good team members and have a professional attitude.

## Vocabulary

Open the *Word* file *CH03 Vocabulary* from the student data files. Complete the exercise to review the vocabulary terms from this chapter.

active listening	nonverbal communication
casual listening	paralanguage
conflict	personal space
emphatic listening	posture
enthusiasm	reflective listening
evaluative listening	self-confidence
friendliness	sincerity
gesture	synergy
informative listening	teamwork
leadership	virtual team

## Critical Thinking Questions

1. What nonverbal symbols can you use to help create a positive professional image?
2. When listening to a speaker, what may be the result of taking too few notes? of taking too many notes?
3. Of the four parts of listening—hearing, focusing, understanding, and remembering—which is most important? Why?
4. Why is self-reflection by each team member about his or her performance important for team success? Why is peer evaluation of the performance of team members important for team success?
5. How important is following the guidelines for effective teamwork to completing group projects? to making group decisions? Why? What may happen if one or more of the guidelines is not followed? Give examples.



CRITICAL  
THINKING

# Chapter **Applications**

## A. **Casual and Active Listening**

Identify the type of listening demonstrated in each situation.

1. A career counselor is listening to a student discuss career goals. The counselor uses parallel talk to help the student clarify goals.
2. Several people are watching and listening to a movie.
3. An employee is listening to a manager give instructions for a task.
4. Jury members are listening to a witness testify about actions of an alleged robber.
5. Adam and Elena are discussing a problem related to work. Adam is listening and trying to understand Elena's point of view.

## B. **Conflict Resolution**

Betty and Joe work in the same office. Betty, Joe, and several other employees share a network printer. Betty is working on a report that her manager needs by noon. She finishes keying the report at 11:15 a.m. and sends it to the printer. She thinks she will have plenty of time to proofread the report, make corrections, and print a final copy by 11:45 a.m.

Betty goes to the printer to get the report. "Oh, no!" she exclaims. "The printer is out of paper again. I just filled it an hour ago." Betty refills the paper tray, and printing resumes. However, it is not her report that is printing but a technical manual that contains 250 pages. Betty looks at the printer cue and sees that Joe is the person who sent this document to the printer. Storming over to Joe's desk, Betty angrily says, "Joe, how do you expect anyone else to get any work done when you keep hogging the printer and never refill the paper tray?" Joe calmly says, "Betty, I don't know what you are talking about, but I don't like your tone. Perhaps we should discuss this matter after you calm down."

1. Do Joe and Betty have the same information or understanding of the situation? Why or why not?
2. What is the underlying cause of the conflict?
3. How could Betty have tactfully brought the problem to Joe's attention?
4. Is Betty objectively considering her role in the situation? Explain your answer.
5. Should Betty apologize to Joe for her angry comments?
6. What are some possible solutions you could suggest for resolving this conflict?

### C. Team Behavior

Every team is different, depending on the personalities and styles of its individual members. What is it that makes one team productive and another not productive? Read the following profiles of two teams. Look for similarities and differences between the two teams.

#### TEAM 1

The members of Team 1 hum along in their daily tasks without much fanfare. They pass work back and forth to each other, verify information by telephone, or work in pairs on specific projects—all with little wasted effort.

Team 1 members know what they do well and what other members do well. When they meet, they are relaxed. They accomplish work easily and laugh a lot. The team's results have had a visible impact on company performance. In a crisis, Team 1 rallies to do what it takes to accomplish the immediate goal, but its everyday functioning is not in "crisis mode." People find being on this team satisfying. Other employees wish they could be part of Team 1.

#### TEAM 2

Team 2 members work hard. They seem to be in meetings every day. They have motivating team slogans on the wall. However, they often leave meetings angry, frustrated, or disgusted. When team members get together in pairs, they spend time blaming others for the team's failures and do not get much accomplished. Several members have approached their supervisor about having one of the team members removed.

1. What are the similarities between Team 1 and Team 2?
2. What are the differences between Team 1 and Team 2?
3. What can Team 2 do to become more productive?

### Editing Activity

Open and edit the *Word* file *CH03 Editing* from the student data files. Correct all spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors.

