

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

He who talks nonstop talks nonsense.

- Ivory Coast Proverb

Overview:

Communication has its root in the Latin word for "common." Like the words community and communion, it implies a state of sharing. Communication can be defined as the exchange of information—knowledge, thoughts, opinions, or feelings—through speech, signs, or actions, between a source and a receiver. Communication is a constant fact of life. We are in an almost continuous state of "communication" with those around us.

...I was waiting on a crowded platform when someone pushed me from behind. I turned to see three teenage girls, giggling, ebullient, and so eager to get on the train...that they were shoving. "Stop pushing--we'll all get on," I said. After a few murmured remarks along the lines of "Get lost, lady," they stopped. So did the conversation around me. Eyes swiveled away. I felt a collective intake of breath. Disapproval hung in the air, but mainly I sensed fear.

- Lucie Prinz

The Atlantic Monthly, October 1996

The foregoing passage describes two distinct modes of communication—verbal and non-verbal—or "content" and "process." The writer feels a shove and, by observing the behavior of those who shoved her, is able to deduce their state of mind and intentions. She speaks—conveys a verbal message—and is met with responses—feedback—from both the girls who shoved her and the people observing. She interprets the girls' response by their verbal remarks and the tone of their voice, and the fellow passengers' response by their nonverbal expressions and actions.

All sentient beings rely on some form of communication for their survival. Human beings have evolved a very complex ability to express exact meanings, feelings, and intentions through language, but they continue to rely on non-language ways of communicating as well. How we convey information verbally and non-verbally is governed by personal emotions, family upbringing, and social/cultural expectations, and may vary according to the situation, but in all societies, deeply ingrained communication codes govern social interaction. Some cultures dictate everything from the forms of speech used to the focus of the eyes according to gender, age, or other criteria. Some cultures forbid communication on specified topics, or communication at all, between certain members of society.

It has been said that "feelings are facts." Our cultural values and emotional frame of mind have an impact on our perceptions and the way we interpret information. It has been said that there are no wrong perceptions, only different perceptions. A communication for social change program relies heavily on an understanding of both universal and local codes of communication.

At every level, our ability to communicate effectively depends on our being able to "read" community perceptions, and ensure that the receiver experiences our message the way we intended it, and then learning from the feedback we receive.

Module III: Principles of Communication: Building Knowledge and Skill

In this module, we will break down into its components the communication process and give participants a chance to use and experience communication in its various forms. The knowledge and skills imparted through these exercises form the basis for effective community assessment and, later, work with the community.

Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Explain the way information is transmitted and interpreted.
- Define communication.
- Describe the characteristics of good interpersonal communication.
- Describe basic interpersonal communication concepts.
- Identify and demonstrate at least three forms of verbal and nonverbal behavior used when communicating.
- Demonstrate appropriate use of three different types of questions.
- Listen and respond in a nonjudgmental fashion.

Activities

What Goes Around Comes Around: Rumors Game	40 minutes
Visual perception: Eye-Sight Game	20 minutes
Introduction to Communication	10 minutes
Characteristics of Interpersonal Communication	40 minutes
Feedback: A Communication Exercise	20 minutes
Feelings Charade: Nonverbal Communication Exercise	20 minutes
Voice Your Feelings: Verbal/Nonverbal Communication Exercise	10 minutes
"Translating" into Simple Language	20-30 minutes
Types of Questions	30 minutes
Listening Pairs	30 minutes
Putting Interpersonal Skills to Work in the Person	30-45 minutes
Estimated module length	4.5-5 hours

Materials

Newsprint and markers

Handouts

HO III.1	Characteristics of Effective Communication
HO III.2	Skills of Interpersonal Communication
HO III.3	Types of Questions
HO III.4	Listening Techniques
HO III.5	The Behaviors of Interpersonal Communication
HO III.6	Key Points, Module III

Training Aids

TA III.1	Sample story for the Rumors Game
TA III.2	Eye-Sight

**Module III: Principles of Communication:
Building Knowledge and Skill**

TA III.3 Examples of Interpersonal Communication
TA III.4 Types of Questions and Their Purposes

Activity

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND: RUMORS GAME

Purpose:	Participants will be able to explain the way information is transmitted and interpreted and conditions that are most likely to dispel concerns.
Format:	Game and Discussion
Suggested Time:	40 minutes
Materials:	Newsprint and markers Strips of paper and pencils TA III.1, Sample story for the Rumors Game
Preparation:	Cut strips of paper for every fourth person in the workshop (sheets of typing paper divided into 3 pieces).

