

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 1-Interpersonal Relationships Communication Skills Inventory

The purpose of this activity is to discover how satisfied you are with the way you communicate in various situations and to preview some topics that will be covered in the class. Below you will find several communication related situations. As you read each of them, imagine yourself in that situation.

For each instance, answer the following question: How satisfied am I with the way I would behave in this situation and ones like it? Use the following scale to indicate your score.

- 5 = Completely satisfied with my probable action.
- 4 = Generally, though not totally, satisfied with my probable action.
- 3 = About equally satisfied and dissatisfied with my probable action.
- 2 = Generally, though not totally, dissatisfied with my probable action.
- 1 = Completely dissatisfied with my probable action.

- ____ 1. A new acquaintance has just shared some personal experiences with you that make you think you'd like to develop a closer relationship. You have experienced the same things and are now deciding whether to reveal these personal experiences.

- ____ 2. You've become involved in a political discussion with someone whose views are the complete opposite of yours. The other person asks, "Can't you at least understand why I feel as I do?"

- ____ 3. You are considered a responsible adult by virtually everyone except one relative who still wants to help you make all of your decisions. You value your relationship with this person, but you need to be seen as more independent. You know you should do something about the situation.

- ____ 4. In a mood of self-improvement, a friend asks you to describe the one or two ways by which you think he or she could behave better. You're willing to do so, but you need to express yourself clearly and in a helpful way.

- ____ 5. A close companion says that you have been behaving "differently" lately and asks if you know what he or she means.

- ____ 6. You've grown to appreciate a new friend a great deal lately, and you realize that you ought to share your feelings.

- ____7. An amateur writer you know has just shown you their latest batch of poems and asked your opinion of them. You don't think they're very good. It's time for your reply.
- ____8. You've found certain behaviors of an important person in your life have become more and more bothersome to you. It's getting harder to keep your feelings to yourself.
- ____9. You are invited to a party at which everyone except the host will be a stranger to you. Upon hearing about this, a friend says to you, "Gee, if I were going I'd feel like an outsider. They probably won't have much to do with you." How do you feel?
- ____10. A friend comes to you feeling very upset about a recent incident and asks for advice. You suspect there is more to the problem than just this one incident. You really want to help the friend.
- ____11. You find yourself defending the behavior of a friend against the criticisms of a third person. The critic accuses you of seeing only what you want to see and ignoring the rest.
- ____12. A boss or instructor asks you to explain a recent assignment to a companion who has been absent. You are cautioned to explain the work clearly so there will be no misunderstandings.
- ____13. You ask an acquaintance for help with a problem. They say yes, but the way the message is expressed leaves you thinking they would rather not. You do need the help, but only if it's sincerely offered.
- ____14. A roommate always seems to be too busy to do the dishes when it's his or her turn, and you've wound up doing them most of the time. You resent the unequal sharing of responsibility and want to do something about it.
- ____15. A new acquaintance has become quite interested in getting to know you better, but you feel no interest yourself. You've heard that this person is extremely sensitive and insecure.

By looking at each question, you can see how satisfied you are by your behavior in specific types of situations. A response of 1 or 2 indicates the areas that would benefit the most with your focus. The numbers following the statement match the unit numbers on your syllabus. At the end of the course you will take this questionnaire again so you can measure your own progress.

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Interpersonal Relationships Communication Skills Inventory

Name: _____ Dates: _____/_____/_____

First day scores

- ____ 1.
- ____ 2.
- ____ 3.
- ____ 4.
- ____ 5.
- ____ 6.
- ____ 7.
- ____ 8.
- ____ 9.
- ____ 10.
- ____ 11.
- ____ 12.
- ____ 13.
- ____ 14.
- ____ 15.

Last day scores

- ____ 1.
- ____ 2.
- ____ 3.
- ____ 4.
- ____ 5.
- ____ 6.
- ____ 7.
- ____ 8.
- ____ 9.
- ____ 10.
- ____ 11.
- ____ 12.
- ____ 13.
- ____ 14.
- ____ 15.

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 2-Culture and Communication

Cultural Groups

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate the impact of cultural differences on interpersonal and group interaction. Working in groups, you will create your own unique “culture”. Each culture must include the following:

1) One unique way of dressing (that can be displayed now).

a. _____

2) One unique ethical stand related to immigration.

a. _____

3) Two unique manners of speaking.

a. _____

b. _____

4) Three unique beliefs that will NEVER be compromised.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5) Four words that only the group members will understand.

a. _____ Meaning: _____

b. _____ Meaning: _____

c. _____ Meaning: _____

d. _____ Meaning: _____

Once you have established the rules of your culture, you will go forth into the world (classroom) and experience other cultures (form new teams). Once new groups have been established, you will attempt to come up with a solution to the problem given.

