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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended for use in a course in on-the-job communication that was developed as a component of a workplace literacy program for persons employed in the manufacturing and service industries. The course is structured so that, upon its completion, students will be able to accomplish the following: identify different personality types and behaviors, recognize their own style of communicating, identify and use positive body language, identify and avoid negative body language, use active listening strategies, use strategies to resolve conflict and problems, work toward consensus and group decision making, organize and present ideas verbally and in writing, use principles of good business writing, distinguish different writing styles for different audiences, and edit their writing. Included in the guide are a course outline and materials for each of the course's 12 sessions. Each section contains some or all of the following: objectives; lists of topics covered, suggested teaching and evaluation methods, and materials required; teacher tips; student handouts; word lists; and learning activities/exercises. (MN)

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ED 368 969

**Communicating
on the
Job**

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CE 066 399



Communicating on the Job



**Mercer County Community College
Division of Corporate and Community Programs
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**Prepared Under a United States Department of Education
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1994

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COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB

COURSE OUTLINE:

Problems at work occur when there are blockages to communication. This course will look at how we communicate in a verbal and non-verbal manner, in writing, formally and informally, and will give students strategies to communicate more effectively.

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- identify who they communicate with and how
- identify different personality types and behaviors
- recognize their own style of communicating
- identify and use positive body language
- identify and avoid negative body language
- use active listening strategies
- use strategies to resolve conflict and problems
- work towards consensus and group decision making
- organize and present ideas verbally and in writing
- use principles of good business writing
- distinguish different writing styles for different audiences
- edit their writing

TOPICAL OUTLINE:

- What is communication?
- Personality types and behaviors
- Verbal and non verbal communication
- Active listening
- Conflict resolution
- Problem solving
- Organizing and presenting ideas
- Working towards consensus and group decision making
- Organizing and presenting ideas
- Principles of good business writing
- Analyzing the author's purpose, the reader, style and tone
- Editing

OTHER:

Hours: 18
CEU: 1.8

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 1

OBJECTIVES:

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- define communication
- recognize the importance of their audience
- identify their own internal and external audiences at work
- identify where the blockages are

TOPICS:

- The Communication Exchange
- the importance of the audience
- identifying those we communicate with and how
- blockages to effective communication

METHODS:

- group discussion
- individual completion of tasks

EVALUATION:

- pre-class exercise
- individual evaluation of how and with whom they communicate

MATERIALS:

- pre-class exercise
- handouts – The Communication Exchange
Audience Analysis

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 1*

- ◇ Introductions
- ◇ Course Overview
 - what communication is?
 - what the blockages are
 - strategies for breaking down the barriers
 1. verbal and non verbal
 2. reading
 3. writing
 - applying strategies through case studies, role-plays, worksheets and a written report
- ◇ Pre-course exercise – Flextime
- ◇ Discussion of what communication is
- ◇ Brainstorm – how we communicate both on a personal level and on the job
- ◇ Handout – The Communication Exchange
- ◇ Look at internal and external audiences in the organization
 - Superiors
 - Peers
 - Subordinates
 - Customers
- ◇ Then have each person draw diagram of who they communicate with and how.

THE COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE

Speaker's Role

- Selects topic
- Analyzes audience
- Plans message
- Sends message
- Encourages listener's response

Mutual
Understanding

Listener's Role

- Listens actively
- Receives message
- Checks understanding

THE COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

A. Audience Identity:

Who? _____

Relationship to me? _____

Knowledge about topic? _____

Interest in topic _____

Additional background information: _____

Probable questions: _____

B. Probable Attitude and Personality

Attitude towards topic: _____

Possible objections: _____

Attitude towards me: _____

Organizational Climate: _____

Probable reaction: _____

C. Expectations

Intended effect: _____

Which tone to pitch? _____

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 2**OBJECTIVES:**

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- classify different personality types and behaviors
- identify their own and others' personality strengths and weaknesses
- identify hindering and helping behaviors and body language

TOPICS:

- classifying behaviors
- self assessment of personality strengths and weaknesses
- understanding others
- verbal and non-verbal communication
- body language – hindering and helping behaviors

METHODS:

- completion of questionnaires
- role plays
- group discussion

EVALUATION:

- self assessment

MATERIALS:

- handouts – Learn to Classify Behaviors
A Look at Verbal and Non-verbal Communication
Self Assessment/Self Awareness Inventory
Ten Rules for Understanding Others
Unspoken Messages
Hindering and Helping Behaviors

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 2*

Examination of personalities involved in communication. Need to look at self and at audience.

- ◇ Handout – audience analysis
- ◇ Handout – classifying different personality types/behaviors
- ◇ Questionnaire – self awareness/self assessment - followed by discussion
- ◇ Handout: Ten Rules for Understanding Others
- ◇ Divide into pairs. Each person to be given specific pattern of body language to use while discussing what they hope to get out of this course. Then discuss how it made them feel.

1. smile and use eye contact and legs uncrossed	lean forward with hands open and arms
2. have blank expression	lean away with arms and legs crossed
3. try to agree with the person and show them you understand what they are saying, by nodding saying "uhhum" etc.	interrupt and disagree and glance at the other people in the room, your watch etc.

- ◇ Handout: Unspoken Messages
- ◇ Discussion and handout of hindering and helping behaviors.

LEARNING TO CLASSIFY BEHAVIORS

Your actions may be labeled as.....

- AGGRESSIVE** *express yourself; dominate set others straight; do it your way, get what you want; disregard feelings of others. You are thoughtless, rude, intimidating, look out for #1; out to get own way; abrasive; ambitious.
- NON-ASSERTIVE**
(passive) *deny yourself; avoid risks; stay out of trouble; quiet; put yourself down; avoid hurting others; want to be liked; pushover; low self-esteem; lack confidence; hide your anger; allow others to take advantage of you; failure to gain your goals.
- ASSERTIVE** *express yourself in honest and direct manner; respect yourself and others; you care; friendly; confident; cooperative; make positive statements; stand up for your beliefs and rights; not intimidated by others; not afraid to confront others; equality in relationships; will not put self or others down.

***A LOOK AT VERBAL AND NONVERBAL
COMMUNICATION***

**The
Non-Assertive Way**

Verbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Apologizes while speaking, for speaking
- ◇ Doesn't get to the point
- ◇ At a loss for words

Nonverbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Hoping someone will guess what you want
- ◇ Looking as if you don't mean what you say
- ◇ Weak, hesitant voice
- ◇ Eyes downcast

A LOOK AT VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

The Assertive Way

Verbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Honest statement of feeling
- ◇ Direct statements that say what you mean
- ◇ "I" messages
- ◇ Likes "win-win"

Nonverbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Attentive listening behavior
- ◇ Assured manner
- ◇ Relaxed, alert
- ◇ Firm, warm voice
- ◇ Eye contact but not staring/glaring

***A LOOK AT VERBAL AND NONVERBAL
COMMUNICATION***

**The
Aggressive Way**

Verbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Accusations
- ◇ "You" messages with blame
- ◇ Puts others down
- ◇ Gives no recognition

Nonverbal Characteristics:

- ◇ Air of superiority
- ◇ Sarcastic style
- ◇ Tense, shrill, demanding voice
- ◇ Cold, narrowed, staring eyes

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

Please respond to the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5:

Not at all like me	Somewhat like me	Occasionally like me	Usually like me	Very much like me
1	2	3	4	5

1. When in a group at work, I tend to speak and act as the leader of that group.
2. I am seldom quiet when I am with other people.
3. When I am faced with a leadership position among my co-workers, I usually accept the role without trying to get others to take it on.
4. I would rather be with people than read a good book.
5. Sometimes I expect more from others than they can do.
6. I enjoy going out frequently.
7. It's important to me that people follow the advice that I give them.
8. I like to have company over.
9. When I am in charge of a situation, I have no problem giving out tasks to others.
10. I often go out of my way to meet new people.
11. In a group, I ask more questions of others than they ask of me.
12. I often play the role of the leader and take charge of situations when necessary.
13. I like mixing in a crowd.