Procedure:

- Ask participants to give some examples of rumors or myths related to FGM gathered from their community assessment or through other personal experience. Write these on newsprint. Examples include:

- ☐ Uncircumcised girls become prostitutes.
- ☐ Women who are uncircumcised have difficulty in childbearing.
- ☐ When a girl bleeds to death during circumcision, it is because her mother was unfaithful.

- Ask participants to identify where they have heard these rumors. Then ask the group to explain what a rumor is.
- Explain that you would like the group to participate in a game called the "telephone" game. This game will illustrate points about rumors. [The objective of this game is to let people experience/participate in the development of a rumor.]
- Ask the group to form a circle. Give every third or fourth person a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain the rules as follows:
 - The trainer will start at a point in the circle and will whisper a statement (at right) in one person's ear.
 - The statement will not be repeated.
 - The listener will pass the statement on in a whisper to the person to his right, and so on, until the story has circulated around the room.
 - Each person who has a piece of paper and pencil should write down what he/she hears after having passed it on verbally.
- Whisper the story found in TA III.1 in the ear of the person to your left.
- When the story has gone around, ask the last person to repeat what he or she heard. Ask each note-taker (starting from the last) to repeat what they wrote. Read the story that you told to the first person.

➤ Discuss what happened.

Questions for discussion:

1. How did the story change?
2. Why did it change?
3. When you heard the story, what did you do before passing it on?
4. Is there a connection with what happened here and how rumors get started?
5. What could have been done to prevent the distortion?
6. Do participants want to add anything to their definition of rumors?
7. What are some ways to avoid or counteract rumors? (Think about the message as well as the context and source. Identify rumor sources in the community and discuss issues with them directly or enlist their involvement in a constructive way.)

Key points:

- A rumor is an unsubstantiated, usually unattributed statement about a topic or a person, place, or thing. It may be based on experience or perception, and is not necessarily false. It may be a distorted or exaggerated fact.
- When a rumor or experience becomes "institutionalized" and generalized it becomes a truism or myth; it may be generalized and embellished or accepted at face value because it serves to explain a practice or support a value or belief system.
- As many people as possible need to hear the correct message directly from a knowledgeable, reliable source (who IS the expert?). When people do not see, hear, or experience something for themselves, they may rely on their imaginations, values, and experience to compensate for their lack of direct knowledge.
- Sometimes people become sources of misinformation because they have been excluded from the planning process. When carrying out social change programs, it is helpful to know the unofficial "information brokers" and gossips in the community, and get to know how and why they operate so that you can help prevent misunderstandings.
- "Feelings are facts," meaning that if people perceive something to be true, it is, for them, a fact. Whether we believe a person's perceptions to be accurate, they exist and must be dealt with respectfully. When countering myths and rumors, it is important to understand how people perceive and feel about the issue.
- The message must be honest and the messenger frank. These qualities ensure credibility and create a higher level of confidence in the receiver.
- The more complicated the message, the greater the chance for distortion.

SAMPLE STORY
for the RUMORS game

[Use one of the following sample rumors, changing proper/place names to fit your location, or create one of your own based on a common belief about uncircumcised women.]

Example 1:

Sampson's daughter, who was not circumcised at the usual age, angered her father so much that he sent her away. She traveled to Mombasa to stay with an auntie. When she got there, she had no means of living, but finally found a job as a waitress in a bar. Her father is worried to death that she will become pregnant and disgrace him.

Example 2:

Mohamud Hassan is a 45 year old ex-policeman. His daughter, Maryan, is in secondary school. She is 16 years old. A male relative of Mohamud came to tell him that his daughter has been seeing a young man in town, in inappropriate places, and she's also moving with bad girls who have sex with men, and if he does not discipline his daughter, she might disgrace the family.

