

UNIT Title: Mastering Effective Communication

Designer: Leah Willis

Purpose: To provide incoming college freshmen with essential strategies for effective communication

Seat-time: 120 mins

Context: Many incoming college freshmen face challenges adapting to the expectations of college-level communication. This often leads to misunderstandings with peers and instructors, poor participation in group settings, and ineffective written or verbal expression. Additionally, many students may encounter culturally diverse communication styles and new academic norms, which can further complicate their ability to express themselves with clarity and confidence. To address these challenges, this unit introduces students to the foundational elements of effective communication across verbal, non-verbal, and written formats. Emphasis is placed on the communication process, active listening, assertiveness, and professionalism. Students will engage in a variety of interactive and reflective activities designed to build competence and confidence. These include guided discussions, analysis of communication barriers, scenario-based role-play, non-verbal interpretation exercises, and written practice using the 7Cs of communication.

Target Audience: This course stand-alone course is designed for incoming undergraduate students, particularly first-year college freshmen, who are transitioning into a higher education environment. No prior communication training is required.

Expected UNIT outcomes:

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

Define the core components of effective communication, including verbal, nonverbal, and written forms.

Identify common communication barriers and describe strategies to overcome them in academic and social contexts.

Demonstrate active listening skills and the appropriate use of nonverbal cues.

Demonstrate professional written communication skills and appropriate digital etiquette

Overview: This course provides incoming college freshmen with foundational skills in effective communication to support their academic and social success. Students will explore essential communication principles, including active listening, nonverbal cues, and the 7Cs of effective communication. Course will be conducted using, lecture, group discussions, role-playing scenarios, writing exercises. This course will emphasize the importance of adapting one's communication styles to different audiences and contexts and enable students to build strong interpersonal relationships.

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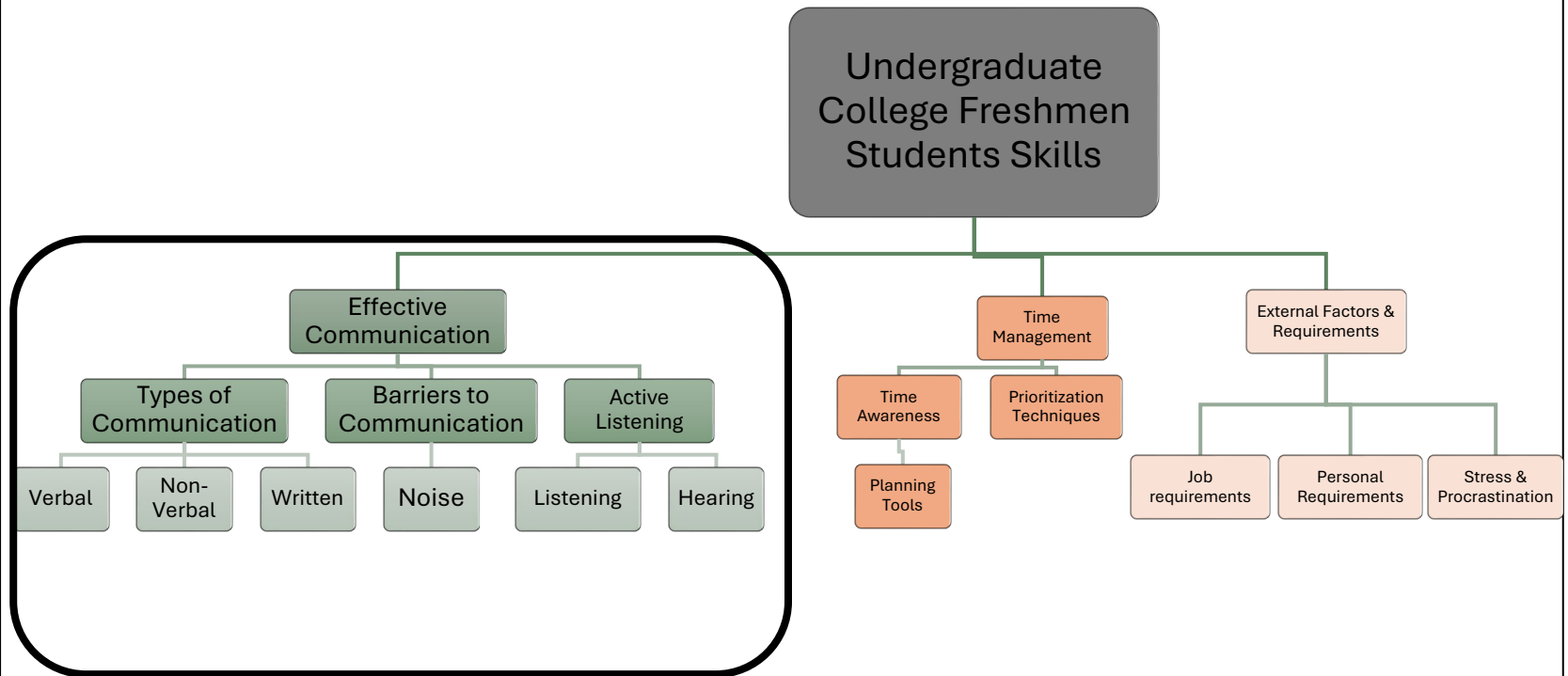
Seat-time: 120 mins

