

COMMUNICATION ISSUES & ADULT LEARNING NEEDS

Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explore the needs and characteristics of the adult learner and factors that influence the effectiveness of safety messages in creating awareness and behavior change. Focus is on strategies and methods (best practices) related to communication and learning styles that must be considered in the design, development, and delivery of safety messages and training. Emphasis is placed on how to analyze situations and identify basic techniques that can support a receptive environment for sending and receiving messages, as well as increasing the likelihood of outcome achievement.

Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Assess advantages and disadvantages of several methods of communication.
- Given a scenario, identify when an adult learning need is being met.
- Complete a learning style assessment to identify learning styles and improve their ability to reach employees with safety messages and training.
- Identify strategies and methods (best practices) for effective safety communication and training.

Objectives (continued)

- Identify actions to take to address barriers and special communication and learning needs/challenges.
- Identify 2 actions related to communication issues and adult learning needs to implement at their workplace, as well as potential barriers to these actions and how to overcome these barriers.

Time

90 minutes: 9:10 to 10:40 AM

Agenda (Instructional Strategy and Content Outline)

The following topics and activities are covered in this module. An estimate of the time needed to cover each section of the module appears in parentheses.

1. Module Introduction (2 minutes)
2. Basic Methods of Communication (10 minutes)
 - A. Introduction to Communication Methods (6 minutes)
 - B. Large Group Discussion: Which method is used most at your facility? How do you know it is effective? (4 minutes)
3. Adult Learning Needs and Principles (18 minutes)
 - A. 4 Basic Learning Needs and Principles (6 minutes)
 - B. Pairs Activity: Applying Adult Learning Needs to Communication and Training (12 minutes)
4. Learning Styles (15 minutes)
 - A. Individual Activity: Learning Style Assessment (12 minutes)
 - B. 3 Learning Styles (3 minutes)
5. Strategies and Methods (Best Practices) for Effective Safety Communication and Training (16 minutes)
 - A. How People Remember – Cone of Learning (4 minutes)
 - B. Basic Elements of Good Communication (3 minutes)
 - C. Elements of Effective Safety Training (2 minutes)
 - D. Large Group Discussion: Rating Effectiveness of Communication Methods (7 minutes)

Agenda (continued)

6. Addressing Communication and Learning Challenges/Barriers (22 minutes)
 - A. Communication and Learning Challenges and Barriers (4 minutes)
 - B. Small Group Activity: Addressing Communication and Learning Challenges in the Safety Setting (18 minutes)
7. Individual Activity: Planning for Your Small Business (6 minutes)
8. Summary and Transition to Module 2 (1 minute)

Materials and Equipment

- Participant Guide and Facilitator Guide
- Flipchart, markers, and tape
- Laptop or personal computer (PC) and LCD projector with wireless remote or projector
- 15 PowerPoint slides

Suggestions for Time Management

- Start promptly on time.
- Watch the clock closely in managing activities and discussions during this module. This module is designed to be highly interactive.

Cues**PPT 1-1****2-Minute
Presentation****PPT 1-2 & 1-3****Presentations and Activities****1. Module Introduction (2 minutes)**

- Start this module at the scheduled time.
- Show PPT 1-1.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 1 of this module.
- Conduct a 2-minute general introduction to this module.
- Show PPT 1-2 and 1-3.
- Briefly review the purpose and objectives of this module. Make the following comments:
 - The purpose of this module is to explore the needs and characteristics of the adult learner and factors that influence the effectiveness of safety messages in creating awareness and behavior change.
 - Focus is on strategies and methods (best practices) related to communication and learning styles that must be considered in the design, development, and delivery of safety messages and training.
 - Emphasis is placed on how to analyze situations and identify basic techniques that can support a receptive environment for sending and receiving messages, as well as increasing the likelihood of outcome achievement.
 - We will also have time to identify actions related to communication and adult learning needs you can implement at your workplace, as well as potential barriers to these actions and how to overcome these barriers.
- Remind participants to ask questions if they need clarification.

