

BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SKILLS
Management Skills for Success

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR
MANAGERS**



National Food Service Management Institute
The University of Mississippi
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www.nfsmi.org

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INTRODUCTION

The National Food Service Management Institute developed this series of modules on human resource management to meet a need for relevant materials that would provide directors and supervisors the tools to teach managers effective management skills. Learning to work with and lead employees is a never-ending journey. These materials were designed to assist the learner in developing effective people skills in the Child Nutrition Programs. A task force of state agency personnel, food service directors, and university faculty identified the topics to include in this resource.

Building Human Resource Management Skills was designed by a team of experienced child nutrition and adult learning professionals. A group of volunteer reviewers from the task force also made significant contributions to the development of this project. We are most grateful to them for sharing their time and expertise.

All of the human resource modules have been approved for continuing education credits by the American School Food Service Association.

Steps to follow in using materials:

Step 1. Review the entire module and think about its relevance to the participants. There may be resources within the community that you may want to use to enhance the learning experience. A lesson plan template has been provided for your use to facilitate teaching the human resource module content.

Step 2. Check the Trainer's Toolbox section in the modules for a list of materials planned for the session. The modules may require the use of policies and procedures, job descriptions, form, or standards specific to Child Nutrition Program personnel.

Step 3. Review the Suggested Time Frames and Comments to determine time allotted for each topic in the modules.

Step 4. Ensure that the learning environment, media center, classroom, cafeteria, or auditorium is comfortable for adults and conducive to learning and discussions.

Step 5. The purpose of the videotapes provided in the kits is to model practices, inspire discussion, and stimulate thoughts about personal practices. Always review videotape at least once before using in class to be familiar with the content and to determine how to use it with the group. Consider the following options:

Use the tape to focus on a specific point during the session.

Encourage interaction by showing all or part of the tape, and divide the group into comfortable discussion groups of no more than 6-7 per group.

The tapes were created to provide real-life practice situations and to precipitate discussion. There are no right or wrong answers, but better and best ways to handle human relations in Child Nutrition Programs.

HUMAN RESOURCE MODULE LESSON PLAN

Date:	Module No.: 1.1	Estimated Time: 1 Hour	Certification Credits: 1	Category: <u>Y</u> Management Skills for Success
Module Title: Communication Skills for Managers			Course Title: Building Human Resource Management Skills	
Instructor:				
Module Content: What is to be taught? At the completion of the module, participants will be able to meet the following objectives: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____				
Instructional Aids, Materials, or Tools Needed: Check Trainer's Tool Box				
Instructional Procedures: ≡ Personal Check-In ≡ Icebreaker ≡ Video Segment (if applicable) ≡ Group activities and role playing ≡ Checking Out				
Suggested Readings: Use <i>Suggested Readings</i> to increase knowledge base concerning a given module topic.				
Evaluation Procedures: How the instructor will determine if the material has been learned. Participants can complete evaluation form included in handout packet.				
Notes: Insert notes as to revisions, additions, and deletions. What went wrong/right with the module lesson plan?				

Communication Skills for Managers

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Communication Skills for Managers

Trainer's Notes

Think about your skills as a communicator. Be prepared to share your experiences to clarify the key learning points. Model and value effective communication practices. Create a climate for open communication, listen to understand, and speak to be truly heard.

Ground Rules

- Share from your own experiences.
- Listen to understand, not to judge.
- Respect others' opinions and feelings.
- Speak one at a time.
- Be concise and to the point.
- Keep the option to pass.

Overview

Communication involves at least two people: the sender and the receiver of information. Communication implies understanding. The sender presents information which is filtered through attitudes and assumptions and which summarizes her position or ideas. The receiver hears through filters of perspective, experience, values, and attitudes that may be similar or different from the sender's. Clear communication occurs when the message goes from sender to receiver and back to the sender. This flow of understanding is called the communication feedback loop. Communication is a two-way street.

Skilled communicators take time to make good decisions about what information to give and to whom at the best time. They tell the truth, clarify misconceptions, and work to ease feelings. Skilled communicators listen with both their head and heart. They listen to understand, not to judge or to defend. They speak to share information needed by others. They know that the best outcomes are the result of clear, honest, and focused exchanges of ideas and information.

Objectives

At the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Discuss ways to create an open communication climate.
- Recognize effective speaking practices.
- Recognize effective listening practices.



