

Segment: Verbal & Non-Verbal Communication

Lesson Title: Lesson 1: Job Interview

Grade Band: 6-12

Approximate Time to Complete:

Session 1: Class Discussion, 60 minutes

Session 2: Class Discussion/Paired Student Role Play, 60 minutes

Session 3: Mock Job interviews with Community Representatives, 30 minutes

Plus extension of variable duration.

Objectives: Students will be able to explain how verbal and non-verbal communication affects business interactions by;

- applying the active listening skills developed in earlier lessons to a role-play situation.
- observing non-verbal communication, and analyze how it impacts communication.
- practicing speaking and communication skills through a role-play.

Materials/Set up:

- Active Listening Skills handout
- Non-Verbal Communication Worksheet (one for each student)
- Non-Verbal Communication Worksheet (Educator Resource)
- [Sample Job Interview Questions](#)

Optional Resources:

- Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 1:07:30-1:09:38)
- Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 39:10-40:44)
- Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 6:22-8:01)

Overview

In this activity students consider how both verbal and non-verbal communication impacts communication in general. Non-verbal communication is a form of speaking. Non-verbal communication has an impact in a variety of settings, particularly during a job interview. By practicing and applying these skills, students will get direct feedback on their own non-verbal communication. These activities can be coordinated with the Guidance Office in preparing students for volunteer/college/employment interviews, or with other college and career-readiness activities, such as resume drafting.

Instructional Plan

Session 1

1. Greet each student with a handshake as he or she enters the classroom.
2. Alternate between providing a firm handshake, smiling face and eye contact and a weak handshake negative or neutral expression and downward glance. The verbal greeting should be the same for each, a “Good morning” or “Good afternoon” in the same tone of voice.
3. Begin the class discussion by asking how each student felt about the greeting they received. Ask, “Did I do anything to create the impressions you have? Can you identify what I did to make you feel that way?”
4. Direct the discussion to specific identification of gestures (handshake), facial expressions (smile), and postures (drooping head) which convey an impression.
5. Distribute the “Non-Verbal Communication” Worksheet to all students and review the instructions on how to complete it. Review the examples provided on the sheet, and point out that the same act done in different ways or with a different expression can have a different impact. Note the example of waving someone to a chair and smiling, and waving someone to a chair and frowning.
6. Provide about 10 minutes for each student to complete the Worksheet. Alternatively, students may complete the Worksheet as a group activity.
7. As a class, review the responses provided on the Worksheet.
8. Optional, invite students to “act out” the responses they provided on the Worksheet.
9. Acknowledge that perceptions about expressions and gestures are often culturally-based. In some cultures making direct eye contact upon first meeting someone is considered impolite, for example:

Ask students to provide examples of cultural differences with which they may be familiar. Ask “How the conversation might be impacted if a party is unaware of a cultural practice?”

Session 2:

1. Pair students and assign one student to the role of employer and the other to the role of job applicant. Invite the students to come up with the type of employment being sought, but encourage them to make it realistic.
2. For younger students, some possible job opportunities could be volunteer positions, such as working at the local library, acting as a junior camp counselor, or babysitting. For older students, the job opportunities could be working at a local fast food or pizza restaurant, cashier at a local retail store, or an internship with a business.
3. Provide the student playing the employer with some sample job interview questions (see Resources); encourage the students to adapt the questions to fit the employment they have selected. Provide each student with a few minutes to prepare. Conduct a mock job interview for about 10-15 minutes and debrief. Switch roles or partners, if time permits.

Session 3:

1. Schedule mock job interviews with adult members of the school and community taking on the role of prospective employer. Ask students to prepare as if the interview were real, including appropriate dress, etc.

Extending the Lesson (variable duration)

Optional: Film the interviews conducted in Session 2 and offer constructive feedback to students.

Alternatively, these activities can be adapted to prepare students for college interview experiences for juniors and seniors.

Additional Learning Opportunities

View a series of brief video segments from the James Baker documentary to stimulate a discussion about non-verbal communication in negotiation.

1. Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 1:07:30-1:09:38). Why was James Baker concerned that he could not be present at the White House for the important discussion, when he was available by phone? What do you think is important about a person being physically present for a negotiation if you are concerned about the outcome?

2. Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 39:10-40:44). What do you think was important about President Reagan's visit to the Capitol Hill? What was communicated to the Congress in that speech? Why would a speech be more effective than a letter?
3. Online Video Clip - [James Baker: The Man Who Made Washington Work](#) (Watch 6:22-8:01). What did James Baker's tone of voice and mannerisms indicate during the news conference?

Resources

Refer to the resources prior to Session 2 of this lesson.

[How to Act at a Job Interview](#)

[Interview Do's and Don'ts, Virginia Tech Division of Student Affairs web article](#)

[Interview Tips for Teens, web video](#)

[Sample Job Interview Questions](#)

Active Listening

Listening is a skill and is essential to good communication, but it's not always as easy as it sounds. Sometimes speakers hide their true feelings, avoid saying exactly what they mean, or reveal only pieces of a story. Active Listening focuses on the speaker and encourages open communication.

Stay in the Moment, Be Patient.

Think about what the speaker is saying and not what you want to say next. While you're listening, put your views aside while the other person speaks. Pause before you respond if you need to collect your thoughts.



Acknowledge the Feelings you Hear?

People speak about more than just facts and timelines, they also mention emotions. Show that you understand the speaker's feelings, such as "You're really angry about" or "It sounds like you were shocked he said that."

Notice More Than Words.

What is the tone of voice? What are the facial expressions telling you? What is the body language telling you?



Practice Empathy.

Imagine yourself in the other person's shoes. Ask questions from the other person's point of view. Ask questions to make sure you understand what is important to the other person, such as, "What was that like for you?" or "What has been the hardest thing for you?"

Show your Interest Through Acknowledgement.



Acknowledge the speaker by making eye contact, nodding your head, or using phrases to encourage the speaker to continue, uh-huh, okay. Longer phrases such as "Tell me more about..." or "What happened then?" show you are listening and encourage the speaker to continue. Use neutral words which don't judge, blame, or draw conclusions too quickly.

Ask Questions to Clarify and Explore.

Clear up misunderstandings before you express your views. Ask for more information if necessary. Confirm a point of view before continuing, such as "Let me make sure I understand..." Summarize what you heard, and ask if you have it right.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Non-Verbal Communication

Instructions

Consider how people communicate without words. A few examples are provided below. Consider the various gestures, facial expressions, and postures you observe in others. Fill in the boxes below with examples both positive and negative impacts of non-verbal communication.

Gestures

Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Waving you to a chair	Feel welcome	Waving you to a chair	Feel coerced
Hand raised to stop	Wait a minute	Hand raised to stop	Feel shut down
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Facial Expressions

Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Smiling	Feel Assured	Frowning	Feel distrustful
Eyes raised	Surprised	Eyes raised	Concerned
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Postures

Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Standing straight	Suggests confidence	Slumping	Suggests fear
Sitting upright	Engaged	Leaning back in chair	Disengaged
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Non-Verbal Communication: Educator's Resource

Instructions

Consider how people communicate without words. A few examples are provided below. Consider the various gestures, facial expressions, and postures you observe in others. Fill in the boxes below with examples both positive and negative impacts of non-verbal communication.

Gestures

Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Waving you to a chair	Feel welcome	Waving you to a chair	Feel coerced
Hand raised to stop	Wait a minute	Hand raised to stop	Feel shut down
<i>Pointing a finger</i>	<i>Showing where to go or how to find something</i>	<i>Waving a finger</i>	<i>Telling a person they should not be doing what they are doing</i>
<i>Saluting</i>	<i>Deferential and honoring someone or something</i>	<i>Saluting</i>	<i>Mocking a person for their authority.</i>

Facial Expressions

Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Smiling	Feel Assured	Frowning	Feel distrustful
Eyes raised	Surprised	Eyes raised	Concerned
<i>Furrowed forehead</i>	<i>Thinking</i>	<i>Furrowed forehead</i>	<i>Confused</i>
<i>Wink</i>	<i>Just kidding</i>	<i>Wink</i>	<i>I like you</i>

Postures			
Positive	Response	Negative	Response
Standing straight	Suggests confidence	Slumping	Suggests fear
Sitting upright	Engaged	Leaning back in chair	Disengaged
<i>Arms in lap</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Arms folded</i>	<i>Closed-off</i>
<i>Head upright</i>	<i>Alert</i>	<i>Head in hands</i>	<i>Tired</i>