

## **Topic:**     Communication Skills 101

**SIPP Competency & Standards:** Relationship Skills (32, 33, 34, 41); Social Awareness (21, 24)

**AET Objectives:** Communication and interaction: engaging in interaction, conversations, communicating information and commenting on events, listening and understanding, non-verbal communication, giving and receiving feedback, oral communication, written communication, visual communication; Emotional understanding: understanding and expressing own emotions, managing emotions and behavior, self-awareness

**Vaughn Competencies:** A. Scientific reasoning, B. Technical skills, C. Information literacy, D. Critical thinking, E. Quantitative reasoning, F. Diverse perspectives, G. Written communication, H. Oral communication, I. Ethics and values

**CASEL Area:** Relationship skills: communication, social engagement, relationship building; Self-management: impulse control; Social awareness: perspective-taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others; Self-awareness: identifying emotions

### **Learner Goals:**

Learners will show a basic understanding of the communication skills that will be practiced and used throughout SIPP that will continue to be used in professional and personal life.

Learners will reflect on communication skills they feel confident in and communication skills they need to grow.

Learners will begin to discriminate their communication styles with different people in different settings.

### **Instructor Goals:**

Instructors will provide learners with an overview of the communication skills that will be practiced and used throughout SIPP that will continue to be used in professional and personal life.

Instructors will facilitate a reflection on learners' communication skills they feel confident in and communication skills they need to grow.

Instructors will facilitate a reflection on discriminating one's communication styles with different people in different settings.

### **Activity:**

1. Highlight that communication is very nuanced, and it is important to recognize the setting, person(s), and context when communicating
2. In today's world, there are many different forms of communication (e.g. face to face talking, ASL, speech to text, text to speech, email, phone calls, video chat) and these forms will likely be used in SIPP and in your future workplace
3. Communication skills that we will practice (Autism Education Trust, 2019)
  - a. Active listening & other nonverbal communication (e.g. body language, tone of voice)
  - b. Using empathy and perspective-taking for respectful & rich conversation
  - c. Understanding others' intentions within communication
  - d. Adapting communication style to your audience
  - e. Initiating conversations and keeping conversations flowing
  - f. Greetings (professional life)
  - g. Sharing our opinions/thoughts/feelings
  - h. Requesting information
  - i. Giving and receiving feedback
  - j. Public speaking/oral presentations
  - k. Written communication
  - l. Visual communication
4. Provide a definition, concrete examples, and discussion about communication skills
5. Provide examples of discriminating communication styles with different people and settings

#### **Reflections:**

1. Take a moment to reflect on the communication skills we reviewed. Think about which skills you feel comfortable using and which skills you think you need more practice with.
2. How does your communication style differ with different people? In different settings? How do you make this discrimination?

#### **Works Cited:**

Autism Education Trust: Progression Framework 2.0. (2019).

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**Topic:** Listening - Empathy & Perspective-taking: Active Listening

**SIPP Competency & Standards:** Relationship Skills (34, 35); Social Awareness (21, 24)

**AET Objectives:** Communication and interaction: engaging in interaction, conversations, communicating information and commenting on events, listening and understanding, non-verbal communication; Emotional understanding: understanding and expressing own emotions, managing emotions and behavior, self-awareness

**Vaughn Competencies:** C. Information literacy, D. Critical thinking, E. Quantitative reasoning, F. Diverse perspectives, G. Written communication, H. Oral communication, I. Ethics and values

**CASEL Area:** Relationship skills: communication, social engagement, relationship building; Self-management: impulse control; Social awareness: perspective-taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others

**Learner Goals:**

Learners will show a basic understanding of empathy (cognitive & affective) and perspective-taking as they relate to different areas of life & communication.

Learners will show a basic understanding of passive listening vs. active listening.

Learners will practice active listening techniques while role playing scenarios with a partner.

**Instructor Goals:**

Instructors will provide a definition & context for empathy (cognitive & affective) and perspective-taking as they relate to different areas of life & communication.

Instructors will provide a definition and concrete examples of active listening vs. passive listening.

Instructors will facilitate active listening role playing scenarios with learners.