Activity
VISUAL PERCEPTION: EYE-SIGHT GAME

Purpose: Participants will have understood the effect of culture, context, and experience on the perception of visual images.

Format: Game
Suggested Time: 20 minutes
Materials: TA III.2 "Eye-Sight" (two options)
Preparation: Review instructions and TA III.2

Procedure:

- Present any one of the illustrations in TA III.2 and ask participants what they see. Elicit responses from everyone. Call attention to the variety of responses offered by the participants.
- Ask a few participants who see different images to illustrate them to the group.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why do people interpret the image differently?
2. Are there right or wrong interpretations?
3. If we wanted to elicit the same interpretation from everyone, how could the visual be altered to illustrate each image more clearly?
4. What defines a "good" visual?

Key Points:

- Perception is influenced by our cultural filters and mental maps: people see things from different perspectives, according to their different backgrounds and experiences.
- Context can also influence our perception of an image. For example, the fact that we are viewing an image in this workshop may have an impact on how we interpret that image.
- Never assume that others will see what you intend them to see. Ask people what they see to avoid misunderstandings.

EYE-SIGHT

Activity
INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Purpose: Participants will be able to define communication and identify different forms.

Format: Mini-lecture and discussion

Suggested Time: 10 minutes

Materials: HO III.1, "Characteristics of Effective Communication"

Preparation: None

Procedure:

- Ask participants to brainstorm modes of communication. Include verbal/non-verbal; person-to-person; print; radio; pictorial; music.
- Ask the group to define the term communication. Work the group's responses into the following definition and print this on newsprint:

Communication is a two-way process of transmitting information from a source to a receiver and ensuring that it is understood.

- Review with participants HO III.1, "Characteristics of Effective Communication."

Key Point:

- Communication can occur person-to-person or through a medium. The principles and elements of communication apply in either case.
- Communication goes two ways; people need to be able to ask questions and get feedback.
- Messages should be consistent, simple enough for the audience and channel, and should be presented in terms that people can understand.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The message must be:

Clear and concise.
Accurate
Relevant
Timely
Meaningful
Applicable to the Situation

The sender must:

Know the subject well
Be interested in the subject
Know the recipients of the message and establish rapport with them
Speak at the level of the receiver
Chose an appropriate communication channel.

The channel must be:

Appropriate
Accessible
Affordable
Appealing

The receiver must:

Be aware, interested, and willing to accept the message
Listen attentively
Understand the value of the message
Provide feedback

Activity

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Purpose: Participants will be able to describe basic interpersonal communication concepts and describe the characteristics of good communication.

Format: Mini-lecture and discussion

Suggested Time: 40 minutes

Materials: Newsprint and markers
TA III.3, "Examples of Interpersonal Communication"
HO III.2, "Skills of Interpersonal Communication"

Preparation: None

Procedure:

- Ask participants how they would define interpersonal communication. Brainstorm the definition, then write on newsprint:

"Interpersonal communication is the verbal and nonverbal exchange of information or feelings between individuals or in groups."

- Share Handout HO III.2, Skills of Interpersonal Communication. Explain that the activities in this module will help participants develop the characteristics they have cited.
- Write the words "PERSONAL INTERACTION" on newsprint.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are some different ways in which people communicate with each other?
2. With whom do participants communicate in their daily lives or on a regular basis?
3. Brainstorm personal interactions that might have an impact on the eradication of FGM.
4. What are the settings in which these exchanges are likely to occur and the purpose of the exchanges?
5. What are some of the characteristics of an effective communicator?
6. What knowledge and skills are needed for effective interpersonal communication in community-based FGM work?

Key Points:

- Interpersonal communication is the most common and the most fundamental form of communication. It is something that we all use whenever we are in the presence of another person.
- Interpersonal communication involves "content"--what is being said--and "process"--what is happening in the exchange that gives meaning and context to the words used.
- The many skills of interpersonal communication can be used effectively in community change programs.

