

Student name: _____ Date: _____

**Define the elements of communicating with
co-workers, emphasizing appropriate
group behavior on the job.***

Objectives:

- A. Define the term "communication."
- B. List and define the 3 categories of human behavior research.
- C. Describe "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" and give personal examples of its application.
- D. Provide examples of communication on the job.

MODULE 7A: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end of the module.

What is Communication?

The definition of the word communication is "the exchange of messages between and among humans." Communication is achieved both verbally and non-verbally in our personal life as well as in our professional life. Problems from communication mishaps are caused by a lack of understanding of human behavior. Research of human behavior falls into three categories:

- 1. psychology -- the study of individual behavior
- 2. sociology -- the study of group behavior
- 3. anthropology -- study of cultural behavior

Much time and effort are spent studying these areas to better understand why humans act as they do.

**(This is also CAPS Module 23, used with permission.)*

One particular psychologist, Abraham Maslow, developed a theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, to explain why the communication process is as it is, and how we can use this to our advantage both in our personal life and at work. Maslow formulated the following conclusions, based on this theory:

1. Humans have certain needs at certain times; thus a successful communicator writes and speaks with the receivers.
2. People will respond positively to messages that meet their particular needs at a particular time.
3. Human needs are based on a system of priorities that are similar to the rungs on a ladder. A person ascends and descends this ladder constantly, but he or she cannot ascend to the next rung until the lower level is satisfied.
4. Once we reach the fifth rung, we set new goals and start the process again.
5. Different people reach different rungs each day. All the external influences in their lives help determine the level they reach on a daily basis.
6. Some people never reach five. For example, a person who is homeless and fights daily for food is firmly attached to rungs one and two and will probably go no further.

The five rungs cover the following needs:

Rung 1--Basic Physical Needs

- a. Food
- b. Shelter
- c. Clothing

Rung 2--Safety and Security Needs

- a. Free from physical harm
- b. Free from mental abuse

Rung 3--Love and Social Needs: The Need to Belong

- a. Feel part of a group--sense of belonging
- b. Family
- c. Friends
- d. Peers

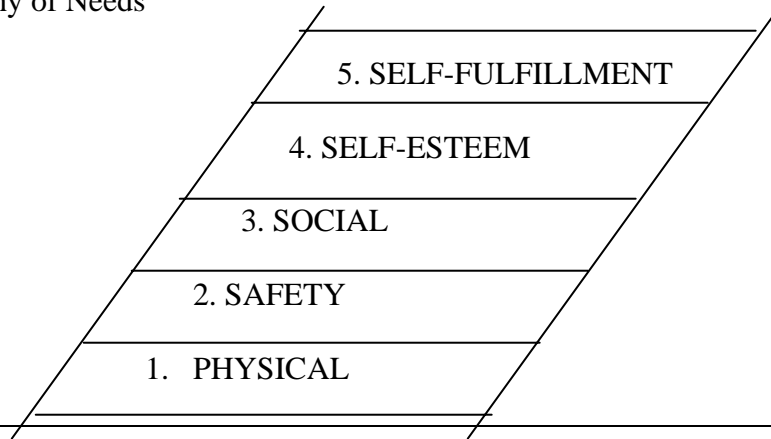
Rung 4--Esteem: The Need to Be Somebody

- a. Needs of our ego--cars, homes, clothing, jewelry, awards, etc.
- b. Recognition for achievements--grades, sports, hobbies, etc.

Rung 5--Self Actualization or Self-Fulfillment

- a. The pinnacle of success--We reach our ultimate goal
- b. Willing to help others struggling on lower rungs

While on the job, we must keep the above process in mind to help us determine how to best communicate with co-workers and others at the workplace.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Communication On the Job

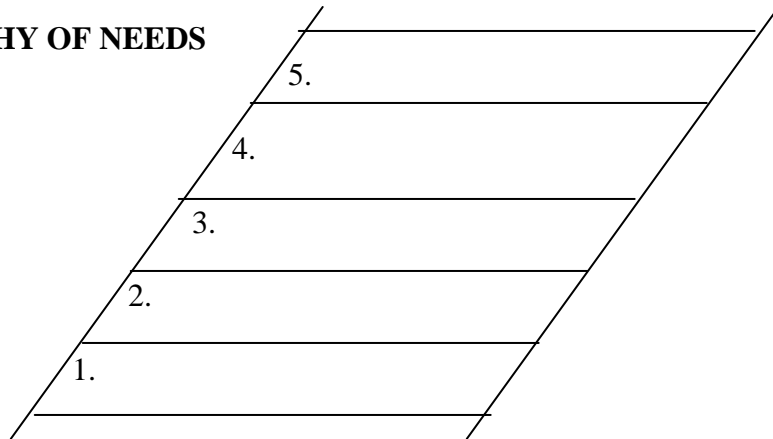
We interact with many people on the job, including co-workers, superiors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, and computers. We communicate in many ways:

1. Face-to-face dialogue using:
 - a. facial expressions
 - b. gestures
 - c. posture
 - d. body movements
 - e. attire
 - f. grooming
 - g. verbal speech
2. Telephone conversations
3. Conferences
4. Committee meetings
5. Written media (letters, memos, reports, bulletins, news releases, meeting minutes, newsletters, employee handbooks, etc.).