**Activity:**

1. Define cognitive empathy and affective empathy; why are these important in communication and across other sub-areas that involve communication (Engineering Design Process, Group Activities, Friendships, Relationships, coworkers & mentors, etc.)
2. What does it mean to “take someone’s perspective?”
3. Why are these two especially important when it comes to listening - which is one very important half of “communication.”
4. Define active listening: a pattern of listening that involves paying attention, suspending judgment, reflecting, clarifying, summarizing, and sharing (Rost, M., & Wilson, J. J., 2013)
5. Define passive listening: hearing what someone has said but not comprehending; sitting quietly as someone speaks while gaining little to no understanding about what they say (Rost, M., & Wilson, J. J., 2013)

6. Highlight that this skill takes time and practice to develop, but strive to actively listen to those around us (Rost, M., & Wilson, J. J., 2013)
  - a. Paying attention:
    - i. involves setting your intention to connect with and understand the other person
    - ii. Use your non-verbal cues to show your interest (e.g. level of eye contact you are comfortable with, facing the person, nodding, smiling, etc.)
    - iii. Noticing their non-verbal cues (this may be difficult and will need to be taught on an individual basis)
  - b. Letting go of judgment
    - i. We all have biases and opinions, but to be an effective listener we must try our best to be *open-minded* and willing to understand the other person's perspective
    - ii. Goal of the active listening is to *understand*
    - iii. Empathy = put yourself in their shoes
    - iv. Acknowledge any differences and ask to understand
    - v. Be comfortable with silence and be patient
  - c. Reflect
    - i. Acting like a mirror - withhold your emotions and opinions for a moment and reflect what the person has said back to them
    - ii. Paraphrase information and emotions
  - d. Clarify
    - i. Ask open-ended questions (i.e. not "yes or no" questions)
    - ii. Ask clarifying questions for anything you do not understand yet (e.g. "can you repeat that," "let me make sure I understand you...")
    - iii. Ask probing questions (these encourage reflection)
  - e. Summarize
    - i. Briefly restate core information/themes from what the person said
  - f. Share
    - i. After you have conveyed that you understand the other person, it is time to share your thoughts/opinions/emotions on the subject

#### **Reflections:**

1. Reflect on what it means to you to show cognitive & affective empathy for others.
2. Reflect on a time you took another person's perspective - or on the flip side, when you did not take another person's perspective, and this caused some type of miscommunication or conflict.
3. Role play active listening and passive listening in pairs
4. Reflect on the difference between passive listening and active listening

#### **Materials:**

1. Active listening diagram
2. Active listening examples
3. Active listening role play scenario

**Works Cited:**

Leadership, C. F. C. (2019). *Active listening : Improve your ability to listen and lead*, second edition. ProQuest Ebook Central <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com>  
(<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.tc.idm.oclc.org/lib/teacherscollege-ebooks/reader.action?docID=5892198&ppg=20>)

Rost, M., & Wilson, J. J. (2013). *Active listening*. ProQuest Ebook Central  
<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.tc.idm.oclc.org>

**Topic:** Speaking - Sharing our thoughts, feelings, and opinions  
& adapting communication style to our audience

**SIPP Competency & Standards:** Relationship Skills (32); Social Awareness (21)

**AET Objectives:** Communication and interaction: engaging in interaction, conversations, communicating information and commenting on events, non-verbal communication; Emotional understanding: understanding and expressing own emotions, managing emotions and behavior, self-awareness

**Vaughn Competencies:** C. Information literacy, D. Critical thinking, E. Quantitative reasoning, F. Diverse perspectives, G. Written communication, H. Oral communication, I. Ethics and values

**CASEL Area:** Relationship skills: communication, social engagement, relationship building; Self-awareness: identifying emotions, self-confidence, self-efficacy

**Learner Goals:**

Learners will show an understanding of sharing their thoughts, feelings, and opinions adapting for the audience.

Learners will practice communication that is clear, concise, concrete, and specific.

Learners will role play using active listening techniques with communication that is clear, concise, concrete, and specific.

**Instructor Goals:**

Instructors will provide a basic definition and examples of sharing thoughts, feelings, and opinions adapted for the audience.

Instructors will facilitate a discussion and role play using active listening techniques with communication that is clear, concise, concrete, and specific.

**Activity:**

1. Thoughts, feelings, and opinions are all related but are not exactly the same
  - a. Thoughts: ideas or opinions produced by thinking (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - b. Feelings: an emotional state of being; a belief (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - c. Opinions: a view or judgment about something that is not always based in fact (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
2. Facilitate a discussion on sharing these in a professional setting/people and in a personal setting
  - a. Important to consider: what is your goal or intended outcome of sharing your thoughts, feelings, and opinions?
  - b. Consider the impact sharing will have on your audience
  - c. Highlight the use of empathy
3. Information communicated should be:
  - a. Clear - easy to understand and interpret (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - b. Concise - providing a lot of information clearly in a few words; brief but comprehensive (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - c. Concrete - tangible qualities or characteristics (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - d. Specific - be precise and provide detail (Mirriam-Webster, n.d.)
  - e. Provide examples of this type of communication
4. Sharing thoughts, feelings, and opinions depending on the setting requires a certain level of self-awareness and monitoring those, and deciding in the moment what is appropriate to share
  - a. Optional: give scenarios and facilitate a discussion about what information should be shared
  - b. Depending on the audience, it is helpful to back up our opinion with facts
5. Highlight that it is important to learn how to express ourselves no matter the setting, but we must practice how that looks
6. Facilitate an exercise practicing communication about our thoughts, feelings, and opinions to different audiences while also using active listening techniques

**Reflections:**

1. Decide a relevant topic and discuss sharing your thoughts, feelings, and opinions with a friend. Now, discuss sharing our thoughts, feelings, and opinions with a professor/instructor. Now, discuss sharing our thoughts, feelings, and opinions with a classmate.
2. Optional: scenarios discussion
3. Role play in small groups or pairs sharing our thoughts, feelings, and opinions using clear, concise, concrete, and specific language.
4. Role play in small groups or pairs sharing our thoughts, feelings, and opinions in different settings (see reflection 1) while using active listening techniques.

