

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

Enabling Objectives:

- 1.3.1 DEFINE the terms verbal, non-verbal, communication, listener, sender, receiver, and sender.
- 1.3.2 LIST the components of verbal communication.
- 1.3.3 LIST five non-verbal clues common to interpersonal communication.
- 1.3.4 IDENTIFY how verbal and non-verbal components of communication affect management of conflict.
- 1.3.5 DEFINE the terms conflict, anger, aggression, assertive, suppressing, expressing, calming, stress, antagonistic, incompatible, contradictory, disagreement, and opposition.
- 1.3.6 LIST three ways unresolved conflict is destructive.
- 1.3.7 LIST four ways conflict can be constructive.
- 1.3.8 IDENTIFY the principal Conflict Resolution Systems used in the Navy.

Trainee Preparation Material:

- A. Trainee Support Materials:
 - 1. Outline Sheet 1-3-1
 - 2. Problem Sheet 1-3-1
- B. Reference Publications: U.S. Navy Core Values Charter

Instructor Preparation:

- A. Review Assigned Training Material
 - 1. Instructors for all lessons must read and familiarize themselves with, at minimum, the “Introduction/Navy Core Values” and “Decision Making” lessons. This will allow instructors to relate their lesson’s material to Navy Core Values, the Four Universal Ethical Principles, and the Five-

Step Decision Making Process. Instructors should bring these into their discussion whenever the opportunity presents itself, whether in the form of the instructional material itself or questions from trainees.

B. Reference Publications:

- 1. Petty Officer Indoctrination Course NAVEDTRA 38200-A, Chapter 2
- 2. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Navy Service Specific Informal Resolution System Course
- 3. Navy Regulations Article 1150
- 4. UCMJ Article 134
- 5. Navy Knowledge Online Courses:
 - a. Conflict Management in Health Care
 - b. Conflict Resolution
- 6. Fisher, R. and W. Ury. (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. New York: Penguin Books.
- 7. Robbins, S. (2005). *Organizational Behavior*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- 8. Instructor General Website
<http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/IG/Complaints>
- 9. Webster’s Online Dictionary <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org>
- 10. Bronwyn Ritchie’s Pivotal Points Website
<http://www.consultpivotal.com/conflict.htm>
- 11. Tough Teams Website
<http://www.toughteams.com/papers/conflict.htm>

C. Training Materials Required:

- 1. Computer and Compatible Projector
- 2. Navy Pride and Professionalism Presentation CD
- 3. White Board or Newspaper

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

4. Colored Markers
5. Trainee Guide
6. PowerPoint Slides: 1-3-1 through 1-3-18

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

1. Communication and Conflict Management

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

1. **Slide 1-3-1**, Communication and Conflict Management

Slide 1-3-2, Lesson Overview

Provide the trainees an overview of the lesson and why the lesson is important. The following are some suggestions:

We often take communication for granted. Many of us think about what we are saying but neglect what others are hearing. Often, the way we word our thoughts causes others to misinterpret what we are trying to say. Thinking through the communication process can help ensure we make ourselves understood and avoid unnecessary offense and conflict.

We owe it to our shipmates to minimize conflict that can make the workplace ineffective and painful to work in. We owe it to the Navy and the nation to manage conflict that can affect mission-readiness. That is why we need to commit to developing effective communication skills.

As you go through this lesson, stress (using specific examples from your experience or those you know or know of) how good communication benefits productivity and mission accomplishment and how ineffective communication sets up barriers between people, causes unnecessary conflict, and interferes with mission accomplishment.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- a. Ice Breaker Activity

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- a. Give the following instructions to the class: I'm going to whisper a sentence to one of you: [Use the following sentence: "Good communication helps manage conflict" or one of your own.] I want that person to whisper the same sentence to the person behind (beside) him or her. Then I want that person to do the same and so on until everyone has heard the sentence. Then we will compare what the last person heard to what the first person heard. You may not ask anyone to repeat the sentence, and be sure no one but the person you are addressing hears you.

Note: If the class is too large to make this exercise practical, limit the number of people who repeat the sentence to five or six.

- (1) The last person will usually repeat something wildly different from the initial sentence. Have the class explore what went wrong. Why did the message get so distorted?
- (2) Record key words on white board or newsprint.
- (3) Look for words and phrases like "misunderstood" "didn't hear" "had to guess" "couldn't ask what was said."
- (4) Use these as lead-in to talk about the elements of the communication process.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

b. The Communication Process

The reason the message did not survive the trip from first hearer to last is that breakdowns occurred in the communication process. Here are the basic elements of that process:

- (1) **Message** - Not only the conveyed information, but the emotions that give the words meaning.
- (2) **Sender** - The source of communication. The sender **encodes** the message, that is, formulates a message and puts it into some form for transmission. That form can range from simply stringing words together to actually putting the message into some kind of code. The sender then transmits the message to a receiver. Transmission is not the final step of sending communication. A good communicator immediately becomes a receiver to accept feedback to verify message delivery.
- (3) **Transmission Medium** - The pathway by which the message flows, the vehicle that carries the message from sender to receiver and back. It can be electronic, written, verbal, or non-verbal.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

b. **Slide 1-3-3**, The Communication Process

After defining the communication process, have the class discuss which elements of the process broke down in the exercise.

