

Interpersonal communication report

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Core Assessment Portfolio Michael E. Szostkiewicz In fulfillment of course requirements for Park University CA104 Interpersonal Communication Fall 1 Term 2009 Interpersonal Communication Report MICHAEL E. SZOSTKIEWICZ SEPTEMBER 30, 2009 Interpersonal Communication Report Outline I. Prior to enrolling in this course, I felt that my interpersonal communication skills were adequate and effective. I have always prided myself on being an adept and able communicator; my vocabulary is diverse. I always make a concerted effort to announce properly.

However, my experiences these last few weeks have left me with a laundry list of things I need to improve upon. Through the various exercises and tasks completed in this course thus far, I have realized that there is always room for improvement in my own interpersonal relationships, both personally and professionally. I feel the areas that I need to improve upon in my interpersonal communication skills are active listening, emotional control, and utilizing cultural differences of those around me.

Even with the myriad of leadership and communication seminars and classes I have either attended or facilitated, I understand that we must constantly learn new techniques and reflect back upon what we have learned in the past to help better any future relationships. II. Main Points A. Active listening 1. Active listening is defined as the process by which a listener expresses his or her understanding of the speaker's total message, including the verbal and nonverbal communication, the thoughts, and the feelings. 2.

By using the five stage model of listening and applying it at home and at work, I will be able to build upon my current relationships and forge better

ones in the future. The techniques of receiving, understanding, remembering, evaluating and responding are an integral part of our relationships and need to be practiced in every day life. B. Emotional control

1. Humans in general are very emotional creatures. Having the ability to control our emotions within our interpersonal relationships is a skill that is not inherent and must be learned and practiced to be successful.
- 2.

As I am extremely passionate in everything that I do, I must sometimes pause and reflect upon my emotional connection to the matter at hand. While having and expressing our emotions at home may be a good way to communicate with our partners, expressing our emotions in the workplace may not be appropriate. C. Utilizing cultural differences

1. Understanding that differences in culture between co-workers can have a positive or negative effect upon the atmosphere of the workplace, we must utilize and embrace those differences to foster an air of acceptance of all colors, races and creeds. . Living in America and especially serving in the military, I have been exposed to countless different cultures. Every culture has significant ideals that can be learned from. Patience with and understanding of differences in thought, speech and mannerisms from diverse cultures can help me to be more appreciative of other people and their indigenous cultures.
- III. In summary, I have covered the three aspects of my own interpersonal relationships that I feel I need to improve upon.

Understanding that all people are different and communicate differently I am able to recognize when and where my own communication flaws exist. First, I feel that I need to improve my skills in the area of active listening. By

reviewing the five stage model of listening I am able to have more productive relationships at home with family and also at work. Secondly, in recognizing my emotions regarding various topics and knowing when emotional responses are warranted, I can be a better, even-keeled father, husband, mentor and leader.

Lastly, reflecting upon the differences in cultures in the work place, I can help promote diversity and acceptance of everyone. IV. In conclusion, I have seen the areas of my interpersonal relationships in which I need improvement. In order to build upon my current relationships and having the requisite skills needed to create new relationships in the future the areas in which I specifically need to focus are actively listening, controlling my emotions and recognizing and embracing diversity.

In order to be an effective leader and mentor, having these skill sets can only increase the value of my worth to my company while simultaneously improving the quality of relationships that I have both at home and work. While becoming complacent in my interpersonal relationships, I feel that I have lost a chance to fully understand the thoughts and feelings of those with whom I am involved. Recognizing my faults and working to better my own communication skills can only result in increased positive relationships.

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Interpersonal Communication Report Prior to enrolling in this course, I felt that my interpersonal communication skills were adequate and effective. I have always prided myself on being an adept and able communicator; my

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vocabulary is diverse. I always make a concerted effort to announce properly. However, my experiences these last few weeks have left me with a laundry list of things I need to improve upon. Through the various exercises and tasks completed in this course thus far, I have realized that there is room for improvement in my interpersonal relationships, both personally and professionally.

I feel the areas that I need to improve upon in my interpersonal communication skills are practicing active listening, exercising more emotional control, and utilizing cultural differences of those around me. Even with the myriad of leadership and communication seminars and classes I have either attended or facilitated, I understand that I must constantly learn new techniques and reflect back upon what I have learned in the past to help better any future relationships.

Identifying and examining the elements and process of interpersonal communication is the first step in understanding who I am and where I place in the communicative world. Joseph A. DeVito states that in the circular nature of interpersonal communication; both persons send messages simultaneously rather than in a linear sequence where communication bounces back and forth between two or more people. DeVito further explains that the ideals that are present in all interpersonal interactions are: source-receiver, encoding-decoding, messages, channels, noise, context, ethics, and competence (DeVito, 9-15).

Understanding that people are unique individuals who converse differently is a primary lesson in becoming a better communicator. The best way to

describe how a person's self-image or self-concept influences their ability to interact with those with whom they come in contact is that every person has a separate and distinct background whereby the environment in which they were raised as children and their varied experiences as young adults may affect their ability to effectively communicate.

Recognizing and understanding that all forms of communication play a specific role in our interactions as adults and how we relate to each other must be understood and practiced in order to have successful and meaningful relationships both personally and professionally. This is also an example of how a person's perceptions can influence their communication choices. DeVito continues by defining perception as the process by which you become aware of objects, events, and especially people through your own senses: sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing (DeVito 61).

As we take an active part in life, our perceptions about the people and the world around us are in a constant state of flux. If we remain stagnant in our relationships then we are bound to miss out on many of the opportunities provided to us to better ourselves. Realizing that I have many things to learn about my own communication skills is the first step toward becoming a person as a whole. The first hurdle on my interpersonal communication task list is to improve my active listening.

