

# Interpersonal Communications

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## OBJECTIVES

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Good communication and interpersonal skills enhance the quality of interactions with clients and coworkers. Rapid technological changes occurring in the health care industry contribute to a more impersonal atmosphere. It is important that health care workers develop and sharpen interpersonal skills to enhance personalized care. The student is expected to use language appropriate for the situation, evaluate the patient's ability to understand the communication, identify language barriers and select alternative methods of communicating, and adapt communications to accommodate individual needs.

TEKS 121.2 (c) 1D, 3A  
121.3 (c) 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D

TAKS ELA 1, 4

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## KEY POINTS

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- I Communicating Effectively
  - A. Expressing Yourself
    1. Helps others get to know you and anticipate what to expect from you.
    2. Helps you get to know others and develop personal and professional relationships.
    3. Exercise self-control by thinking before you speak.  
Be precise, pleasant, confident, and present one idea at a time to make sure it is understood before continuing.
    4. Keep in mind the listener's background, knowledge, feelings, culture and values
  - B. Good Listening Skills Avoid Misunderstandings
    1. show interest and give full attention to the speaker  
(don't rush, interrupt, or finish sentences for the speaker)
    2. ask questions when you need more information
    3. paraphrase - summarize what the speaker has said.  
Summarizing, lets the speaker know if the message was communicated successfully and minimizes misunderstandings
  - C. Responding Effectively
    1. be specific, descriptive, and tactful
    2. positive feedback provides reinforcement
    3. negative feedback must include WHY you disagree, making sure the speaker knows you are not attacking him or her personally.
  - D. Assertiveness (express feelings honestly and directly)
    1. you have the right and the responsibility to express opinions including tactfully disagreeing and saying "no"
    2. Be assertive not aggressive. Aggressive people try to impose their position on others
    3. An understanding of body language aids in conveying the proper message
  - E. Managing Stress

Health care workers may experience high levels of stress. Stress is a barrier to good communications with clients, coworkers, family, and friends. Stress is also dangerous to one's

own health. It is important to learn how to manage or reduce it.

- II Interpersonal Relationships
  - A. Be warm and friendly (smile, cheerful greeting, professional)
  - B. Be interested (let others know they have worth as a person)
  - C. Show respect (acknowledge the choices of others without passing judgment; respect the feelings and values of others)
  - D. Be genuine (giving the patient full attention builds trust)
  - E. Be trustworthy (if you make a promise - keep it)
  - F.. Be open-minded (be willing to listen to the viewpoints of others)
  - G. Be empathetic (be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others)
  - H. Discourage gossip (say nothing about another unless it is good)
  - I. Accept criticism and learn from mistakes
    - \* Remember that illness causes stress to the clients and their families. When clients are irritable and demanding, be kind and tolerant. The demanding nature may be a way of coping with fear and pain.
- IV. Relationships With Employers and Supervisors
  - A. Understand and comply with different leadership styles
  - B. Qualities preferred by employers
    - 1. competence - the ability to perform the desired task
    - 2. cooperation - teamwork in striving for a goal
    - 3. loyalty - feeling of obligation or devotion to the job
    - 4. initiative - doing a job without being told, doing more than expected
    - 5. trustworthiness - dependability
    - 6. honesty - integrity, free of deception
    - 7. dependability - punctual, notifying employer if one cannot work or will be late
    - 8. positive attitude -
    - 9. neat, clean appearance
- V. Handling Problems and Conflicts With A Positive Approach
  - 1. Address the problem - be specific, stick to the problem
    - confront the issue not the person
    - be objective
  - 2. Generate possible solutions together - consider all possibilities
  - 3. Evaluate the possible solutions - which one meets the needs, goals
  - 4. Decide on a solution - compromise
  - 5. Take action - establish goals, evaluate progress, and make necessary changes

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## ACTIVITIES

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- I. Complete the Self-Assessment of Interpersonal Communication Competency.
- II. Analyze a personal experience with a health care professional. State the positive and negative communication practices and how each affected the final outcome. Share experiences with the class.
- III. Identify possible barriers to effective communications between health care professionals and clients. Construct alternative methods of communication to accommodate at least 3 different individual needs (hearing loss, vision loss, patients who speak another language, etc.)
- IV. Role play effective methods of communicating with clients, coworkers, employers, and clients' family members using a variety of health care scenarios.
- V. Participate in Moods Game.

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## **MATERIALS/RESOURCES**

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Completion of the Self-Assessment of Interpersonal Communication Competency .  
Role Play Rubric  
Moods Game

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## **ASSESSMENT**

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Completion of the Self - Evaluation of Interpersonal Communication Competence Form.

Role Play Rubric

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## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

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For reinforcement, the student will compare appropriate and inappropriate factors involved in effective communication.

For enrichment, the student will create skits showing appropriate and inappropriate communication skills.