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

14. When there is a problem on the job, I usually try to get things straightened out and working smoothly.
15. I make friends very easily.
16. Other people usually think of me as being energetic.
17. I am a verbal person.
18. I try to be supportive of my friends, no matter what they do.
19. I usually enjoy myself at a really lively party.
20. When I'm in the lead in some situation, I spell out exactly what I plan to do and let others know what I expect of them .
21. I am pretty good at small talk.
22. I am very good at persuading others to see things my way.
23. I can usually let myself go and have fun with friends.
24. I don't really like the simple, quiet life.

For questions 25-30, answer "yes"(= 5) or "no" (= 1)

25. You are talking with more than one person. Someone makes a statement the you know is incorrect but you are sure the others didn't catch it. Do you let them know?
YES (5)
NO (1)
26. After a hard day's work I prefer to:
YES (5) Get together with a few friends and do something active.
NO (1) Relax at home and either watch TV or read.

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

27. When making plans for a small social get-together, I am most likely to:
YES (5) Be the first to suggest some plans and try to get the others to decide quickly.
NO (1) Make sure everyone has a say in the planning and go along with what the group decides.
28. You have just finished a three-month project which forced you to work a lot of overtime and made stress your personal life. To celebrate, you are more likely to:
YES (5) Invite some of your friends over and throw a party.
NO (1) Spend a quiet, peaceful weekend doing whatever you wish, either alone or with a good friend.
29. If I feel that I am underpaid for my work, I'm most likely to:
YES (5) Confront the boss and demand a raise.
NO (1) Do nothing and hope the situation improves.
30. I think that those around me see me as :
YES (5) People oriented and outgoing.
NO (1) Inward-looking and thoughtful.

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

ANSWER SHEET

After you have answered, add each column.

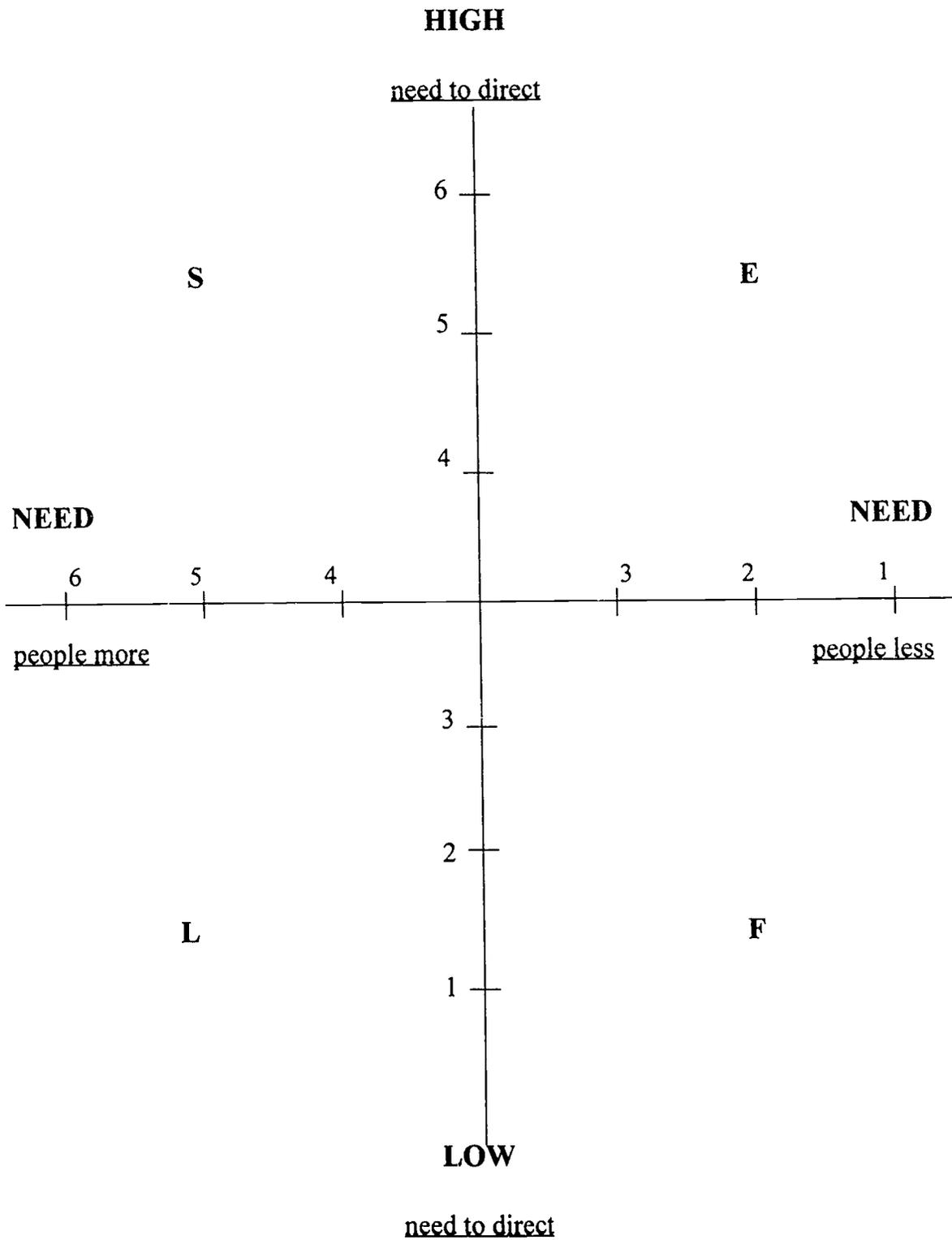
1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	6. _____
7. _____	8. _____
9. _____	10. _____
11. _____	12. _____
13. _____	14. _____
15. _____	16. _____
17. _____	18. _____
19. _____	20. _____
TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____

<u>If you scored from:</u>	<u>Give yourself a:</u>
15 - 21.....	1
22 - 33.....	2
34 - 44.....	3
45 - 56.....	4
57 - 68.....	5
69 - 75.....	6

