

Small Group Communication Theory, Day 1

2020-01-30

Course(s) Used:

- Team and Small Group Communication

Goals and Objectives:

- Students gain familiarity with members of the class
- Students understand how to prepare an interaction diagram

Rationale: Interaction diagrams are an important and accessible method of conducting small group observation work. Students will need to know how to create an interaction diagram for their Community Group Observation assignment.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- None

Technology:

- Classroom computer and projector

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session's content
2. How to prepare an interaction diagram
 1. Notate each group member¹
 2. Draw a line for each communication event
 1. Communication to the entire group is an arrow drawn away from the center.
 2. Communication to a specific individual is an arrow from the sender to the receiver.
 3. Add additional cross lines for subsequent communication events.
3. Hands on group work: "Brainstorm: fix a problem on campus"
 1. Divide the class into groups of approximately 5.
 2. Groups take turns discussing a problem on campus that they could create a product to solve.

¹ In normal observations this may be a name, a participant code/ID, a number, or a researcher nickname (ex: "Purple Pants").

3. While each group discusses, the other class members observe and create an interaction diagram.
4. Stop each group when they reach 7-10 minutes. Allow a few minutes between groups and at the end for discussion.
5. Discussion questions:
 1. How did the interactions in the different groups differ?
 2. What additional information could we add to the interaction diagram to make it more useful?
4. Lesson closing

Limitations

At times this activity will require interruption to establish group member names.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities.