

Verbal Communication I

Course

Principles of Health Science

Unit VI

Personal Qualities of a Healthcare Worker

Essential Question

How does the communication process affect health care delivery?

TEKS

*130.202 (c)
2 A, 2B; 5 A*

Prior Student Learning

Students should have had the lecture Fundamentals of Communication and have a basic understanding of health careers.

Estimated time

3 hours

Rationale

Expertise in communication skills is necessary for workers in health care. To deliver quality health care, the health care provider must be an effective communicator.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- develop verbal communication skills; and
- adapt communication to the needs of the individual.

Engage

Before the students get to class, hang a large piece of paper somewhere in your room. When the students are seated, give each student a sticky note and ask each of them to write their name on the sticky note. Then ask them to put the note somewhere in the room. After they are finished, get upset and tell the students that you had wanted them to place their notes with their names on the paper that you put up in the room. Have each student go to their notes and tell them that you want them to put their notes on the paper. Have them get their notes, close their eyes, and place the notes on the paper that you pointed out to them. After they complete the task, ask them how they felt when you were upset about them not putting their names in the correct place. Discuss situations where they received directions that were not clear. Have them discuss the consequences. How did they feel when they were blamed for doing something wrong? Even with their eyes closed, was the second set of instructions easier or harder to follow than the first set?

Key Points

- I. Verbal Communication
 - A. Exchange of information using words
 - B. Includes both the spoken and written word
- II. Uses of Verbal Communication
 - A. Interactions with patients, families and co-workers
 - B. Giving reports to other health care professionals
 - C. Documenting patient care
- III. Elements of effective communication
 - A. The message must be clear
 1. Use terms that the receiver can understand
 2. Medical terms must be modified or defined
 - B. Deliver the message in a clear and concise manner
 1. Use good grammar and correct pronunciation

2. Avoid slang terms or meaningless words such as “you know” or “all that stuff”
 3. Do not speak too fast or too slow
 4. Written communication should have correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- C. The receiver must be able to hear and receive the message
1. Patients may be heavily medicated, have a hearing or vision loss, or speak a different language
 2. Use alternate methods of communication such as writing the message out, using an interpreter, or repeating the message
- D. Interruptions or distractions must be avoided
1. Trying to talk while answering the phone or writing a message will decrease the effectiveness of communication
 2. Environmental factors may affect communication, (e.g. uncomfortable temperatures or a loud TV or radio may interfere with communication.)
- IV. Therapeutic Communication Skills are skills which the Health Care Worker uses to encourage communication
- V. Non-Therapeutic Communication Skills: those that block communication
- VI. Barriers to Communication: something that gets in the way of clear communication
- A. Hearing Loss
1. Use body language such as gestures or signs
 2. Speak clearly in short sentences
 3. Face the person you are speaking to (some people read lips)
 4. Write out messages
 5. Make sure that hearing aids, if used, are working properly
 6. When identifying yourself, walk up to the person and get their attention before speaking
 7. Don't chew gum, cover mouth, or turn your back to the person
- B. Impaired Vision
1. Describe things which are happening and what you want the person to do
 2. Announce your presence as you enter a room
 3. Use touch to orient the person to where you are
 4. Stand close to the person and in good light
 5. Do not move things without telling the person
 6. Tell the person when you are leaving
- C. Trouble Speaking
1. Ask direct questions if the person can answer yes or no
 2. Allow adequate time for the person to answer
 3. If you can't understand, validate what the person is saying
 4. Encourage the patient to point, nod, or write to convey a message

Activity

I. Complete Lego Communication Activity.

Assessment

Participation in Lego Communication Assignment

Materials

Legos or blocks

Lego object pictures

Accommodations for Learning Differences

For reinforcement, students are to identify terms and phrases used by family members which may be misunderstood by a health care provider.

For enrichment, students will interview someone from a different culture in order to determine complications that could be encountered in a health care setting as a result of poor communication.

National and State Education Standards

National Health Care Standards

HLC02 Communications

Health Care Workers will know the various methods of giving and obtaining information. They will communicate effectively both orally and in writing

TEKS

130.202(c)(2)A identify components of effective and non-effective communication;

130.202(c)(2)B demonstrate effective communication skills for responding to the needs of individuals in a diverse society; and

130.202(c)(5)A identify employer expectations such as punctuality, attendance, time management, communication, organizational skills, and productive work habits.

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

English/Language Arts

Speaking III B Develop effective speaking styles for both group and one-on-one situation

Listening IV A Apply listening skills as an individual, and as a member of a group, in a variety of settings

IV B Listen effectively in informal and formal situations

Social Studies Effective Communication V A clear and coherent oral and written communication

Lego Communication Activity

Obtain several Legos (or blocks) of the same size. Have the students sit back-to-back. One student will have a picture of the Lego object and the other student will have the Legos. Allow 2-3 minutes for the student with the picture to give instructions about how to build the object to the other student, who should try to build it based on those instructions.

- Neither student can look at the other student's picture nor Legos until time has been called.
- It is even more effective if every student in the room has a partner and they are all trying at the same time.

At the end of the allotted time, let students compare. Discuss what was hard and what was easy to communicate. Have the students switch places and compare and discuss.

Exercise can be varied by using a geometric picture and rulers to describe length and have one student with the picture and the other trying to draw it.

Discuss how this relates to communicating with patients, families, and co-workers.