MODULE 7A: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After you have read and studied the information sheet, complete the following activities.

Activity 1: Fill in the blank rungs on Maslow's chart below and answer the questions.

MASLOW'S HEIRARCHY OF NEEDS

1. What rung are you on at this time?
2. Describe what you have done today to reach this rung.
3. What item will place you on rung 4? Be specific! Example: car, jewelry, vacation, etc.

Activity 2: Read the following case studies and answer the question in a complete paragraph at the end of each case study.

1. While working at a local fast food restaurant, you overhear several co-workers discussing a new employee. The comments being made are not very nice and will likely cause problems in the workplace. How would you handle the situation?

2. You have been a cashier at Wal-Mart for three years. Even though you thoroughly enjoy your job, you are eagerly awaiting a promised promotion. However, today while talking with co-workers, they tell you they have "heard" that another employee (who has only been here for 1 1/2 years) will be getting the promotion instead of you. How would you handle this situation?

3. You are a salesclerk at a local department store. You approach a customer who is browsing in your department and he/she is very rude and nasty at your effort. How would you handle this situation to make a positive impact on this customer?

MODULE 7A: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)**1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- C. Write persuasive pieces.
- Include a clearly stated position or opinion.
 - Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence.
 - Develop reader interest.
 - Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.
 - Include a variety of methods to advance the argument or position.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Describe basic skills needed on the job.

Objectives:

- A. Recognize that there are basic workplace skills that apply to almost every job.
- B. Understand that these basic workplace skills are first learned and developed in school – in the classroom and in extracurricular activities.
- C. Identify and describe the 5 SCANS Competencies.
- D. Identify and describe the 3 Foundation Skills.
- E. Evaluate personal workplace know-how utilizing SCANS Competencies and Foundations Skills.

MODULE 7B: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities.

Introduction

It is true that different jobs require different skills and knowledge. It is also true that different jobs require certain abilities in all workers; no matter what job they hold. These abilities relate to how a person works, not what a person knows. How well employees work is very important to employers. Companies try to hire workers who demonstrate the abilities needed for workplace success.

The Problem

In recent years, employers across the country have expressed concern over new employees not being able to do their work well. Technology advances and global competition is changing the workplace, and too many workers are struggling to keep pace.

To address this problem, the Secretary of the US Dept. of Labor organized the SCANS Project - Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. It involved employers, educators, and labor leaders. The SCANS Commission studied the workplace by speaking with jobholders in both the public and private sectors. The Commission found that over half of our young people leave school without the knowledge or skills needed to find and hold good jobs.

The Solution

The SCANS Commission identified 5 basic abilities that are needed for workers to perform well in the workplace. These are called SCANS Competencies. Effective workers are able to productively use:

1. Resources – They know how to allocate time, money, materials, space, and staff. Sample tasks include:
 - Develop cost estimates and write proposals to justify the expense of replacing kitchen equipment.
 - Read construction blueprints and manufacturers' installation requirements to place and install the equipment.
2. Interpersonal Skills – They can work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, and work well with others from culturally diverse backgrounds. Sample tasks include:
 - Teach a co-worker the procedure for preparing and distributing the quarterly sales forecast.
 - Help customers select merchandise and resolve complaints.
3. Information – They can acquire and evaluate data, organize and maintain files, and to use computers to process information. Sample tasks include:
 - Record and maintain purchase requests, invoices, and cost information for materials.
 - Use a spreadsheet program to estimate the food costs of alternative menus and daily specials.
4. Systems – They understand social, organizational, and technological systems, monitor and correct performance, and design or improve systems. Sample tasks include:

- Analyze the average and maximum wait time from the time the customers sit down until they receive the appetizer and then the entrée; modify restaurant procedure to reduce time by 20%.
 - Analyze current expenditures against expected needs and revenue.
5. Technology – They can select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks, maintain equipment, and troubleshoot equipment problems. Samples tasks include:
- Operate a forklift and ensure it's in proper operating condition.
 - Evaluate 3 new paint spray guns from the point of view of costs, health and safety, and speed.

The SCANS Commission also determined that developing the 5 SCANS Competencies depends on developing a solid base of the following 3 Foundation Skills:

1. Basic Skills – for expressing thoughts and communicating you must develop your skills in reading, writing, arithmetic, math, speaking, and listening. Sample tasks include:
 - Write a memo to justify additional resources.
 - Prepare instructions for operating simple machines.
 - Explain new schedules to a work team.
 - Estimate discounts on the spot while negotiating sales.
 - Complete monthly reports of your department's activities.
2. Thinking Skills – for developing ideas and solving problems you must develop the ability to learn, to reason, to think creatively, to make decisions, and to solve problems. Sample tasks include:
 - Resolve scheduling conflict by setting priorities for processing orders.
 - Collect payment from delinquent customers and use judgment about extending credit.
 - Compensate a customer who is dissatisfied with housekeeping services on a recent cruise.
 - Evaluate vendor bids and select supplier.
3. Personal Qualities – qualities that shape the kind of person you are such as responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity.

Although the 5 Competencies and 3 Foundation Skills are listed separately, you cannot develop them separately. Each one builds upon and supports another. As you

develop one, you automatically strengthen others. School and work are not the only places where these skills can be developed. Workplace know-how can also be developed through extracurricular activities, community involvement, volunteer projects, and even at home.

Once a person possesses the 3 Foundation Skills – Basic Skills, Thinking Skills, and positive Personal Qualities – a person can concentrate on developing the 5 SCANS Competencies. By developing the SCANS Competencies, a worker will be able to work competently and effectively in the workplace. Possessing the SCANS Competencies often makes the difference between a worker who “just gets by” on the job and one who excels.

Preparation for the world of work begins long before an employee actually gets a job. Workplace readiness involves the skills a person develops throughout school. For example, thinking logically, reading, and writing are skills a person strengthens through class participation and homework. They are the same skills used by a worker when communicating with coworkers. In the workplace, being able to write instructions for coworkers can mean the difference between getting the job done well or having it totally confused.

In the workplace, for example, the ability to budget time wisely is very important in determining how much work gets done. Some workers can complete big projects in short periods. They meet deadlines, volunteer for more work, and get it done as well. These individuals may not be smarter; they just “work smarter”. They know how to budget their time wisely, set deadlines, and meet them – a sign of competence with resources. This same competence can be developed through simple activities such as keeping your bedroom clean and doing your homework well.

Goal Setting - The 3 Foundation Skills

Developing the foundation skills takes time and practice. You need to:

- Learn how certain skills can help you in today’s workplace.
- Determine what skills you have now by examining your strengths and weaknesses.
- Take action to improve your workplace skills.

Developing these workplace basics is worth the time and effort. Strong workplace skills can boost your productivity and your chances for advancement.

Assess your Basic Skills:

1. Do you remember what you read? Can you summarize the main ideas of an article or a book? Yes _____ No _____
2. Do you know rules for grammar and punctuation? Yes _____ No _____
3. Can you perform basic math functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division with ease? Yes _____ No _____
4. Do you know how to type and use a computer? Yes _____ No _____

Ways you can develop these skills:

- Use dictionaries and other reference books to help you read and write better.
- Read newspapers, magazines, and books in your free time.
- Try a new dinner recipe each week to practice following written instructions.
- Keep a journal. Look at older entries to see how your writing has improved.
- Practice math skills using calculators and computers.

Assess your Thinking Skills:

1. When you face a problem, do you try to think of more than 1 possible solution? Yes _____ No _____
2. Are you open to new ideas? Yes _____ No _____
3. Do you weigh the consequences of your actions? Yes _____ No _____
4. Can you separate fact from opinion? Yes _____ No _____
5. In a discussion, can you present facts and ideas in an organized, convincing way? Yes _____ No _____

Ways you can develop these skills:

- Brainstorm with others to find as many possible solutions to reach difficult decisions.
- Read mystery novels - try to figure it out before the solution is given.
- Play board games that require creativity, planning, and logic.

Assess your Personal Qualities:

1. Can you accept compliment and criticisms? Yes _____ No _____
2. Do you arrive on time for scheduled events, school, work, etc.? Yes _____ No _____
3. Do you accept responsibility for mistakes you make? Yes _____ No _____
4. Are you comfortable speaking in front of a group? Yes _____ No _____

5. Are you aware of nonverbal communication cues, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.? Yes _____ No _____
6. Do you respect and value the opinions of others? Yes _____ No _____
7. Do you ask others for help or advice? Yes _____ No _____
8. Do you make suggestions for improvements? Yes _____ No _____

Ways you can develop these skills:

- Read books on self-esteem, stress or time management.
- Spend time with positive, motivated people.
- Make to-do lists or daily schedules to stay organized and reduce stress.
- Role-play workplace situations with a family member or friend.
- Watch your body language by talking in front of a mirror.
- Volunteer for community projects.
- Show initiative at work by asking for more responsibilities.

There are many other ways to develop your Foundation Skills:

1. On-the-job training
2. A mentor
3. Apprenticeship
4. Workshops
5. Adult education courses
6. Career Centers

Workplace skills help you achieve and succeed. Learning is a lifelong process.

MODULE 7B: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After studying the information sheet above, complete the following activities.

Activity 1: What Are Your Workplace Skills?

Review the SCANS Competencies and Foundation Skills and rate your workplace know-how by checking the appropriate boxes. Then answer the questions that follow.

