



LESSON 3

Communication and Conflict Resolution

Approximate
time required:

🕒 60 min

LEARNING GOALS

We are learning:

- To develop effective communication skills and understand their importance in personal and professional relationships.
- To apply strategies for resolving conflict in a constructive and respectful manner.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Co-develop success criteria with students using the following questions: “How will we know we are achieving our learning goals? What will it look like/ sound like?”

For example:

- I can effectively use “I statements” when solving problems or resolving conflicts.
- I can use non-verbal communication skills to express my ideas clearly and actively listen to others.

BIG IDEAS

- Effective communication skills can help build positive relationships, resolve conflicts and achieve success in various settings.
- Resolving conflicts can be done in a constructive and respectful manner.

CONSIDERATIONS

- While conflict resolution highlighted in this lesson will be work-related, be mindful of potential student conflicts in the class that might affect their participation.
 - It is recommended that teams/partners be heterogeneous teacher-selected groupings.
- Ensure that **racialized students and students marginalized by society** continue to have an amplified voice where theirs were historically excluded.

MATERIALS/HANDOUTS

[Student Notebook](#)

- 3.1 – Communication and Conflict Resolution
- 3.2 – Wrap Up

[PowerPoint Slides](#)

- Communication and Conflict Resolution

ADDITIONAL TEACHER REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Articles about teaching communication skills may be helpful background. For example:

- [Teaching Communication Skills: A framework for exploring with students what good communication looks like and for helping them develop the necessary skills.](#)
- [Communication Skills: Prepare students for academic and life success by helping them develop their listening, speaking, writing, and digital media skills.](#)
- Barriers to listening CAMH article may also be helpful knowledge for you ([From “Let’s Talk” to “Let’s Listen”](#))
- Being mindful of tone is an essential skill. Here’s an interesting article that speaks to tone, audiences and cultural differences: [Tone policing is a little-known microaggression that’s common in the workplace - here’s how to identify it](#)

INTRODUCTION



Slide 1 : Introduction

Slide 2 : We are learning...

- » To develop effective communication skills and understand their importance in personal and professional relationships.
- » To apply strategies for resolving conflict in a constructive and respectful manner.



MINDS ON

 5 min

Invite four volunteers to read the following statement aloud. When relevant, the volunteer will put an emphasis on the word that is underscored.

Slide 3: “I never said I was bored.”

Slide 4: I never said I was bored (I didn’t, but someone else did),

Slide 5: I never said I was bored (I never, ever did),

Slide 6: I never said I was bored (I didn’t say it, but I thought it).

Slide 7: Debrief the activity highlighting that communication is an essential part of life, but one that can lead to misunderstanding. Even just the slight inflection in tone can change our meaning. Today we’ll learn about and practice these skills.

Introduce today’s **Big Idea: Effective communication and conflict resolution skills can be learned and can help you to be successful in various contexts (e.g., workplaces).**

ACTION TASK (Consider self, others, careers)

 30 min

Setting the stage

Slide 8: Communication

Teacher prompt: “The importance of effective communication skills in our lives cannot be overstated. They are essential for building strong relationships with family, with friends, at school, and in workplaces. When we learn to communicate effectively, we are more successful in these contexts.

Our thoughts, emotions and actions can impact our ability to communicate effectively.

Communication is much more involved than we may think. It involves many factors- our vision, our hearing, our tone of voice, our body language, our emotions and thoughts.”

Non-verbal communication

Slide 9: Communication does not always happen verbally

Teacher prompt: “Remember the activity at the beginning of the lesson (“I never said I was bored”) where we realized that tone of voice plays a huge part in communication. The same is true of body language.”



Slide 10 : Non-verbal communication (con't).

Body language isn't universal and digital tone is just as important. Ask students to give some non-verbal communication examples that can provide them with additional communication cues.

Answers may include,

- » facial expressions (smiling, frowning, daydreaming),
- » body language (crossed arms, turned away from you, leaning in) and
- » tone of voice (remember the first activity).

Teacher prompt : “Non-verbal communication cues are not universal. Consider cultural differences (e.g., eye contact is not considered respectful in every culture) and the situation (crossed arms could mean that the person is simply cold) in your interpretations.

Stay curious and check your assumptions!

Finally, tone is also significant in digital communication

Think about text messages.

There's a big difference between

- » “Yeah”
- » “Yeah!” or
- » “YEAH”

The importance of paying attention to your digital tone is also true for texts and emails in the workplace!”

Active listening

Slide 11 : Teacher prompt: “Communication is not a one-way activity. In order for us to effectively communicate with others, we also need to be active listeners.”

Slide 12 : Five aspects of active listening and a few barriers

Teacher prompt: “There are five aspects of active listening:

1. pay attention to the speaker
2. take turns speaking
3. restate what you heard
4. listen without interrupting
5. use actions to show understanding (such as non-verbal communication)



Try to avoid barriers to listening, like:

Comparing – You can't let much in because you're too busy seeing if you measure up.

Mind Reading – You are trying to figure out what the other person is thinking and feeling, instead of listening.

Taking time to really listen to what someone is saying can help us demonstrate a genuine interest in understanding their perspective, foster connections and promote effective communication."

Using "I statements"

Slide 13 : Teacher prompt: "In order to communicate effectively, it is important that we frame what we need to say by using "I", thus explaining our feelings and/or point of view, rather than "you" which can be perceived as blaming the other person."

Slide 14 : Interactive scenario that demonstrates the I statement concept.

Answer : B

Teacher prompt: "When we use "you" statements, people get defensive, which makes having a productive conversation difficult. Instead, if we explain our feelings using "I statements" a more open conversation is possible."

Slide 15 : Work-related scenario

Ask students to create an I statement using the following prompt. You can ask for a few examples from 2 or 3 volunteers

Sample statement in response to the scenario:

I feel _____ humiliated_____, when_____ you yell at me in front of others _____ because _____ I don't believe that it was anybody else's business _____. Next time _____ I would prefer that you take me aside to let me know of any concerns you might have about my work.

Conflict resolution: Using communication to solve problems

Slide 16 : Teacher prompt: "When we get into disagreements with others, it is common to feel heightened emotions, and have unhelpful thoughts influence our responses.

We might react aggressively, solely focused on our own wants and needs, without considering the perspectives of the other person.

Or, we might be tempted to avoid the issue altogether. We might let the other person have their way, or avoid confrontation, or pretend everything's okay when it's not."



Slides 17-20 :

Scenario with possible reactions and outcome – interactive activity where students volunteer their responses (or add in the chat if in a virtual setting).

Slide 21 : Conflict resolution steps

- » Ask students to go through the steps and deciding what they would do/say.
- » Debrief after the activity.

CONSOLIDATION 15 min

Slide 22 : Review slide of possible communication strategies to use if your employer gives you feedback.

Slide 23 : Small group or class discussion: Using what you learned today, decide how you would respond if your employer said to you: “I’ve noticed that you’re on your phone a lot during work. I’m concerned that this might be a safety issue and might make our business look bad.”

- » Direct students to their **Notebook** for [Handout 3.1 – Communication and Conflict Resolution](#) to use as a quick reference to the topics discussed in the lesson.

Wrap Up 10 min**Slide 24 : Notebook**

Teacher prompt: “Consider the communication skills you have developed so far, both in and outside of school when answering the following questions:

- » What is working well and what needs further work with your communication skills?
- » How will you apply the communication skills you learned today in different scenarios?”

Slide 25 : Wrap Up

Effective communication and conflict resolution skills can be learned and can help you to be successful in various contexts (e.g., workplaces).

