Course Learning Outcomes for Unit II

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

4. Formulate ways to overcome potential barriers to communication, including nonverbal communication.
    4.1 Formulate how to use supported data and illustrations to overcome communication barriers, including both verbal and nonverbal.

Reading Assignment

Chapter 3: Building Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Chapter 4: Interpersonal Communication

Chapter 5: Interpersonal Skills for the Digital World

Unit Lesson

Chapter 3 discusses building self-esteem and self-confidence and explains why each is important. The chapter also provides examples of how to identify high self-esteem and low self-esteem, as well as methods on how to improve self-esteem and self-efficacy.

What is Self Esteem?

Self-esteem is defined as "the overall evaluation people make about themselves, whether positive or negative" (DuBrin, 2015, p. 53). There are a number of assessments that can help one determine his or her level of self-esteem. For example, the self-assessment quiz (on page 55 of the textbook) provides various behavioral statements and asks the participant to select if each statement is "mostly true" or "mostly false." You then count the number of each selection, and the highest number will be defined according to the three feedback statements.

Self-esteem is how one views himself or herself, and the scale runs from high self-esteem to low self-esteem or somewhere in between. An individual's location on the self-esteem continuum, from high self-esteem to low self-esteem, can be based on the positive or negative experiences throughout his or her life. Self-esteem can fluctuate depending on life events and the level of support received or not received during the experiences.

Self-esteem levels can vary according to one's self-efficacy, which is defined as one's belief and confidence in his or her abilities to successfully complete a particular identified task. Over time, confidence levels are built as self-esteem is developed through self-actualization.

In addition to simply defining self-esteem, it can be helpful to illustrate self-esteem as part of a model such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (see Figure 1). The hierarchy is made up of steps identifying how to reach one's full potential (Anderson & Bolt, 2013). It is important to note that Maslow states that the hierarchy starts at the bottom with physiological needs (e.g., food and water), and none of the higher levels can be achieved until the lower, more foundational level has been satisfied. In other words, an individual will not be concerned with social development unless a minimal level of safety has been satisfied, and so on. Self-esteem is the fourth step, which is defined as ones' ability to feel he or she is capable of accomplishing goals and is a generally worthy individual. The final step self-actualization is the embodiment of one reaching the highest possible version of himself or herself. Understanding this hierarchy and the integral role self-esteem plays can help the HR professional with employee relations, development, and general motivation.
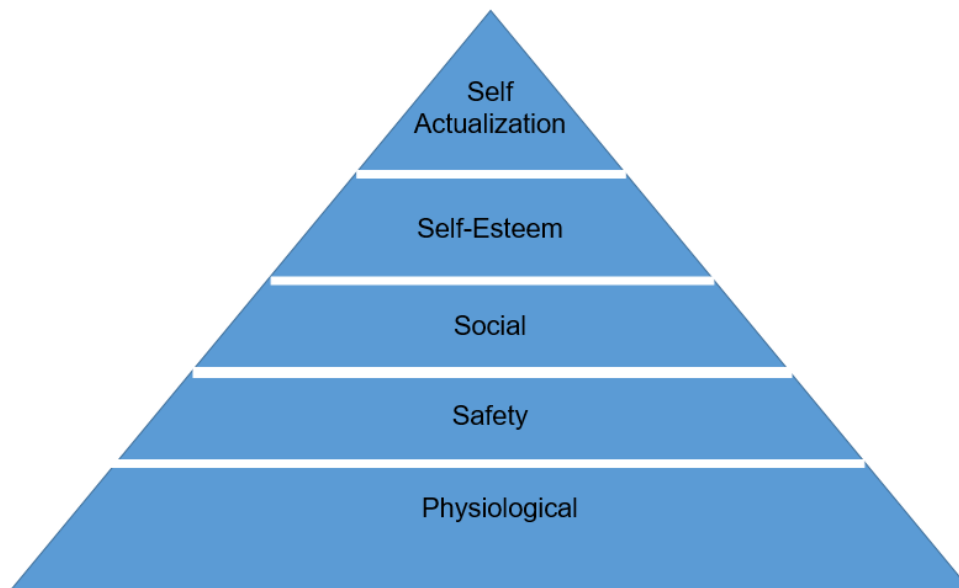
Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
(Anderson & Bolt, 2013)

Note: Additional ways of developing your self-esteem can be located below.

The Development of Self-Esteem

Almost every experience in an individual's life impacts his or her self-esteem. Every experience can increase or decrease self-esteem, so it depends on the positive and negative aspect of the experience and how it affects the individual. There are various examples of how self-esteem can be developed throughout your life. For example, being praised, supported, loved, cheered, and appreciated, as well as receiving care, affection, and direction can all help the development of high self-esteem. On the other hand, low self-esteem experiences can consist of being criticized, harassed, badgered, and suffering failures (DuBrin, 2015).

Self-Esteem Consequences

There are consequences to positive and negative self-esteem. Positive consequences can be anything from effectively envisioning and planning goals to accomplish in life such as career attainment, high income, educational and organizational achievement, and great relationships. Most people are planning and striving for positive consequences and being a better person with confidence and high self-esteem; however, negative consequences can range from envy to self-centeredness.

Communication

Chapter 4 discusses interpersonal communication. The chapter identifies verbal and nonverbal communication. Additionally, it addresses the communication process, which includes a sender, receiver, and decoding efforts. DuBrin (2015) identifies and discusses communication barriers, which are defined as reasons why the message is lost during the decoding process. The message can be lost for a number of reasons, but the most common reason is due to the interpretation of the message being sent (Anderson & Bolt, 2013).

