

# Communication assignment

Business



Part A The video presents a situation in which three friends (two men and one woman) walk into an empty bar. The bartender (who is also the bar owner) asks them what each is having, and each places their order. Just after they receive their orders, Mike asks the bartender for matches to light a cigarette. Immediately, Enrique, who is next to him, warns him to watch out, because the government has banned smoking in closed establishments. Enrique is clearly against smoking, and his words, although spoken in a calm, amicable manner, clearly indicate how much he is against smoking.

Mike responds sympathetically and offers to put the cigarette out, but the bartender assures him that she does not mind, and Enrique simply asks him to blow the smoke in another direction. Following this exchange between Mike and Enrique, Clair intervenes and speaks against the ban. She states that she feels that smoking in bars should be legal as it is an exercise of individual rights. Enrique starts arguing with Clair, trying to make her see that the ban is good for everyone, but she cannot be swayed (neither can Mike). In the end, Enrique takes his leave and offers to pay the check, but Mike takes it and states that paying the check is the least he can do as he is smoking and forcing them all to be passive smokers.

This scenario is interesting, because it shows how each of the people involved (the bartender, Enrique, Mike, and Clair) is both an effective listener and an effective communicator. Throughout the duration of the discussion, each tries to defend their respective points of view, and when speaking to each other, they almost always ascertain eye contact and articulate body language that is consistent with wanting to assert and empower their views. No consensus can be reached in the end, because even though the

bartender, Mike and Clair share the same point of view, Enrique does not (and each is adamant about defending their point of view, which of course makes it harder to reach a consensus). However, they respect their opinions and do not display any kind of hostilities or rudeness (they simply agree to disagree). Part B Jake and Enrique work together at a local television station. The video starts with them catching up, asking each other what they did last night and about their weekend.

Their communication is direct and effective; they are simply exchanging information and paying attention to each other as well. After this initial exchange, they are called by Chris, an anchorman that instructs them to do some research for a lead story that they need to report the following morning. Jake has some questions and ideas that he wants to share with Chris, but Chris makes it clear that there is no time to waste, and that his instructions are to be followed to the letter. Chris is clearly not willing to listen to anyone's input; he is communicating effectively but fails to be an effective listener. After their meeting with Chris, Enrique and Jake make a plan for developing the story in which Enrique is in charge of getting the video footage, and Jake is in charge of the script.

This plan is developed singlehandedly by Jake, but Enrique accepts it as he agrees that it is a good plan (which shows that Jake exercises excellent communication skills and Enrique is a great listener). At 7 pm, Jake gives Enrique the finished script and goes on the date he had planned. The following morning, however, Enrique confronts him for having plagiarized the entire script off the Internet. Enrique is upset, and both his body language

and spoken language clearly indicate how upset he is. Jake does not take well to Enrique's attitude and warns him not to tell Chris about it.

On this point, there is no effective communication between them; each is focused only on what they think and want and are unyielding. By the end of the video, Chris finds out about the plagiarized script and threatens both Enrique and Jake; he warns them not to mention the incident to anyone and makes it clear that if anything like that ever happens again they will be fired. Here Chris is clearly not interested in listening to anyone; he just wants to make his point clear, and Enrique and Jake can do nothing more than keeping quiet (as they know there is no time or opportunity to discussing the matter; Chris's message is more than clear). Part C The video shows Clair and Rachel working out in the gym. After they finish their respective workout routine, they start talking about their figures, and then Clair tells Rachel that there is a guy behind them that is staring at her. At that initial moment, communication flows bilaterally between both women without any problem; they listen attentively to each other, exercise constant eye contact, and they speak their minds freely and amicably.

Upon hearing about the man who is staring at her, however, Rachel turns serious and complains about the matter. Clair does not understand why Rachel is upset, and so she asks her what is going on. Rachel talks about a problem that she is having with a man that she works with at the office. She complains about how he is getting too familiar, and how she tries to blow him off but does not know how to do it. Clair listens attentively and then shares an experience of her own with a former boss of hers that had

harassed her at the office. The video ends with both women meeting a friend at the gym; they both compliment him and Clair grabs his arm suggestively.

Their friend is clearly made uncomfortable by their attitude and words; he takes his leave and walks away. After watching the video, it is clear that both Clair and Rachel are effective communicators and listeners. However, when describing their uncomfortable experiences at the workplace, it becomes clear that the men that harass them are not good listeners at all. They appear not to pay attention to the discomfort that both women display both with their words and with their respective body language. This, however, ends up happening to Clair and Rachel at the gym with their friend.

They were just complimenting him, but they failed to realize how uncomfortable they had made him until he left (given that his body language and overall demeanor clearly changed when Clair took his arm). In this case, both women should have shown more restraint in their words, and Clair should have not touched her friend. Part D The video shows how Sam's family prepares to celebrate his college graduation and his new job. First, there is his mother and father in the bedroom getting ready for the party. After getting ready, they go downstairs to the living room and meet with Sam, his grandmother, and his girlfriend. Shortly thereafter, the bell rings, and his professor, Paula Stern walks into the house.

On this point, it becomes clear that communication is fragmented between the people inside the house. On one side, there is Sam's grandmother with his girlfriend, on the other there's Sam with his professor and his father. Sam's mother is alone, and it becomes clear that she is upset about the way

in which professor Stern and her husband are talking. Later on Sam's sister arrives with a friend called Deirdre. Sam's sister appears not too interested in communicating with anyone other than her grandmother; Deirdre speaks to no one and arbitrarily starts smoking inside the house.

After some time, Sam's mother joins the conversation that her daughter and mother are having, but it appears that her views are extremely different from her daughter's (which makes communications difficult as neither is willing to yield and reach a consensus). At the end of the video, Sam approaches Deirdre and tries to talk to her, but everything is interrupted when his grandmother complains about a headache and faints on the couch. By the end of the video, it becomes clear that the only truly effective and bilateral communications took place between Sam's father and his teacher, on the one hand, and between his sister and grandmother on the other hand. The rest of people were kind of isolated, they failed at communicating effectively and did not even want to listen to others (the best example being Deirdre). In terms of avoiding this, an option might have been integrating everyone instead of allowing them to float around the room.