

Lesson 14: Skills that Pay the Bills: Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues

Category: Employability Skills

Employability Skills

- a) Interpersonal Communication
- b) Enthusiasm & Attitude
- c) Professionalism
- d) Work Ethic: Integrity, Responsibility, & Accountability

Instructional Direction

Below are two quick lessons on verbal and non-verbal cues. The lessons can be used as warm up activities that can lead into more thorough work on presentation of self, following directions, or other employability skills.

One Way Communication: Tear-agami

Students should each take a sheet of paper, close their eyes, listen carefully, and follow the verbal instructions given by the facilitator (who also performs the actions concurrently): "Fold your sheet of paper in half, tear off the upper right hand corner, fold the paper in half again, tear off the upper left hand corner, fold it in half one more time, and tear off the lower right-hand corner. Now open your eyes and unfold your paper." Students should discuss whether or not everyone's end product looks the same; if not, why not and what could have been done to improve the results.

Flipping the Switch

Students should break into groups and identify the verbal and non-verbal communication they would use with their friends, their parents, and an employer in each of the following situations: saying hello, saying goodbye, asking for help, e-mailing, texting, and making a phone call. Groups should share and discuss their findings with each other then in front of the classroom, role play/act out how they would handle each of the communication scenarios.

As time allows, students can demonstrate the differences in communicating the same message with different audiences. Students should demonstrate at least two scenarios, for example, of saying hello to two different audiences and then elaborate on which verbal and non-verbal cues were different between the two scenarios.

Ask students why they chose to implement these differences. Do some cues seem more appropriate in some scenarios than others? Why? What happens if we use the wrong cues for the wrong audience(s)?

Learning Outcome(s)

Students will be able to recognize that people receive information in different ways and that two-way conversation, which allows for clarification may be necessary in order for successful communication to take place. Students will be able to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate verbal and non-verbal communication behaviors with different groups.

Resources Needed

1. Scrap sheets of paper
2. Writing utensils

Modification and Extensions

Tear-agami

- After discussing two-way communication, have students complete the Tear-agami instructions, but allow them to ask clarifying questions along the way. Repeat again, allowing students to keep their eyes open and ask clarifying questions.
- Have students instruct the teacher on how to construct a sandwich. Have all the necessary supplies and construct the sandwich per their directions being VERY precise to follow their words. If they say "get a piece of bread out of the bag", you may want to rip open the package dramatically and pull out a piece of bread from the center of the loaf. This will achieve the same intent as the Tear-agami activity...and might be more entertaining.

Flipping the Switch

- Students could create and act out their own communication scenario not listed in the activity.