The conveyance, receipt, and understanding of a message constitutes communication (DuBrin, 2015). Verbal and nonverbal are methods of communication sent to the receiver but in different forms. Verbal communication is the articulation of the message with proper diction and voice quality. The nonverbal type is communicating in other forms, which include body language, facial expressions, and written forms. The communication process is illustrated below in Figure 2:
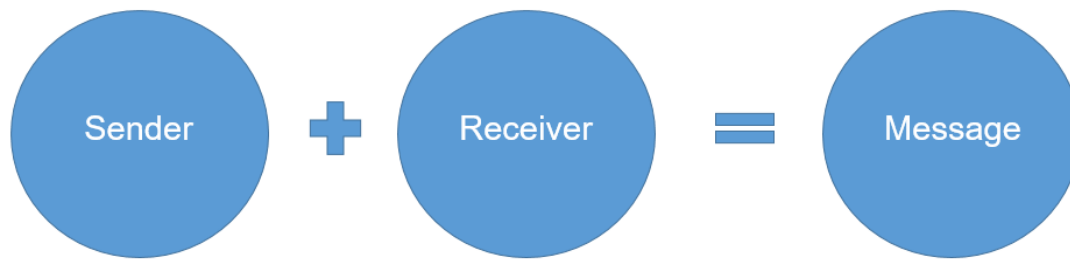
Figure 2: The communication process
(DuBrin, 2015)

Things to Consider in Enhancing Nonverbal Communication

"Nonverbal communication refers to the transmission of messages through means other than words" (DuBrin, 2015, p. 81). During this communication process, nonverbal cues should match the verbal aspect of the process. For example, smiling as you give condolences to someone—the two forms of communication do not complement each other; therefore, you should practice effectively communicating both verbally and nonverbally. Examples of how to improve nonverbal communication skills include obtaining feedback, supplementing verbal communication with effective nonverbal communication, avoiding indiscriminate communication, checking for appearance fitting the message, exuding confidence, and using the mirroring effect. In the process of enhancing communication efforts, you will often find organizations will offer training to enhance the skills as well.

Overcoming Communication Problems and Barriers

Communication, at the most basic level, includes a sender, a receiver, and a message; however, each can contribute to problems and barriers in the process. For example, lack of clarity, lack of understanding, method of transmission, and tone of the message are all problems that can originate in any of the three steps in the process; therefore, you need to identify the sources of communication problems and methods to overcome them. In the workplace, there will be times where the communication process is flawed, which leads to ineffective communication efforts. The practitioner must identify best practices for overcoming communication problems and barriers. These best practices can be located in the textbook.

Interpersonal Skills and One-on-One Interactions

In all environments, work is performed with some form of technological device (e.g., cell phone, computer, tablet, iPad). The devices are used to communicate in various forms such as writing emails, viewing PowerPoints or reports, conducting conferences or webinars, and answering phone calls. As the devices are used in the communication process, proper etiquette should also be used. Interpersonal skills and one-on-one interaction are important in the communication process; thus, regardless of the means of communication, there must be a sender and receiver as previously discussed. The communication process should be clear and concise with the verbal and nonverbal communication complementing each other. In addition, strong interpersonal skills must be utilized to effectively communicate on a one-on-one basis. When communicating, if interpersonal skills are deficient, the receptiveness of the message can be negatively impacted.

Interpersonal Skills and Social Networking

As technology advances, so do the platforms available to communicate. Social platforms are used in the world of work to conduct recruiting efforts, promote the company, and train employees; however, the platforms have been viewed in negative and positive ways due to the way the platforms are used. You should identify the dos and don'ts of social networking and interpersonal skills, which are listed below:

1. being conscious of what is stated via the platforms,
2. violating company confidentiality, and
3. derogatory information or statements.

Social networking and interpersonal skills work hand-in-hand to create balance for the employer and employee. Technological advances allow organizations to provide flexibility to the employees and help create

a healthier work-life balance. For example, some organizations offer telecommuting opportunities; however, by offering the opportunities, there are some concerns with interpersonal skills, loss of camaraderie, and face-time with fellow colleagues. What are your thoughts?

References

Anderson, L. E., & Bolt, S. B. (2013). *Professionalism: Skills for workplace success* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson.

DuBrin, A. J. (2015). *Human relations: Interpersonal job-oriented skills* (12th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Suggested Reading

In order to access the following resource, click the link below:

The following article discusses evidence-based leadership strategies for promoting and sustaining employee engagement for occupational safety. You are encouraged to review this information.

Geller, E. S. (2016). Leadership lessons for OSH professionals. *Professional Safety*, *61*(6), 63-71. Retrieved from https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=116035697&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Review the PowerPoint presentations on Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 to supplement the textbook reading and lesson content.

Chapter 3: Building Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Click here to access the Chapter 3 PowerPoint presentation.

Click here for the PDF version.

Chapter 4: Interpersonal Communication

Click here to access the Chapter 4 PowerPoint presentation.

Click here for the PDF version.

Chapter 5: Interpersonal Skills for the Digital World

Click here to access the Chapter 5 PowerPoint presentation.

Click here for the PDF version.

Learning Activities (Nongraded)

Nongraded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study. You do not have to submit them. If you have questions, contact your instructor for further guidance and information.

You may complete one or all activities.

1. Read the Interpersonal Relations Case 3.1 or Case 3.2 on pp. 73-74, and answer the case questions.

2. Read the Interpersonal Relations Case 4.1 or Case 4.2 on pp. 101-102, and answer the case questions.

3. Read the Interpersonal Relations Case 5.1 or Case 5.2 on pp. 125-126, and answer the case questions.