

**M5D2: Improving YOUR Interpersonal Communication Skills**

Ashton Hellwig

Department of Mathematics

Front Range Community College

COM125: Interpersonal Communication

Richard Thomas

December 12, 2020 23:59:59 MDT

## **Abstract**

### **Overview**

In Module 1 you committed to becoming a better interpersonal communicator by focusing on improving two interpersonal communication skills. In each subsequent module, we are checking in to see how those efforts are proceeding based on your practice sessions. In this module, you will report on how your practice has progressed so far.

You should spend approximately 4 hours on this assignment.

**M5D2: Improving YOUR Interpersonal Communication Skills****Instructions**

1. How did your interpersonal skills improve over the course of the class?
2. Of the skills you chose to work on, which one improved the most? Which one improved the least? Why?
3. Which skill was the hardest to improve? Which was the easiest?
4. Which outside influences (e.g., family, work, etc.) interfered with your ability to improve your skills? Which influences helped?
5. At which point in the course do you feel you turned a corner toward becoming your “real you”, as Sam does in the video clip? How did it happen? If you do not feel you ever turned a corner, why not?
6. What skills will you continue to work on improving once the class is over? How will you keep yourself motivated to improve those skills when you are no longer required to report your efforts to the class?

### **Initial Post**

It has been a great class! Too bad it was so short, I feel like I barely got to know anyone here!

### **How My Skills Have Improved Over the Class**

I believe my skills have improved over the class due to the fact that I am now **far** more conscience of how my thoughts, feelings, stories, and situations which I discuss in public affect other people. I am also more aware of how focusing attention on the subject of the conversation is far more important than relating the situation being discussed back to myself and that silence can be used in a positive way.

### **Skill Progress**

I feel like it is not all that possible to be 100% proficient in *every* interpersonal communication skill (or even a single one of them), as there are **always** ways to improve or increase one's understanding of another type of person.

### ***Skill With Most Improvement***

The interpersonal communication skill I had been working on with the most improvement had to have been empathy, as I will discuss later in my post with the subject of being the “easiest” (still not easy) interpersonal communication skill to work on.

### ***Skill With Least Improvement***

As I will discuss later in this discussion post, I feel my attention to the current “*psychological context*” is still the skill I am most suffering with.

### **Working on These Skills**

### ***The Hardest Skill To Improve***

The hardest skill to improve by far was the understanding of the current “psychological context”, as stated by one of our course texts (*Communication in the Real World*, [2013](#)).

### ***The Easiest Skill To Improve***

The easiest skill for me to improve over this course would have to be that of *empathy*. I am now much more affected by the situations described to me by others after having experienced many low points in my last semester here.

### ***Outside Influences Affecting The Use of Certain Skills***

**The Coronavirus Pandemic.** The obvious outside influence affecting my ability to practice certain skills would have to be the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic. While I was *always* in online school and in an essential business function, COVID-19 did not affect my work or school and in fact resulted in me getting **even more** work hours since February of this year.

The main way in which the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic affected the practice of utilizing interpersonal communication skills was due to the fact that we all are wearing masks when out in public, making the nonverbal communication skills we are all used to analyzing for a person's "true emotions" non-existent.

### **Conclusion**

I believe that I "turned a corner" on where I view myself and where I would rather be in terms of interpersonal communication skills when we discussed the subject of "*listening*". This is when I noticed I was more of an "*Action Oriented Listener*" or a "*Time Oriented Listener*". My ex-girlfriend (turned roommate as of recently) expressed how that was one of the main things that gave her issues during our five-year long relationship, but was **not** the thing that ended it. Nevertheless, I felt the need to work on my interpersonal communication skills as well as show her the same things I am working on in order for us both to communicate with one another in a more efficient way to improve both our current and any future relationships we have.

## Responses

### Response 1

Although I wouldn't say I hadn't improved in it at all, I'd say that the most challenging skill to improve was the skill of asserting myself. The assignments in this course made me more aware of the skill itself and some ways I could improve it in feedback that was much more helpful and I think more engaging than reading off of a Helpline article. On the other hand I think my ability to be an engaged listener had drastically improved due to the same causes of reading feedback and reading some of the other content off this course's pages.

Of course the hardest challenge was COVID-19. It made finding people to interact with much more difficult and I often found myself trying to create meaningful encounters so I could practice assertion and engagement for the practice log. Some of the encounters that helped though were simple phone calls concerning my upcoming graduation, my transfer, calls with friends and the occasional meetings with some other friends and family friends.

**This is a response to Lillian Morton on Post ID 43609215.** Excellent response, Lillian! I regret that we were unable to get to know one another over the course of this class a bit more. I completely agree with you in regards to how tremendous an impact the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic affected the ability for us to practice interpersonal communication skills. I was lucky enough to keep my job throughout the pandemic in an essential function (who knew Cannabis would be "essential" one of these days)!. I can tell you that even with the ability to see 600 customers a day and work with the same people over the course of three years, it is *still* difficult to communicate because all you can see is someone's eyes and the masks tend to muffle communication, along with the large plexiglass we now use at our registers to limit the ability for sound to travel even further!

**Response 2**

I choose an effective delivery method of communication and active listening to improve upon because I was not chosen for a promotion at work. I was not sure of the reason, but I knew I had some communication issues. I came into this class with an open mind and with the intention of figuring out what I needed to correct because I was not getting any feedback from anyone. Needless to say, I have received my answer.

[...]

I will continue to work on all the communication skills I am lacking and completing graduate school and receiving a promotion will be my motivation. I want my son to communicate well with others in preschool and in the future so that he can go further in life than I have.

**This is a response to Diata Hart on Post ID 43614421.** Loved your post, Diata! Perhaps we will get to know one another more in a future class. I was wondering about the motivation behind your desire to improve your interpersonal communication skills: promotion, completing graduate degree. Do you think that without the feeling on the inside which is what provides the ability to utilize skills such as empathy and a stronger understanding of psychological context that many interpersonal communication skills can be improved? I would think that if the only goal is to make it *seem* like you are listening, this would go against the very meaning of what it means to be a great interpersonal communicator at its core: the *person* in *interpersonal communication*. What are your thoughts?

### **References**

*Communication in the real world.* (2013). Saylor Academy.



### **Additional References**

*Business communication for success.* (n.d.). Saylor Academy.

*College success.* (n.d.). Saylor Academy.