Key UNIT content: Students will be introduced to effective communication techniques too navigate academic and social interactions in a college environment. Instruction will focus on building verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills through the lens of clarity, confidence, and professionalism. Students will explore the 7Cs of effective communication, examine common barriers such as misinterpretation and lack of active listening, and engage in guided activities that promote assertive speaking and respectful feedback. Through role-plays, discussion exercises, and written practice, students will develop and refine their communication skills.

Content learning assessments: Students will begin with an activity to generate their ideas on effective communication. Learners will engage in interactive activities including role-playing exercises, peer evaluations, and guided discussions to demonstrate their understanding and application of effective communication techniques. They will practice active listening and assertive speaking in real-world scenarios, such as giving and receiving feedback, participating in group dialogue, and navigating conflict.

Resources required for UNIT: Presentation slides, communication skills worksheets, scenario cards for role-play activities, peer feedback forms, and professional email writing templates. Participants will also have access to sample videos demonstrating active listening, assertive speaking, and the 7Cs of communication in action. Additional materials include whiteboards or flip charts for group brainstorming and access to devices for drafting and reviewing written communication examples.

Facilities required for UNIT: The session will be conducted in a traditional classroom or seminar room equipped with flexible seating arrangements to support both individual work and small-group collaboration. The space should include a projector or large display screen for presentations, a whiteboard or flip chart for facilitator notes, and access to power outlets for student devices.

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☐ Content required to close the gap

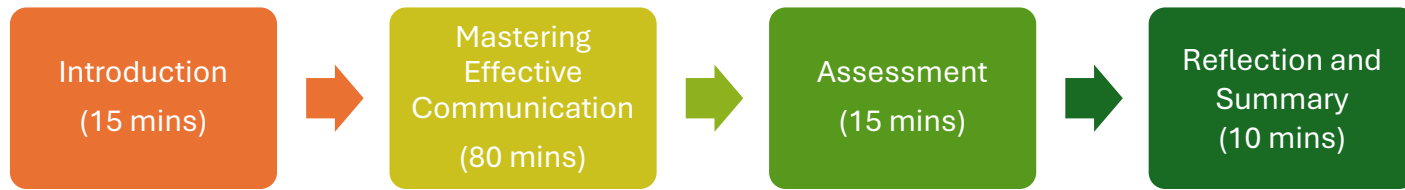
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UNIT Flow Chart of EVENTS:



Brief EVENT descriptions:

Introduction (15 mins): The session begins with a welcome and introductions followed by an icebreaker designed to build group cohesion.

Mastering Effective Communication (80 mins): This comprehensive section explores the essential components of effective communication, beginning with a deep dive into the three primary types: verbal, non-verbal, and written. Students examine how each type functions in daily interactions and academic settings, sharing personal examples to connect theory with lived experience. The facilitator then guides a discussion on common communication barriers such as language differences, cultural misunderstandings, and emotional blocks, with students brainstorming practical solutions in small groups using real-world scenarios. The focus then shifts to verbal and non-verbal communication, where students learn about tone, clarity, body language, and facial expressions. Through structured role-playing and interpretation exercises, learners practice speaking assertively, listening actively, and reading non-verbal cues. These hands-on activities help students internalize communication strategies and enhance their ability to engage confidently in both personal and academic conversations.

Assessment (15 mins): Students will be administered a summative assessment to determine if they have understood and can apply the core principles of effective communication.

Reflection and Summary (10 mins): Facilitator will recap the key concepts of effective communication and conduct a debrief of the session

UNIT title: Mastering Effective Communication

EVENT Title: Introduction to Effective Communication

Estimated Time for EVENT: 10 mins



EVENT Description:

- Instructor Lead in/transition to Critical Content

EVENT Deliverables:

- * Motivator for transition to Critical Content

EVENT-required resources:

- Classroom with computer and internet access

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

Key & Peele - Text Message Confusion – Censored

- **Motivator:** Instructor will play the following video and ask students what do they see? Discussion should last 15 mins
- **This exercise will set the tone for students to think about effective communication and how it may be perceived from others**

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

Primary Learning Objective:

Recognize the importance of effective communication in academic and personal success.