**6-Minute Large
Group Discussion****PPT 1-4****4-Minute Large
Group Discussion****Question****2. Basic Methods of Communication (10 minutes)**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 3.
- Introduce methods of communication with a 6-minute lecture.
- Show PPT 1-4.
- Make the following points about communication methods:
 - There are many ways to communicate and several types of communication including verbal, nonverbal, written, and visual images.
 - It is important to give consideration to the medium you choose to communicate your message. We need to be able to communicate so that people can know and understand our message.
- Highlight examples, advantages, and disadvantages for each of the 4 methods:
 - Verbal: Giving job instructions.
 - Nonverbal: What do you see when you drive into the parking lot at your worksite? In your lobby?
 - Written: Posting of monthly statistics by department vs. goal.
 - Visual Images: Posters, banners, signs, etc.
- Point out that nonverbal communication accounts for up to 80% of all communication.
- Start a 4-minute large group discussion by asking: *Which method is used most at your facility? How do you know it is effective?*
- Get responses from 2-3 participants. Try to get participants to comment on advantages, and disadvantages for each method.

**6-Minute
Presentation****PPT 1-5****12-Minute Pairs
Activity****PPT 1-6****3. Adult Learning Needs and Principles (18 minutes)**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 4.
- Introduce adult learning needs and principles with a 6-minute presentation.
- Show PPT 1-5.
- Tell participants that 4 basic adult learning needs and principles common to most adult learners, in addition to basic communication theory and principles, must be addressed to implement effective safety messages and training.
- Highlight key points about each of the 4 needs and principles.
 - Adults **need to know why** they are learning a particular topic or skill because they need to **apply learning** to immediate, real-life challenges.
 - Adults have **experience** that they apply to all new learning.
 - Adults need to be **in control** of their learning.
 - Adults want to learn things that will make them more **effective and successful**.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 5.
- Introduce a 12-minute pairs activity.
- Show PPT 1-6.
- Review the directions for the activity.
- Ask pairs to complete the activity in about 8 minutes.
- Walk around the room during the activity to answer questions.

Debrief

- Debrief the activity by asking pairs for their responses. Ask why participants responded as they did. Since participants are interpreting adult learning and communication principles, their answers will vary.
- Use a disagreement over a point as an opportunity to reinforce that adult learners often have a very good sense of what they need. Remind participants that if training decision-makers have a disagreement, asking members of the target audience what they need may provide valuable insight.

PPT 1-7**12-Minute Individual Activity****Remind participants to total their scores****Debrief****Record participant responses on a flipchart****4. Learning Styles (15 minutes)**

- Show PPT 1-7.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 8.
- Conduct a 12-minute individual activity in which participants conduct a learning style assessment.
- Review the directions for the activity.
- Give participants 5 minutes to complete the assessment.
- Remind participants to total their scores.
- Debrief the activity in the remaining 7 minutes.
 - Make a chart on the flipchart. The chart should have 2 rows labeled preferred and secondary. The chart should have 3 columns labeled auditory, visual, and kinesthetic.
 - Survey participants and ask how many scored highest in auditory. Tally the number and record it on the chart you made.
 - Repeat the step above with the visual and kinesthetic columns. Tally the numbers and record them on the chart you made.
- Make the following points:
 - Although kinesthetic learners retain best, they make up only 5% of the population. Visual learners make up 65% of the population and auditory learners make up 30% of the population (Mind Tools, 1998). **NOTE:** Adapted from <http://library.educationworld.net/a1/a1-7.html>.
 - Most people “send” in the style that they would like to “receive.”
 - The best way to reach a variety of learners is to use a variety of teaching techniques. You may have a tendency to develop training in your preferred learning style. To improve the success of your safety efforts/training, use several methods to deliver important information.

**3-Minute
Presentation****PPT 1-8**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 9.
- Reinforce points about learning styles with a 3-minute presentation.
- Show PPT 1-8.
- Point out that most people have a preferred learning style as you present an overview of learning styles.
- Briefly highlight key points about the 3 learning styles:
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Kinesthetic
- Remind participants of the following:
 - If you have difficulty understanding someone (or they have difficulty understanding you), it is possible that you exchange complex information differently.
 - The other person may primarily be a visual learner, but you are always explaining (using an auditory method) rather than showing (visual method) or demonstrating (kinesthetic method).
 - The best approach to use to ensure that your communication is effective is to try a combination of methods. For example, explain, show, and demonstrate while explaining.

**9-Minute
Presentation****PPT 1-9****5. Strategies and Methods (Best Practices) for Effective Safety Communication and Training (16 minutes)**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 10.
- Conduct a 9-minute presentation on strategies and methods for effective communication and training, starting with how people remember.
- Show PPT 1-9.
- Make the following points using the “learning cone” based on the work of Edgar Dale and Robert Felder.
 - People tend to remember more when they are actively involved in the learning process as opposed to simply receiving information visually or verbally.
 - Research shows that passive involvement tends to lead to a limited retention of knowledge, as indicated in the “Cone of Learning” pictured below.
 - Research shows that after 2 weeks, we tend to remember:
 - 10% of what we read
 - 20% of what we hear
 - 30% of what we see
 - 50% of what we see and hear
 - 70% of what we say
 - 90% of what we both say and do
 - For students in a typical classroom, most of the time is spent passively learning – listening to the facilitator, looking at a PowerPoint, reading out of a manual. Research shows that this passive involvement leads to limited retention of the material(s) covered.
 - Research also shows that by re-organizing the way material is presented, facilitators can create an environment where retention is increased. Active learning involves students directly and actively in the learning process.

