



MODULE 6

SOCIAL MEDIA DETOX AND DIGITAL WELL-BEING



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Lesson 6.5

Enhancing Communication Skills for Better Connections



ERASMEDIAH

Educational Reinforcement Against
the Social Media Hyperconnectivity



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Enhancing Communication Skills for Better Connections

Objectives:

- To help participants understand the importance of effective communication for building strong personal and professional relationships.
- To provide strategies for improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
- To practice communication techniques that foster trust, empathy, and connection in conversations.

Key Message(s):

- Effective communication goes beyond words – body language and active listening are key.
- Clear communication enhances relationships and helps resolve conflicts.
- Practicing empathy and active listening builds trust and mutual understanding.



TYPE OF LESSON:





Lesson Overview

This workshop aims to improve participants' communication skills by exploring both verbal and non-verbal communication techniques. Through hands-on tasks and reflection, participants will learn to connect better with others and develop meaningful relationships. The lesson is structured into five tasks that focus on different aspects of communication.

The workshop is organized into 5 steps:

1. Introduction to Communication Skills (10 min)
2. Verbal vs. Non-verbal Communication (15 min)
3. Active Listening and Empathy (20 min)
4. Building Trust through Communication (15 min)
5. Reflection and Discussion (10 min)



Step 1

Introduction to Communication Skills

Communication is the foundation of all meaningful connections. Did you know that what we say is only part of how we communicate? Verbal communication involves the words we use to express our thoughts, while non-verbal communication includes body language, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice. These non-verbal cues often add context and emotion to our words—or even contradict them. For example, a simple "I'm fine" can take on very different meanings depending on the tone or accompanying facial expression. Non-verbal communication can sometimes convey more than the words themselves.

Let's explore this idea further:

- Think about a time when someone misunderstood you because your body language or tone didn't match your words.
- How did this impact the interaction? Write down your thoughts.
- Share your example with the group to discuss how verbal and non-verbal communication work together.

By reflecting on these experiences, we can better understand the importance of aligning our words and actions for clearer, more effective communication.



Step 2

Verbal vs. Non-verbal Communication

Communication is about more than words; non-verbal cues like posture, eye contact, facial expressions, and tone of voice can carry even more meaning than what is said. Think about how your non-verbal signals might reinforce or contradict your words.

To start, let's explore this concept with an example. Imagine someone saying, "I'm excited to be here today." Now, picture how that statement feels when delivered with slumped shoulders and no eye contact versus with a bright smile and open posture. These differences show how non-verbal cues can dramatically change the meaning of a message.

Activity: Pair up with another participant and practice saying a simple sentence (like "I'm looking forward to working with you") using different non-verbal cues. Try expressing excitement, disinterest, or nervousness.

Afterward, discuss as a group how these non-verbal changes impacted the perceived meaning of the message. Reflect on how being mindful of your own non-verbal signals can make your communication clearer and more intentional.



Step 3

Active Listening and Empathy

Did you know that non-verbal communication often speaks louder than words? The way we carry ourselves—our posture, facial expressions, eye contact, and tone—can reveal emotions and intentions that words alone cannot convey.

For example, imagine saying, “I’m excited to be here today” with slumped shoulders and no eye contact. Now picture saying the same sentence with a bright smile and open body language. The message feels completely different, right? Non-verbal signals often shape how others interpret our words and can even overshadow what we’re trying to say.

To do this task:

- Pair up with a partner and take turns saying the sentence, “I’m excited to be here today,” using different non-verbal cues (e.g., enthusiastic, disinterested, nervous).
- Observe how the tone, posture, and facial expressions affect the interpretation of the message.
- Afterward, share your observations with the group: How did non-verbal cues influence the message?



Step 4

Building Trust through Communication

Improving communication starts with self-awareness. Take a moment to think about how you communicate in different areas of your life—whether in personal relationships, at work, or in social settings. Reflect on the habits you’re proud of and the areas where you’d like to improve.

Let’s begin with some questions to guide your reflection:

- What aspects of communication do you find challenging?
- How has communication (good or bad) impacted your relationships in the past?
- What changes could make a positive difference in how you connect with others?

The task is:

- Write down your strengths and areas for improvement in communication. Think about specific situations where better communication could have led to a different outcome.
- Based on your reflections, set one or two actionable goals for improvement. For example: “I will focus on active listening by summarizing what the other person says before I respond.”