EXAMPLES OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Examples of the way people communicate:

- Touch
- Body movement
- Voice
- Words
- Facial expression
- Eye contact

Examples of personal interaction:

- Husband-wife
- Mother-daughter (or daughter-in-law)
- Peer to peer (sisters, brothers, friends, co-workers)
- Outreach workers-villagers
- Teachers-students
- Teachers-parents
- Employee-employer
- Youth counselors-teenagers
- Health care provider-client
- Project worker-community leader
- Community leader-any of these groups

Examples of settings in which exchanges are likely to occur:

- Mothers may speak to their daughters about circumcision when they are very young.
- Friends/sisters/brothers may discuss information they have heard about girls who are not circumcised.
- Outreach workers may encourage girls who are having health complications from circumcision to visit a clinic.
- Teachers may carry out family life education programs with students.
- Clinicians may educate/counsel women on the possible adverse effects of FGM.
- Mothers may discuss circumcising their daughters with husbands.

Module III: Principles of Communication:
Building Knowledge and Skill

- Researchers do needs assessment with community groups for program design, training, or materials development
- Project team members interact with community members.

SKILLS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION
"CLEAR ROLES"

An effective verbal communicator:

Clarifies
Listens
Encourages empathically
Acknowledges
Restates/repeats

An effective non-verbal communicator:

Relaxes
Opens up
Leans toward the other person
Establishes eye contact
Shows appropriate facial expressions

**Knowledge and skills needed for effective interpersonal communication in
community-based FGM efforts:**

An understanding of one's own values and willingness to withhold
judgment about others' values
Skill in verbal and nonverbal communication
Ability to show empathy and encourage
Skill in asking questioning and listening
Ability to paraphrase and summarize the concerns of individuals and the
community
Ability to observe and interpret behavior
Ability to use language the community understands

Activity
FEEDBACK: A COMMUNICATION EXERCISE

Purpose: Participants will be able to appreciate the importance of "two-way" verbal and non-verbal communication.

Format: Exercise
Suggested Time: 20 minutes
Materials: None
Preparation: None

Procedure:

- Explain that the next few exercises will develop and reinforce the concepts and skills that are used in interpersonal communication.
- Ask participants to form pairs. Give them these instructions:
 - Person A should talk for 5 minutes about some problem or concern she has.
 - Person B should try to communicate interest, understanding, and help in any way she wishes except that he/she may not speak.
 - At the end of 5 minutes, have pairs switch roles and repeat the exercise.
 - At the end of the second 5 minutes, the pairs should talk freely for 2 to 3 minutes.
- Discuss the exercise with the group.

Questions for discussion:

1. How did it feel to talk for 5 uninterrupted minutes? (Shy? Free? Nervous about no response?)
2. How did it feel to be prevented from talking? (Frustrating, wanted to interrupt?)
3. Did you feel your partner understood you? How did you know? (Expression, body movement, eye contact?)
4. Did anyone feel helped? (Yes, by nods and smiles? No, wanted verbal acknowledgement?)
5. Why is silence so difficult to tolerate? (It makes us uncomfortable because we need feedback; we rely on words to convey meaning.)
6. What specific body behaviors communicate understanding? Support?
Examples: Holding, "Mmmm" (positive non-verbal sounds), eye contact, leaning forward.

Key Point:

- Interpersonal communication should always involve an exchange of verbal and non-verbal information. If verbal communication is one-way only, the sender will only be able to guess how the message is being received.

**Module III: Principles of Communication:
Building Knowledge and Skill**

Activity

FEELINGS CHARADE: A NONVERBAL EXERCISE

- Purpose:** Participants will be able to explain the importance of nonverbal expression as a mode of communication
- Key Point:**
- Sometimes people feel uncomfortable expressing their emotions in words, or they may be unable to do so. It is important to recognize nonverbal clues to people's feelings.
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- Format:** Role-play
- Suggested Time:** 20 minutes
- Material:** None
- Preparation:** None
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Procedure:

- Ask for 5 or 6 volunteers to participate in this exercise. Give these instructions:
 - Each person will act out a different emotion before the group, one at a time.
 - Some examples include anger, joy, impatience, sadness, lust.
 - They may use facial expression and body language but no words or vocal expressions.
 - The other participants must try to guess the emotion or feeling.
- Following completion of the exercise, discuss the exercise.