Communication Skills for Managers

Trainer's Toolbox

Materials:

Flip Chart and Stand
Paper and Markers
Overhead Projector
Transparencies and
Markers
Handouts

Definitions

Open communication- clear exchange of information without fear or anxiety where what is heard and said are the same thing.

Feedback loop- the process of communication during which the speaker and listener check to be sure that what was received was correct in content and meaning.

Communication Skills for Managers

Suggested Time Frames and Comments

Total Time = 1 hour

Topic	Comments	Time Allotted
Review Purpose and Objectives	Provide quick understanding of the desired outcomes.	2 minutes
Personal Check-In: Your Communication Inventory	Invite participants to respond individually to the inventory.	5 minutes
Icebreaker: Two by Two	Working in pairs, ask each participant to select one habit not marked “always.” Have them clarify why the presence of these indicates effective communication.	5 minutes
Definitions	Review and discuss.	3 minutes
Creating a Climate for Open Communication	Key learning points: Communication is a significant part of a manager's job. Employees want information that affects them. Trust is the foundation of a climate of open communication.	10 minutes
Listen Effectively	Review Dos and Don'ts.	5 minutes
Reality Practice: Case Study	Let participants complete Reality Practice in small groups. Review the answers as a large group.	5 minutes
Reality Practice: Listening	Let participants complete Reality Practice in small groups. Review the answers as a large group.	5 minutes
Listen Up!	Review tips for effective listening.	2 minutes
Speak Effectively	Review Do s and Don'ts.	5 minutes
Reality Practice: I-Messages	Divide participants into small groups to write I- or we-messages.	5 minutes
Checking Out: A Communications Review	In three groups, respond to questions. Then share answers and key points with large group.	8 minutes

Communication Skills for Managers

Outline	Trainer's Tactics
<p>Create a Climate for Open Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Communication is a significant part of a manager's job. To build the competence and commitment of employees, a manager has to communicate effectively. ❑ A manager's job is to determine who needs what kind of information in what time frame. One way to improve the communication climate at your work site is to ask employees what information they need. How do you determine who needs to know new information? ❑ Most employees want to know about any changes and exactly how those changes will affect them. ❑ Utilize effective communication (listening and speaking) during the employment interview process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Climate for Open Communication • • • • Employees' work goes well when communication is effective. Employees can accomplish more when they have open communication. All day long you are communicating with employees, so if you are not thinking about how important communication is to your success and that of your work group, please consider this point now! • • Each day take time to consider what information you have, who could benefit from receiving it, and how to pass it on most effectively. • • When asked, nearly all employees indicate they would like communications to improve. With further questioning, it often becomes clear that they get A LOT of information but they don't get the information they need or want. • • Giving employees information they don't need reduces their effectiveness. Giving employees information too slowly increases stress and frustration. When employees receive the information she needs in time to use it, she can make good decisions and act responsibly. • • Optimal: Ask participants to draw a line in their workbooks. From left to right, ask them to visually pinpoint their satisfaction with information provided to them (from inadequate/unsatisfactory to adequate/satisfactory). • • Use the handout on page 22. •

Communication Skills for Managers

Outline	Trainer's Tactics
<p>Reality Practice: Case Study</p> <p>Chang Lee is the manager of a new middle school. She was promoted to manager last summer because of her excellent work as a cook and as an assistant manager. Tom, the cashier, told her that he had many complaints about the lasagna served on the menu. Manager Lee immediately spoke to Maylene. She would have to write up a reprimand if Maylene did not follow the recipes in the future. Maylene left work in tears because she made the lasagna the same way she always does.</p> <p>How well did Chang Lee and Maylene communicate?</p> <p>Discuss the Dos and Don'ts of listening effectively.</p> <p>Discuss ways Chang Lee could improve her communication and listening skills.</p>	<p>Reality Practice: Case Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In small groups, discuss the case study. Discuss findings as a group. • Use the handout on page 25.

