

Student name: _____ Date: _____

MODULE 23
Define the elements of communicating
with co-workers, emphasizing appropriate
group behavior on the job.

Objectives:

- A. Define the term "communication."**
- B. List and define the 3 categories of human behavior research.**
- C. Describe "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" and give personal examples of its application.**
- D. Provide examples of communication on the job.**

MODULE 23: INFORMATION SHEET

***TO THE STUDENT:** Read and study this information sheet and then complete the student activities at the end of the module.*

What is Communication?

The definition of the word communication is "the exchange of messages between and among humans." Communication is achieved both verbally and non-verbally in our personal life as well as in our professional life. Problems from communication mishaps are caused by a lack of understanding of human behavior. Research of human behavior falls into three categories:

1. psychology -- the study of individual behavior
2. sociology -- the study of group behavior
3. anthropology -- study of cultural behavior

Much time and effort are spent studying these areas to better understand why humans act as they do.

One particular psychologist, Abraham Maslow, developed a theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, to explain why the communication process is as it is, and how we can use this to our advantage both in our personal life and at work. Maslow formulated the following conclusions, based on this theory:

1. Humans have certain needs at certain times; thus a successful communicator writes and speaks with the receivers.
2. People will respond positively to messages that meet their particular needs at a particular time.
3. Human needs are based on a system of priorities that are similar to the rungs on a ladder. A person ascends and descends this ladder constantly, but he or she cannot ascend to the next rung until the lower level is satisfied.
4. Once we reach the fifth rung, we set new goals and start the process again.
5. Different people reach different rungs each day. All the external influences in their lives help determine the level they reach on a daily basis.
6. Some people never reach five. For example, a person who is homeless and fights daily for food is firmly attached to rungs one and two and will probably go no further.

The five rungs cover the following needs:

Rung 1--Basic Physical Needs

- a. Food
- b. Shelter
- c. Clothing

Rung 2--Safety and Security Needs

- a. Free from physical harm
- b. Free from mental abuse

Rung 3--Love and Social Needs: The Need to Belong

- a. Feel part of a group--sense of belonging
- b. Family
- c. Friends
- d. Peers

Rung 4--Esteem: The Need to Be Somebody

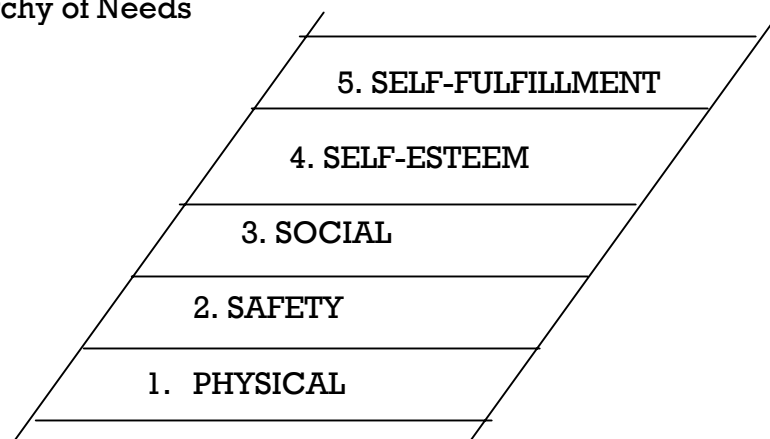
- a. Needs of our ego--cars, homes, clothing, jewelry, awards, etc.
- b. Recognition for achievements--grades, sports, hobbies, etc.

Rung 5--Self Actualization or Self-Fulfillment

- a. The pinnacle of success--We reach our ultimate goal
- b. Willing to help others struggling on lower rungs

While on the job, we must keep the above process in mind to help us determine how to best communicate with co-workers and others at the workplace.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

**Communication On the Job**

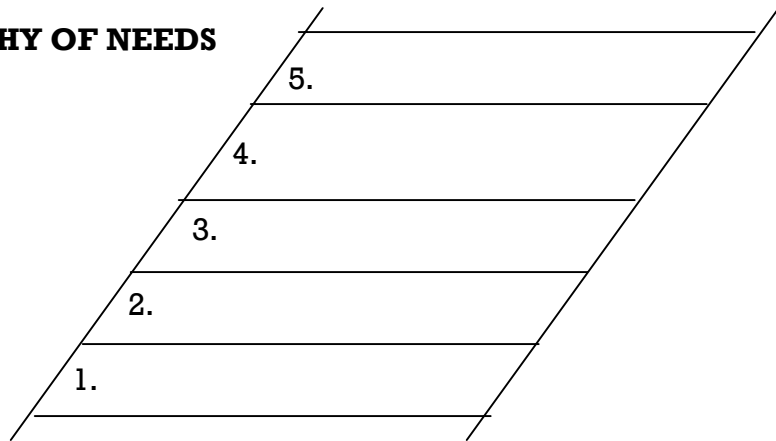
We interact with many people on the job, including co-workers, superiors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, and computers. We communicate in many ways:

1. Face-to-face dialogue using:
 - a. facial expressions
 - b. gestures
 - c. posture
 - d. body movements
 - e. attire
 - f. grooming
 - g. verbal speech
2. Telephone conversations
3. Conferences
4. Committee meetings
5. Written media (letters, memos, reports, bulletins, news releases, meeting minutes, newsletters, employee handbooks, etc.).

MODULE 23: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After you have read and studied the information sheet, complete the following activities.

Activity 1: Fill in the blank rungs on Maslow's chart below and answer the questions.

MASLOW'S HEIRARCHY OF NEEDS

1. What rung are you on at this time?
2. Describe what you have done today to reach this rung.
3. What item will place you on rung 4? Be specific! Example: car, jewelry, vacation, etc.

Activity 2: Read the following case studies and answer the question in a complete paragraph at the end of each case study.

1. While working at a local fast food restaurant, you overhear several co-workers discussing a new employee. The comments being made are not very nice and will likely cause problems in the workplace. How would you handle the situation?

2. You have been a cashier at Wal-Mart for three years. Even though you thoroughly enjoy your job, you are eagerly awaiting a promised promotion. However, today while talking with co-workers, they tell you they have "heard" that another employee (who has only been here for 1 1/2 years) will be getting the promotion instead of you. How would you handle this situation?

3. You are a salesclerk at a local department store. You approach a customer who is browsing in your department and he/she is very rude and nasty at your effort. How would you handle this situation to make a positive impact on this customer?

MODULE 23: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE**Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)****1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- C. Write persuasive pieces.
- Include a clearly stated position or opinion.
 - Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence.
 - Develop reader interest.
 - Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.
 - Include a variety of methods to advance the argument or position.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)**THINKING SKILLS**

Problem Solving Skills: Recognizes that a problem exists, identifies possible reasons for the discrepancy and devises and implements a plan of action to resolve it. Evaluates and monitors progress and revises plan as indicated by findings.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

Self-Esteem: Believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view.

COMPETENCIES

Interpersonal: Works well with others, including being skilled team members and negotiating with others to solve problems or reach decisions.