Step 5

Reflection and Discussion

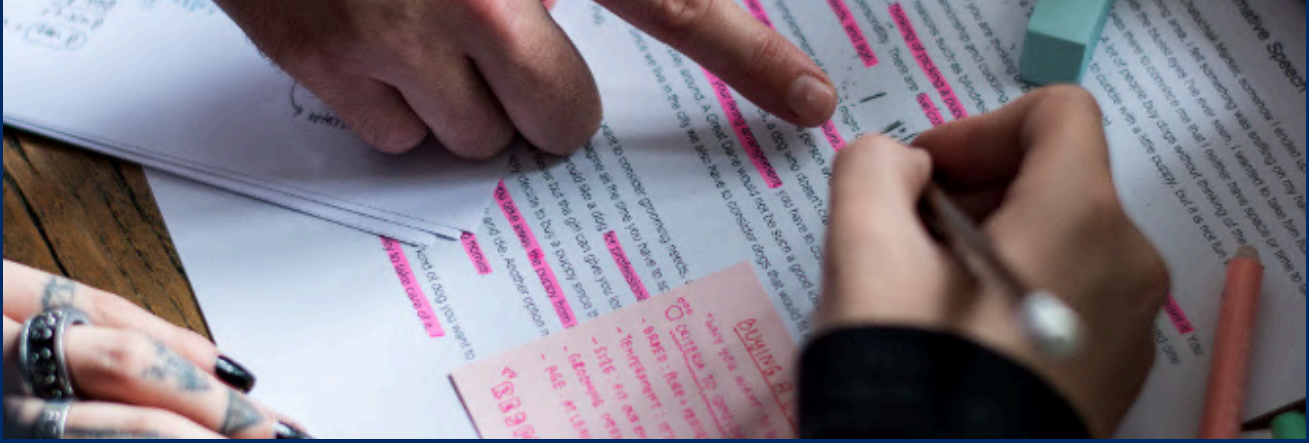
Take time to evaluate how you communicate in different areas of your life—such as personal relationships, work settings, or social interactions. Reflection helps uncover strengths and areas where improvement can make a meaningful difference.

Begin by participating in a group discussion to share experiences and challenges. Talking with others can provide valuable insights and foster a sense of mutual learning. Questions to consider include:

- What aspects of communication do you find most challenging?
- How could improving your communication positively impact your relationships?

After reflecting, set one or two specific goals for enhancing your communication skills. For example, you might aim to practice active listening during conversations or focus on expressing yourself more clearly and respectfully. These goals should be measurable, so you can track your progress over time.

This task will help you build awareness and take actionable steps toward becoming a more effective



Key Takeaway Summary

- Communication involves both speaking and listening – being aware of non-verbal cues is just as important as words.
- Active listening and empathy strengthen connections by ensuring people feel heard and understood.
- Trust is built over time through honest and open communication.
- Practicing these skills consistently improves both personal and professional relationships.
- Communication skills are crucial for conflict resolution and collaboration.



Instructions for youth workers, educators, and teachers

Objective:

The goal of this lesson is to help participants enhance their communication skills to build stronger connections with others. By focusing on active listening, body language, and clear messaging, participants will learn how to effectively express themselves and better understand others. Teachers should guide students through practical exercises and discussions that highlight the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication, encouraging them to practice these skills in real-life situations to improve their relationships and personal interactions.

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard or flipchart
- Markers
- Handouts with communication tips
- A timer for time management
- Paper and pens for group reflection





Step 1: Introduction to Effective Communication (10 Min)

Begin by explaining the two main forms of communication: verbal and non-verbal. Highlight how verbal communication uses spoken words to share thoughts and ideas, while non-verbal communication involves body language, gestures, tone, and facial expressions that add emotional context or nuance.

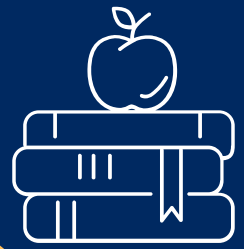
Use relatable examples to illustrate the importance of non-verbal cues. For instance, say the phrase "I'm fine" in different tones or with varying facial expressions to demonstrate how the meaning can change.

Ask participants to think about a time when they felt misunderstood due to a mismatch between their verbal and non-verbal communication. Encourage them to write their responses briefly.

Have participants share their examples with the group. Use this discussion to point out patterns or insights, such as how emotions or cultural differences can influence non-verbal communication.

Emphasize that effective communication requires an alignment between verbal and non-verbal cues. Encourage participants to be mindful of how they convey their messages in future interactions.





Step 2: Active Listening Exercise (15 min)

Briefly explain the concept of active listening, emphasizing that it requires full attention to the speaker without thinking about how to respond or preparing your own reply.