Workplace Skills & Competencies Very Good Good Fair Poor Do Not Possess

Workplace Skills & Competencies	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Do Not Possess
Basic Skills:					
Read written material, charts, and graphs.					
Write an effective letter.					
Calculate a percentage discount on a product.					
Speak to a group.					
Listen to instructions to complete a new task.					
Thinking Skills:					
Learn new job responsibilities.					
Use reasoning skills to choose from alternatives.					
Use creative thinking to develop a new idea.					
Make decisions about work priorities.					
Apply established procedures to new projects.					
Resource Skills:					
Manage time well.					
Organize work and storage areas.					

Use a budget for money management.					
Use supplies and tools wisely.					
Divide work according to group members' skills.					
Interpersonal Skills:					
Contribute to group efforts.					
Teach others new skills.					
Lead others in a project.					
Negotiate with others to gain an agreement.					
Work well with others from different cultures.					
Information Skills:					
Research and collect data from reliable sources.					
Organize and maintain a file system.					
Give a speech using various media.					
Interpret instructions on a work procedure.					
Use a computer to create work documents.					
System Skills:					
Explain and draw an organizational chart.					
Diagram the steps of a problem's possible solutions.					
Propose a plan for a situation needing change.					
Monitor, correct, and improve your work performance.					
Break down a complex task into component parts.					
Technology Skills:					
Judge the best procedures, tools, or machines to use.					

Assemble equipment from instructions.					
Operate equipment according to guidelines.					
Identify reasons for wrong results from tools or machines.					
Follow maintenance procedures to prevent failures.					

1. Circle your 5 STRONGEST skills from the choices given. How did you acquire these skills?

2. List several ways to improve FAIR or POOR skills.

3. How can you acquire the skills you DO NOT POSSESS?

4. How will your skills influence your career choice?

Activity 2: Developing Workplace Know-How

Listed below are the 5 SCANS Competencies and the 3 Foundation Skills that workers need to be effective in the workplace. These skills and qualities develop gradually and are strengthened through everything you do. For each item listed below, report at least 1 example of a related activity or accomplishment of yours.

Activities Report

Workplace Abilities	Recent Examples
Competence with resources – allocating time, money, materials, space, and help from others.	
Competence with interpersonal skills – working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.	
Competence with information – acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information.	
Competence with systems – understanding social, organizational, and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performance, and designing or improving systems.	
Competence with technology – selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, maintaining equipment, and troubleshooting equipment problems.	

Workplace Skills and Qualities	Recent Examples
Basic skills – reading, writing, math, speaking, and listening.	
Thinking skills – learning, reasoning, thinking creatively, making decisions, and solving problems.	
Personal qualities – displaying individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity.	

Activity 3: Math Practice

Practice using your math skills by solving the following problems. Do not use a calculator.

$$\begin{array}{r} 1. \quad 25 \\ \quad 73 \\ \quad 12 \\ + \quad 6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$2. \quad \begin{array}{r} 39.5 \\ + \quad 6.2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$3. \quad 943 - 21 =$$

$$4. \quad 10\% \text{ of } \$7.50 =$$

$$5. \quad 20\% \text{ of } \$15.00 =$$

$$6. \quad 5 \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{4} =$$

$$7. \quad \begin{array}{r} 886 \\ \times 62 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$8. \quad \begin{array}{r} 7.2 \\ \times 5.9 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$9. \quad 1144 - 52 =$$

10. An item sells for 3 for \$1.00. How much does 1 cost? _____

11. Write 0.66 as a percentage _____

12. Write 91% as a decimal _____

13. A customer gives you \$20.00 for a \$13.84 purchase. How much change does the customer get back? _____

14. A customer gives you \$5.25 for a \$3.19 purchase. How much change does the customer get back? _____
15. An item sells for 4 for \$1.00. How much do 5 cost? _____
16. How many items are in 2 ½ dozen? _____
17. Using numbers, write “one hundred seventeen dollars and twenty-three cents” correctly. _____

MODULE 7B: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.2.11. Career Acquisition (Getting a Job)

- E. Demonstrate, in the career acquisition process, the application of essential workplace skills/knowledge, such as, but not limited to:
- Commitment
 - Communication
 - Dependability
 - Health/safety
 - Laws and regulations (i.e. Child Labor Law, Fair Labor Standards Act, OSHA, Material Safety Data Sheets)
 - Personal initiative
 - Scheduling/time management
 - Team building
 - Technical literacy
 - Technology

13.3.11. Career Retention and Advancement

- A. Evaluate personal attitudes and work habits that support career retention and advancement.

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

2.2.11 Computation and Estimation

- A. Develop and use computation concepts, operations and procedures with real numbers in problem-solving situations.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Describe non-verbal skills.

Objectives:

- A. Define non-verbal skills.
- B. Identify forms of non-verbal skills by reading examples and referring to the list of forms pertaining to non-verbal communication on the student information sheet.
- C. Reflect on your personal use of non-verbal skills.

MODULE 7C: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end.

What are non-verbal skills?

