

M2D2: Improving YOUR Interpersonal Communication Skills

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COM115: Interpersonal Communication

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Abstract

Overview

In Module 1 you committed to becoming a better interpersonal communicator. In each module, we will check in to see how those efforts are proceeding. In this module, you will report on how your practice has progressed so far.

You should spend approximately 4 hours on this assignment.

M2D2: Improving YOUR Interpersonal Communication Skills**Initial Post****Instructions**

1. To assist your classmates, list again the two (2) interpersonal communication skills you chose to improve.
2. Friendly and Important Reminder: Attach to the Main post a Microsoft Word document a Progress Report containing detailed practice sessions demonstrating attempts to improve the two communication skills you have chosen to improve.
 - NOTE: Sample of how to format your practice log in a Word Document. (Click anywhere on the previous sentence to open and review the sample).
3. In the Main post include the following:
 - Consider the topic of conflict. Everyone deals with conflict situations. Consider how Brooke and Gary dealt with conflict in the video. Was their method effective? Why or why not? Use evidence from your readings to support your post.
 - If dealing with conflict or conflict resolution is on your list, reflect on what you learned in this module about conflict that will help you moving forward. Review what your classmates posted about their goals, and choose at least two different people who have a goal different from yours. Post a resource that you feel will provide a strategy for improving one of their identified skills.
 - If dealing with conflict or conflict resolution is not on your list, offer suggestions for at least two other students who are trying to improve their skills in the area of conflict. What items covered in this module will help your fellow students? Are there outside resources or strategies you can share?
4. When the assignment is completed, you will have submitted a Main post and read and replied to the Main post submitted by two classmates.

5. Continue keeping 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 in your Word document. Include details with each practice session. You will continue to share practice session updates in future Modules. In each Module, continue to add practice sessions to the same Word document. Do not start over. By the end of the course, all your work should be posted in the same Word document. Include an updated Word document with your Main post. Again, refrain from starting a new document. We want to see the progress you make Module-to-Module.

How Effective Were Gary and Brooke at Conflict Resolution? The conversation we witnessed between Gary and Brooke was an excellent illustration of poor conflict resolution skills on *both* sides. Both parties tended to personally attack one another in terms of their personality and character rather than focusing on whatever situation prompted the argument. Instead of listening to one-another, they simply tried to defend or justify their actions without regard to the other's feelings. I actually **just** met the end of five year long relationship, so this module and especially that video were an incredibly painful experience for me to undertake and it was incredibly unpleasant.

Progress Report on My Two Skills to Improve. The two skills I chose to improve were: obtaining a stronger hold on psychological context, and listening during conversation with more of an intent to understand rather than to reply. After this module and my recent heart-and-world-shattering situation, I would like to replace one of those (if I am *only* allowed two) with that of conflict resolution and improving my ability in that. I tend to be either *too* emotional or appearing *emotionless* depending on how defensive I feel during the conversation, I suppose. This goes hand-in-hand too, with the proper utilization of *silence*.

Please see the attached word document for my practice log.

Responses

Response 1

At the beginning of this course I chose to improve my ability as an engaged listener and asserting myself. These were two abilities that due to some interesting events this past weekend, I was able to practice for many hours than I anticipated to.

I watched that clip from The Break-up and I want to say they were both trying to gain power over each other, the “win-win approach”. You can tell as both Vince Vaughn’s character and Jennifer Aniston’s character saw each other as opponents, like it was a game to see who was more right than the other person, and it was as if the actual break-up that occurs was like them admitting that the game was no longer fun to play, there was no point in trying to win it anymore.

I can’t say that conflict is a strong thing on my list but I think referring to the content in the CR List that lists each conflict resolution method and helps you identify the ones you use, or have used in the past with certain individuals, helps you put things into perspective of how you’re dealing with these conflicts and what other methods you should try practicing with.

I can’t stress enough that all this communication stuff really comes down to confidence. The link I’ll attach at the end will give you twenty-five tips on how to build your confidence. Personally, I think some of these “build your confidence” websites are a little ridiculous, but in a weird way I think they’re meant to be ridiculous because if you’re confidence enough, you can be as ridiculous as you want and still feel good about yourself. Kind of like if you think wearing purple pants is ridiculous, you’ll eventually build the confidence someday to wear those purple pants without even worrying about what other people think, or you’re confident enough that other people thinks it’s cool now to wear purple pants.

It really does come down to feeling confident enough to where if conflict is on your list then you’ll feel confident with the resolution methods you’ve practice, and the confidence you’ve gained, than any conflict can be easily navigable.

This is a response to Lillian Morton on Post ID 43272328. Great read, Lillian! I wholeheartedly agree with the sentiment that confidence goes a *very long way* in terms of navigating a difficult conflict. The phrase “*fake it till you make it*” comes to mind!

I dealt with a similar situation to your “purple pants” situational theory! I was born male and I identify as *gender fluid*. Raves and music festivals tend to be the only place I feel safe enough to express my feminine side, though. It took a long time to build the confidence to dress femininely in public when I feel more feminine, but with the support of some close friends I was able to attend my first show — GRiZ at Red Rocks — in full hair and makeup and dance with my friends, who dedicated their time to having fun with the group as well as preventing any unforeseen conflicts from occurring from any bigoted individuals around. It almost seems like if you *act* like you are supposed to be there and be there that way, other people will simply assume you are!

Response 2

Of the many skills of interpersonal communication that I want to improve is Assertiveness. According to the book I read Assertiveness includes when you confidently express your needs and opinions in a fair, honest and calm way whilst considering the needs and views of other people. As far as I know about myself I am not good at expressing what I want, I back off more and give in than telling my teammates what I want, sometimes I think if I tell what I want it is more likely to be rejected, rejection is things that I still fear today. That's why I still want to learn to express myself.

Besides the Assertiveness that I want to achieve in this interpersonal communication class, I also want to improve my ability in one more skill, namely empathy. I feel that when I work with someone I often don't care about how my coworkers feel because sometimes I'm too logical. To be empathetic means that you are able to identify and understand others' emotions, often this is not what I do. I often feel that feelings are not necessary in making decisions. From now on I want to improve my ability to understand my colleagues and be more empathetic.

This is a response to Marcella Ferchette on Post ID 43336346. I enjoyed reading your post again, Marcella! In regards to your attempt to become more empathetic and "less logical", I wanted to offer one piece of advice maybe you could use in your practicing.

While empathy exclusively deals with the emotional intelligence of an individual, in reality, being empathetic and providing others with sympathy *is* the logical thing to do. Treating people as a *means to an end*, rather than as the end itself, is inherently bad practice. This is especially important in the work place, as often the relationships you build will dictate your future in that industry more than experience and school ever will. People would much rather give their friend and confidant a raise or promotion, rather than someone they rarely speak to!