Pair up participants for a listening exercise where one will talk about a topic of their choice (e.g., a hobby, recent experience, etc.) for 2-3 minutes, and the other will listen attentively.

After the speaker finishes, ask the listener to summarize what they heard, focusing on key points, emotions, and the main message. Have the pair switch roles and repeat the exercise.

In a group discussion, explore how participants felt during the exercise and what they learned about the importance of listening.

This task helps build self-awareness and can be eye-opening for many participants, as they may not realize how often they communicate non-verbally. Keep the environment supportive, allowing for exploration of various forms of expression.





Step 3: Non-verbal Communication Awareness (15 min)

Explain that non-verbal communication often carries more weight than words themselves. Discuss how gestures, posture, facial expressions, and tone of voice all contribute to how a message is received.

Conduct a non-verbal exercise, where participants will try to convey a simple emotion (e.g., happiness, confusion, excitement) without speaking, using only body language and facial expressions.

Ask the rest of the group to guess what emotion or message was being conveyed. This will highlight the importance of understanding non-verbal cues.

Encourage participants to pay attention to these cues in their everyday interactions, as they can reveal more than spoken words.

Encourage participants to simplify their language and remove any jargon that could confuse the listener. Focus on delivering key points while avoiding unnecessary elaboration.





Step 4: Creating an action plan (15 min)

Discuss the importance of concise communication, explaining that clarity and brevity are key to ensuring the message is understood correctly.

Provide an example of a complicated message and rewrite it in a simpler form to demonstrate how unnecessary details can obscure the message.

Ask participants to practice explaining a simple topic (e.g., their favorite activity or a recent event) in one clear sentence. The goal is to express the message clearly without adding excessive details.

After each participant presents their message, discuss as a group how clarity and brevity helped improve the communication. Offer feedback on how to refine messages further.

Encourage participants to simplify their language and remove any jargon that could confuse the listener. Focus on delivering key points while avoiding unnecessary elaboration.





Step 5 Reflection and Discussion (10 min)

Ask participants to take a few minutes to reflect on their experiences throughout the session. Have them write down which communication skills they feel most confident in and which ones they would like to improve.

Encourage them to create an action plan for improving their communication skills, setting goals for specific behaviors they want to focus on (e.g., “I will practice active listening in my next conversation” or “I will focus on clearer messaging in my work emails”).

After participants have written their plans, pair them up to share their action plans and provide mutual support and accountability.

Guide the reflection process by asking prompting questions like, "What did you learn today that surprised you?" and "How can you apply these skills in your personal and professional life?"





Follow-Up and At-Home Activities

- Ask participants to keep a communication journal for one week, noting any significant conversations where they applied the skills learned in the workshop.
- Encourage them to reflect on how their communication was received and any challenges they faced.
- In the next session, participants can share their reflections and discuss adjustments to improve further.

Tips for Teachers:

- Make the session interactive by asking open-ended questions and encouraging everyone to participate.
- Some participants may need extra time to reflect on their communication styles. Create a supportive environment.
- Demonstrate active listening and empathy throughout the session to model these skills.
- Share stories or case studies of effective communication to make the concepts relatable.
- Throughout the session, reiterate the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as the role of active listening and empathy.





Tools

Zoom



Facilitates remote meetings and discussions, where participants can practice verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in virtual environments.

[LINK](#)

Otter.ai



A transcription tool that automatically transcribes meetings, interviews, or conversations.

[LINK](#)



References

- Gattig, N. (2024). 18 effective strategies to improve your communication skills. BetterUp.
<https://www.betterup.com/blog/effective-strategies-to-improve-your-communication-skills>
- Emerson, M. S. (2021). 8 ways you can improve your communication skills. Harvard Division of Continuing Education. <https://professional.dce.harvard.edu/blog/8-ways-you-can-improve-your-communication-skills/>





QUIZ

1. What is the primary difference between verbal and non-verbal communication?

- A. Verbal communication involves body language, while non-verbal communication involves spoken words.
- B. Verbal communication uses words, while non-verbal communication uses body language, facial expressions, and tone.
- C. Non-verbal communication is faster than verbal communication.
- D. Verbal communication is always more effective than non-verbal communication.

2. What is active listening?

- A. Waiting for your turn to speak.
- B. Listening while preparing your response.
- C. Fully focusing, understanding, and responding thoughtfully to the speaker.
- D. Hearing the speaker but not reacting.