Communication Skills for Managers

Outline	Trainer's Tactics
<p>Speak Effectively</p> <p>As an effective communicator, remember to always check to see how your message sounds to the listener. Here are some tips for best speaking habits.</p> <p>To speak effectively, Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Speak with confidence. <input type="checkbox"/> Remain calm and courteous. <input type="checkbox"/> Speak with a logical sequence. <input type="checkbox"/> Learn to be comfortable speaking in front of others. <input type="checkbox"/> Rephrase to ensure clarity. <input type="checkbox"/> Be generous with praise. <input type="checkbox"/> Be friendly and cordial. <input type="checkbox"/> Call people by name. <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrase questions you are asked to make meanings clear. <input type="checkbox"/> Vary your tone, pace, and volume to keep others interested. <p>To speak effectively, Don't:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take things personally. <input type="checkbox"/> Lose your poise. <input type="checkbox"/> Swear. <input type="checkbox"/> Take and defend a position without flexibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Become angry. <input type="checkbox"/> Threaten. 	<p>Speak Effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review these tips for effective speaking. Ask participants for examples of how one would act to do these. • Example: speaking with confidence means having good posture, feet firmly on the floor, direct eye contact, clear knowledge of the subject, thinking before speaking, etc. • Example: speaking with a logical sequence means being clear in making your points. • Consider role playing these Dos and Don'ts in small groups. Encourage participants to use Child Nutrition Program examples like employee meetings, providing feedback to school principal, or meeting with a parent or other customer. • Use the handouts on pages 29 and 30.

Communication Skills for Managers
Handouts: Table of Contents

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Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Objectives and Definitions

Objectives

At the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

- ❑ Discuss ways to create an open communication climate.
- ❑ Recognize effective speaking practices.
- ❑ Recognize effective listening practices.

Definitions

Open communication- clear exchange of information without fear or anxiety where what is heard and said are the same thing.

Feedback loop- the process of communication during which the speaker and listener check to be sure that what was received was correct in content and meaning.

Communication Skills for Managers
Handout: Personal Check-In: Your Communication Inventory

Personal Check-In: Your Communication Inventory

This inventory offers a quick assessment of your current communication skills and habits.

Do You...	Seldom (1)	Usually (3)	Always (5)
Ask your employees what kinds of information they want and need?			
Encourage sharing of information among employees?			
Know who needs what information when?			
Hold regular meetings to keep communication open?			
Give the speaker your full attention?			
Wait until the speaker has completed his thought before you add yours?			
Refrain from having the last word?			
Attempt to remember the speaker's key points?			
Outline your key thoughts in your mind before you speak?			
Pause to answer a tough question rather than jumping right in to respond?			
Watch others' non-verbal actions to note misunderstanding or disinterest so you can clarify your point?			
Speak clearly and concisely?			

Subtotal _____

Total Score: _____

Note: Add each subtotal together to determine the total score. Sixty points is a perfect score. You are an effective communicator. Fewer than 45 points indicates you have room for improvement.

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Icebreaker: Two by Two

Icebreaker: Two by Two

List the communication skills you did not mark as “always.” With a partner, discuss one of the communication habits you listed. Share an example from your Child Nutrition Program experience as a manager where using the communication skills discussed would have improved the situation.

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Create a Climate for Open Communication

Create a Climate for Open Communication

- ❑ Communication is a significant part of a manager's job. To build the competence and commitment of employees, a manager has to communicate effectively.

- ❑ A manager's job is to determine who needs what kind of information in what time frame. One way to improve the communication climate at your work site is to ask employees what information they need. How do you determine who needs to know new information?

- ❑ Most employees want to know about any changes and exactly how those changes will affect them.

- ❑ Utilize effective communication (listening and speaking) during the employment interview process.

- ❑ A manager's job is to build trust in relationships with employees. How do you build trust in relationships with your employees?

Remember:

- ❑ Communication is a significant part of a manager's job.
- ❑ Employees want information that affects them.
- ❑ Trust is the foundation of a climate of open communication.

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Listen Effectively

Listen Effectively

To listen well, **Do** :

- ❑ *Hear* Listen to really hear the message and the emotion behind it. Hear the content and the feelings. Take these in without thought about anything other than hearing what is said.
- ❑ *Understand* Grasp the meaning of what is being conveyed. Don't think about agreeing or disagreeing, just work to be so clear about the content that you can repeat it to the speaker's satisfaction.
- ❑ *Reflect* Repeat what you have heard so that the speaker knows you are truly listening. Use phrases such as "What I hear you saying..." or "As I understand it..." or "It sounds like..." to begin your restatement of the core ideas or emotions. Reflecting indicates you are trying to understand and helps the speaker identify his key points.
- ❑ *Respond* Based on what you have heard and understood, respond in a way which continues understanding of the situation, ideas, or feelings and furthers the conversation.

