



EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

FEMA

IS-242.b

Effective Communication



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Visual 1.1
Effective Communication (IS-242.b)

Course Administration

- **Sign-in sheet**
- **Course evaluation forms**
- **Site logistics**
 - **Emergency procedures**
 - **Breaks**
 - **Restrooms**
 - **Cell phones and other electronic devices—silent**



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Introductions

Working in pairs, introduce your partner by:

- **Name**
- **Prior emergency food and shelter experience**



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About This Course

Being able to communicate effectively is a necessary and vital part of every emergency management professional's job.

The goal of this course is to improve your communication skills.



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Course Objectives

- **Identify factors that contribute to and detract from effective communication.**
- **Develop a strategy for ensuring that emergency communications meet the needs of the whole community, including those with access and functional needs.**
- **Identify strategies for communicating effectively in emergency situations.**
- **Identify strategies for improving your oral presentation skills.**



Course Content

Lesson 1: Understanding Communication Basics

Lesson 2: Communicating With the Whole Community

Lesson 3: Communicating in an Emergency

Lesson 4: Preparing for Oral Presentations



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Lesson 1 Objectives

- **Indicate the value of empathic listening and effective feedback.**
- **Indicate how speakers' and listeners' nonverbal cues impact communication.**
- **Identify vocal factors that contribute to effective communication.**
- **Indicate how actively engaging the audience contributes to effective communication.**
- **Assess your current communication skills.**



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Video: Effective Communication



Click on the image to view the video.



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Discussion Question

Think about a great speaker or presenter. What made that person so effective?

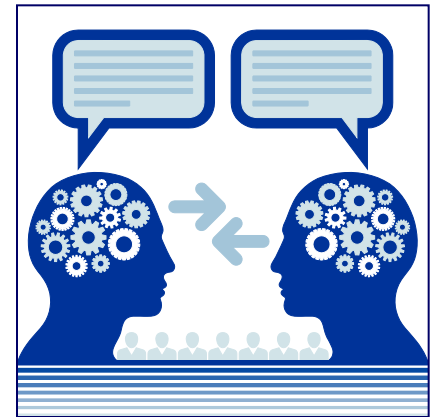


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The Communication Process

Communication is a two-way process where:

- **You send a message using your voice and nonverbal cues.**
- **The other person listens, interpreting and personalizing the message, and gives feedback verbally and nonverbally.**
- **Meanwhile, you are listening to the verbal feedback and attending to the nonverbal cues in order to gauge how your message was received and to understand the other person's response.**



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Communication Basics

- **Listening**
- **Communicating Nonverbally**
- **Using Your Voice**
- **Engaging the Audience**



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Hearing vs. Listening



Hearing is a
sensory experience.



Listening is a
voluntary activity.



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Barriers to Effective Listening

- Emotional responses.
- Hearing facts and not feelings.
- Hearing what is expected and not what is said.
- Not seeking clarification.
- Stereotyping.
- The halo effect.
- Resistance to change.



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Active Listening

- 1 • Decide to listen and concentrate.
- 2 • Enter the speaker's situation.
- 3 • Observe.
- 4 • Listen without interruption.
- 5 • Confirm.
- 6 • Provide feedback.



Activity: Listening Self-Assessment

Instructions: Working individually:

- Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill.
- Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest.



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Understanding Nonverbal Cues

- **Nonverbal clusters are several related nonverbal signals that work in concert.**
- **They are more significant than a single signal and reflects a change in attitude and state of mind.**



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Mixed Messages

When nonverbal cues don't match spoken words, the result is mixed messages.

We're so very happy to get your input.