Non-verbal skills involve looking at all the processes we use in communicating our language or understanding another's language or culture except speech and using words. It is important to note that the term non-verbal is actually a misnomer. When the use of the voice and what is done with and to words are emphasized, this can be interpreted as non-verbal communication.

The way we stand, sit, move, gesture and use facial expressions, can tell others about how we feel. In some instances this form of communication can be more powerful than the spoken or written language. To be a successful communicator we must be able to master how we relay and receive information non-verbally.

Types of non-verbal skills

Appearance - How we look has an immediate subconscious effect on everyone we meet. Impressions are made about people in a matter of seconds. Evaluating factors are attractiveness, height, weight, body shape, hairstyle and dress.

Occulesics - People who drop their eyes or who do not look right at you are thought to be hiding something, or being evasive. The perception is one of insincerity. People who give direct eye contact when you are talking to them are often perceived as strong and honest.

For example:

- Normal eye contact means communication is open.
- Eye contact and head nodding means understanding, not necessarily approval.
- Avoiding eye contact could suggest feelings of insecurity.
- Staring could mean dislike.
- Eye movement from side to side could indicate if someone is not being truthful.

Kinesics - The lay term is body language and refers to movements other than touching. Specifically, this term refers to posture, movement styles and gestures. Body language can convey several things about a person. It can convey mood, interest, attentiveness and approval. Hand, foot and body movement can achieve this. This can be witnessed by the following examples:

- Slouching
- Standing straight
- Leaning back on a chair
- Fast hand movements
- Arms folded
- Foot tapping

Vocalics - This refers to non-verbal cues in a speaker's voice. The way an utterance is made can determine its meaning more so than the text itself. Words can be said in different tones such as sarcastic or hesitant to name a few.

Haptics - Refers to the study of touching behavior. Basically, gentle touching of someone encourages trust, compliance and affection. Aggressive touch usually has a negative connotation. Be careful about how, where and when you touch someone. You want to make sure a reassuring pat on the shoulder is not misinterpreted as something else. Some people have sensory issues and simply do not like to be touched.

Olfactics - Refers to the study of scents and odors. A person's scent and odors reflect what others think of our hygiene, personality and culture.

Proxemics - Refers to the study of the use of personal space. People demonstrate a need for personal space (e.g. walls and fences). A violation of this space can cause distress and anxiety. Allow at least three feet of space between you and the person you are communicating with. If you invade someone's personal space it makes that person uncomfortable.

Territoriality - This is a stationary personal space. Two examples would be a reserved table at a restaurant or a specific desk at work.

Chronemics - Refers to the study of use and perception of time. Two opposite examples would be being punctual for a meeting or fashionably late for an appointment.

MODULE 7C: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After reading and studying the above information sheet, complete the following activities.

Activity 1 - Define the term “non-verbal skills.”**Activity 2 - Identify the forms of non-verbal skills.**

In the space provided next to each example below write the correct form of non-verbal skills from the listing on the information sheet.

1. _____ “I knew I was in trouble when she said, “Oh hello!” in a very low voice.”
2. _____ When conducting a job interview, I prefer the applicant to sit at least four feet from me at all times.”
3. _____ “Some people speculate that she only hires attractive assistants.”
4. _____ “She believes if she shows late for the appointment that others will think she is important.”
5. _____ “Joe twitches when he is around his boss.”
6. _____ “He parks in that spot because he is the club champ.”
7. _____ “To show she was interested in Bill, she touched his arm three times during their conversation.”
8. _____ “My students often look to the floor when they are telling me a lie.”
9. _____ “She always looks like a million bucks.”

Activity 3 - Reflect on your personal use of non-verbal skills.

List the types of non-verbal skills you have used while at work. Refer to the types listed in the information section of this module.

Activity 4 - Evaluate what type of impact these forms of non-verbal skills have had on your interaction with others at work. From your personal list of non-verbal skills you generated in activity 3, please rate each of them in the space provided below using the following codes:

Positive Impact- PI,
Little Impact - LI, and
Negative Impact - NI.

(You may choose more than one code for these forms if the form had different effects at different times e.g. Territoriality LI, NI.)

Activity 5 - Application of non-verbal skills.

Explain in a complete paragraph some ways you can improve your communication with others at work through the use of non-verbal skills. Use a separate sheet of paper.

MODULE 7C: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.3.11. Career Retention and Advancement

- A. Evaluate personal attitudes and work habits that support career retention and advancement.

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Demonstrate effective telephone skills.

Objectives:

- A. Identify the rules of telephone etiquette to be followed when answering the telephone.
- B. List the elements that should be contained in a telephone message.
- C. Describe the procedure for making a business telephone call.

MODULE 7D: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end.

Basics of telephone communications

The telephone is an important tool of modern business. Businesses communicate with customers, suppliers, government agencies, and each other over the telephone. With the development of the cell phone, telephone communications are more important than ever. Learning how to communicate effectively with the telephone is a valuable skill – one, which will help you in nearly every business situation. Likewise, those employees who are not proficient in the use of the telephone may find their careers limited.