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Listen Effectively

Listen Effectively

To listen well, **Don't**:

- ❑ *Advise* Most of the time people will ask for advice if they want it. Usually individuals appreciate someone just listening and truly hearing what they have to say. Wait to be asked for your advice. You will be surprised how much more others will value your insights if you wait.
- ❑ *Probe* Asking questions while someone is explaining his point of view interrupts his flow and indicates that you are in a hurry to get him to the point. Clarifying questions are appropriate once a speaker is ready to receive them. Probing questions are those which make the speaker feel that you are picking into details or forming a judgment about what he is saying. Often these are questions parents use with children.
- ❑ *Interpret* Telling people why they did something demeans them. When you choose to interpret someone's behavior, you put yourself above them. If you tell someone "You were just mad because you thought he was treating you like your father did," you are interpreting their behavior.
- ❑ *Judge* Evaluating is not listening effectively. Your main job as a listener is to understand the other's point of view. Telling him he is right or wrong is not furthering open communication.

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Reality Practice: Case Study

Reality Practice: Case Study

Chang Lee is the manager of a new middle school. She was promoted to manager last summer because of her excellent work as a cook and as an assistant manager. Tom, the cashier, told her that he had many complaints about the lasagna served on the menu. Manager Lee immediately spoke to Maylene. She would have to write up a reprimand if Maylene did not follow the recipes in the future. Maylene left work in tears because she made the lasagna the same way she always does.

How well did Chang Lee and Maylene communicate?

Discuss the Dos and Don'ts of listening effectively.

Discuss ways Chang Lee could improve her communication and listening skills.

Communication Skills for Managers
Handout: Reality Practice: Listening

Reality Practice: Listening

Identify the following responses from one employee to another as either advise, probe, interpret, or judge. Then rewrite each statement to follow the Dos of effective listening.

Statement	Type of Response
<input type="checkbox"/> “You’re right. You should be able to leave as soon as your work is finished and not have to stay until the clock says you can go.”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “It seems to me that you do not have the discipline to stay on task.”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “If I were in your shoes, I would tell her exactly how I feel.”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “I understand why you feel that way, but you are too defensive and are missing the point.”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “Why did you decide to do that? You didn’t think it through!”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “I think you are way too upset about this issue.”	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> “You are right. We should keep our processes the way they are.”	_____

Communication Skills for Managers
Handout: Reality Practice: Listening KEY

Reality Practice: Listening KEY

Identify the following responses from one colleague to another as either advise, probe, interpret, or judge.

Statement:	Type of Response
<input type="checkbox"/> “You’re right. You should be able to leave as soon as your work is finished and not have to stay until the clock says you can go.”	(Judge)
<input type="checkbox"/> “It seems to me that you do not have the discipline to stay on task.”	(Interpret)
<input type="checkbox"/> “If I were in your shoes, I would tell her exactly how I feel.”	(Advise)
<input type="checkbox"/> “I understand why you feel that way, but you are too defensive and are missing the point.”	(Interpret)
<input type="checkbox"/> “Why did you decide to do that? You didn’t think it through!”	(Probe/Interpret)
<input type="checkbox"/> “I think you are way too upset about this issue.”	(Advise)
<input type="checkbox"/> “You are right. We should keep our processes the way they are.”	(Judge)

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Listen Up!

Listen Up!

Here are some suggestions to help you improve your listening skills.

Suggestion	Examples
Stop talking!	<i>You cannot listen when you are talking.</i>
Be attentive.	<i>Show that you want to listen; refrain from going through papers or doodling. Look at the speaker.</i>
Put the speaker at ease.	<i>Be inviting so the speaker feels comfortable.</i>
Listen to understand.	<i>Put yourself in the speaker's place and see things from his point of view.</i>
Be patient.	<i>Do not interrupt; take time.</i>
Contain your anger.	<i>Anger colors one's words so meanings are misunderstood.</i>
Refrain from arguing.	<i>Arguments make others defensive or withdrawn. Even if you win your point, you lose.</i>
Stop talking!	<i>How can you listen and talk at the same time?</i>

Communication Skills for Managers
Handout: Speak Effectively: Dos

Speak Effectively: Dos

List examples of how one can use the following suggestions to be an effective manager.

Suggestion	Examples
Speak with confidence.	
Remain calm and courteous.	
Speak with a logical sequence.	
Learn to be comfortable speaking in front of others.	
Rephrase to ensure clarity.	
Be generous with praise.	
Be friendly and cordial.	
Call people by name.	
Paraphrase questions you are asked to make meanings clear.	
Vary your tone, pace, and volume to keep others interested.	