Questions for discussion:

1. Was it difficult trying to convey a feeling without words?
2. Was it difficult to interpret emotions without a verbal explanation?
3. What are ways people demonstrate negative emotions or feelings during interactions with each other? (Some examples include: glare/frown, no eye contact, look at watch, act distracted, permit interruptions.)
4. What are some behaviors that people can adopt in their interactions to put one another at ease? (Some examples include: use respectful language, introduce yourself, use open, non-threatening body language, speak in the person's language, be patient, wait for responses, don't interrupt, make eye contact, say "Mmmm," "Yes," ask questions, restate and summarize responses.)

Key Point:

- Interpersonal communication should always involve an exchange of verbal and non-verbal information. If verbal communication is one-way only, the sender will only be able to guess how the message is being received.

Activity
**VOICE YOUR FEELINGS: A VERBAL/NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION
EXERCISE**

Purpose: Participants will be able to identify non-verbal behavior and its role in interpersonal communication.

Format: Group exercise
Suggested Time: 10 minutes
Materials: None
Preparation: None

Procedure:

- Explain, using an emotional tone of voice, that people communicate different emotions using tone of voice.
- Ask several volunteers to repeat the same sentence, e.g., "What do you want?" using one of the following emotions: Anger, boredom, happiness, frustration, disgust, fear, sarcasm, disinterest, or interest. Let the others guess which emotion is being displayed and discuss how the feeling is shown.
- Process the exercise with a brief discussion.

Questions for discussion:

1. What effect does a change in tone of voice have on the verbal message? (It can change the meaning of the message, or the impact on the receiver; it can send a second message.)
2. What happens when nonverbal behavior, such as tone of voice, does not match the verbal message? (Examples: Confusion, uncertainty, mistrust.)
3. Give other examples of contradictory verbal/nonverbal messages. (Examples: Saying "yes" while frowning.)

Key Points:

- Voice tone can provide a subtext to the words being spoken. This may be intentional or unintentional. We naturally tune in to voice tone. When working in the community, we must pay careful attention to our own and others' voice tone to monitor the emotional impact of our messages.
- Tone of voice is part of the "process" in communication. It is one way we communicate our feelings without stating them. In some cultures, unstated feelings may be "taboo" for direct comment.

Activity
"TRANSLATING" INTO SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Purpose: Participants will be able to gear their written or spoken messages to the educational level of the individuals and groups they are addressing.

Format: Group task

Suggested Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Papers and pen or pencils
Newsprint and markers

Preparation: Write on newsprint the expression, "The fimbria of the fallopian tubes capture the ovum for transfer into the uterus."
Review FGM resource materials for other examples.

Procedure:

- Explain that it is common for professionals in any field to use terminology that the public-at-large does not understand. Read the following aloud:

"The fimbria of the fallopian tubes capture the ovum for transfer into the uterus."

- If they express confusion, show them the written version on newsprint.

Questions for discussion:

1. Do people know what it means?
2. How might we react if someone told us this?
3. Can participants paraphrase it in simple terms?

Possible "translation": "The egg passes into finger-like ends of the fallopian tubes that carry it to the womb."

- Point out that there are words in the example that they may have difficulty understanding. Discuss other examples you may have from any discipline, or any questions the participants have. Give the following FGM example and ask participants to write down how they would paraphrase it:

"Infibulation involves the amputation of the entire clitoris, the labia minora, and incisions on the inner walls of the labia majora to create a raw surface."

- Ask the group to share what they have written down.

Possible "translation": "In infibulation the circumciser cuts and scrapes away the outer sex organs, including the folds of skin that surround the opening of the birth canal."

➤ Discuss and critique responses.

Question for discussion:

1. Why is it important to formulate questions and explanations clearly in language appropriate to respondents' level of understanding?

Key Points:

- Complex language may not be appropriate when communicating with the intended recipients of our messages. The language used in questions or information should meet the needs of the individual or community to avoid misunderstanding and establish trustworthiness and approachability.
- Ensuring that information and explanations are easily understood helps avoid rumors and misconceptions that often result when people are trying to make sense of confusing information.

Activity
TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Purpose: Participants will be able to demonstrate appropriate use of three different types of questions.