Good telephone communications follows many of the rules of effective verbal communication, with a few exceptions. Because the person you are talking with cannot see you, your communication depends solely upon your words and tone of voice. The listener cannot see you shake your head, frown, or gesture, as they would if you were communicating in person. So, your words must be very clear and understandable.

Your telephone voice should be strong enough to be heard, but not so loud that you disturb other people in your office. Your personality should come through easily in the conversation, letting the customer or client know that you are indeed interested and willing to help. Try to avoid a monotonous tone, and talk in a normal voice that rises and falls as you emphasize key words and phrases.

Effective telephone communication must be done in a professional manner. Slang or the kind of casual conversation you would use in talking with friends won't work for business telephone communications. Rather, you must speak clearly and use good English grammar at all times.

Good telephone communications mean being a careful listener. Listening phrases such as, "yes," or "I see," are good ways to assure a caller that you are giving full attention to the conversation. Don't eat, chew gum, or allow interruptions during a business telephone conversation. If you must interrupt a conversation, excuse yourself and then apologize when you return.

Above all, be friendly and sincere on the telephone. A good attitude can be "sensed" over the phone, just as in person. Your sincere efforts to communicate will be appreciated, sometimes even more than the actual words you say.

Answering the telephone

Answering the telephone at your place of business is like welcoming a customer or opening the door to your office. By identifying yourself and asking, "How may I help you?" you make the customer feel welcome. If the caller asks to speak to someone, ask, "May I say who is calling please?" Most important, never put a caller on hold without asking permission. "Would you mind holding for a moment while I transfer your call?" is much better than "Hold please!" Your caller will appreciate your courtesy.

Observing the following simple rules for good telephone etiquette will help you become successful:

- Answer before the third ring.
- Speak clearly and use proper identification for your company and yourself. "ABC Company, Mr. Jones speaking. How may I help you." This is a proper greeting.
- Be positive. Tell the customer what you can do, not what you can't do for them.
- Be sincere and friendly. Your voice is everything.
- Listen carefully. Good telephone communications requires better listening skills than other kinds of communications. Have a notepad handy so you can write down the caller's name as soon as you hear it. This way, when you transfer the call you can use the person's name without having to ask for it again.
- Close on a positive note. Let the caller know you were glad to be of service. Be sure to say "good-bye" not "bye-bye," "ciao," "later," "bye-now" or any other unprofessional close. For example, "Thank you for calling, Mr. Beane. Good-bye." Or "Thank you, Mr. Beane. I'll give Mrs. Shorborne your message."

Taking messages

Business can be lost, customers not served, and important meetings missed if telephone messages are not properly recorded and delivered. The ability to prepare a clear, detailed telephone message is an important telephone communications skill in today's business world.

You should always keep a telephone message pad handy to record messages as you talk to a caller. **Never rely on memory alone.** Write the information accurately and neatly as you receive it from the caller. A telephone message should include:

- The date and time of the call.
- Who the message is for.
- The caller's name and company.
- A message.
- The telephone number where the caller can be reached.
- The best time to reach the caller (to avoid "phone tag").
- Your name (in case there are any questions about the message).

After receiving a message, you should read it back to the caller to make sure your information is correct. If you have any questions about spelling the caller's name or company, ask for the correct spelling.

Finally, you must deliver all messages promptly.

Handling an Irate Caller

Handling an angry caller is sometimes a real challenge. The first thing to remember is to stay calm and be courteous. Although this can be very difficult, it is the fastest and best way to calm things down. Then try to connect the caller with the person she wants. If you have to transfer the call, try not to lose the caller in the process, as this adds more fuel to an already bad situation.

SEC: Parker's Sporting Goods, Angie Green speaking.

CUST: I don't know what's going on over there. This is the second overdue notice I've received in the last three days and that account has been paid! I even brought back a dartboard so I probably overpaid, and if you can't get your records straight.... I am sick of you people. If you call me again, I will telephone my attorney! Do you understand?

SEC: Ma'am, the person you need to speak to is William Tall in Accounting. I'll connect you.

After they have been connected, it is up to William to look up the account and figure out what is wrong.

A caller's vocabulary can get a little rough when he or she is irate. And some callers just like to complain and argue. If this happens to you, remember, you don't have to lower yourself to their level. Be calm and be courteous. It's your job.

Making a business call

Making a business call is very different from a personal telephone call. Your professionalism is on the line. To be sure that you handle yourself correctly, it's a good idea to write a list of things you want to discuss before actually making the call.

Here are a few simple rules for making business calls:

- Always introduce yourself to the person answering the phone. It shouldn't be necessary for them to ask who is calling.
- Identify your company also. "This is John Smith of ABC Manufacturing Company. May I speak with Mr. Jones, please?"
- When you reach your party, repeat your name and state the reason for your call.
- If you are calling someone in a particular job (like the personnel manager) but you don't know the person's name, ask the operator for the name before your call is transferred to the person you want.

