

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

10

Module Overview

Module Competencies

Competencies#1	Learning Objectives to Develop Competencies
Understand the core principles underlying effective social communications.	a. Learn about the concept associated with successful communications

A. WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?



Communication is a two-way process of giving and receiving information through any number of channels. Whether one is speaking informally to a colleague, addressing a conference or meeting, writing a newsletter article or formal report. Communication is a complex two-way process that can involve several iterations before mutual understanding is achieved. Communication takes place in many ways. It can use words, symbols, pictures, graphics, voice, tone, facial expressions, clothing, and body language. Here are principles of communication to be successful: (Bradbury, 2011)

- **Trustworthiness.** Effective relationships are built on trust and, with respect to communication, trust that both parties are applying the same principles. Without sense of trust, it may be difficult to really engage in meaningful communication.
- **Active Listening.** Active listening means being focused entirely on the person speaking, and not interrupting or starting to fashion your own response before someone has finished their sentence. This “inner chatter” that goes on in our heads is a barrier to hearing. Active listening is difficult and takes practice. Most people want to talk rather than listen.
- **Non-judgmental.** Judging others is not a good basis for building relationship. Judging is about hierarchy in some shape or form – who (or what) is best. There are criteria against which the judging takes place, to ensure that there is logic to the decisions that are taken.
- **Value Difference.** Value the different contributions that people we interact with bring to our relationship. When trusting environments are created, people will know that their contributions will be valued, they are not being judged, people are respectfully listening to them and appreciating their input, that what they say remains confidential and that they are being listened to fully.
- **No Assumptions.** People can interpret words they hear in a way that was not intended by the person who said them. If someone says one thing and another takes those words to mean something completely different, communication has not occurred. There has simply been an exchange of words without comprehension. This happens when we assume that we understand what is meant without checking things out. It is important to clarify what someone means, rather than make assumptions that have been understood what they are trying to convey.
- **Authenticity.** Be truthful in your communication. How things are said and the movement of the body all have a bearing on the message that is conveyed to the listener or observer. Research tells us what words actually have the least impact on communication (around 7%). The manner in which things are said – tone, speed, etc (music 38%) and body language (dance 55%) are far more important in conveying our message. It is important that all the three elements of words, music and dance are congruent. People are generally attuned to picking up non-verbal signals and can tell if there is a mixed message between the words, music, and dance.

A.1. Element of Communication

Communication can be defined as the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another (Keyton (2011) in Lunenburg (2010). Active Seniors Learn, Educate, Communicate and Transmit defines the basic communication model consists of five elements of communication:

- *Sender*, - plays the specific role of initiating communication. To communicate effectively, the sender must use effective verbal as well as nonverbal techniques. Speaking or writing clearly, organizing points to make other easy to follow and understand, maintaining eye contact, using proper grammar and giving accurate information are all essential in the effectiveness of the messages. The sender must understand who the receiver is in order to modify the message to make it more relevant.
- *Receiver*, - means the party to whom the sender transmits the message. A receiver can be one person or an entire audience of people. In the basic communication model the receiver, is directly across from the speaker. The receiver can also communicate verbally and nonverbally. The best way to receive a message is to listen carefully, sitting up straight and making eye contact. Nodding or smiling to the sender also demonstrates that the receiver understand the message.
- *Message*, - can come in many different forms, such as oral presentation, a written document, an advertisement or just a comment. In the basic communication model, the way from one point to another represents the sender's message traveling to the receiver. The message isn't necessarily what the sender intends it to be. Rather, the message is what the receiver perceives the message to be. As a result, the sender must not only compose the message carefully, but also evaluate the ways in which the message can be interpreted.
- *Channel*, - the message travels from one point to another via a channel of communication. The channel sits between the sender and receiver. Many channels, or types, of communication exist, from the spoken word to radio, television, internet site, or something written. Every channel of communication has its advantages and disadvantages.
- *Feedback*, - describes the receiver's response or reaction to the sender's message. The receiver can transmit feedback through asking questions, making comments, or just supporting the message that was delivered. Feedback helps the sender to determine how the receiver interpreted the message and how it can be improved.

A.2. Communication Barrier

A barrier to communication is something that keeps meanings from meeting. Meaning barriers exist between all people, making communication much more difficult than most people seem to realize. In ongoing communication, as message go backwards and forwards between sender and receiver, the potential for error increases. People in the same condition and face the same situation might have different perceptions. It is not unusual for a group of people to come out with different ideas and assumption about what have been faced. That is why it is important to examine the following types of barrier.

- *Environment*, - in which the communication takes place may contain physical or emotional barriers. The physical barriers include interference or discomfort), while emotional barriers include feeling angry or unhappy over something that can affect the atmosphere in a meeting and distort message.
- *Language*, - in which problem can arise if the language used is unfamiliar to one of the parties. A prime example of the problems that inappropriate language can raise is the use of 'text language' in transmitting both phone messages and emails. A second problem with language is that we assume words have the same meaning for different people. Our understanding of a word is influenced by our background knowledge, culture, and experience.

