

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 5-Language
Responsible Language

The purpose of this activity is to rewrite evaluative statements into descriptive statements. Rewrite each evaluative “you” language statement into a descriptive “I” language statement. Use all four elements of the complete “I” statement:

Describe the other person’s behavior

Give your interpretation of the behavior

Describe your feelings

Give the consequences that the other person’s behavior has for you

be careful to

Use specific, low level abstractions

Take the responsibility for your own thoughts and feelings (don’t say, “I feel you’re...”)

Avoid loaded terms like “It seems as if...”, “You wouldn’t even...”, or “you could at least”.

Also avoid absolutes like always, never, finally, etc.

Prepare your responses and be prepared to share with the class.

1) “You ruined my day.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

2) “You’re such a drama queen.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

3) “You clearly can’t be trusted.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

4) “Stop trying to control my life.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

5) “You don’t ever trust me.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

6) “You’re so full of yourself.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

7) “You make me doubt our relationship.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

8) “You have a bad attitude.”

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

9) "You weren't there for me."

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

10) "You're not really trying to get a job."

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

11) Record your own "you" language statement here:

"_____."

Rewrite it using an "I" language statement.

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

12) Record your own "you" language statement here:

"_____."

Rewrite it using an "I" language statement.

Behavior: _____

Interpretation: _____

Feeling: _____

Consequences: _____

Interpersonal Communication Discussion

Chapter 5-Language Mediated Message-Language

The purpose of this activity is to analyze the use of language in mediated contexts. As a group, discuss the following questions and prepare a response to share with the class.

- 1) Your identity is tied to the names we use. Discuss how the names you use in mediated contexts make a difference. (e.g., *your e-mail address or your chat room identity*).

- 2) The language used in answering machine or voice mail message can be very businesslike or very informal. Discuss the pros and cons of formal versus informal mediated messages.

- 3) Sometimes people fail to adapt their language style to the medium they are using (e.g., *they leave a long e-mail or 5 minute voice mail that should have been summarized briefly or within 30 seconds*). Should mediated channels contain more language or less? Specify two different mediated channels and how much language is appropriate for each.

- 4) Describe the gender or social role differences you have noticed in the language of mediated communication. (Example: *My son seems much more comfortable "talking" about emotions through e-mail, whereas my daughter prefers the telephone*) or (*My husband's secretary uses far more informal language to address me in e-mails than she uses face-to-face*).

Interpersonal Communication Discussion

Chapter 6-Nonverbal Mediated Message-Nonverbal

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

- 1) Mediated messages often deprive us of important nonverbal communication cues. Discuss what nonverbal cues are present and absent in the mediated contexts (e.g., telephone, e-mail, handwritten messages) used by members of your group.

- 2) List substitutions that people make for missing nonverbal cues (i.e., facial expressions, tone of voice, touch, spacing) in mediated contexts. How effective are these substitutions?

- 3) Your textbook discusses nonverbal signals of deception, or leakage. Describe why you think it is easier or more difficult to detect deception in mediated contexts.

- 4) Discuss the messages conveyed by the use of time in mediated context (for example, the length of time taken to return a phone call or an e-mail). Include both intentional and unintentional messages.

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 7-Listening Effective Questioning

The purpose of this activity is to develop your ability to question effectively in order to gain information about another person's thoughts. For each of the following statements, write two questions to get more information. Avoid counterfeit questions that trap the speaker, carry hidden agendas, seek "correct" answers, or are based on unchecked assumptions. Compare the responses of the group members and prepare a response to share with the class.

Example: "It's not fair that I have to work so much. Other students can get better grades because they have time to study."

How do you feel when others score higher than you do?

How many hours a week do you work?

1) "I guess it's OK for you to use my computer, but you have to understand that I've put a lot of time and money into it."

a. _____

b. _____

2) "You'll have the best chance at getting a loan for the new car you want if you give us a complete financial statement and credit history."

a. _____

b. _____

3) (Instructor to student) "This paper shows a lot of promise. It could probably earn you an A grade if you just develop the idea about the problems that arise from poor listening more."

a. _____

b. _____

4) "I do like the communication course, but it's not at all what I expected. It's much more *personal*, if you know what I mean."

a. _____

b. _____

- 5) “We just got started on your car’s transmission. I’m pretty sure we can have it ready tonight.”
- a. _____
- b. _____
- 6) “I do think it’s wrong to take any lives, but sometimes I think certain criminals deserve capital punishment.”
- a. _____
- b. _____
- 7) “My son never tells me what’s going on in his life. And now he’s moving away.”
- a. _____
- b. _____
- 8) “My family is so controlling. They make it impossible for me to escape.”
- a. _____
- b. _____
- 9) “It was a great game, I guess. I played a lot, but only scored once. The coach put Pat in ahead of me.”
- a. _____
- b. _____
- 10) “We had a great evening last night. The dinner was fantastic; so was the party. We saw lots of people. Erin loves that sort of thing.”
- a. _____
- b. _____

Interpersonal Communication Activity

Chapter 8-Emotions The Components of Emotion

The purpose of this activity is to identify the components of emotion. As a group, read each of the situations described below and describe how the emotions you would experience might manifest themselves in each of the components listed. Compare the responses of the group members and prepare a response to share with the class.

- 1) Incident: Your romantic partner says “I need to talk to you about something.”

Emotion: _____

Physiological changes: _____

Nonverbal reactions: _____

Cognitive interpretations: _____

- 2) Incident: You run into an “ex” while out with your new partner.

Emotion: _____

Physiological changes: _____

Nonverbal reactions: _____

Cognitive interpretations: _____

- 3) Incident: As you’re telling a story, you notice your listener stifle a yawn.

Emotion: _____

Physiological changes: _____

Nonverbal reactions: _____

Cognitive interpretations: _____

- 4) Incident: Your professor says “I’d like to see you in my office after class.”

Emotion: _____

Physiological changes: _____

Nonverbal reactions: _____

Cognitive interpretations: _____