Format: Mini-lecture and exercise

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

Material: TA III.4, "Types of Questions and Their Purposes"
HO III.3, "Types of Questions"

Preparation: Review HO III.3

Procedure:

- Ask for two volunteers to stand at the front of the room and ask each other two or three questions about the workshop. Write their questions down on newsprint.
- Ask all participants to name the type of questions they heard. Help people categorize the responses according to the categories on the right..
- Give out HO III.3. Review the list and ask them to explain in what circumstances, the different types of question are appropriate and the advantage of each.
- Ask participants to provide their own examples of each kind of question and correct or clarify where necessary.

Key Points:

- Closed-ended, open-ended, and clarifying, or "probing" questions are used to elicit different sorts of information.
- In addition to paying attention to the language, tone of voice, and expression used, it is important to frame all questions in unthreatening, open ways that encourage a frank response.
- Leading questions are usually not appropriate because they act as "door closers" and discourage a respondent from saying what he or she really feels.

Types of Questions and Their Purposes

- Closed-ended:** To obtain specific/quantifiable information: narrows the response. Example: "Are you from this community?" or "At what age are girls circumcised in this community?"
- Open-ended:** To learn about feelings, beliefs, knowledge. Opens up the range of responses. Example: "What have you heard about FGM in this community?" "How do girls prepare for circumcision?"
- Probing:** Follow-up in response to statement. Helps to clarify information already received. Example: "(You said that FGM changes a girl's behavior.) What about FGM makes a girl behave differently?"
NOTE: Tone of voice is important in asking probing questions in a unthreatening, nonjudgmental way.
- Leading:** Expects or encourages a particular response and usually reflects the asker's bias. In general, AVOID using leading questions. Although they can be used to provoke discussion (for example, setting up a "devil's advocate" situation), they often inhibit the free flow of ideas or put the respondent on the defensive. Example: "Is FGM old-fashioned?"

HO III.3

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Type of Question	When to use	Example:	Other examples
Closed-Ended Question	When seeking specific, quantifiable information that has only one answer, for example in a survey	How many girls do you have? Are you married?	
Open-Ended Question	When seeking information about thoughts, perceptions, feelings, or experience	What have you heard about FGM? What happened when you were circumcised? What are the concerns of young people today?	
Clarifying (Probing) Question	When following up a response, as when clarifying the meaning of a comment. NOTE: Out of context or if worded or expressed inappropriately, probing questions sound leading.	Why do you think FGM is necessary for a girls' purity? What do you mean by the word "purity"? Why are girls circumcised in August?	
Leading Question	Leading questions direct a respondent to answer a certain way or anticipates a certain answer. AVOID using leading questions.	Haven't you heard that FGM causes VVF? Mothers shouldn't circumcise their daughters, should they? Aren't uncircumcised girls promiscuous?	

Activity
LISTENING PAIRS

Purpose:	Participants will be able to demonstrate skill in nonjudgmental listening and responding.
Format:	Game
Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Newsprint and marker HO III.4, "Listening Techniques"
Preparation:	Prepare topic list ahead of time if desired. Write the topics on newsprint.

Procedure:

- Explain that when asking questions, it is important to listen to the answers. Often we hear, but we aren't really listening. For example, studies done on doctor-patient interaction show that providers often interrupt the patient many times during the exchange, cutting off an exchange of information that would help the doctor in assisting with decision-making. The ability to listen and focus attention on what the speaker is trying to convey is vital for effective communication. The following exercise will sharpen listening skills. Explain the rules for this exercise as follows:
- Participants must form pairs with another participant, preferably someone with whom they know they disagree on some issue.
 - Explain that they can choose a topic from the list or make up their own topic for discussion.

Possible Topics:

The role of women in the society.

The role of government in the eradication of FGM.

Boys' perceptions of FGM.

- One person in the pair begins a conversation with a statement of opinion related to the topic they have chosen. The second must summarize what the other has said in a nonjudgmental fashion, to the satisfaction of the first speaker, before giving his or her own viewpoint.
 - The listener should feel free to ask for clarification or repetition.
- Show the group how to do the exercise with a volunteer from the group:

Example:

Person A: I think hot pepper is bad because it is harmful to the digestive tract.