**Materials:**

1. Examples of thoughts, feelings, and opinions
2. Reflection scenarios

**Works Cited:**

Ellis, R. (2003). *Communication skills : Stepladders to success for the professional*. ProQuest Ebook Central <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.tc.idm.oclc.org>

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Thought definition & meaning*. Merriam-Webster. Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thought>

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**Topic:     Group Skills**

**SIPP Competency & Standards:** Relationship Skills (32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38); Social Awareness (21, 28); Responsible Decision-Making (42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48); Self-Awareness (4); Social Awareness (22)

**AET Objectives:** Social understanding and relationships, 5. Group activities

**Vaughn Competencies:** A. Scientific reasoning, B. Technical skills, C. Information literacy, D. Critical thinking, E. Quantitative reasoning, F. Diverse perspectives, G. Written communication, H. Oral communication, I. Ethics and values

**CASEL Area:** Relationship skills: communication, social engagement, relationship building, teamwork; Responsible decision-making: identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving problems, evaluating, reflecting, ethical responsibility; Social awareness: perspective-taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others; Self-awareness: recognizing strengths

**Learner Goals:**

Learners will practice communicating using language that is clear, concise, concrete, and specific within a group.

Learners will show a basic understanding of the important components to working in a group.

Learners will practice group work skills either in their current project or in a mini SEL project.

Learners will reflect on their typical role in a group and begin to think about trying different roles in groups.

### **Instructor Goals:**

Instructors will provide a basic definition of and examples of the components to working in a group.

Instructors will facilitate practicing group work skills either in the learners' current project or in a mini SEL project.

Instructors will facilitate a reflection on the learners' typical role in a group and begin to think about trying different roles in groups.

### **Activity:**

1. Communicating in a group is different than 1:1, but many of the underlying communication skills are the same (e.g. clear, concise, concrete, specific & active listening are all used)
2. When working in a group, one must be aware of working towards a common goal
3. Usually everyone contributes something different
  - a. Your contribution may align with your strengths
  - b. Your contribution may push you out of your comfort zone and require you to take on new responsibilities
4. Important components of working in a group (Derek Bok Center, Harvard University, n.d.):
  - a. Communicating your thoughts, feelings, and opinions (with facts/research in a professional setting)
  - b. Active listening techniques
  - c. Defining roles (review maker leadership roles) (Oplinger, J., Lande, M., Jordan, S., & Camarena, L., 2016)
    - i. Producer
    - ii. Mentor
    - iii. Facilitator
    - iv. Director
    - v. Innovator
    - vi. Coordinator
    - vii. Broker
    - viii. Monitor



- d. Brainstorming and ideation - emphasize doing these while using active listening
- e. Decision-making & examining multiple ideas
- f. Compromise
- g. Breaking components of project into smaller, digestible tasks
- h. Form a plan
- i. Executing a plan
- j. Problem solving

**Reflections:**

1. Reflect on your most recent (or current) group project - were all of the components discussed incorporated? Was there anything that could have been incorporated to make the process more efficient and effective?
2. Reflect on your strengths and typical role(s) in a group. How can you push yourself outside of your comfort zone and practice taking on a new/different role?
3. Try a short group project and practice the group activity skills discussed.

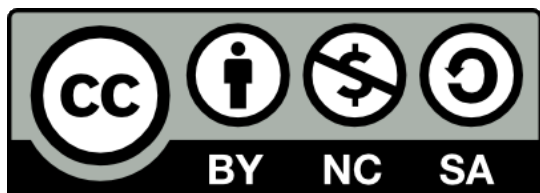
**Materials:**

1. Example of most recent/current group project
2. Maker roles
3. Mini (one day) group project to practice group activity skills

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*Group work*. Derek Bok Center, Harvard University. (n.d.). Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/group-work>

Oplinger, J., Lande, M., Jordan, S., & Camarena, L. (2016). Making Leaders: Leadership Characteristics Of Makers And Engineers In The Maker Community. *American Journal of Engineering Education (AJEE)*, 7(2), 65–82. <https://doi.org/10.19030/ajee.v7i2.9833>



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