

ACTIVITIES

1.1 COMMUNICATION SKILLS INVENTORY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Assess the needs (physical, identity, social, and practical) that communicators are attempting to satisfy in a given situation or relationship.
- Diagnose the effectiveness of various communication channels in a specific situation.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Below you will find several communication-related situations. As you read each item, imagine yourself in that situation.
 2. For each instance, answer the following question: *How satisfied am I with the way I would communicate in this situation and ones like it?* You can express your answers by placing one of the following numbers in the space by each item:

 - 5 = Completely satisfied with my probable action
 - 4 = Generally, though not totally, satisfied with my probable action
 - 3 = About equally satisfied and dissatisfied with my probable action
 - 2 = Generally, though not totally, dissatisfied with my probable action
 - 1 = Totally dissatisfied with my probable action
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- _____ 1. A new acquaintance has just shared some personal experiences with you that make you think you'd like to develop a closer relationship. You have experienced the same things and are now deciding whether to reveal these personal experiences.
 - _____ 2. You've become involved in a political discussion with someone whose views are the complete opposite of yours. The other person asks, "Can't you at least understand why I feel as I do?"
 - _____ 3. You are considered a responsible adult by virtually everyone except one relative who still wants to help you make all your decisions. You value your relationship with this person, but you want to be seen as more independent.
 - _____ 4. In a mood of self-improvement a friend asks you to describe the one or two ways you think he or she could behave better. You're willing to do so, but need to express yourself in a clear and helpful way.
 - _____ 5. A close companion tells you that you've been behaving "differently" lately and asks if you know what he or she means.

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- _____ 6. You've grown to appreciate a new friend a great deal lately, and you want to express your feelings to this friend.
 - _____ 7. An amateur writer you know has just shown you his or her latest batch of poems and asked your opinion of them. You don't think they are very good. It's time for your reply.
 - _____ 8. You've found certain behaviors of an important person in your life have become more and more bothersome to you. It's getting harder to keep your feelings to yourself.
 - _____ 9. You're invited to a party at which everyone except the host will be a stranger to you. Upon hearing about this, a friend says, "Gee, if I were going I'd feel like an outsider. They probably won't have much to do with you." How do you feel?
 - _____ 10. A friend comes to you feeling very upset about a recent incident and asks for advice. You suspect that there is more to the problem than just this one incident. You really want to help the friend.
 - _____ 11. You find yourself defending the behavior of a friend against the criticisms of a third person. The critic accuses you of seeing only what you want to see and ignoring the rest.
 - _____ 12. A boss or instructor asks you to explain a recent assignment to a companion who has been absent. You are cautioned to explain the work clearly so there will be no misunderstandings.
 - _____ 13. You ask an acquaintance for help with a problem. She says yes, but the way the message is expressed leaves you thinking she'd rather not. You do need the help, but only if it's sincerely offered.
 - _____ 14. A roommate always seems to be too busy to do the dishes when it's his or her turn, and you've wound up doing them most of the time. You resent the unequal sharing of responsibility and want to do something about it.
 - _____ 15. A new acquaintance has become quite interested in getting to know you better, but you feel no interest yourself. You've heard that this person is extremely sensitive and insecure.

By totaling your score for all of the items you can get an idea of how satisfied you are with your overall ability to communicate in interpersonal situations. A score of 68–75 suggests high satisfaction, 58–67 indicates moderate satisfaction, while 45–57 shows that you feel dissatisfied with your communication behavior nearly half the time.

Another valuable way to use this activity is to make a second inventory at the end of the course. Have you improved? Are there still areas you will need to work on?