

M1D2: Who Do You See in the Mirror

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COM115: Interpersonal Communication

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Abstract

Overview

Identifying our flaws and weaknesses can be hard. Ultimately though, we can never improve unless we first figure out what we are doing wrong.

Earlier this module, you researched effective interpersonal communication and created a list of important skills.

Now, you will analyze your own communication abilities and use this information to create a plan to work on the areas in which you need to improve. For example, reflect upon King George in the movie clip referenced in Module 1 Discussion 1. He is very aware of his stutter, which is the first step toward solving the problem.

This is your opportunity to be honest and open with yourself so you can identify interpersonal skills you want to improve and practice improving your interpersonal skills throughout the course. You know what they say: practice makes perfect!

You should spend approximately 3.5 hours on this assignment.

M1D2: Who Do You See in the Mirror**Initial Post****Instructions**

1. Using the list of skills of effective interpersonal communicators that you developed in Module 1 Discussion 1, rank your current ability on each skill.
2. Use this ranking system to rank your current ability:
 - (a) I never use this skill/I am poor at this skill
 - (b) Rarely
 - (c) Sometimes
 - (d) Most of the time
 - (e) Always
3. Consider the items you ranked as 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. How important are those traits in your life? Why are they important or unimportant?
4. Be honest with yourself! Only you will see your personal rankings; therefore, do not share your rankings in the Main post.
5. In your Main post, list two (2) interpersonal communication skills you will commit to work on improving during the length of our class (and beyond). Explain why you have chosen these two interpersonal communication skills, using information from your rankings and your subjective determination of their importance to you. Include some preliminary ideas for how you will improve these traits, both in your personal life and professional life (if applicable).
6. Next, read and comment on the Main post of two classmates. What suggestions can you make to help them achieve their goals?

- Remember that these feedback posts should contain useful and friendly suggestions using a positive communication tone; you are not attempting to “fix” anything for your classmates.
 - Use “I” statements rather than “You” statements. For example: “I have found that talking in a calm voice is essential to resolving conflict”.
 - Be respectful! Follow the Golden Rule by treating others the way you would like to be treated.
 - Remember to read and fully comply with the Netiquette Guide found in the Syllabus section.
7. Now, go out and have fun while practicing improvement of the two interpersonal communication skills you chose to improve. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** It is very important to keep track of what you practice, when you practice (time and date), who you practiced with, what strategies you used when you practice, and the outcome of that practice. Keep track in a Word document. Why? Next week you will begin adding your practice results, saved in a Word document, as an attachment to the Main Post of Discussion 2 Assignments. I enthusiastically look forward to reviewing your practice results appearing in the Word document. Appearing below is a link to a sample of how to format and enter entries in a practice log. The practice will be updated each week!

How I rank Myself With Previously Mentioned Interpersonal communication skills

In the last discussion I had trouble coming up with five interpersonal communication skills, and thus I only had three. Below is how I would rank myself against these three skills as described by the discussion prompt.

1. *A Strong Hold on Psychological Context*

- ☒ I never use this skill/I am poor at this skill
- ☒ Rarely
- ☒ Sometimes
- ☒ Most of the time
- ☒ Always

2. *Enter Every Conversation with the intention to understand, rather than with the intention to reply*

- ☒ I never use this skill/I am poor at this skill
- ☒ Rarely
- ☒ Sometimes
- ☒ Most of the time
- ☒ Always

3. *Effectively Utilize Silence*

- ☒ I never use this skill/I am poor at this skill
- ☒ Rarely
- ☒ Sometimes
- ☒ Most of the time
- ☒ Always

Personally Selected Skills for Improvement

I chose to work on the skills involving a stronger hold on psychological context as well as listening with more of an intent to understand, rather than with the intent to respond. I believe these are both very important skills I tend to lack more-often-than-not. I also am fully aware that I tend to try to seem more like an expert on everything I talk about, rather than trying to learn instead. I think it's because rather than viewing the conversation as an educational opportunity I would view it in a more "business-connection" focused sense. I also tend to say more than is needed, whereas the Ted Talks we viewed described the preference of being more concise.

I feel the best way to improve these skills in which I lack would be to simply *talk less*. This also goes as far as to stop immediately thinking of how what someone is telling me relates to my own life and ask questions even if I already have the prior knowledge as someone may have some that I do not.

Responses

Response 1

The two interpersonal communication skills that I would like to improve are assertive self-expression, and being able to adapt my messages to account for the unique perspective of the other person.