## CASE STUDY

### Listening Behavior

You have an acquaintance named Wilson. You have known him for more than ten years. He feels very close to you and considers you a good friend. However, you do not feel the same way about him. One of the reasons that you do not feel close to him is that he is always talking and never listens to you. Even when he does let you talk, his mind seems to wander. He seems to be thinking about what he will say next. At times, he seems to think he knows what you are going to say and does not want to hear your comments.

Wilson has commented that he cannot listen to people who are dressed strangely or have annoying habits. You wonder what he says about you when talking with others. Probably his most irritating trait is his inability to agree. If you say "yes," he says "no;" if you say "no," he says "yes."

Wilson has just been fired from his second job in three months. The same reason was given each time: "You do not listen." In a moment of humility, he approaches you as his friend and asks, "Am I really a bad listener? If I am, how can I learn to listen better?" He sincerely wants you to be honest with him.

1. What would you tell Wilson about his listening behavior?
2. What specific suggestions would you give Wilson to help him improve his listening skills?

## CAREER CASE STUDY



### Communication in Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security

Shane Correa is especially excited to go to work today. Shane is a new police detective, and he solved his first crime yesterday. He and his partner, Lee Park, solved a bank robbery case.

A local bank was robbed two days ago. Mid-afternoon is the time when tellers usually have the most money in their cash drawers. The robbery occurred at 2:15 p.m. The robber got away with \$48,556 in cash.

Shane suspected that the robbery was an "inside job" because of the timing of the robbery. Sheila, one of the bank tellers, seemed very nervous when she was questioned about the robbery. She sat tensely in the chair, tapped her pencil, and perspired heavily. She also seemed hesitant when answering questions and would not make eye contact. Shane's partner, Lee had noticed the same things. He commented to Shane that Sheila seemed unusually nervous when she was being questioned.

Because of their suspicions, Shane and Lee examined Sheila's background. They quickly discovered that Sheila's boyfriend had a criminal record and had spent some time in prison for robbery. When looking at the bank's tapes of the robbery, they recognized the robber as Sheila's boyfriend. Sheila and her boyfriend had planned the robbery together. Today, Shane will fill out the paperwork on the case so that charges can be filed against the couple.

1. What role did nonverbal communication play in solving the case?
2. What role did teamwork play in solving the case?
3. Do you think listening and observing nonverbal cues are important in law enforcement? Why or why not?



## Chapter 3 Answers

### Checkpoint 1

1. Nonverbal symbols may reinforce, contradict, or substitute for verbal symbols. They may also regulate the verbal part of a message.
2. Answers will vary. An example answer is given here.

You may say, "That's fine." However, if your voice is strained and you look away from the receiver, your behavior indicates that you are not in agreement.

### Checkpoint 2

1. The appearance and correctness of a written document send critical nonverbal messages. Color, pictures, graphics, and errors can also send nonverbal messages in a written document.
2. Examples of nonverbal symbols sent in spoken messages include body language, touching, space, time, and paralanguage.
3. When judging attitudes, people often give more importance to how words are spoken than to the words themselves.

### Checkpoint 3

1. Important aspects of your image are based on level of confidence, eye contact, friendliness, enthusiasm, sincerity, and appearance.
2. Having the right amount of self-confidence is important because having too much or too little confidence can hurt your image.
3. Your clothing should be appropriate to your work setting because being poorly groomed or dressed in a way that is not appropriate can create a negative impression.

### Checkpoint 4

1. The listening process involves hearing a message, focusing attention on the message, understanding the message, and remembering the message.
2. Hearing is simply detecting sounds. Listening involves hearing and also focusing attention, understanding, and remembering.

### Checkpoint 5

1. Casual listening involves hearing and understanding a message but not trying to remember the message in the long term. Active listening is hearing and trying to understand and remember a message. Active listening may be informative, evaluative, emphatic, or reflective.
2. Four types of active listening are given in the following list.
  - Informative listening is used to obtain specific information or understand a message. Doctors use informative listening to learn about their patients.
  - Evaluative listening involves judging the importance or accuracy of what a speaker is saying. Listening to a presidential candidate's speech is an example of evaluative listening.
  - Emphatic listening involves trying to understand the speaker's point of view, attitudes, and emotions. A support associate listening to a customer's complaint is an example of emphatic listening.
  - Reflective listening involves understanding and restating the speaker's message. A guidance counselor may use reflective listening when talking with a student about career goals.

