

Paul English
COMM 1010-003
Shirene McKay
May 7, 2013

Personal Change Progress Report

1 Competency Area

Interpersonal Interest: This dimension assesses the extent to which you are likely to initiate and maintain friendship with people who might be different from you. It also measures how inclined you are to actively seek out others, as well as your ability to engage them in interesting conversation ("GCI").

2 Goal

I would like to improve my interpersonal interest by seeking out other acquaintances who I might not normally befriend or connect with. Specifically I would like to find interests outside of class work with at least one individual in my classes this semester.

3 Chapter 5: Identity and Intercultural Communication

3.1 Tactic

I plan to focus on learning more about the identity of the people I work and interact with on a regular basis by asking honest questions that may help me learn about their identity. Identity is described as who we are and who other people think we are ("Martin, and Nakayama" 170). By asking questions about identity, I can learn more about them, I can adjust my perspective about their identities, and my own.

3.2 Implementation

By asking what kind of culture do they belong too, or asking about choices they've made that might seem curious we can learn more about the one or many identities that build up into the behaviors that make them who they are. Do they have strong personal identity? Are they from a culture that gives them a lot of influence? Are they from a differing region or are they of a different ethnicity? I had a chance to talk to a few of my coworkers and learn a bit more about their identity and who they perceive themselves as.

3.3 Recommendations

Keeping a strong interest in the identity of others usually requires more than just guesses based on externally observable stereotypes, and although these can help be good indicators for particular identity connections early on, deep relationships require more information to get to know what

affects a person's identity. In the future continuing to have an active interest in people, can help improve my understanding of others' identity.

4 Chapter 6: Language and Intercultural Communication

4.1 Tactic

As language is considered to be closely tied to our identities and the identities we perceive in others, I plan to pay attention to the language people use as a way of getting to know them or the culture they belong to ("Martin, and Nakayama" 224). Specifically try to understand or ask about high-context or low-context communication when I recognize examples of it.

4.2 Implementation

Recognizing high context communication is a bit of a trick when your goal is to inquire about it. The whole point of the high context communication is not having to dull yourself with the details or intricacies, and still be able to make a point. Still clarifying or asking about high-context details helps to understand how a person uses language or the world around them to communicate and how they wish to be perceived. When at work I noticed that some coworkers used high-context communication amongst others' teammates. I monitored my language, and then tried to recognize what kind of communication I used most frequently.

4.3 Recommendations

It's important not to over-represent a person's use of language, it's easy to apply meaning that may or may not actually be there to conversations you're having. Some people may in fact use a lot of metaphor, and have subtle overt meaning in their language and behavior. Others may seem like they are a high-context communicator, when in fact they may not have additional meaning to attach to the words they say.

5 Chapter 7: Nonverbal Codes and Cultural Space

5.1 Tactic

Simply displaying an obvious non-verbal action can illicit a non-verbal response in many cases, including smiling regularly. By smiling a few times a day even just in passing, while working, or in brief encounters I can gain information about the non-verbal styles of those around me. If people find the act unexpected and interpret it positively they are likely to regard the situation in a favorable manner based on the expectancy violations theory ("Martin, and Nakayama" 277).

5.2 Implementation

Simply working to share my feelings through smiling or telling outside reactions. Greeting friends and coworkers, or in making new introductions I make sure to either smile or be receptive

to the other person. Likewise it's important to listen to the non-verbal queues that others around you might share, and act appropriately. I asked about some of the non-verbal cues that friends had shown, to see what or if they recognized what they were doing. I was in general happier, and more noticeable while smiling.

5.3 Recommendations

Non-verbal communication can be wildly important in our interactions with others, however we can't always just shrug and gesture our way into a happy or successful life, so it's important to augment non-verbal communication with clear understood communication, often verbal, as well. By doing so we help to prevent misrepresentations of how we feel, or how we receive others.

6 Works Cited

Martin, Judith N., and Thomas K. Nakayama. "Culture, Communication, and Intercultural Relationships." *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*. 6th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 391. Print.

GCI, Communication 2150 Course Readings. SLCC, Spring 2013.