PPT 1-10

- Ask participants to turn to Page 11.
- Show PPT 1-10.
- Make the following points about basic elements of good communication:
 - To achieve effective communication, the sender and receiver of the message must actively participate in the process.
 - Whether you are the sender or receiver in communication, remember that a good communicator pays attention to what is said AND how it is said.
- Highlight key points about being a good communicator and listener.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 12.

PPT 1-11

- Show PPT 1-11.
- Highlight key points about elements of effective safety training, referred to as best practices:
 - Sound planning for safety training
 - Design a high quality learning experience

7-Minute Individual Activity

- Facilitate a 7-minute individual activity and large group discussion on rating the effectiveness of communication methods.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 13.

PPT 1-12**Assign a communication need to individuals in various “parts” of the room**

- Show PPT 1-12.
- Review the directions for the activity and discussion.
- Assign a safety communication need/method to individuals in various “parts” of the room for a quicker debrief.
- Give participants 2 minutes to assess the need and method, as well as determine their recommended method of communication.

Debrief

Remind participants that more than one communication method should be used to appeal to a wider range of learner needs and characteristics

- Facilitate a brief discussion of each safety communication need and method by asking 2 participants to share their recommended method(s). For each recommendation, ask the class to rate the effectiveness of the method and reasons for their ratings.
- Remind participants that some communication methods are more effective than others. Tell them that given the situation, more than one communication method should be used to appeal to a wider range of learner needs and characteristics.

**4-Minute
Presentation****PPT 1-13****18-Minute Small
Group Activity****6. Addressing Communication and Learning
Challenges/Barriers (22 minutes)**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 14.
- Conduct a 4-minute presentation on learning disabilities, other communication and learning challenges and barriers, and how to manage these challenges/barriers.
- Show PPT 1-13.
- Make the following points:
 - People see, hear, and interpret information in many different ways.
 - Often, an intended message is not the received message – resulting in ineffective communication.
 - Safety communicators are likely to face situations in which someone in their audience has a learning disability or special learning need. In other cases, a barrier may be present.
 - Recognizing and managing these issues will help ensure successful communication.
- Define a learning disability.
- Highlight key points about the effects of learning disabilities.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 15.
- Highlight key points about other communication and learning challenges and barriers.
- Emphasize key points about understanding and managing communication and learning challenges.
- Ask participants to turn to Page 16.
- Facilitate an 18-minute small group activity on communication and learning challenges in the safety setting.

PPT 1-14

- Show PPT 1-14.
- Review the directions for the activity.
- Ask the class to form small groups of about 4 participants
- Give the small groups about 8-9 minutes to complete the activity. Move around the room to answer questions during the activity.

Debrief

- Ask each group to share ideas about language as a challenge. Then, ask groups to share ideas about other challenges/needs and strategies they identified.
- As groups share their ideas, encourage other groups to ask questions about the issues and strategies or add other strategies and/or ideas for resolving situations. Offer other strategies/suggestions, as time permits.

**6-Minute
Individual
Activity****PPT 1-15****Question****7. Individual Activity: Planning for Your Small Business
(6 minutes)**

- Ask participants to turn to Page 17.
- Facilitate a 6-minute individual activity.
- Remind participants that it is time for them to determine how they will use what they have learned in this module on their jobs.
- Show PPT 1-15.
- Ask participants: *How can you use what you learned in this module about safety communication issues and adult learning needs at your organization?*
- Review the directions for the activity and possible actions.
- Allow time for participants to work individually on identifying actions, potential barriers, and how to overcome barriers.
- As time permits, ask participants to share some of their actions.

**1-Minute
Summary and
Transition****BREAK****8. Summary and Transition to Module 2 (1 minute)**

- Highlight a few of the key points from this module as you summarize this section. Use the objectives as a guide to emphasize important points.
- Tell participants that you will now begin the last module that focuses on organizing their safety messages and training programs. In that module, safety and health information and resources available to participants are also presented.
- There is a 10-minute break after this module.