DIRECT SCORE _____ PEOPLE SCORE _____

21

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY



SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

STRENGTHS

HIGH
need to direct

S

Persuasive
Risk taker
Confident
Inspiring
Open
Outgoing

E

Practical
Orderly
Very direct
Organized
Traditional
Economical

HIGH

LOW

need people more

need people less

Team oriented
Caring
Enthusiastic
Sensitive
Good listener
Good friend
Peacemaker

Exacting
Thorough
Factual
Reserved
Practical
Calm
Has high standards

L

F

LOW
need to direct

SELF ASSESSMENT/SELF AWARENESS INVENTORY

LIMITATIONS

HIGH
need to direct

S

Pushy
Overbearing
Impatient
Abrasive
Dominating

E

Lives by the rules
Stubborn
Unapproachable
Critical
Insensitive

HIGH

LOW

need people more

need people less

Too other oriented
Indecisive
Vulnerable
Hesitant

Slow to get things done
Perfectionist
Withdrawn
Withdrawn

L

F

LOW
need to direct

TEN RULES FOR UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

1. **BE SURE YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS**
2. **LOOK FOR GOOD IN OTHERS**
3. **AVOID EXPECTING PEOPLE TO BE PERFECT**
4. **DEVELOP A FEELING OF EMPATHY**
5. **AVOID STRESS-CAUSERS BY CONTROLLING YOUR ATTITUDE**
6. **DON'T BLAME YOURSELF BUT DON'T BLAME OTHERS, EITHER**
7. **LEARN TO LISTEN ATTENTIVELY**
8. **GET ALL THE FACTS**
9. **EXPRESS APPRECIATION - LET PEOPLE FEEL IMPORTANT**
10. **BE PATIENT**

UNSPOKEN MESSAGES

Based on your observations, think of some common nonverbal signals associated with each spoken message shown below.

Example:

Spoken message: "I'm confused" or "I disagree."
Nonverbal communication: slugging shoulders, shaking head from side to side, glancing away, squinting eyes, wrinkling forehead

1. **Spoken message:** "I'm going to be late."
Nonverbal communication: _____

2. **Spoken message:** "I'm surprised."
Nonverbal communication: _____

3. **Spoken message:** "I'm angry."
Nonverbal communication: _____

4. **Spoken message:** "I'm busy."
Nonverbal communication: _____



HINDERING AND HELPING BEHAVIORS

HINDERING BEHAVIOURS**HELPING BEHAVIOURS**

Lean away with hands clenched, arms crossed and legs crossed.	Lean forward with hands open, arms uncrossed and legs uncrossed.
Look at the other person for less than 50% of the time.	Look at the other person for approximately 60% of the time.
Listen silently with no continuity noises and/or interrupt before the other person has had their say.	When listening nod and make "I'm listening" noises such as "um" "yes" "really?"
Have a blank expression.	Smile.
Sit opposite the other person.	Sit beside the other person or if this isn't possible, at a 90° angle to them.
Don't use the other person's name or use it artificially so that it jars.	Use the other person's name early on in the transaction.
Don't ask questions or ask closed questions.	Ask the other person open questions.
Offer no summaries and don't check your understanding.	Summarise back to the other person what you think they have said.
Stick rigidly to saying things that are routine and standard.	Say things that refer back to what the other person has said.
Don't acknowledge the other person's expressed feelings or point of view.	Show empathy by saying you understand how the other person feels and can see things from their point of view.
Acquiesce or never explicitly agree with the other person.	When in agreement with the other person, openly say so and say why.
Pick holes in the other person's ideas.	Build on the other person's ideas.
Criticise the other person.	Be non-judgemental towards the other person.
Disagree first then say why.	If you have to disagree with the other person, give the reason first then say you disagree.
Be defensive and never admit to any inadequacy.	Admit it when you don't know the answer or have made a mistake.
Be secretive and withhold information from the other person even though it affects them.	Openly explain what you are doing, or intending to do, for the other person.
Have visual and verbal behaviours out of step with each other.	Be genuine, with visual and verbal behaviours telling the same story.
Don't give the other person anything.	Give the other person something even if it is only a name card, or piece of paper with notes on it.

Remember the choice is yours and, so far as other people are concerned,
you are your behaviour.

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 3

OBJECTIVES:

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- identify different ways to respond to potential problems
- identify components of active listening
- use strategies for active listening

TOPICS:

- different types of responses and their effects on others
- active listening

METHODS:

- group discussion
- video
- roleplays

EVALUATION:

- individual assessment of responses
- self assessment of how well they listen

MATERIALS:

- video – "From No to Yes"
- handout – Guidelines for Active Listening
- case study

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 3*

◇ Case Study

You're trying to introduce an new system to a colleague. His response is "But we've put on four months of training and practicing. People have just got used to it and don't want to change again."

◇ Look at the three responses below and discuss:

- 1 "I understand your concern, John, but surely it will benefit us all in the long run if we change to one system that meets all our needs."
- 2 "You're concerned then that switching to a new system would cause morale problems."
- 3 "We've got to keep pace with change. This is a directive from head office. If people don't like it they'll just have to lump it."

- 1 The "Yes, But" approach - people try to be reasonable, but start to dig their heels in and defend their own positions. Get further and further apart and less open to persuasion. Argue behind a polite facade.
- 2 The confrontational approach - honest and straight talking, but ignores the emotions of person you're trying to persuade. Assumes that emotions are irrational. Unexpressed emotions - biggest obstacle to persuasion.
- 3 The Active Listening approach – most likely to succeed in winning someone over to your position. Shows you respect them and take them seriously.

◇ Video – "From No to Yes"

◇ Discussion – body language

◇ Discussion – Active Listening

- tune in to the feeling behind the words
- try to identify precisely what the feeling is about
- try to clarify exactly why the person feels so strongly about it

◇ Handout – itemizing strategy for Active Listening

CASE STUDY – ACTIVE LISTENING

You're trying to introduce a new system to a colleague. His response is, "But we've put in four months of training and practicing. People have just got used to it and don't want to change again."

Look at the three responses below and discuss:

1. "I understand your concern, John, but surely it will benefit us all in the long run if we change to one system that meets all our needs."
2. "You're concerned then that switching to a new system would cause morale problems."
3. "We've got to keep pace with change. This is a directive from head office. If people don't like it they'll just have to lump it."

GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVE LISTENING

Focus your attention

- ◇ avoid distraction and daydreaming

Identify the topic

- ◇ what does the speaker want you to know or do?

Think about the background knowledge you already have

Grasp the main ideas

- ◇ identify the key points of the message

Tune in to the feeling behind the word

Try to identify precisely what the feeling is about

Try to clarify exactly why the person feels so strongly about it

Check your understanding

- ◇ summarize/restate in your own words

Take notes if necessary to help you understand and remember

ASSESS YOURSELF

Take the following quiz to assess your skills in calming upset people.

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Usually 5 = Always

_____ I feel I can calm most upset people

When I'm with an upset person, I...

- _____ stay calm
- _____ don't interrupt
- _____ focus on his/her concern without getting distracted
- _____ respond to personal accusations without becoming defensive
- _____ have attentive body posture
- _____ have appropriate facial expressions
- _____ have confident eye contact
- _____ listen completely before responding
- _____ reduce distractions of things going on around you on the job
- _____ show empathy
- _____ let him/her know that I want to help
- _____ know when to call on my supervisor for help
- _____ have a confident, helpful tone of voice
- _____ use words that don't escalate his/her anger
- _____ avoid blaming my fellow workers for causing the problem

After the upset person leaves, I...