Person B: You said that you think hot pepper is harmful to the digestive tract. I find that it helps cleanse the system.

Person A: You find that pepper helps cleanse the system. In my experience, it just causes diarrhea.

etc....

Module III: Principles of Communication:
Building Knowledge and Skill

- Give each group 2-4 minutes for discussion. Process by asking the participants to share how they felt during this exercise.

Questions for discussion:

1. Describe what happened.
 2. Was it difficult to follow the rules?
 3. What are some skills we need to exercise in order to be good "active" listeners?
- Refer participants to HO III.4, Listening Techniques. Review techniques with them.

Key Points:

- Accurate reflection and acknowledgment of feelings show respect and encourage trust and responsiveness.
- Listening is a skill and requires constant practice. Summarizing the main points is good discipline to practice as listeners, as it helps one to hear and understand accurately. Often one is able to identify issues or emotions of which the speaker may be unaware, particularly when a feeling is communicated non-verbally. These issues and emotions may be probed to provide insight into why individuals feel or behave the way they do.

ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES
(from Training for Transformation)

Types of Response	Purpose	Possible Responses
1. <i>Clarifying</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To get at additional facts.2. To help the person explore all sides of a problem	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "Can you clarify this?"2. "Do you mean...?"3. "Is this the problem as you see it now?"
2. <i>Restatement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To check our meaning and interpretation with the other.2. To show you are listening and that you understand what the other has said.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "As I understand it, your plan is..."2. "Is this what you have decided to do...? and the reasons are...?"
3. <i>Neutral</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To convey that you are interested and listening.2. To encourage the person to continue talking.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "I see."2. "I understand."3. "That is an interesting point."
4. <i>Reflective</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To show that you understand how the other feels about what he or she is saying.2. To help the person to evaluate and temper his or her own feelings as expressed by someone else.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "You feel that..."2. "It was shocking as you saw it."3. "You felt you didn't get a fair hearing."

ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES
(from Training for Transformation)

Types of Response	Purpose	Possible Responses
1. <i>Clarifying</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To get at additional facts.2. To help the person explore all sides of a problem	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "Can you clarify this?"2. "Do you mean...?"3. "Is this the problem as you see it now?"
2. <i>Restatement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To check our meaning and interpretation with the other.2. To show you are listening and that you understand what the other has said.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "As I understand it, your plan is..."2. "Is this what you have decided to do...? and the reasons are..."
3. <i>Neutral</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To convey that you are interested and listening.2. To encourage the person to continue talking.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "I see."2. "I understand."3. "That is a good point."
4. <i>Reflective</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To show that you understand how the other feels about what he or she is saying.2. To help the person to evaluate and temper his or her own feelings as expressed by someone else.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "You feel that..."2. "It was shocking as you saw it."3. "You felt you didn't get a fair hearing."
5. <i>Summarizing</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To bring the discussion into focus in terms of a summary.2. To serve as a spring board to discussion of new aspects of the problem.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. "These are the key ideas you have expressed..."2. "If I understand how you feel about the situation,...."

5. *Summarizing*

1. To bring the discussion into focus in terms of a summary.
2. To serve as a spring board to discussion of new aspects of the problem.

1. "These are the key ideas you have expressed..."
2. "If I understand how you feel about the situation,...."

Activity

PUTTING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TO WORK IN THE PERSON

Purpose: Participants will be able to synthesize the components of good interpersonal communication into a code of behavior for interacting with other people

Format: Discussion

Suggested Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials: HO III.5, "The Behaviors of Interpersonal Communication"

Preparation: None

Procedure:

- Ask participants to discuss which of the characteristics, behaviors, or skills they have explored in this module strikes them as the most important one. Write their responses on the board.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why does any particular behavior or skill seem important?
 2. Were any of these surprises?
 3. Are there others that weren't covered that should be mentioned?
 4. If we combine these skills with our thinking about values, could we come up with a code of interaction that we would like to characterize our project and its members?
- Ask a volunteer to transcribe the "code" that the group comes up with. If they have difficulty, refer to HO III.5, "The Behaviors of Interpersonal Communication," and ask whether there are elements of this handout that should be incorporated. Ask participants to check their own interactions periodically against the code.