### Checkpoint 6

1. Eight barriers to effective listening are listed below.
  - Deafness or a partial hearing loss
  - Attitudes about the speaker
  - Attitudes about the topic
  - Prejudices or differing opinions
  - Assumptions made about the message
  - Environmental distractions
  - Physical discomfort
  - Divided focus
2. Note-taking techniques can create a divided focus. The listener is dividing his or her focus between listening and recording information. While writing notes about one point, the listener may miss the speaker's next point.

### Checkpoint 7

1. Four techniques for improving listening skills include:
  - Focus on the main idea
  - Evaluate the message

- Provide feedback
  - Take notes
- Notes taken during listening can be organized in an outline with main points followed by details. Notes can also be organized in two columns with main ideas on the left and supporting details on the right.
  - To practice active listening in a small group, listen for both ideas and feelings. Use effective eye contact and body language that indicate to others that you are listening. Check your understanding by asking questions or restating ideas as appropriate.

### **Checkpoint 8**

- Workplace relationships include employee and manager relationships, coworker relationships, and customer relationships.
- A manager is in a position of authority. You should respect this authority by being an honest and loyal employee. Your manager should expect that you will do your work to the best of your ability, keep confidential information secure, and support the efforts of your company and workgroup. Part of keeping a good relationship with your manager is respecting lines of authority in communicating with other employees.  
Your manager should provide you with the appropriate direction and support to do your job well. Your manager should treat you with respect and give you regular feedback about your work and how well you have completed your duties. Your manager should not expect you to do anything that is illegal or unethical.
- Follow these guidelines for dealing with coworkers.
  - Be fair and honest in your dealings with coworkers. However, remember to keep confidential information secure, even from coworkers.
  - Be helpful. If a coworker requests your help with a rush project, give your help if you can do so without creating problems for other projects that have a higher priority.
  - Be tactful when communicating with coworkers. If work has errors or must be redone, state this information in a positive and constructive way.
  - Acknowledge your mistakes. Do not attempt to hide your mistakes or blame others for your errors.
  - Show appreciation and acknowledge good work done by others. Try to resolve conflicts with coworkers before the problem becomes serious.

### **Checkpoint 9**

- Workplace teams may include:
  - Manager and employee teams
  - Department teams
  - Workgroup teams
  - Special teams or committees
- Using teams to achieve goals can have several advantages. Members of a team bring different skills and

knowledge to the group. Team members who work well together often create a synergy and are more creative and productive than the individuals would be working separately. Team members may be able to help one another if a part of the project is behind schedule or not working as planned. A team with culturally diverse members may be better able to understand the needs of culturally diverse customers.

Using teams to achieve goals can also have disadvantages. If the team is disorganized or the members do not understand their goals or tasks, the team may accomplish little. Poor communication among team members can also be a problem that limits the team's accomplishments.

### **Checkpoint 10**

- Guidelines teams can follow to help them be successful are listed below.
  - Identify the goals of the team. State clearly what the team plans to accomplish. State how the team will know when the goals are achieved.
  - Determine tasks or steps needed to accomplish the goals. The team may need to break large tasks into small parts.
  - Identify resources needed to complete the tasks. Get any approvals that are needed before proceeding.
  - Assign duties and tasks to team members. Set times for when each task should be accomplished.
  - Communicate regularly with team members about the progress of tasks.
  - Resolve conflicts that arise. Do not let prejudice and assumptions that may be incorrect hinder communication.
  - Brainstorm ideas for solving problems that arise.
  - Evaluate procedures. Periodically, look at how the work has progressed. Individual team members should reflect on the procedures used and ways to improve them. The team should consider how well the members work together and how procedures and relationships can be improved.
  - Celebrate success. When significant parts of the project or an entire project is completed, recognize efforts of group members.
- Things you can do as a team member to contribute to team success are listed below.
  - Set aside personal goals and focus on the team's goals.
  - Do your work as well as you can. Be reliable and responsible.
  - Contribute your ideas and opinions to team discussions.
  - Find roles that you can fill and be ready to step into other roles, including leadership roles, when you are needed.
  - Be supportive of your team members. Keep the team's affairs confidential.
  - Do not take it personally when others disagree with you or criticize your ideas.