Communication Skills for Managers
Handout: Speak Effectively: Don'ts

Speak Effectively: Don'ts

List examples of how one can use the following suggestions to be an effective manager.

Suggestion	Examples
Don't take things personally.	
Don't lose your poise.	
Don't swear.	
Don't take and defend a position without flexibility.	
Don't become angry.	
Don't threaten.	

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: I-Messages

I-Messages

I-messages are one way to deal with conflict and problem situations. They are a non-judgmental means of conveying one's feelings about another's behavior. Here are some benefits of I-messages:

- ❑ Models openness and honesty.
- ❑ Owns the problem.
- ❑ Presents no blame.
- ❑ Shows a willingness to change.
- ❑ Identifies own feelings and needs.
- ❑ Deals with conflicts without causing a blow-up.

To construct an I-message, identify your feelings as specifically as you can. Name your feelings and describe the behavior in a blameless way. Then provide a concrete tangible effect of the behavior.

Feeling
+ Blameless Description of Behavior
+ Concrete Effect
I-Message

Sometimes as a manager you represent the Child Nutrition Program, not just yourself. Then you may want to use we-messages. A we-message is one that describes the employee's behavior from the organization's perspective, not that of the manager.

For a manager, this type of clear speaking can have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the organization.

<p style="text-align: center;">Communication Skills for Managers Handout: Checking Out: A Communications Review</p>

Checking Out: A Communications Review

Take a few minutes to consider the following questions. Each of three groups will take one topic and prepare together to offer suggestions for the workplace.

Open Communications:

- How can you find out what kind of information your employees want to have?

- What are some ways to encourage everyone in your organization to keep others up-to-date and to share information?

- Who are the key people who contribute to your success and how could you keep them informed?

Listening:

- What is the difference between listening to hear and to understand and listening to judge or to defend?

- Why does interrupting others, finishing their sentences, or asking lots of questions reduce the effectiveness of your learning?

- What do you do to show your interest in what others have to say?

Speaking:

- What is the speaker's responsibility in the communication feedback loop?

- Why is it important to take time to think before responding?

- When you are speaking, how could you use positive non-verbal actions to indicate your commitment to a conversation?

Communication Skills for Managers

Handout: Evaluation Form

Please check the response below that best describes your feelings about this program:

Question	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Comments
1. Topic is of interest to me as a manager.				
2. Topic is important to my job.				
3. Content is useful in my job as a manager.				
4. Handouts help me understand the topic better.				

5. List one or more things you can do to enhance communication with your employees after attending this in-service:

6. My supervisor can help me develop communication skills in my workplace by:

General Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the evaluation form. Have a great day!

Communication Skills for Managers

Suggested Readings

Suggested Readings

- Belker, L.B. (1997). The first time manager (4th ed.). New York: American Management Association.
- Block, P. (1987). The empowered manager. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Booher, D. (1994). Communicate with confidence: How to say it right the first time. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Burley-Allen, M. (1995). Listening: The forgotten skill (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Covey, S. R. (1989). The seven habits of highly effective people. New York: Simon and Schuster.
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- DePree, M. (1989). Leadership is an art. New York: Doubleday.
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- Harvard book review on effective communication (9th ed.). (1999). Boston: Harvard Business School.
- Hiam, A. (1999). Motivating and rewarding employees. Holbrook, MA: Adams Media Corporation.
- Kouzes, J. & Posner, B. (1993). Credibility: How leaders gain and lose it. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- McCallister, L. (1992). I wish I'd said that. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Miller, J. B. & Brown, P. B. (1993). The corporate coach. New York: St. Martin's Press.

<p style="text-align: center;">Communication Skills for Managers Transparency Masters</p>

Transparency Masters

Transparencies are available in two formats. Landscape formatted transparencies are provided using Microsoft Word™. A PowerPoint™ presentation format is also available.

1. Objectives
2. Definitions
3. Personal Check In: Your Communication Inventory
4. Create a Climate for Open Communications
5. Create a Climate for Open Communications
6. Listen Effectively
7. Listen Effectively
8. Reality Practice: Case Study
9. Reality Practice: Listening
10. Listen Up!
11. Speak Effectively
12. Speak Effectively
13. Speak Effectively
14. Benefits of I-Messages
15. I-Messages
16. Reality Practice: I-Messages
17. Checking Out: A Communications Review
18. Checking Out: A Communications Review
19. Checking Out: A Communications Review