Dynamic Professional Communication Strategies

Presenters: Dr. Laurel Walsh
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Topics

• Discuss verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to make a positive first impression in the workplace

• Provide e-communications best practices to facilitate clarity and understanding
Dr. Diana Tucker

Dr. Diana Tucker is an Academic Coordinator and Core Faculty in the College of Undergraduate Studies where she teaches undergraduate general education communication courses and helps to coordinate the field experience and student abroad courses for undergraduates.

Her main research area is in sport communication and public relations and currently she is working on a sport communication textbook for Kendall Hunt Publishing.
Face-to-Face Communication

The first impression is everything.
## Things to Consider

### Nonverbal Communication
- Hair
- Makeup
- Attire
- Tidiness
- Eye Contact
- Smile
- Handshake
- Posture
- Gestures
- Show Confidence Nonverbally

### Verbal Communication
- Audience Analysis
  - Being Interpersonal
  - Direct vs. Indirect Communication
- Message Construction
  - Using Confident Language
  - Create a Supportive Climate
MEN: Hair, Makeup, Attire, & Tidiness

*Note that the conventions discussed today are American and could vary in other cultures.*
WOMEN: Hair, Makeup, Attire, & Tidiness

*Note that the conventions discussed today are American and could vary in different cultures.

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Front Stage vs. Back Stage Nonverbals

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The Building Blocks of Verbal Communication

- Audience Analysis (Bricks)
- Message Construction (Mortar)
Audience Analysis

Being Interpersonal
- Asking how their day is going.
- Showing interest in them.
- Listening well, remembering something they told you before.
- Remember, everyone is a unique individual.

Direct vs. Indirect Communication
- Should you “get to the point?” Or allow for small talk?
- Confront problem issues or let it go?
- Use more verbal or nonverbal communication?
- Use written or spoken communication?
Message Construction

• Create a Supportive Climate
  – Always be positive.
  – “I” messages vs. “You” messages
  – Confirming message vs. Disconfirming message

• Use visuals whenever possible.

• KISS
Create Moments that Matter

- Interpersonal not Impersonal
- Practice Proper Self-Disclosure
- Know-it-all vs. Showing Competence
- Be diplomatic
In her current role, Laurel is the General Education Coordinator for the College of Undergraduate Studies. After obtaining an MFA in Writing, Laurel taught developmental composition at the community college level where she sought to instill in struggling students a love of words.

As a professional communication consultant, Laurel had the opportunity to work with adults on workplace communication best practices in numerous settings. She has published articles on e-communication and cyber courtesy issues.
Writing and Work

Written communication in an asynchronous academic setting:
• How can we make the most of each written message?
• What makes a message effective?
• At work, written correspondence must be in tune with audience, purpose, and tone.
• Modeling excellence starts at the sentence level.
• Make each word work for you!
Busy is not the new happy...

Stop the glorification of busy.
Professional Writing has Unwritten Rules

• Communication rules are rarely displayed in a list.
• We work in adult education; learning is an emotional process.
• Writing our thoughts down makes us vulnerable, even when it is just an email.
• Tone is inferred.
• In absence of eye contact, civility erodes quickly.
• Attempt to assume good and constructive intentions on behalf of others.
Spending your word bank wisely...

- Once sent, e-mail leaves an electronic trail.
- Consider an e-mail before you send.
- Spellcheck each e-mail before you send.
- If you are worried about tone, read the e-mail out loud to hear if you pick up negativity.
- Get into good e-mail habits.
Make a MEAL of it!

Email blueprint

• **Main Point** (this should appear in your subject line)

• **Evidence** (tell the person why this must be done)

• **Analysis** (use persuasion to encourage the person to respond)

• **Lead in** (provide exact next steps)
CAPS LOCK IS NOT YOUR FRIEND

• Using all caps looks like yelling.

• Don’t do it.

• Even if you feel like yelling (actually, especially if you feel like yelling).
E-Communication: Paragraph Best Practices

No one is good at this automatically, so practice.

• Use the MEAL plan.
• Use the active voice.
• Omit unnecessary words.
• Put statements in positive form.
• Use definite, specific, concrete language.
• Pause before posting (check tone and purpose).
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A Final Thought

“The choice of what words we may use determines what dreams we are able to express.” -Gloria Steinem