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Visual 1.17
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Optional Activity #1: Communicating Nonverbally

Instructions: Work in partners as follows:

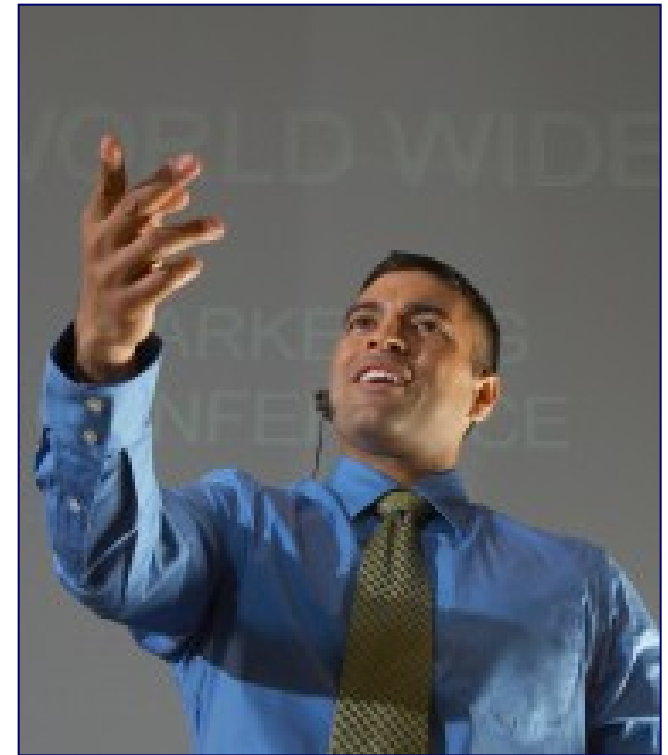
- Choose one partner to do a one-minute self-introduction as described in the Student Manual.
- Have the other partner use a smartphone or video-capable cell phone to record a video of the speaker.
- Play back the tape with the sound off, so only the speaker can see it. The speaker will then evaluate his/her nonverbal language using the questions in the Student Manual.
- Repeat the process for the other partner.
- Be prepared to share any insights you learn.



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Using Your Voice Effectively

- **Use clear, concise language.**
- **Speak loud enough to be heard.**
- **Vary the pace.**
- **Slow down for important points.**
- **Use the pause.**
- **Avoid speaking with a monotone voice.**



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Projecting Your Voice



- **If the room is large, use a microphone.**
- **Use short phrases and slow your pace.**
- **Lower your pitch.**
- **Don't try to talk over noise and side conversations.**
- **Rest your voice and drink water.**



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Avoiding Fillers

At transition points, or when you hear yourself adding a filler:

- **Pause.**
- **Take a breath.**
- **Gather your thoughts.**



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Video: Using Your Voice



Click on the image to view the video.



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Activity: Using Your Voice

Instructions: Entire group:

- The instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual, and ask if you agree or disagree with the action.
- Be prepared to explain your answers.



Optional Activity #2: Using Your Voice

Instructions:

- Use the presentation video you created in Optional Activity #1.
- Listen to your voice without looking at the video screen.
- Evaluate your performance using the questions in the Student Manual.



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Engaging Your Audience

- **Understand your audience.**
- **“Read” your audience and be sensitive to nonverbal cues.**
- **Listen carefully and paraphrase.**
- **Use questions and allow time for response.**



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Asking Questions



Open-Ended Questions:

- Require more than a “yes” or “no” answer.
- Begin with “what,” “how,” “when,” or “why.”



Direct Questions:

- Require a simple “yes” or “no” answer or statement of fact.
- Begin with “is,” “can,” “how many,” or “do.”



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Activity: Open-Ended vs. Direct Questions

Instructions: Entire group:

- Your instructor will read each statement in the Student Manual, and ask if it is an open-ended or a direct question.
- The instructor will then ask for volunteers to reword each question so that it is now the other type of question.



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Handling Responses



- **Acknowledge the response in a positive manner.**
- **Avoid answering your own question.**
- **If a response is unclear, ask clarifying questions.**



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Activity: Analyze Your Basic Communication Skills

Instructions: Working individually:

- Review the job aid on basic communication skills.
- Analyze your own strengths and areas for improvement in each basic skill area.



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Summary and Transition

- **Lesson 1 presented an overview of basic communication skills.**
- **Lesson 2 discusses how to communicate with the whole community.**



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