3. Why is empathy important in communication?

- A. It helps the speaker feel heard and understood.
- B. It allows the listener to control the conversation.
- C. It helps the listener judge the speaker's intentions.
- D. It reduces the need for feedback.





QUIZ

4. Which of the following builds trust in communication?
- A. Speaking quickly to avoid pauses.
 - B. Being consistent and open in your communication.
 - C. Avoiding eye contact.
 - D. Interrupting to ensure the listener understands.
5. What is one way to improve non-verbal communication?
- A. Focus only on what you are saying, not how you are saying it.
 - B. Use excessive gestures to express yourself.
 - C. Maintain eye contact and be aware of your body language.
 - D. Avoid using facial expressions to match your emotions.





Solutions

Question 1: B

Question 2: C

Question 3: A

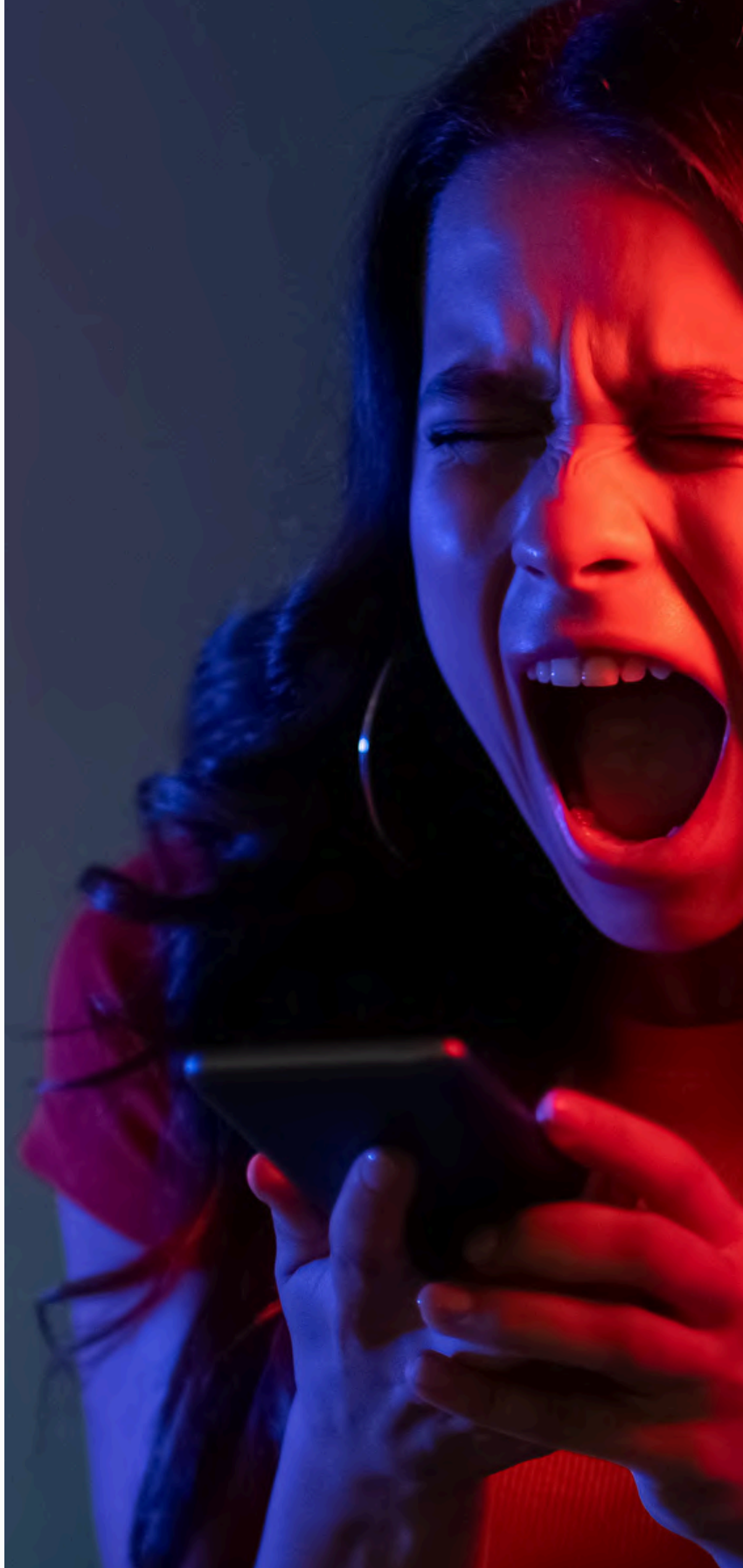
Question 4: B

Question 5: C





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