Improving my assertive self-expression is important to me because I am not really able to express my needs during a one-on-one conversation. I tend to think more about the other person and their feelings, rather than my own. I have a really hard time saying “no”, making requests, and sharing my negative feelings. For those reasons, I do end up getting walked all over, in some cases. This is especially prevalent in my work life, as I always let people leave before me and end up staying there very late. All in all, I am just bad at being honest with my co-workers and boss, and expressing my true feelings. I want to be able to stick up for myself when I need to. In both my personal and work life I plan on gradually adjusting the way I phrase things and how I display them. I will practice saying no, rehearsing what it is I want to say, using body language, and starting small and working my way up. I know this skill is going to take me a while to get good at, so I will have to begin using the ideas mentioned before, and start incorporating them in my daily life.

Being able to adapt my messages for each unique individual is something I am keen on working on, because it will allow for my message to be interpreted as intended. I want to be able to read the person I am conversing with, so I can accommodate to their experiences and perspectives, to further the discussion. I don't think I am the worst at doing this, but it is definitely something I want to improve on. Some preliminary ideas I have about honing in on this skill is to first get to know the person. Understanding where people come from and how they came to be who they are today, is the key to having a deep and meaningful conversation. Analyzing everyone's personality will also help me, there are different approaches to interaction when someone is, let's say, more serious

versus some who is more laid back. Improving on both these skills is going to be something that is essential in not only my personal life, but my work life, and my future as well.

This is a response to Kristyna Sekera on Post ID 43177567. I definitely see how it is difficult to assert your own beliefs with the fear of how others will see you once said. It is much easier just to “smile and nod”, so to speak. I saw this everyday when I was still in a customer facing role in my industry, where female budtenders where subjugated to rude, sexist, and more-often-than-not vulgar, comments. In the face of this situation usually another team member on the sales floor would find some sort of excuse to remove her from the situation and take over the sale, banning customers who failed to comply after some arbitrary rule the Human Resources department made up. I believe that if more of us were to master this skill we would have a brighter perception of our personal quality of life and relationships since not every conversation will include “settling” without expressing one’s own opinion.

Responses

Response 2

The reason for taking this class was to see where my communication flaws were, and I don't like what they are. However, I want to advance in my career. I want to be closer to my son, and I want people to know it's easy to communicate with me. I was a teacher for 14 years, and it was easy because I taught a subject, Life and Physical Science, I love. It was easy for me, but it may not have been easy for my students. Now, I teach new employees on the unit. I always have great reviews, but not so great reviews as a coworker. I have a great quality which is being direct, but my delivery needs work. For instance, my delivery could use more and better eye contact with direct communication. I have a tendency to show my emotions in my face that are not favorable, and I'm not proud of it. For instance, the charge nurse is new and unfamiliar with things. Another nurse called to ask her for help calling a doctor, and the charge nurse said she would help. The charge nurse hung up the phone, and stated that she didn't know how to do it. I happened to be near, turned to her, and gave a face that stated "what". The charge nurse looked down. I felt bad. So I apologized for the look on my face, and stated I would help her know how to call a doctor. Later, we talked about how that situation was never brought to her before, but everyone on the floor needs to show compassion and patience with her. Afterwards, I went to the nurse that called her, and I instructed her what to do as well. It was a simple solution in the end. So instead of frowning or making a face at someone, maybe I can ask an open ended question to understand the situation better, and then I can have input on how to make things better.

I carry a list with me almost always. It may be a list of groceries, a to-do list around the house, or a to-do list for work. It's how I keep my thoughts organized. For the items on the list, I can multitask those to complete duties assigned. When someone wants to add to the list while I'm multitasking, I'm less receptive. I say sometimes, "walk and talk". It reads rude as I write it, but at the time it's

happening it doesn't. I want to learn to stop for just a second to listen, but I feel I will get out of rhythm and things will get chaotic. Things won't get chaotic, but I still feel that way. When a coworker and my brother stops to listen to me talk, it seems so easy and effortless, and it makes me feel good. Respected. They are confident, and I can tell. Hence, I have a plan. If I'm in the zone, I can ask the person to wait just a second so I can stop, grab paper and pencil, and begin to listen.

Learning these communicative skills will definitely put me at the top, and, undoubtedly, be the hardest things I will ever learn to do in five weeks.

This is a response to Diata Hart on Post ID 43188941. Placeholder.