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Notes:

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A.3. Component of Communication

Spoken messages have 3 components related to the probability that the message intended is the message received.

- **Verbal (7%)** – actual words spoken in the message
- **Tone (38%)** – vocal inflection while speaking (sincere, authentic, sarcastic, interested, bored)
- **Non-verbal (55%)** – physical aspects while delivering the message (facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture)

Key Components of Body Language

Posture	How you sit and stand can show your level of confidence as well as your level of interest in the topic at hand. An erect posture demonstrates confidence, poise and alertness, while a drooping shoulders or slouching can reveal insecurity, apathy or a lack of interest.
Facial Expressions	Emotional expressions made by faces have a communicative component. While you might say one thing, your expression can tell a different story. Make sure your face demonstrates interest and enthusiasm and be aware of in the moment expressions of dissatisfaction, anger, etc.
Eye Contact	The appropriate level of eye contact is culturally dependent, but always aim to demonstrate interest and respect. Keep your eyes focused on the task and avoid getting distracted (for example looking at the clock, etc.)
Gestures	Movement of the hands can enhance communication by supplementing speech. You should avoid continuous gestures, but you can use short gestures to emphasize a point. Like eye contact, gestures are culturally dependent and a gesture in one culture can mean something very different in another culture.
Movement	Movement such as fidgeting shows disinterest and disengagement from a conversation. Sit still and focus on the current task (check phones, emails, etc. after a conversation is over.)
Head Motion	The movement of the head plays an important role in communication. Appropriate nods and shakes of the head can enhance a point or display understanding and agreement/disagreement without using words.

For main components of listening

1. Seek to understand before seeking to be understood. When we seek to understand rather than be understood, our modus operandi will be to listen. Often, when we enter into conversation, our goal is to be better understood. We can be better understood, if first we better understand. With age, maturity, and experience comes silence. It is most often a wise person who says little or nothing at the beginning of a conversation or listening experience. We need to remember to collect information before we disseminate it. We need to know it before we say it.
2. Be nonjudgmental. Empathetic listening demonstrates a high degree of emotional intelligence. There is a reason kids do not usually speak with adults about drugs, sex, and rock and roll. The kids already know what the adults have to say. Once a child knows your judgment, there is little reason to ask the question unless the intention is to argue. If we would speak to anyone about issues important to them, we need to avoid sharing our judgment until we have learned their judgment. This empathetic behavior is an indicator of emotional intelligence as described in Chapter
3. Give your undivided attention to the speaker. The Chinese symbol that we used to describe listening used the eyes and undivided attention. Absolutely important is dedicating your undivided attention to the speaker if you are to succeed as an active listener. Eye contact is less important. In most listening situations people use eye contact to affirm listening. The speaker maintains eye contact to be sure the listener or listeners are paying attention.

From their body language the speaker can tell if he is speaking too softly or loudly, too quickly or slowly, or if the vocabulary or the language is inappropriate. Listeners can also send messages to speakers using body language. Applause is the reason many performers perform. Positive feedback is an endorphin releaser for the giver and the sender. Eye contact can be a form of positive feedback. BUT, eye contact can also be a form of aggression, of trying to show dominance, of forcing submissive behavior. All primates use eye contact to varying degrees. We should be careful how we use it when listening. If we want to provide undivided attention to a child, a better way to show your attention is to do a “walk and talk” as we discussed in Chapter 2. Walk and talk is such a successful strategy that works well for active listening!

4. Use silence effectively. The final rule for active or empathic listening is to effectively use silence. To often a truly revealing moment is never brought to fruition because of an untimely interruption. Some of the finest police interrogators, counselors, teachers and parents learn more by maintaining silence than by asking questions. As an active or empathic listener, silence is a very valuable tool. DO NOT interrupt unless absolutely necessary. Silence can be painful. It is more painful for a speaker than for a listener. If someone is speaking, and we want them to continue talking, we do not interrupt. Rather, we do provide positive feedback using body language, eye contact, and non-word sounds like “umh, huh”. Silence is indeed golden especially when used to gather information as a listener.

EXERCISE#2

Reflection

Instruction: Read the statements below and honestly assess how often you demonstrate these behaviours, then respond to the open-ended questions.

Rate how often you demonstrate the behaviours described in the statements.

Statements	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. My family and friends say I am a good listener.					
2. I find myself daydreaming while I try to listen.					
3. I find myself pretending to listen.					
4. I fidget a lot when I am trying to listen to others.					
5. I only focus on the parts of a conversation I am interested in.					
6. If I disagree with an opinion or statement someone else has made I have a hard time listening.					
7. I finish peoples' thoughts and sentences.					
8. I listen to part of a story and then start to think about what story I will tell next.					
9. I can accurately repeat back what someone has told me.					
10. I let the people I am listening to know that I am interested by using verbal and non-verbals.					

Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
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- ✓ Which word on the scale below best describes how you rate your listening skills?
- ✓ Explain why you gave yourself this rating.

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B. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Communicator needs to develop talking point worksheet to prepare themselves. The good talking points are:

- Are clear and succinct summaries (often less than one page) of key messages to communicate to the public. They provide only the most important information so that the public will not be overwhelmed with extra information and use familiar, non-technical language or jargon.
- Give consistent messages from all spokespersons to prevent public panic. Panic can stem from inconsistent or contradictory messages.
- Should address people's concerns, clarify mis-information or mis-conceptions, motivate people to take do-able actions and give them advice on where to find additional information (e.g. medical care, frequently asked questions, etc.)
- Can be used by a variety of stakeholders and media (e.g. when visiting an affected community, when talking to a government official, when being interviewed by the media, or when creating print media, radio content, or in social media.)

In the case of high stress situations, messages should be based on the 'Rule of Three'. Dr. Vincent Covello for the Center for Risk Communication maintains that in high stress situations people can process 3 information bits. Rule of Three states in high stress situations, we should:

- Present 3 key messages
- Repeat key message 3 times
- Prepare 2-3 supporting messages for each key message

Case Study Option 1: Leptospirosis in Cambodia

Part A

Outside a coastal village in Cambodia that lies near a river there has been unusually heavy flooding this past monsoon season. Farmers growing rice and other crops were temporarily displaced from their homes, as were their animals, moving from the coastal areas to higher ground.

Flooding has been occurring on a more frequent basis in Cambodia—six times over the last ten years. This is a sharp increase over previous decades. And floods are becoming more severe. The process farmers use to plant rice is weather-dependent. The amount of rainfall determines the size and quality of the rice crop, with a potential for large variations from year to year. When floods occur, farming is disrupted, crops are damaged, and farmers lose money. Many farmers practice agriculture at a subsistence level, using traditional methods that are low in productivity. They depend on their oxen to help plough the fields, to furrow and turn up the soil, and to rake the fields before they plant rice. Most farmers have one bull, a couple of steer, and a couple cows with calves.

After the flooding subsided and the farmers, with their animals, returned to their land from the hills, they noticed their cows experiencing “abortion storms” one to three weeks later. In addition, the calves were showing symptoms of illness, such as jaundice and pulmonary congestions. As a result, many of the calves couldn’t be used to cultivate the soil. Because of this, the farmers turned to scattering rice seed on the untilled soil. But soon rodents came and ate the seed.

At the same time, many farmers and their families in the area were getting sick with high fevers, headaches, redness in the eyes, and jaundice. Word of their illness reached the district health office, which sent out public health workers to investigate the outbreak.

When the health workers visited the farmers, they noticed that some of the animals were experiencing symptoms of illness.

Part B

Leptospirosis is an infectious disease that is dependent upon the interaction of humans, animals, and the environment.

Increases in the frequency and intensity of flooding in Cambodia have had an effect on the regularity of the seasons. Global climate change, including extreme weather events, is resulting in a rise of leptospirosis outbreaks. Weather conditions and a decline in the population of farm animals are leading to lower farm productivity. Rural populations, in particular, have a strong dependence on the regularity of seasons, controlled by the climate, for their well-being.

Because the vast majority of Cambodians live in rural areas, the flooding of their farms makes them more vulnerable to poverty. Other factors, such as industrialization, deforestation, and changes in land use also contribute. Cambodia has one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world. Flooding and mudslides are caused by the deforestation of the mountain ranges. Without vegetation to help hold the soil together, mountain ranges can erode by wind and water. These factors present serious challenges to reducing poverty, ensuring equity, and securing people’s livelihoods.

Part C

Only 30% of Cambodians have access to safe drinking water and 19% to adequate sanitation. Most get their drinking water by walking long distances to rivers. About 75% of the rural population practice open defecation. People use rice paddies, banana groves, and other water sources to dispose of their own waste, thus polluting the water on which they depend. A lack of proper sewage and wastewater treatment, coupled with poor standards of hygiene, results in many people being forced to drink contaminated water.

Persistent poverty, limited sources of land management, institutional and governmental constraints, poor sanitation and rodent management all contribute to the risk of spirochetes such as leptospirosis causing disease in humans and animals.