Active listening is defined as the process by which a listener expresses his or her understanding of the speaker's total message, including the verbal and nonverbal communication, the thoughts, and the feelings. Active listening is a concept that was developed by Thomas Gordon (1975) in the early 1960's

as the foundation of his Parent Effectiveness Training program which still continues to offer proven communication and conflict resolution skills to parents, teachers and managers from all walks of life (2009).

DeVito states that active listening is not merely repeating the speaker's exact words, but rather putting together your understanding of the speaker's total message into a meaningful whole (DeVito 94). I have always considered myself a good listener. Whenever one of my seniors, peers or subordinates steps into my office for a chat, I always tell myself to devote my full attention to this person. I will turn off my computer screen, open my steno pad—which I often refer to as my “memory,” grab my pen and show the person that I am fully tuned into what they are discussing with me.

Additionally, throughout this course I have been able to hone my skills as an accomplished conversationalist by using the three simple techniques of active listening: paraphrasing the speaker's meaning, expressing understanding and asking questions. However, there are times when I get complacent and my skills fail me. One such instance of a breakdown in communication and an example of how language can create communication problems with disastrous effects was recently when I tasked one of my subordinates to research an instruction governing the proper wearing of maternity uniforms in the Navy.

As a leader, I unsuccessfully delineated my specific instructions and by failing to use active and effective listening skills, my subordinate failed to receive the message properly. I also failed to ensure my instructions were clear and concise by neglecting to have him repeat back exactly what I

wanted him to do. As such, this young man overstepped his bounds and mistakenly corrected the young woman on the spot which proved an emotional disaster (Student Journal 1-1). It was then that I realized the importance of removing any barriers in communicating and vowed to deter this behavior in the future.

For me, personally, this was a poignant lesson for soon after this incident I received a homework assignment in this class to review an article describing how our words can affect those around us, and even more importantly, “ If you manage people, your words have much more weight that you may realize” (Morgan 3). To correct the deficiency I consulted the five stage model of listening and by applying it both at work and also at home, I will be able to build upon my current relationships and forge better ones in the future.

The techniques of receiving, understanding, remembering, evaluating and responding are an integral part of our relationships and need to be practiced in every day life. Another area of concern in my communication skills is the need to better control my emotions. Humans in general are very emotional creatures. Having the ability to control our emotions within our interpersonal relationships is a skill that is not inherent and must be learned and practiced to be successful.

As I am extremely passionate in everything that I do, I must sometimes pause and reflect upon my emotional connection to the matter at hand. While having and expressing our emotions at home may be a good way to communicate with our partners, expressing our emotions in the workplace

may not be appropriate. In the early phases of this course I realized the power of my emotions while trying to balance my professional duties with my duties and responsibilities as a husband and father while keeping the plates spinning simultaneously enrolled in two classes with Park University.

I explained my frustrations, concerns and worries with my wife and also with my Brothers in the Chief Petty Officer's Mess (Student Journal 2-1). After receiving sage guidance and wisdom from those with whom I have confided, I was able to begin separating my emotions from the equation and find the balance between work, home and school. As an adult, male military professional nearly 40 years old, I found it difficult to admit my fallacies, but once I did, I discovered that I am still able to learn many things from those around me.

The last area of my communication skills that I found I need improvement upon is utilizing the cultural differences of those around me to add extra value to the tools I already possess. Understanding that differences in culture between co-workers can have a positive or negative effect upon the atmosphere of the workplace, I must utilize and embrace those differences to foster an air of acceptance of all colors, races and creeds. Living in America and especially serving in the military, I have been exposed to countless different cultures.

Every culture has significant morals that can be learned from. An effective personal strategy that I have developed in my intercultural communication skills is patience with and understanding the differences in thought, speech and mannerisms from the diverse cultures that I have been exposed to in my

travels and how those experiences can help me to be more appreciative of other people and their inherent lifestyles. In summary, I have covered the three aspects of my own interpersonal relationships that I feel I need to improve upon.

By understanding that all people are unique and communicate differently I am able to recognize when and where my own communication flaws exist. First, I feel that I need to improve my skills in the area of active listening. By reviewing the five stage model of listening I am able to have more productive relationships at home with family and also at work. Secondly, in recognizing my emotions regarding various topics and knowing when emotional responses are warranted, I can be a better, even-keeled father, husband, mentor and leader.

Lastly, reflecting upon the differences in cultures in the work place, I can help promote diversity and the acceptance of everyone. By utilizing these strategies I will be able to develop and foster a supportive communication climate. In conclusion, I have seen the areas of my interpersonal relationships in which I need improvement. In order to build upon my current relationships and having the requisite skills needed to create new relationships in the future the areas in which I specifically need to focus are actively listening, controlling my emotions and recognizing and embracing diversity.

In order to be an effective leader and mentor, having these skill sets can only increase the value of my worth to my company while simultaneously improving the quality of relationships that I have both at home and work.

While becoming complacent in my interpersonal relationships, I feel that I have lost a chance to fully understand the thoughts and feelings of those with whom I am involved. Recognizing my faults and working to better my own communication skills can only result in increased positive and healthier interpersonal relationships.

Works Cited DeVito, Joseph A. *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. 12th ed. Boston: Pearson. 2009. Gordon, T. P. E. T. : *Parent effectiveness training*. New York: New American Library. 1975. “ Gordon Training International. ” September 2009. <http://www.gordontraining.com> Morgan, Rebecca L. , “ The Power of Our Words. ” Morgan Seminar Group. 1996. <http://www.rebeccamorgan.com/articles/mgmt/mgmt2.html> Szostkiewicz, Michael E. *Journal*, Week 1, Entry 1. 17 August 2009. Szostkiewicz, Michael E. *Journal*, Week 2, Entry 1. 25 August 2009.