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## **REFLECTIONS**

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## SELF - ASSESSMENT OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

**Instructions:** Rate each item below honestly as you feel it applies to you in typical conversations with others utilizing the following:

5 - strongly agree  
4 - slightly agree  
3 - unsure  
2 - slightly disagree  
1 - strongly disagree

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|-----|--|-----------|
| 1.  | I want to adapt my communication to meet others' expectations.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2.  | I have enough knowledge and experience to adapt to other people's expectations.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3.  | I use a wide range of behaviors, including self-disclosure and humor, to adapt to others.                                | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4.  | I want to be accepted in the conversations I have with other people.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5.  | I know how to respond to others because I am perceptive of social situations and attentive to others' behaviors.         | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6.  | I show my involvement in conversation both verbally and and non-verbally.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 7.  | I want to make my conversations with others go smoothly.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 8.  | I know how to change topics and control the basic tone of the  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 9.  | It is easy for me to manage conversations the way I want them to proceed.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 10. | I want to understand other people's viewpoints and emotions.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 11. | Truly understanding another person means both taking the role of that person and feeling the feelings that person feels. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 12. | I demonstrate my understanding of others by reflecting their thoughts and feelings to them.                              | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 13. | I am motivated to obtain the conversational goals I set for myself.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 14. | Once I set a goal for myself that involves another person, I know the steps to take to achieve it.                       | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 15. | I achieve my interpersonal goals.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 16. | I want to communicate with others in an appropriate manner.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 17. | I am aware of the rules that guide social behavior.  | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 18. | I act in ways that meet situational demands for appropriateness.   | 5 4 3 2 1 |

**Scoring:** To assess motivation, add items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess knowledge, add items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess skill, add items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess adaptability, add items 1, 2, 3..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess involvement, add items 4, 5, 6..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess conversation management, add items 7, 8, 9..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess empathy, add items 10, 11, 12..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess effectiveness, add items 13, 14, 15..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess appropriateness, add items 16, 17, 18..... = \_\_\_\_\_  
 To assess overall communication skills, add 1-18..... = \_\_\_\_\_

(POSSIBLE RANGE = 18 TO 90 POINTS)

Adapted from Cody, Michael J. and Canary, Daniel J. Interpersonal Communications, St. Martin's Press: NY 1994 ISBN 0-312-03696-5

# MOODS GAME INSTRUCTION SHEET

## Materials:

1. MOODS game
2. Overhead Projector
3. Transparencies of 'Mood Options' - Option 1, Option 2, Option 3, Option 4, Option 5
4. Buttons, plastic disks from the game, or something similar
5. Phrase Cards – part of the game
6. Answer Sheet for students – duplicate as many as are in your class.
7. Some sort of reward (like candy pieces or something similar)
8. Die – from the game

## Procedure:

1. Give a button and Answer Sheet to each student in the class.
2. Place a 'Mood Options' transparency on the overhead projector. Ask if everyone understands all of the terms. Define the terms for anyone who needs definition. (This becomes a great way to build more general vocabulary)
3. One student is "IT" and rolls the dice from the game. The dice has a number that coincides with the numbers on the Moods Options' transparency.
4. Next have the student draw a card from the box of Phrase Cards. The student has to say the statement on the card in the tone of voice/mood that was selected when they rolled the die. For instance if they rolled a 9 and number 9 on the transparency was frustrated, they would have to say the statement in a frustrated manner.
5. The remainder of the class looks at the various moods on the transparency after the student makes his/her statement. They choose the mood that they think was trying to be conveyed and place their button on that square on the Answer Sheet.
6. The teacher asks if everyone has voted. If yes, he/she asks the student who is "IT" to place a button on the square that reflects the mood.
7. If the majority of the class was correct in their choice, the student was very effective in changing his/her tone of voice to match the mood. The student wins a small reward (a piece of candy, etc.) for correctly convincing the majority of students.
8. Move on to the next person in the class. You can change your transparency at this time, if you wish. There are five different 'Mood Options' transparencies that can be cycled through with each turn.

1	6
apologetic	bossy
2	7
dignified	triumphant
3	8
sulking	forgetful
4	9
romantic	fussy
5	10
grouchy	impatient

indignant	1	nervous	6
panicky	2	relieved	7
depressed	3	sneaky	8
excited	4	embarrassed	9
righteous	5	ashamed	10

1 sleazy	6 bashful
2 amused	7 crazed
3 frightened	8 dazed
4 manly	9 wishy-washy
5 bored	10 threatening

1 silly	6 suspicious
2 sincere	7 perky
3 envious	8 jealous
4 snobbish	9 contented
5 girlish	10 determined

1 sarcastic	6 hopeful
2 clueless	7 amazed
3 humble	8 confused
4 analytical	9 annoyed
5 mellow	10 arrogant

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10