Secondary Learning Objective:

Reflect how communication can be misinterpreted

EVENT primary content points:

- Participation in the icebreaker to promote engagement and collaborative learning environment

Storyboard Template Introduction

EVENT Title: Introduction to Effective Communication

Estimated Time for EVENT: 5 mins



EVENT Description:

- Course overview of the importance of effective communication
- Brief introduction on the different types of communication

EVENT Deliverables:

- * Course overview
- * Effective communication: What is it? And why is it important?

EVENT-required resources:

- Classroom with computer and internet access

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

- **Instructor will introduce the course and inform students about the assessment**
- **This exercise will set the tone for students to think about effective communication and how it may be perceived from others**

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

Primary Learning Objective:

Recognize the importance of effective communication in academic and personal success.

Secondary Learning Objective:

Reflect on words they believe are effective and ineffective communication

EVENT primary content points:

- Overview of the purpose and value of effective communication in college and life
- Participation in the icebreaker to promote engagement and collaborative learning environment


Learning Objective 1

UNIT title: Mastering Effective Communication

EVENT Title: Core Components to Effective Communication

Estimated Time for EVENT: 20 mins

What is Effective Communication?

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- Clear message delivery
 - Active listening
 - Understanding verbal & non-verbal cues
 - Respectful and open-minded dialogue

EVENT Description: This learning objective provides a comprehensive overview of core communication skills including understanding different types of communication, communication process, active listening, identifying barriers, and practicing verbal, non-verbal, and written strategies. Students engage in discussions, scenario-based activities, and practical exercises to strengthen their ability to communicate effectively in academic and personal settings.

EVENT Deliverables: Group discussion summaries, scenario solution worksheets, completed role-play feedback forms, non-verbal interpretation notes, and short written messages.

EVENT-required resources:

Presentation slides
3x5 note cards

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

- This event introduces the learners to the core components of effective communication.

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

* Define the core components of effective communication, including verbal, nonverbal, and written forms

Sub-learning Objectives

- * Recognize key principles of digital communication etiquette.
- * Reflect on and discuss your own perceptions of effective communication.

EVENT primary content points:

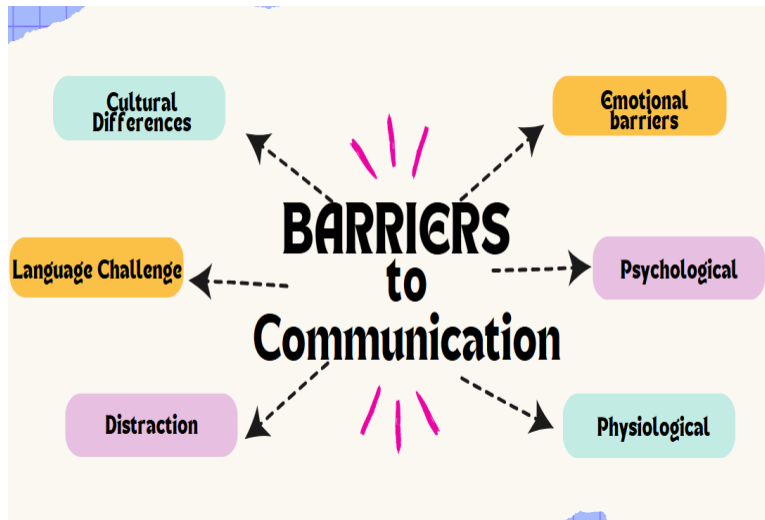
Types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written), Digital communication etiquette

Learning Objective II

UNIT title: Mastering Effective Communication

EVENT Title: Barriers to Communication

Estimated Time for EVENT: 20 mins



EVENT Description: This session provides a comprehensive overview of identifying barriers to communication and strategies to overcome them. Students will engage in a role play activity to demonstrate non-verbal communication which will strengthen their ability to communicate effectively in academic and personal settings.

EVENT Deliverables: Group discussion summaries, scenario solution worksheets, completed role-play feedback forms, non-verbal interpretation notes, and short written messages.

EVENT-required resources: Presentation slides, scenario cards, learner's guide

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

- During the role-play activity, instructor should select two students to conduct the activity and facilitate a discussion
- Encourage feedback

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

* Identify common communication barriers and propose solutions.

EVENT primary content points:

Types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written), barriers to communication, elements of verbal and non-verbal communication, writing best practices using the 7Cs.