Above all, stay formal and businesslike at all times. If you must leave a message, be sure to give specific information including the best time for the person to return your call.

Summary

The telephone is a powerful tool for business communications. By following a few simple rules, you can learn how to answer the telephone, take messages, and make business calls that work for you and your organization.

MODULE 7D: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After reading and studying the above information, complete these activities.

Activity 1: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. A customer calls your place of business and you say, “Good morning, ABC Manufacturing.” What elements of good telephone etiquette were left out of this greeting?

2. After answering the telephone, the caller asks to speak to Mr. Jones. What should you ask the caller before checking to see if Mr. Jones is available?

3. A caller asks for someone and you have never heard of this person, so you reply, “You’ve got the wrong department.” Write a better response following the rules for telephone etiquette.

4. List the six elements of a good telephone message:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.

Activity 2: Read the following telephone conversation and then answer the questions.

- Employee: “Jenkins Distributors. This is Ann Watson. How may I help you.”
- Caller: “Can I speak with David Masterson, please?”
- Employee: “Who may I say is calling?”
- Caller: “This is Bill Nixon. Is David there?”
- Employee: “He’s not here right now. May I have your number so he can return your call?”
- Caller: “Yes, he can reach me at area code 216, and the number is 327-4912.”
- Employee: “Let me make sure I have this correct. Is that 216-327-4912?”
- Caller: “Yes.”
- Employee: “Thank you. When is the best time for Mr. Masterson to call?”
- Caller: “Anytime before 4 o’clock will be fine.”
- Employee: “If that’s not possible, is there another time when he can reach you later?”
- Caller: “He can reach me tomorrow morning between 8 and 11.”
- Employee: “OK. I’ll give Mr. Masterson your message as soon as possible. Thank you for calling Jenkins Distributors.”

1. How would you rate the service the employee gave to the caller?

2. Why did the employee repeat the telephone number to the caller?

3. What did the employee do to prevent telephone tag?

4. When the call is finished, what should the employee do with the message?

Activity 3: What should you say differently if you were making the following business calls? Script your revised call on a separate piece of paper.

1. You call a company and say, “Is the personnel director there?”
2. You call a company and say to the person answering the telephone, “Mr. Jones please.”

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

Activity 4: You MAKE the call

In this activity you will need a partner to assist you. You are to call your partner who will be acting as an administrative assistant and ask to speak to Mr. Brown. Remember the key points and information when making the call.

Activity 5: You TAKE the call

In this activity you will again need a partner to assist you. Your partner will be calling you. You are working for a Home Improvement Store. Remember to use the key points and information from this module on receiving calls.

MODULE 7D: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.3.11. Career Retention and Advancement

- A. Evaluate personal attitudes and work habits that support career retention and advancement.

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.6.11 Speaking and Listening

- A. Listen to others.
 - Ask clarifying questions.
 - Synthesize information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy.
 - Take notes.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Demonstrate basic uses of computer technology.

Objectives:

- A. Describe basic computer technology today.
- B. Discuss ways we use computer technology on the job.
- C. Use the internet to explore job opportunities.

MODULE 7E: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet, then complete the activity at the end of this module.

What is considered basic computer technology today?

Without a doubt in anybody's mind, the answer would be the computer and/or the Internet. Thousands of people each year have new computers on their desks either at work or at home, each one having the growing capabilities at their fingertips that was once only available to large corporations or the military. Computers were the size of trucks! Now we have that technology in our homes and at our private businesses.

Why is a computer technology?

Most of the time we think of technology as something that makes our lives and work easier and faster. The computer, along with the Internet, are considered the fastest and most powerful inventions. It reaches out to the end of the globe and can be connected to satellites in outer space. The newest, and some say one of the greatest invented technology of all time, the computer, makes our lives and work easier when we use them. Other great inventions that were thought to be great were boats, railroads, telegraphs, automobiles, telephones and even satellites and, maybe the most famous of its time, the printing press. All of these are technologies that when invented were marvels of their time like the computer.

A computer can help us complete many different jobs that otherwise would be long and cumbersome tasks. A computer can:

- Store all kinds of information both personal and business.
- Act like a typewriter, allowing you type letters, better known as word processing.
- Organize information in charts and graphs.
- Help us make presentations and publications.
- Allow us to send communications across the world in the form of e-mails and faxes instantaneously.

- Allow us to organize budgets and financial records in the form of spreadsheets.
- Can entertain us by playing games, allowing us to watch movies, and play music.

A computer can help us complete our work faster and easier.

- Computers are very accurate, far more than humans.
- Computers save documents in their original form until you physically change it.
- Computers can be used to reproduce documents in mass; requiring no retyping. Just click and print.

Using computers on the job

Computers can be used for many different purposes. At home, we use computers for doing our schoolwork and browsing the Internet. Computers are also important tools on the job. They are used for communication and data management.