- _____ am in control of my emotions
- _____ don't repeat the story more than once
- _____ analyze what I did well and what I'd do differently

Your score:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 81-100 | Excellent |
| 61-80 | Good |
| 41-60 | You need to work on your skill |
| 21-40 | You may need to ask your supervisor for help |

WRITING TO SOLVE A PROBLEM

1. **Identify** the problem – *What?*
2. **Describe** the problem – *Who* is involved? *Where?* *When?*
3. **Effects** of the problem? – *How does it affect us?* Specifically?
4. **Causes** of the problem? – *What?* *Who?* *Why?*
5. **Solution** to the problem – *How to eradicate the problem.*
6. **Implementation** of the solution – *How to make the solution work.*

STEPS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 1. Make sure that the people involved really disagree.**

- 2. Check to see that everyone's information is correct.**
 - ◇ different styles, interpretations
 - ◇ faulty assumptions

- 3. Identify the needs that each person is trying to meet.**
 - ◇ tune in to the feelings behind the words
 - ◇ try to identify precisely what the feeling is about
 - ◇ try to clarify exactly why the person feels so strongly about it

- 4. Search for alternatives**

HANDLING CONFLICT

You are at a meeting where the problem of communication between departments is being discussed. In pairs develop the incomplete dialogue below:

A: I think that the best approach would be to _____

B: Yes, but _____

A: Yes, but I still think _____

B: What you don't seem to realize is _____

A: What YOU don't seem to realize is _____

B: Whatever you say, I think that the best approach would be to _____

A: Why don't you listen to reason?

B: Why don't YOU listen to reason?

A: You're just being difficult _____

B: No, I'm not. YOU'RE the one who's being difficult!

HANDLING CONFLICT

Think about what the stumbling blocks are here, and how you could make this into a constructive discussion.

A: I think that the best approach would be _____

B: Yes, but _____

A: I see. (ACTIVE LISTENING) So what concerns you is _____

B: Exactly.

A: Well, (ASSERTIVE APPROACH) what concerns ME is _____

B: Why is that so important?

A: Because _____

B: I see.

A: (SUMMARIZING THE TWO POINTS OF VIEW) So what's important for

you is _____

and what's important to me is _____

Let's look for a solution which satisfies both.

CASE STUDY

A few weeks ago Joan Smith, a highly respected supervisor, was asked by her manager to find and train a replacement for herself. Recognizing that a promotion was in the wind for her, Joan interviewed several prospects. She was in the process of recommending Fred James when management assigned her a young man named Dennis as the replacement.

Although the experience was upsetting to Joan, she proceeded to devote all her spare time to training Dennis to the best of her ability. Despite all of her efforts to be skillful in building a healthy relationship, a serious conflict developed. Dennis seemed to ignore her suggestions, and at times, questioned authority; he kept talking about needing "more freedom" to develop his own style. Soon the conflict was obvious to the rest of the staff, and productivity started to drop. Little communication was taking place between Joan and Dennis. What should be done to correct this situation?

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 5

OBJECTIVES:

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- give criticism
- take criticism
- be assertive
- recognize the importance of consensus
- use the best approaches to reach consensus
- identify positive and negative roles in groups

TOPICS:

- making complaints
- giving and taking criticism
- being assertive
- making others listen to you
- consensus
- positive and negative roles in groups

METHODS:

- role plays
- case study
- group discussion
- self assessment

EVALUATION:

- self assessment
- successful completion of tasks

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 5

MATERIALS:

- role play
- case study – Making Others Listen to You
- handouts – Making Complaints or Giving Criticism
 - Responding to Criticism
 - A look at Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication - The Assertive Way
 - Guidelines for Group Decision Making
 - Positive and Negative Roles in Groups
- Assertiveness Quiz

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 5*

- ◇ Giving and taking Criticism
- ◇ Handout – Assertiveness questionnaire
- ◇ Handout – Responding to criticism
- ◇ Role-plays
- ◇ Consensus – what is it and why is it necessary to have it in a work situation?
In order to reach consensus, how do you get others to listen?
 - a) The aggressive approach
 - b) The judgmental approach
 - c) The non-assertive/pleading approach
 - d) The sarcastic approach
 - e) The assertive approach
- ◇ Ask for examples of each.
- ◇ Handout – Roles in Groups

MAKING COMPLAINTS OR GIVING CRITICISM

When making a complaint

- **decide what the problem is**
- **explain how you feel and why**
- **make your point briefly**
- **pause and wait for the response**
- **resist the urge to relieve the tension by further explanation**

When criticizing someone

- **start with genuine and specific praise**
- **try not to make him/her feel bad**
- **avoid putting him/her on the defensive**
- **describe and explain the problem without attacking the other person**
- **avoid inferences, cite observations**
- **be specific**
- **motivate the person to improve**

ROLE PLAY

Liz has spent a lot of time on a report to be presented to senior management. She has produced a very lengthy thorough document and is very pleased with the results. Her supervisor, however, is concerned that it's too long and that what has been proposed will be rejected, precisely because of the detail.

In pairs, role play the situation. Then discuss the difficulties you each had and why.

RESPONDING TO CRITICISM

Conflict is very difficult to resolve when we are criticized or attacked directly. Our natural instinct is to defend ourselves, often by counterattacking. And then the conflict escalates.

Constructive Ways of Responding to Criticism

Paraphrasing (repeating in your own words what your critic has said)

- ◇ to make sure that you have heard your critic accurately
- ◇ to let him/her know what has been said means to you
- ◇ to communicate the feeling that you are taking your critic and his/her feelings seriously

Checking for feelings

- ◇ to try to understand your critic's emotions
- ◇ to assess the importance of the criticism for your critic
- ◇ to see if the unspoken ideas and feelings are different from/ more important than the voiced criticism

Checking for inferences

- ◇ to try to understand *why* your critic is bothered by the attitude or action under discussion
- ◇ to identify the real problem
- ◇ to communicate that you care about resolving the conflict

Buying time with limited agreement

- ◇ to avoid escalating the conflict
- ◇ to allow you time to think and respond, rather than simply reacting defensively
- ◇ to suggest that you are trying to hear what your critic is saying

ASSERTIVENESS QUIZ

Before learning how to develop your assertiveness, it is important to take a few moments to get some idea of where you are right now. Answer the questions below honestly. They will help you gain some insights about your current level of assertiveness.

Use the scale 5 to 1 as described for your answers.

ALWAY				NEVER
5	4	3	2	1

- _____ 1. I say "No" without feeling guilty, particularly when someone asks me to do something I do not want to do.
- _____ 2. I ask others to do things without feeling apologetic or anxious
- _____ 3. I confidently express my honest opinion to authority figures.
- _____ 4. When I experience feelings of anger, frustration, disappointment, etc., I verbalize them easily.
- _____ 5. When I express anger, I do so without blaming others for "making me mad".
- _____ 6. When I make a mistake, I acknowledge it.
- _____ 7. If I disagree with the majority in a meeting, I can "stick to my guns" without feeling uncomfortable or being abrasive.
- _____ 8. When discussing my beliefs/opinions, I do so without labeling the opinions of others as "crazy", "stupid", "ridiculous" or "unrealistic".
- _____ 9. When considering doing something I have never done, I feel confident I can learn to do it.
- _____ 10. I generally have confidence in my own judgment.