Key Points:

- Almost all our behaviors are learned through repetition and reward over time. Even if certain ways of communicating and interacting do not "come naturally," effective skills can be acquired.
- Reflection on one's own actions and emotions is helpful in improving interpersonal skills.

The Behaviors of Interpersonal Communication
(adapted from Donald J. Bogue,
A Training Manual for Interpersonal Communication)

These ways of treating and thinking about others form the basis for good interpersonal communication.

1. Get to know others as persons. Remember their names and basic facts about them. Know their likes and dislikes, their interests and hobbies. Use this information in interaction with them.
2. Like other people. Will Rogers, an American philosopher, once said, "I never met a man I didn't like." Having a sincere feeling of liking, warmth, and friendliness toward those with whom one interacts provides a foundation for frictionless and effective communication.
3. Empathize. Empathy is the ability to put one's self in the position of other persons and see problems from their point of view. It is trying to understand what leads people to speak, act, and feel as they do.
4. Be egalitarian. This means being unconscious of status or ignoring differences in status when interacting with others. Treat those with lower status as equals, and be dignified and self-confident when communicating with superiors. Egalitarianism requires the respect of every person as a person.
5. Be altruistic. Show genuine concern for the well-being and comfort of others, and a desire to be of help or service to them.
6. Maintain a positive, cheerful outlook. Control negative emotions and do not express them to others, but present a pleasant, cheerful outlook on life. This means one should not force others to share all of one's problems and disappointments, and one should not spend too long brooding over them.
7. Listen attentively. Pay attention to what others have to say, and store it away in memory. While others are talking, do not spend all of the time thinking about what to say next. Instead, concentrate on what is being said and what it implies.
8. Respect the beliefs and customs of others. Do not challenge or ridicule, or show disrespect for religious, ethical, or even factual beliefs of others unless it is absolutely necessary to do so in order to accomplish one's work--and then do so in ways that are least offensive. When the customs of others differ from one's own, do not emphasize the differences, but show tolerance and respect for their right to do things as they prefer.

Module III: Principles of Communication:
Building Knowledge and Skill

9. Criticize as little as possible. There are flaws and small defects in the speech, work, and behavior of everyone. Sometimes these defects are important and must be corrected if progress is to be made. But often the defects are minor, and make no difference. Some people insist on pointing them out, possibly to demonstrate their own superiority. Do not use criticism as a weapon, but only as a constructive force to get necessary things accomplished.
10. Accept criticism and suggestions gratefully when valid and graciously even when you feel they are not. When criticized, try to review the evidence impartially to determine whether the criticisms are justified. If one is in the wrong, admit it, thank the person for pointing out an error, and apologize if any damage has been done. Even when criticism does not seem justified, it is best to bear in mind that perceptions vary and what seems all right to you may not to someone else. In the long run, it will gain, rather than cost, status points.
11. Be honest. Try to tell the truth at all times, and never be deceitful. In all dealings involving material things such as money, be scrupulously honest. Once a person has been caught being deceitful or dishonest, others will be reluctant to interact with that person except in a guarded way.
12. Have patience. When interacting with others, it is necessary to appreciate that it may take time for them to understand what one is trying to communicate, or to agree even when they do understand. Give them the time they need, and repeat the message patiently until they understand.
13. Think logically. When talking with people, have the conversation follow a connected path, with what each person says following as a logical sequence to what has been said before. One should learn to keep his or her mind "in gear" when talking, even informally.
14. Build rapport. Rapport is a feeling of mutual confidence, trust, and esteem that develops between people as they interact. By applying the above principles, a person can help generate rapport in every personal communication.
15. Follow the rules of good conversation.
 - a) Speak audibly and distinctly, so that all can hear.
 - b) Take turns in talking. Do not make long speeches.
 - c) Follow closely what is being said and respond to it.
 - d) Do not interrupt or shout over others while they are talking.
 - e) Use words that the listener understands. Use short sentences. State ideas clearly.
 - f) Be sensitive to the facial expressions and gestures (process) of other persons, as well as to what they are saying (content).