Creating information

Word-Processing Software is used in homes, schools and business for the writing letters and many other types of printed communication. An example of word-processing software is *Microsoft Office Word. Word* and other word-processing software, can be used to type letters, resumes, journals and many other types of printed information. This form was created by word-processing software.

Managing Information

Spreadsheets are used in business and industry to organize and manage information (data) in many different ways. Spreadsheets can be used to make calculations, store columns of numbers or graphically display any type of numeric information. The spreadsheet below shows us an example.

Age group ratio for pensions: extrapolation until 2025

Ratio Retired/Workforce

Austria		Scen.	Curr.
Start age Workforce	male	◀	▶
	Female	◀	▶
Start age Retirement	Male	◀	▶
	Female	◀	▶
Percent Workforce	Male	◀	▶
	Female	◀	▶

Age Group Ratio	Scen. %	Current %
Year		
1991	40.0	40.0
1992	39.9	39.9
1993	39.7	39.7
1994	39.6	39.6
1995	39.5	39.5
1996	39.8	39.8
1997	40.7	40.7
1998	42.1	42.1
1999	43.3	43.3
2000	44.1	44.1
2001	44.7	44.7
2002	45.2	45.2
2003	45.2	45.2
2004	45.3	45.3
2005	46.1	46.1
2006	46.9	48.9
2007	47.5	47.5

Communication and the Internet

Computer technology can also be used to access up-to-date information on weather, the stock market, and other important forms of information via the internet. The Internet also allows companies and individuals to communicate through chat rooms and e-mail. Information that would traditionally take days to receive through mail delivery can now be sent and received with one click of a computer key.

Sample E-Mail

To <homeowner email>
FROM: <your email>
SUBJECT: Meeting with <company name> on <day month, day> at <time>

Dear [Mr. /Ms.] <homeowner name>,

Just a quick reminder of our meeting to discuss the project for your home at <address, city>. If for any reason you cannot meet at the above time, please contact me immediately at <office phone number>.

Thank you for considering <company name>, and I look forward to helping your home improvement dreams become a reality.

<your name>
<your company>
<email>
<website>
<phone no.>

What is the Internet?

The Internet was developed in the 1960's primarily as a defense mechanism in case of a nuclear war. It was thought that if all areas of the country or military were connected to each other by modems, telephone lines and cables, or other communications devices, that if one area was destroyed, the others would still be able to communicate with each other via the internet network of computers. This network was named ARPA net (Advanced Research Projects Agency). As its popularity grew, and the wide capabilities were uncovered, many more networks followed. The ability to communicate with other people all around the country at the touch of some keys was unstoppable. E-mail was invented. Today, we have companies like Compu Serve and America Online, just to name a few, as part of a huge Internet.

What is the Worldwide Web?

The Web, on the other hand, was not developed until 1990. “Based on a proposal by Tim Berner-Lee for enhancing the Internet, CERN (the European Particle Physical Laboratory in Geneva) began work on a hypertext browser;” hence, the term “Web browser.” The idea was to allow users to share research information in hypertext with graphics, illustrations and even with sound and video. By January of 1993, fifty such web servers were in existence. Mosaic, a user friendly advanced Web browser, was developed and is given the title as the spark that started the interest in the Worldwide Web. By 1994 there were more than 10,000 servers. In early 1996, it was estimated that 40,000 servers were online serving an estimated 20 to 30 million users.

Think of the internet as a device that contains all the information and Web pages and the Web browser as the tool to access that information and Web sites.

Searching the Worldwide Web

Many people are waking up each morning and instead of opening the newspaper, they are opening up their Web browser to the Dailynews.com to get the information they used to get from their paper in their driveway.

The Web is a great place to learn news and receive information but one of the best parts of the Web is the useful downloadable material we use to advance ourselves in life. Not just the baseball scores, but also the tickets to the game. Not just information on what’s the best car for the consumer, but we actually can purchase the car on line. We can sign up and take a college course online.

The computer along with the Internet gives us power. This power is unequal to any other new technology because it is a worldwide resource that is important to people around the globe. It is accessible to anyone!

Summary

Technology is an important part of business and industry and we need to be familiar with these tools. As members of the workforce, we need to be very familiar with these tools and how to use them.

References for this Module:

Clark, Carol Lea. Working the Web, Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997.
Shelly Cashman Series, Essential Introduction to Computers, Thomson Learning, 2001.

MODULE 7E: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work**13.2.11. Career Acquisition (Getting a Job)**

B. Apply research skills in searching for a job.

- CareerLinks
- Internet (i.e. O-NET)
- Networking
- Newspapers
- Professional associations
- Resource books (i.e. Occupational Outlook Handbook, PA Career Guide)

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)**1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

1.8.11 Research

- B. Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.
- Determine valid resources for researching the topic, including primary and secondary sources.
 - Evaluate the importance and quality of the sources.

- Select sources appropriate to the breadth and depth of the research (e.g., dictionaries, thesauruses, other reference materials, interviews, observations, computer databases).
- Use tables of contents, indices, key words, cross-references and appendices.
- Use traditional and electronic search tools.