_____ TOTAL SCORE.

45

MAKING OTHERS LISTEN TO YOU

You are in a meeting with a colleague. He feels that the solution to the problem is to take the risk and spend a considerable amount of money on new machinery which will put you on the cutting edge when the market improves. You, on the other hand, are of the opinion that the market at this moment is too unstable, and the risks involved in spending the money outweigh the benefits. You both feel very strongly that your way is the correct way to go. Look at the following five styles and consider the strengths and weaknesses of each in trying to dissuade him from his course of action.

1. "That's a stupid idea. It's totally irresponsible. If we get into financial difficulties, it will be all your fault."
2. "I think it's irresponsible to do that. It's wrong to take a gamble like this. You should think more about the consequences."
3. "Brilliant! With people like you at the helm, it's bound to be plain sailing all the way! Remind me to put your name forward for the manager-of-the-year award."
4. "I'm sure you know best. It's just that...you don't mind my saying...do you really think it's wise...I mean...surely it would be safer not to?"
5. "I'm extremely concerned about our bank balance, because we are already close to the limit of what we had budgeted to spend this year and sales have nowhere near reached what we had forecast."

MAKING OTHERS LISTEN TO YOU

1. The **Aggressive** approach
 - an attack on "opponent"
 - expresses anger
 - effect on others – resentment, fear, closed mindedness. Barriers go up.

2. The **Judgmental** approach
 - expresses your honest opinion
 - but people resent being told what the should/shouldn't do; what is right/wrong; good/bad
 - effect – leads to arguments

3. The **Sarcastic** approach
 - implies contempt
 - people afraid to fight back for fear of being accused of being over-sensitive and having no sense of humor
 - effect – creates tension, suspicion and people feel hurt

4. The **Pleading/Non-Assertive** approach
 - trying to avoid conflict
 - don't want to antagonize or demoralize others
 - makes person look weak and pleading
 - effect – message loses impact

5. The **Assertive** approach
 - states fact, not opinion
 - shows how you feel, but doesn't make other person feel bad as there is no put down, or attack
 - communication is direct and open
 - effect – creates constructive atmosphere of mutual respect, frankness

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP DECISION MAKING

- 1. Know the purpose of the meeting**
- 2. Be prepared.**
 - ◇ Think about your own ideas and feelings about the decisions to be made
- 3. Support your opinions**
 - ◇ Think of reasons or evidence for your views
- 4. Be open to other points of view**
 - ◇ Listen carefully to opinions that differ from your own
 - ◇ Consider new ideas with an open mind
 - ◇ Don't tune out a speaker whose viewpoint differs from yours
- 5. Express your comments clearly and concisely**
 - ◇ Think about what you want to say before you speak.
 - ◇ Make your point quickly and don't ramble on with needless information
- 6. Avoid arguing**
 - ◇ Try to reach a compromise
- 7. Know what is expected of you at the end of the meeting**

POSITIVE / NEGATIVE ROLES IN GROUPS

Positive roles and actions that help the group achieve its goals:

- seeking information and opinions
- giving information and opinions
- summarizing
- evaluating
- coordinating

Positive roles and actions that help the group build loyalty, resolve conflicts and function smoothly:

- encouraging participation
- relieving tensions
- checking feelings
- solving interpersonal problems
- listening actively

Negative roles and actions that hurt the group:

- blocking
- dominating
- clowning
- withdrawing

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 6**OBJECTIVES:**

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- identify and use different methods to present their ideas
- organize their thoughts for impromptu speaking, using the PREP formula
- apply stress relievers to control anxiety
- identify the benefits of written over verbal communication
- identify the cost of poor correspondence to the company

TOPICS:

- verbal vs. written communication
- formal vs. informal communication
- impromptu speaking using the PREP formula
- stress relievers to control anxiety
- benefits of writing
- costs of poor correspondence

METHODS:

- group discussion
- individual presentations

EVALUATION:

- self assessment
- peer critiques of presentations

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 6

MATERIALS:

- handouts -- PREP Formula
 - Let's Relax
 - Keeping your Stress/Anxiety in Check
 - More Practice with Prep
 - Anxiety Check-Up
 - Reasons for Communicating in Writing
 - The Costs of Poor Writing

• **TEACHER TIPS** ◆ **SESSION 6**

- ◇ Discussion on the best way to present your point of view in different situations
 - verbal/written
 - formal/informal

- ◇ How to organize and present ideas
 - PREP Formula
 - relaxation
 - do PREP
 - anxiety checkup

- ◇ Extend to reporting information –
 - e.g. Report the state of a project you have Ben working on. This will be followed by a written report.

- ◇ Handout – Why people put things in writing
 - Costs of Poor Correspondence

PREP FORMULA FOR IMPROMPTU SPEAKING



To encourage clear and organized thinking as an aid for clear speaking, use the **PREP** formula.

PREP

P..... **Point**

R..... **Reason**

E..... **Example**

P..... **Point**

I like the people I work with.

Point

Because they show concern for each other.

Reason

For example, when Joe was in the hospital, they all chipped in and bought him a fruit basket.

Example

Therefore, I really look forward to coming to work.

Point

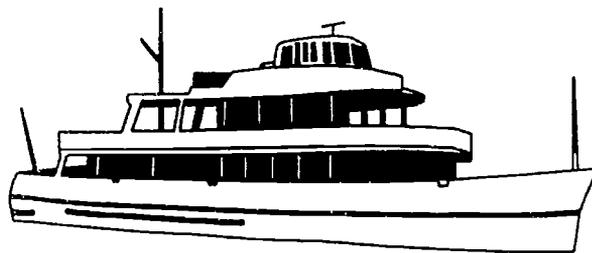
LET'S RELAX!!

⌘ Follow these exercises to relax before you make your presentation (practice or final).

STRETCH raise your arms gently over your head and gently reach higher with your left arm, then right, then left, etc. Now bend at the waist and gently sway your upper body from side to side. Slowly stand straight and gently shake your arms, becoming more vigorous as you go.

RELAX your shoulders and neck. Do the head roll – gently roll your head from the left to the right and back. Raise your shoulders and roll your shoulders in circular fashion.

BREATHE deeply and relax. Imagine yourself speaking in front of the group. See yourself relaxed as you speak; hear your voice sounding clear and calm and **b r e a t h e** deeply again.



Let's Relax!!

VOICE RELAXATION

VOICE TUNE-UPS

SIGH

a deep sigh, letting your shoulders slump toward the floor

INHALE and EXHALE

deeply and slowly. Breathe in through your nose, filling your lungs and feeling that your lower abdomen is expanding. Exhale through mouth and as you do your abdomen should pull in.

Say "AH"

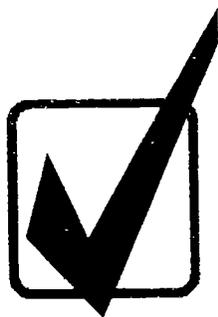
then a series of "ahs," each becoming more forceful than the last.



AH...AH...AH..AH...