Case Study Option 2: Rabies in Bali

Introduction

Bali Island is one of the most important tourist destinations in Indonesia. Every year more than one million foreign and domestic tourists visit this Island. Tourism businesses now become primary income for people in this Island. This island is one among 35 Provinces in the Republic of Indonesia. With a total of 3,890,000 inhabitants, Bali Province consists of 9 Districts and 54 sub districts. Despite most of the Indonesian is Muslim, Hinduism is the religion of the majority of Balinese. Due to their practice and belief, Balinese show high compassion to animals, particularly dogs. In their belief, dog is the animal who will accompany their souls to enter the heaven. As a result of that belief, dogs are easily found in the streets because most of the owned dogs are roaming freely (74%), whereas the rest are kept in houses resulting the vaccination coverage is low.

Bali was historically rabies-free, but in 2008 rabies was detected on a peninsula on the South of the island, probably introduced by infected dogs travelling on fishermen's boats. Balinese government is very concern about this disease especially as it happens on the island of tourist holiday hotspots as it will ruin the tourism industry. Starting December 2008, the Balinese government began culling using strychnine-laced baits or blow darts to unconfined dogs in areas of big towns like Denpasar and Badung with confirmed rabies cases and began vaccinating dogs at fixed posts. It was estimated from a survey in Badung, where the ratio of human to dog ratio was 8.3 human to 1 dog.

Chapter 1

Made, 27 years old, is a father of three children who lived in Village Api-api of Bali Island. On August 11th 2011, he was bitten by his dog's neighbour. The dog bite on Made's right heel and caused small laceration. His family later brought him to Private Practice Midwives nearby as there was no medical facility in the village. The midwife washed the wound according to the standard operating procedures. Made started to developed flu-like symptoms such as discomfort, fever, and headache. On December 3, 2011 Made developed delirium and seizures. He was taken to the sub-district health center by his family members who later referred him to the district hospital. However, on December 5, 2011 Made died.

Chapter 2

The same dog who attacked Made somehow escaped to the nearby village which is Bota village, and attacked new victims including a human, a dog and cattle. Eventually, the dog died after being hit with stones by the angry Bota villagers and the body of the dog was thrown into the nearby bushes. The new victim, Wayan, was taken to the district hospital for anti-rabies treatment. The wound of the victim was cleaned with disinfectant and was given anti-tetanus along with HRIG and initiated rabies vaccine. Wayan recovered 15 days later after being treated with anti-rabies treatment. The district hospital notified the case to the District Health Services, and District Livestock Services for the them to conduct further investigations.

Chapter 3

The veterinarians from District Livestock Services conducted an investigation at Bota village by gathering the dogs with bite marks on the body inclusive the owned dogs, to be observed in a quarantine facility for 14 days. The villagers were very angry at the authorities and becoming less cooperative. Nevertheless the villagers obeyed the authority's advice after a public dialogue was carried out. At the same time, the District Livestock Services observed the bitten cattle for any abnormal behavior and clinical symptoms.

On the 10th day of the quarantine, the bitten dog were found dead at the quarantine facility. A sample from the unfortunate dog's brain was sent to the laboratory for microscopic examination. At the same time, the health authority conducted an enquiry of the history of the patient and found out that Wayan was bitten by a dog without prior provocation from the victim. They also found out that the dog was new to the area. Fortunate enough, the cattle did not show any sign of rabies infection.

Chapter 4

At the Api-api village, more dogs were seen having abnormal behaviour and some villagers were getting bitten by these dogs. Most of the victims seek treatment at Private Practice Midwives and the same advice given to Made that they should go to the subdistrict health center at South Kuta to get anti-rabies vaccine. The victims complied with her advice and took the anti-rabies treatment. The victims recovered after 15-25 days and return to their daily activity soon after. The subdistrict health center notified the cases to the District Health Services, and District Livestock Unit, where the same actions to the dogs were applied.

Meanwhile, the result of laboratory examination showed positive rabies infection on sample of dog's brain that bitten Wayan. The District Livestock Services took the action of launching rabies control program in the areas by mass vaccination to the owned dogs and culling of the stray dogs. This program created conflict between District livestock authority and villagers to the extent that the villagers hide some dogs to other areas. Mass dog vaccinations substantially reduced rabies incidence in Bali.

Communication Strategies Worksheet

- Outline the objective/goals of the communication,
- Identify stakeholders,
- Define key messages,
- Pinpoint potential communication methods and vehicles for communicating information for a specific purpose, and
- Specify the mechanisms that will be used to obtain feedback on the strategy.

EXERCISE#3

Discussion

Issue/Problem and Key messages

Description of the issue/problem:
The key messages to be communicated for this issue/problem

Planning the Strategy: Audience and Communication Vehicle

Audience	Communication Vehicles

Implementation: Communication Vehicle and Required Resources

Communication Vehicle	Required Resources and Time

- ✓ What made it difficult to write the talking points?
- ✓ What made it easier to write the talking points?
- ✓ What additional information would have helped you write the talking points?
- ✓ What questions do you have for your target audience?
- ✓ How confident are you that your messages will be accepted by the target audience? Why?

Notes:

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