Learning Objective III

UNIT title: Mastering Effective Communication

EVENT Title: Active Listening

Estimated Time for EVENT: 20 mins



EVENT Description: This session provides an overview of active listening. Learners will explore the key components and techniques of active listening, including how to give full attention to speakers, provide appropriate feedback, and interpret verbal and nonverbal cues. Through interactive discussions, role-playing activities, and practical exercises, participants will practice applying active listening skills in both face-to-face and digital communication contexts

EVENT Deliverables: Email draft, peer review checklist, Reflection

EVENT-required resources: Presentation slides, learners guide

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

This session is designed to be highly interactive, with a strong focus on practical application.

It is important to emphasize that active listening is a skill that requires ongoing practice and self-awareness. The session will include opportunities for learners to assess their current listening habits and identify specific strategies for personal improvement. The Instructor should adapt examples and scenarios to match the learners' contexts (academic, professional, personal) to ensure relevance and maximize engagement.

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

Demonstrate active listening behaviors, such as paraphrasing, asking clarifying questions, and offering thoughtful responses.
Identify and overcome common barriers to active listening.
Apply active listening strategies to enhance understanding and build stronger interpersonal connections.
Reflect on their listening habits and set personal goals for continued improvement.

EVENT primary content points:

Definition and importance of active listening
Asking clarifying and open-ended questions
Role-play exercises to practice active listening techniques

Learning Objective IV

UNIT title: Mastering Effective Communication

EVENT Title: Active Listening

Estimated Time for EVENT: 20 mins



EVENT Description: This session introduces students to the fundamentals of professional written communication and digital etiquette in an academic environment. Using methods learned in previous learning objectives and this learning objective, students will explore key strategies for composing clear and effective emails when interacting with professors. The session will include a guided email activity where students compose their own email based on a scenario, and a peer review component where students evaluate and provide constructive feedback on their peers' email drafts.

EVENT Deliverables: Group discussion summaries, scenario solution worksheets, completed role-play feedback forms, non-verbal interpretation notes, and short written messages.

EVENT-required resources: Projector or large display screen, Instructor computer with internet access, pen and paper for drafting emails, email sample handout, peer review checklist

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

Modeling is key, ensure students are aware of how the activity should be conducted. Instructor can change the scenario if chooses. If students are unsure how to phrase things formally, provide sentence starters or useful phrases.

Before the peer review section, explain to students how to give constructive feedback. Use the feedback form for a clearer expectation from the students.

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

Group work and collaboration efforts

Digital Communication etiquette

Peer review activity

Sub-learning objectives

Discussion and reflection

EVENT primary content points:

Common mistakes to avoid when crafting professional email

Group collaboration work

Digital communication skills

Storyboard Template

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EVENT Title: Assessment

Estimated Time for EVENT: 15 mins



EVENT Description: This session concludes with a structured assessment to evaluate students' understanding and application of effective communication skills.

EVENT Deliverables: Assessment quiz evaluating the identification of communication barriers and appropriate responses. Learners must be able to complete the assessment scoring at least 80%.

EVENT-required resources: Assessment prompts, peer review rubrics, printed quiz sheets and timer.

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

- Instructor should explain the assessment clearly so the students can understand how their performance will be evaluated.
- Instructor will provide support as needed for students who has questions or failed the assessment.

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

- * Assess students' understanding of communication barriers and response strategies.
- * Demonstrate verbal communication proficiency through real-time performance tasks.

EVENT primary content points:

- * Application of effective communication principles
- * Identification of communication issues in diverse contexts.
- * Peer feedback and self-reflection based on observed communication skills.

Storyboard Template

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EVENT Title: Reflection and Summary

Estimated Time for EVENT: 10 mins



EVENT Description: This summary wraps up the session by reviewing key takeaways, encouraging student reflection, and providing an opportunity for questions. It reinforces the importance of communication skills and offers guidance on applying them in real-world scenarios.

EVENT Deliverables:

- * Completed post-assessment quiz
- Verbal feedback from students
- Summary of the entire lesson

EVENT-required resources:

Reflection prompts, post-assessment sheets, resource handout with further reading and practice materials

Clarifying Notes on EVENT:

* Facilitator should guide the summary and debrief session and provide students with follow-up resources and tips for ongoing communication development

EVENT primary and sub-learning objectives:

- Reinforce key communication concepts covered during the session
- Encourage self-assessment
- Clarify any outstanding questions related to the content.

EVENT primary content points:

* Review of the types of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written), barriers to communication, elements of verbal and non-verbal communication, digital communication etiquette, group collaboration