ANXIETY CHECK-UP

BEFORE your impromptu speech:



- ◆ Breathe deeply
- ◆ Relax your upper body
- ◆ Do "Voice tune-ups"
- ◆ Imagine yourself speaking with calm and ease

AFTER your impromptu speech:

How did you FEEL during it? _____

Did you try to relax if you noticed nervousness (e.g. dry mouth, racing heart, sweaty palms, etc.) _____

Did you let your fear of "messaging up" take control? Were you able to stop the negative thinking and relax? _____

What do you need to work on for the next time? _____

REASONS FOR COMMUNICATING IN WRITING

1. Written communications serve as permanent records.
2. Written communications (including graphics) are more effective than oral ones for presenting complex information and numerical data.
3. Written communications give the writer time to think about the best way of saying what he/she wants to say.
4. Written communications are more convenient for the recipient than oral ones, as they give the reader time to fully understand key points and think about the appropriate response.
5. Written communications are more cost effective for reaching large numbers of people or transmitting information over longer distances.

THE COSTS OF POOR WRITING

Wasted Time:

- Incomplete information requires the reader to waste time asking for clarification before he/she can respond.
- Difficult subject matter, poor organization and style wastes the reader's time trying to understand the message.
- Bad writing may need to be rewritten.
- Bad writing may obscure ideas so that discussions and decisions are needlessly drawn out.

Wasted Efforts:

- If people have to guess the writer's intentions, they may respond wrongly, or choose not to do what the message asks.

Loss of Goodwill:

- Careless spelling, poor organization and unclear messages show the reader that he/she is not worth the time it takes to do the job properly.
- Even if the words give correct information, if the style and tone are inappropriate or disrespectful they will undermine the image the reader has of the writer.

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 7

OBJECTIVES:

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- analyze why complicated memos fail to get their message across
- apply the principles of good writing to simplify and rewrite a complicated memo
- identify the purpose of writing
- analyze their reader and what his/her responses should be
- plan a report/memo

TOPICS:

- what is the purpose of writing
- why do memos fail to communicate?
- principles of good writing
- audience
- preliminary planning

METHODS:

- group discussion
- practice situations
- individual writing

EVALUATION:

- peer critique of rewritten memo

MATERIALS:

- handouts – What's Wrong with this Memo?
Principles of Good Writing
Tips for Effective Communication
Preliminary Plan Worksheet

TEACHER TIPS ◆ **SESSION 7**

- ◇ Problems with written communications
- ◇ Discussion on why complicated memo fails to get its message across
- ◇ Handouts
 - Difficult memo
 - Principles of good Writing
 - Tips for more Effective communication
- ◇ Group work- rewrite memo
- ◇ Handout
 - Preliminary Plan Worksheet
- ◇ Discussion
 - PURPOSE:
 - why am I writing this?
 - what do I want my reader to do?
 - AUDIENCE:
 - who is my reader?
 - what is she/he?
 - what does she/he know about the subject?
 - how will he/she react and use this document?
 - is there anyone else who should read this?
 - BOTTOM LINE:
 - if the reader were to forget everything else, what is the one idea I want to get across?
- ◇ Use Preliminary Plan Sheet for written presentation of status of a project they have been working on

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS MEMO?

Memorandum

TO: Employees in the Warehouse
FROM: Management
SUBJECT: STOCK

Please be cognizant of the alterations to the stock placement alphabetical/numerical code system. In previous times, we as a company have adhered strictly to the implementation of a single alphabetical letter, single numerical digit code system for placing and locating stock materials in the warehouse. Due to the large increase and overwhelming amount of stock which we have recently received into our warehouse, we are no longer able to abide presently by the aforementioned system of coding, namely single alphabetical letter and single numerical digit.

As a result of this tremendous stock, instead of the old system, single alphabetical and single numerical, we will put into immediate implementation the variant system of double alphabetical letter and single digit coding. This will allow us to accommodate and store more storage materials. This will be of great and useful benefit for everyone concerned.

This implementation will take effect immediately on January 1, 1993. It is of the utmost importance to note to you that any earlier previously received stock which already holds the previous old code will stay as it is. Only newly received and recent stock, received on or after January 1, 1993, will fall into the category of items that are to be recipients of the new coding numbers.

Please digest the above detailed information to promptly ensure that you minimize potential incorrect actions and/or potential errored coding in the upcoming future.

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD WRITING

1. **Know why you are writing.** What do you hope to accomplish by writing
What do you want the reader to think, feel say or do as a result of reading your
communication?

2. **Write the way you speak.** Though written English is usually more formal
than spoken, use standard, straightforward language. Don't make anything
more complicated than it needs to be. Fancy vocabulary more often than not
creates problems.

3. **Write for your reader, not for yourself.** Involve your reader in your
communication.

4. **Be positive** and, wherever possible, look upon situations optimistically.

5. **Be certain your writing is clear, concise, accessible, complete and accurate,
correct and organized.**

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Keep your writing clear, concise and simple.
- Choose your words carefully.
- Be natural.
- Avoid fad words, jargon, and clichés.
- Use the active rather than the passive voice.
- Be committed to what you say. Avoid qualifiers.
- Use familiar words.
- Be specific. Avoid vagueness.
- Eliminate redundant expressions.
- Keep your audience in mind.

PRELIMINARY PLAN WORKSHEET

Topic of presentation: _____

Length of presentation: _____

Who requested that the presentation be made? _____

Purpose of presentation:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

A. Audience Identity:

Who? _____

Relationship to me? _____

Knowledge about topic? _____

Interest in topic _____

Additional background information: _____

Probable questions: _____

B. Probable Attitude and Personality

Attitude towards topic: _____

Possible objections: _____

Attitude towards me: _____

Organizational Climate: _____

Probable reaction: _____

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

C. Expectations

Intended effect: _____

Which tone to pitch? _____

MAIN IDEAS OR CONCEPTS

What *main ideas* or *concepts* must the audience understand and remember if you are to achieve your purpose?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

FACTS



What *factual information* do you need to support your main ideas?

Idea 1: _____

Idea 2: _____

Idea 3: _____

Idea 4: _____

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 8

OBJECTIVES:

In order to communicate more effectively on the job, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- distinguish different styles and tones for different audiences
- organize their materials into introduction, body and conclusion
- research information
- take effective notes

TOPICS:

- style and tone
- guidelines for organizing materials
- using transitions
- reading for information
- taking notes

METHODS:

- guided discussion
- individual writing

EVALUATION:

- successful completion of exercise

MATERIALS:

- handouts – Tips for Setting out Your Letter
Style and Tone
Guidelines for Organizing Materials
Transitions
Reading for Information
Taking Notes

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 8*

- ◇ Distinguish different styles and tones for different audiences
- ◇ Handout – Tips for Setting out your Letter
Style and Tone
- ◇ How to organize and present ideas
- ◇ Handout – Guidelines for Organizing Materials
- ◇ If you need to do research
- ◇ Handouts – Reading for Information
taking notes (value in meetings etc.)
- ◇ Handout – transitions and exercise

TIPS FOR SETTING OUT YOUR LETTER

When reader's reaction is positive or neutral and you aren't asking for any action –

- give good news first. Summarize main points in 1st paragraph.
- in body, give supporting details, negative aspects and benefits.
- make last paragraph personal and positive.

When you have bad news –

- open with a neutral statement.
- give the reason for the news before the bad news itself.
- be clear and concise.
- try to give a n alternative or compromise.
- try to end positively.

When you want the reader to do something –

- catch the reader's interest.
- define the problem.
- explain the solution.
- show that any objections are outweighed by the benefits.
- tell the reader exactly what you want him to do.