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 3-Communication and the self

Self Identity

The purpose of this activity is to identify the biological and social aspects of your self-concept. For each category below, supply the words or phrases that describe you best.

1) What cultural or ethnic descriptors are important to describe you (American, Hispanic, Jewish, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
2) How do you describe your personality traits (introvert, extrovert, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
3) What gender or sexual orientation words describe you (male, gay, heterosexual, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
4) How would you describe your social behaviors (friendly, shy, aloof, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
5) What moods or feelings best characterize you (cheerful, serious, optimistic, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
6) How would you describe you physical condition/appearance (fit, big, tall/short, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
7) What talents do you possess or lack (good artist, bad carpenter, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
8) How would you describe your intellectual capacity (curious, good reader, bad at math)?		
a.	b.	c.
9) What beliefs do you hold strongly? (political, religious, lifestyle, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.
10) What social roles are the most important in your life (mother/father, clerk, student, etc.)?		
a.	b.	c.

After filling in the spaces within each category above, organize your responses so that the most fundamental characteristics are listed first, with the rest of the items following in order of importance.

1	16
2	17
3	18
4	19
5	20
6	21
7	22
8	23
9	24
10	25
11	26
12	27
13	28
14	29
15	30

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 4-Perception Perception-Checking Practice

The purpose of this activity is to create effective perception-checking statements. Working with a partner, write out perception checking statements for the following scenarios.

Example: Yesterday your friend Erin laughed at a joke about “dumb blonds”. You found it offensive.

Perception-checking statement: *Erin, when Joey cracked the dumb blonde joke last night, you laughed. I'm wondering if you disapprove of the joke but laughed to make Joey feel comfortable, or if you really do agree with the premise of that joke that blonds are not as smart as the rest of the population. Can you clarify things for me?*

- 1) Last night you saw a recent date walking on the beach, holding hands with someone. You'd like to date again, but don't want to if a current relationship exists. You get a call from the recent date, asking you to a movie and dinner this weekend.

- 2) Ever since the school year began, one of your parents has called weekly, asking how you are doing. They just asked again.

- 3) Your friend was driving home from a party last night when he began to weave the car between lanes on the highway. You were uncomfortable, but didn't say anything then. Now it is the next morning and your friend shows up to take you to a class. You have decided to bring up the incident.

- 4) For the last two weeks, when you are leaving your house, your roommate has asked for a ride somewhere. Your roommate has a car, but you haven't seen it lately. You are in a hurry now and your roommate has just asked for another ride.

- 5) You return home to find your roommate reading on the couch. When you walk into the room and give greeting, your roommate grunts and turns away from you and keeps on reading.

- 6) Last week your instructor returned a paper to you with a low grade and the comment “this kind of work paints a bleak picture for the future.” You have approached your instructor to discuss the matter.

- 7) In a long distance phone call with a friend from high school, you ask about their romantic life. They say, “Oh it’s OK, I guess.”

- 8) Last week your supervisor at work gave you a big assignment. Three times since then they have asked you if you are having any trouble with it.

- 9) One of your classmates sits by you everyday in class and you’ve done a lot of homework together, they’ve even called you at your home a few times a week. They suggest that you meet for dinner this weekend.

- 10) Last weekend your neighbor raked a big pile of leaves up to your property line, promising to clean them up on Monday. It’s now Wednesday and the leaves are blowing into your yard.

Interpersonal Communication Discussion

Chapter 4-Perception Mediated Message Perception

The purpose of this activity is to investigate the differences in mediated communication. As a group, discuss the following questions and prepare a response to share with the class.

- 1) List several ways in which messages sent through mediated channels may be misperceived. (Example: *I called my grandmother and she thought my tone of voice sounded like I was irritated with her; she didn't say anything at the time, but she complained to my mother about me.*)
- 2) How do influences on perception (physiological or cultural differences, social roles, and self-concept) affect these mediated misperceptions? (Example: *Physiological: I was tired when I called my grandmother and I know she has age-related hearing problems.*)
- 3) Prepare a perception checking statement that could be used in a mediated context for each of the misperceptions you listed above. Specify the mediated channel and the likelihood of success of the perception checking attempt. (Example: *"When you said in your last e-mail that you were busy on Saturday, I wondered if you had a previous commitment or if you were irritated with me for some reason I'm not aware of and don't want to see me. What did you mean?" I think this perception checking statement gives my friend a way to bring up anything that might be wrong, so it has a good likelihood of success.*)