STYLE AND TONE

What you say in a memo or letter is partly **how** you say it.

Your message can get lost in your words. The whole message is more than understanding the dictionary definitions of the words you use.

Writing effectively conveys how you wish to relate to your audience and what you want your audience to feel in response.

You must choose what style is appropriate for the occasion. Should you be personal or impersonal, simple and direct or more complex and colorful, forceful or passive?

To be an effective communicator **remember**:

- Your style has an impact on your reader
- Style communicates almost as much as the content of a message
- Style cannot be isolated from a situation
- There is no general style to fit all situations

For a forceful style – appropriate where the writer has power to give orders or to say no, firmly but politely to a subordinate.

- use the active voice
- don't beat around the bush. Say it directly.
- Write most sentences in subject-verb-object order. Don't weaken sentences by relegating the action to a subordinate clause: "Mike was offered the job, although the competition was intense," not "Although Mike was offered the job, the competition was intense."
- be confident. Avoid words like possibly, maybe, perhaps, some might conclude that

STYLE AND TONE

For a passive style – appropriate in negative situations and where the writer is subordinate to the reader.

- avoid the imperative
- occasional use of the passive: "Valuable time is being wasted" instead of "You are wasting valuable time."
- use words like possibly, maybe, perhaps, some might conclude that

For a personal style – appropriate in good news and persuasive action/request situations.

- use the active voice
- use personal pronouns (particularly you and I) and people's names, instead of titles
- uses short sentences that give the rhythm of ordinary conversation
- direct questions to the reader
- add positive personal thoughts and references to reinforce that this is not some type of form letter, sent to lots of others

For an impersonal style – appropriate in negative and information conveying situations. (Also in technical and scientific writing)

- avoid using people's names and personal pronouns
- use the passive voice
- make some of your sentences complex and some paragraphs long.

For a colorful style – appropriate for the more persuasive writing of sales and advertising letters.

- use adjectives and adverbs
- if appropriate, use metaphors - our new product is a miracle of modern design; or similes - our new cleaner works like magic to remove stains

There can be some overlap in these styles. This is a guide to help you, but, in the end, it is up to you to decide how you say what you want to say.

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

There are three purposes to the introduction:

- a) selling the audience on listening to your presentation
- b) introducing the subject matter to the audience
- c) establishing your personal credibility as a speaker and regarding the subject matter

Suggested Approaches for the Introduction

1. Open with a direct statement of the subject and why it is important.
2. Link the subject to something that you know is of interest or concern to the audience.
3. Give an example or comparison leading directly to the subject.
4. Use a strong quotation or give important statistics about the subject.
5. Tell a story related to the subject.

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING MATERIALS

BODY

Once you have given the introduction, the body of your presentation must develop the main ideas that you have laid out in your preliminary plan. In essence, you must fulfill the commitment that you have made to your audience. You must try to make them believe that the subject is as important to them as it is to you.

You can use several techniques:

- a) statistics
- b) examples
- c) comparisons and contrasts
- d) narratives or testimonies
- e) argument (pros and cons)
- f) process analysis

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING MATERIALS

CONCLUSION

Remember that your ending is what the audience takes away with them. Therefore it is critical. A good conclusion provides a summary of the main ideas, a review of the purpose of the presentation, and an appeal for audience action.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are words or phrases that show the relationship between one statement and another. They make your speaking more coherent and easy to listen to.

- TO EXPLAIN:** for instance, for example, to illustrate, also, that is, too, namely, besides, such as
- TO COMPARE:** similarly, by comparison, likewise
- TO CONTRAST:** however, nevertheless, yet, but, on the other hand, on the contrary, still, although, otherwise, in contrast, in spite of, instead, despite
- TO ADD:** in addition, furthermore, similarly, besides, moreover, a second, another, again, also
- TO SHOW REPETITION:** in other words, as I have said, that is, as has been stated
- TO SHOW ORDER:** first, second, third, finally, in conclusion, last
- TO SHOW RESULT:** therefore, as a result, consequently, for this reason, accordingly, in conclusion, thus, because, so hence
- TO EMPHASIZE:** in fact, indeed, in any event, naturally
- TO CONCEDE A POINT:** fortunately, of course, in fact, naturally

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 9

OBJECTIVE:

At the end of this session students will have written a first draft of their reports.

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 9*

Write presentation

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 10 & 11**OBJECTIVES:**

In order to write a clear, well constructed report, at the end of this session, students will be able to:

- simplify complicated sentences
- remove clichés, redundancies and obsolete expressions
- avoid ambiguities
- use the active rather than the passive voice
- correct sentence problems, e.g. dangling and misplaced modifiers, subject and verb agreement and parallel construction
- correct spelling and punctuation mistakes
- use proofreading techniques to edit a first draft

TOPICS:

- basic rules for editing: trimming unnecessary words, simplifying language, removing clichés, redundancies, ambiguities, and obsolete expressions
- sentence problems: modifiers, subject & verb agreement, parallel construction
- spelling and punctuation rules
- proofreading

METHODS:

- guided discussion of principles
- worksheets of examples
- application of the above to own first drafts

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 10 & 11

EVALUATION:

- comparison of first to second drafts
- successful completion of worksheets

Students will be able to edit their own work so that their messages are clear, concise and coherent. If they write well, their ideas are more likely to be taken seriously by customers, supervisors and managers.

MATERIALS:

- Editing: What to look for
- Simplifying Prepositional Phrases
- Simplifying Phrases
- Sentences to Simplify
- Outdated Business Language
- Redundancies
- Being Tactful and Positive
- Eliminating Redundancies
- Making Passive Sentences Active
- More Sentences to Edit
- Memos for Revision
- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Modifiers
- Parallel Construction
- spelling and punctuation handouts and worksheets

TEACHER TIPS ◆ *SESSION 10*

- ◇ Rules of editing
- ◇ Handouts and worksheets

EDITING: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Lengthy Sentences

In arranging for the customer to finance his car, Chrysler dealers were at a disadvantage when competing with General Motors and Ford dealers because both these companies offered direct auto financing to dealers and customers through their own financing sources and Chrysler dealers had to look to outside sources to satisfy their financing requirements.

Clichés

Enclosed please find the information as per your request. Hopefully, you can utilize our product to benefit your company within the parameters of your computer's invoice processing. We appreciate your input.

Too Many Big Words

Pursuant to our discussion, herewith we acknowledge receipt of your correspondence as of the above date.

Subsequently, we'll require your endorsement.

Vague Expressions

The company's negative cash flow position forced it to resize its operations to the level of profitable market opportunities.

Active vs. Passive Voice

It was necessary to terminate the search

The secretary was hired by Mary.

The Ford corporation was founded by Henry Ford in 1903

New and used automobiles are financed by G.M.A.C.

SIMPLIFYING PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

ORIGINAL

at all times
 at a later date
 at an early date
 at the present time
 at the time when
 at this time
 in the amount of \$10.00
 in the development of
 in the event that
 in the meantime
 in the nature of
 in the near future
 in view of the fact that
 for the collection of
 for making the comparisons
 for the learning of
 for the mastery of
 for the month of July
 for the operation of
 for the purchasing of
 for the preparation of
 for the purpose of reviewing
 for the operation of
 for the reason that
 for this to be accomplished
 along the lines of
 of this nature
 on the grounds that
 on the part of
 over the signature of
 to the attainment of
 through the use of
 under the direction of
 under separate cover

REVISED

always
 later
 soon
 now
 when
 now
 for \$10.00
 in developing
 if
 meanwhile
 like
 soon
 because
 to collect
 to compare
 to learn
 to master
 for July
 to operate
 to buy
 to prepare
 to review
 to operate
 because
 to do this
 like
 like this
 because
 by
 signed by
 to get
 by using
 directed by
 separately

SIMPLIFYING PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

UNNECESSARY WORDS

are as follows
aware of the fact that
if it is deemed to be satisfactory
in order to be well-prepared
in the course of his speech
in the month of July
in the year 1993
it is interesting
it is obvious that
it is possible to do this
until such time as
we are in the process of preparing
we are in the process of restructuring
we wish to advise
we find it objectionable
we came to the conclusion that

are
aware of
if satisfactory
to be well-prepared
in his speech
in July
in 1993
(leave it out)
(leave it out)
we can do this
until
we are preparing
we are restructuring
(leave it out)
we object
we concluded that

SIMPLIFYING PHRASES

Simplify the phrases below. Eliminate any wordiness, jargon, obsolete expressions or incorrectly used words.

- at this point in time _____
- as per your suggestion _____
- I would like to call your attention _____
- in the event of _____
- due to the fact that _____
- at a later date _____
- kindly advise _____
- in the normal course of our procedures _____
- this will acknowledge with thanks _____
- in accordance with your request _____
- under separate cover _____
- on a daily basis _____
- each and every one _____
- in my opinion, I think _____
- irregardless _____
- owing to the fact that _____
- we regret to inform you _____
- therefore, we ask you to remit _____
- there is no doubt but that _____
- so very happy _____
- clenched tightly _____
- close proximity _____
- close scrutiny _____
- in the majority of instances _____
- at this juncture of maturation _____
- in the amount of _____

OUTDATED BUSINESS LANGUAGE

Good business writing requires flexibility and a willingness to change. Many obsolete phrases and overused expressions are no longer appropriate and make your writing dull and expressionless.

Examples:

comply with your request
permit us to remind you
pleasure of a reply
regret to advise you
thanking you kindly
we take pleasure in advising
subsequent to your letter of
as per our agreement
as per your request
enclosed please find
under separate cover
until such time
prior to the start of
regarding the matter of
in the near future
pursuant to
hereby advise
please be advised
in the matter that
please remit

REDUNDANCIES

Redundancies are unnecessary repetitions of words. Writing should be concise and to the point.

Examples:

exact same

past history

past experience

free gift

personal opinion

true fact

other alternative

return back

basic fundamental

both alike

cooperate together

revert back

Jewish rabbi

Catholic priest

meet together

goals and objectives

fair and just

advised and informed

rules and regulations

full and complete

prompt and immediate

each and every

right and proper

continuous and uninterrupted

refuse and decline

modern and up-to-date

Avoid these phrases:

As a general rule

In my opinion, I believe that

In my personal opinion

Enclosed you will find

MAKING PASSIVE SENTENCES ACTIVE

Overusing the passive voice makes you sound ineffectual, and unwilling to take a stand. Instead, use the active voice to sound more positive and capable of getting the job done.

Example:

We have received your letter *or* Thank you for your letter
rather than
Receipt of your letter is acknowledged

Rewrite the sentences below using the active voice.

1. The supervisor was notified by the employees that the meeting would take place the following Thursday.
2. Suggestions and comments about my ideas can be given without hurting my feelings.
3. It was stated in the nurse's report that fewer accidents were suffered by employees this year than in the previous three years.
4. It is advised that accurate minutes of all departmental meetings be kept and reports submitted by departments at the end of every month.

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB ♦ SESSION 12

- ◇ Post class exercise
- ◇ Return presentation
- ◇ Case study
- ◇ Class evaluations

CASE STUDY

Most people in Department A have been there for some time and know each other very well. Over the years, they have developed a form of sexual banter which all, including the supervisor, have participated in.

Jan J. is a new employee who comes into this department and, although she tries to hide it, she gets upset when things are directed at her. It has begun to affect her work and she has been coming in late or calling in sick to avoid coming in.

As a group, discuss whose problem this is and what can be done about it. Look at the situation from all sides and plan your courses of action.

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB

Pre and Post Class Exercises

Each company has a policy of flextime. Below are a selection of memos written by the Manager of Human Resources telling all employees about the program. Think about how each meets the needs of the reader and the organization. In a few sentences give your comments about what you feel is right and wrong with each of the memos and then write your own.

1.

To: All Employees
From: Manager, Human Resources
Subject: Now you can come and go when you want!

Great news! As from Monday, March 1, you get to choose your own hours! Well, not any hours, but as long as you're here from 10 to 3, the rest is up to you.

This will make life easier for you moms and dads. We all know what a pain it is trying to juggle home and work. And those without kids won't mind the extra flexibility to catch up on time in the gym. It will be good to get on the machines without having to wait.

Just work it out with your supervisor. Someone has to be around from 9 to 5. We don't want the customers thinking there's nobody here when they phone! Enjoy!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

92

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB

2.

To: All Employees
From: Manager, Human Resources
Subject: Flexitime

Following the Executive Board meeting on February 3, 1993, in accordance with company's policy regarding changes to procedures, it is announced that from Monday, March 1, 1993, The company will be initiating a system of flexitime. Attendance between the hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. will be regarded as obligatory. However employees will have the option of choosing their own hours of commencement and departure, subject to their supervisor's approval and providing they are present for the mandatory eight hours. The other stipulation is that personnel are present at all times in order to facilitate the answering of telephones.

COMMUNICATING ON THE JOB

3.

To: All Employees
From: Manager, Human Resources
Subject: Another Employee Benefit for the company's Employees who work here at the Corporate and Service Centers

Some of you may already have got wind of the new policy that we are about to initiate at the company. We are really excited about it and know that once you get used to the new system, you too will be as enthusiastic as we are. However there are some organizational details that you need to be aware of.

Things will get under way on March 1, 1993. At that time you will be able to be more flexible about you start and finish times. You have to be at work between the core hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. and then have to put in the extra 3 hours to make the 8 hour work day. This means that, for example, you could come in at 6 a.m. and then leave by 3 p.m. Or, if you wanted to come in at 9.30 a.m. it would mean that you could only leave at 5.30 p.m. You will be able to work out whatever suits you best. You can even come in at different times on different days, so long as you have your supervisor's permission.

As I have just said, you do need to get your supervisor's permission. This is obvious, because otherwise it might mean that on some days and at some times, there might not be anybody to answer the telephones. You all know that customers are the lifeblood of our company, so we must have somebody here at all times.

I do see that there might be a few problems with this to start out, but I am confident that we can work it out. I hope that you think that this is a good idea and that it gives you more time to spend with your families or catching up with those things that we never get time to do in a normal work week.

94
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SCORING

Response to memos.....	- 5 marks each
Rewriting memo - information	- 5
- style and tone	- 5
- correctly set out	- 5
- spelling, gram etc.....	- 5
	= 35 x %