For example, a comment like “I misunderstood what was said” might be related to the **Sender**, the **Transmission Medium**, or the **Receiver**. It might indicate a breakdown in encoding, transmission, or decoding. Be sure to define and discuss the bolded terms.

- (1) Introduce trainees to the concepts illustrated in the Communication Process graphic.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- (4) **Receiver** – The receiver **decodes** the message, that is, interprets and understands its meaning. Only when the receiver has understood the message has true communication taken place.
- (5) **Feedback** – The element of the communication process that confirms whether or not the message has been received and understood. Perhaps the greatest cause of ineffective communication is failure to request or to provide feedback.

c. Non-Verbal Communication

Factors other than words help determine what a sender means and a receiver should understand. Together, these cues are called non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is an important part of the communication process. The following are some **non-verbal cues** that affect the meaning of a message.

Note: Not all cultures use non-verbal cues the same way. The cues examined below apply to American culture, but they may not apply to others.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

c. **Slide 1-3-4**, Non-Verbal Communication

After defining non-verbal communication, and before showing them the Non-Verbal Cues slide, ask the class for some specific examples. What, other than words, can affect communication?

Write answers on white board or newsprint and group ones that are similar.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

(1) **Personal Space** - This is our “bubble,” the space between people at which we feel comfortable. When someone violates our “bubble,” i.e., gets too close to us, we feel uncomfortable or even hostile. Culture determines the specific distance of personal space. In American culture, we have three zones of interaction we expect others to recognize and respect:

- (a) **Intimate Zone** – This zone extends from body contact to about 18 inches away. We reserve this zone for intimate acquaintances like family, spouses, and very close friends. When anyone else enters this zone, we feel extremely uncomfortable, nervous, and/or hostile.
- (b) **Personal Zone** – This zone ranges from 1 to 4 feet from our body. When we have personal conversations with our friends, this is the comfortable zone. Some people get hostile when strangers “intrude” on this space.
- (c) **Social Zone** – This is the zone for public interactions. It has two areas, close and far.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

(1) **Slide 1-3-5**, Non-Verbal Cues

As you go through the definitions of non-verbal cues relate the groupings resulting from the question to the specific types of non-verbal cues

Be sure to bring out the definitions of all the bolded terms.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- i. The close zone ranges from 4 to 12 feet away, the usual width of a boss's desk or the distance between work stations. We are comfortable within this distance for professional conversation or conversation with those we do not know well.
 - ii. The far zone ranges outward from 12 feet. We use it for one-way communication such as lectures or public speeches.
- (2) **Gestures** – Gestures express as much as or more than words. Be acutely aware of your body language and that of your shipmates. Crossed arms could indicate defensiveness. Clenched or wringing hands can indicate tension, strong disagreement or feeling pressured. Tapping fingers, looking at a watch, or foot-swinging often convey boredom.
- (3) **Eyes** – Eye contact, or lack of it, can convey a wide range of non-verbal messages. Too little eye contact, for example, can cause a person to feel ignored; too much might make that person feel self-conscious or threatened. People who wish to hide their feelings or avoid social interaction with others often avoid eye contact.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- (4) **Voice** – Our voice can convey more than just words. Loudness, pitch, emphasis, and tone of voice can change the meaning of any particular statement. Saying “That was a *great* movie!” in an enthusiastic tone means exactly the opposite of saying “*That* was a great movie” in a sarcastic tone. “Sit down” said in a moderate volume and a polite tone means something different than “SIT DOWN!” shouted in a commanding tone.
- (5) **Facial Expression** – The human face can change expression at any time to reflect honesty, friendliness, guilt, happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, and many other feelings. Unlike verbal sentences that must be sent word by word, facial expressions can express the entire message in an instant.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- (5) **Slide 1-3-6**, What do these facial expressions say?

Ask trainees to identify how the person in these photographs is feeling by facial expression. Get them to look at the details of what makes the expression one of sadness, anger, fear, excitement, etc.

The expressions are intended to convey the following:
Top left to right, amusement, anger, and confusion.
Bottom left to right, sadness and surprise. Not all of the trainees will see the expressions the same way. That in itself can be a topic for discussion. If they disagree on what an expression represents, what details cause the disagreement? It is also an opportunity to mention that facial expression and other non-verbal cues are not always clear and sometimes require context (what is being said and other non-verbal cues).

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- d. Communication and Conflict

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- d. Ask trainees to break up into small groups (2-4 per group depending on class size). Have them analyze the following case study scenario (page 82 in the Trainee Guide Volume 1 and page 2 in Volume 3). Keeping the communication process in mind, write a response to each of the scenario questions, then have one member of each group report out the group's answers to the questions. The answers should be the groups' and not each individual's.

Look for the opportunity to emphasize how important good communication is and both the specific ways communication can break down and how that breakdown can be avoided or, when it happens, resolved.

Scenario: A work center supervisor reprimands an Airman because the Airman did not complete a task the supervisor assigned him. The Airman begins to defend himself, but the supervisor cuts him off with, "I don't want any excuses! Just get back in there and get to work. And from now on do what I tell you *when* I tell you." Later, the work center supervisor's own supervisor approaches her and says, "Sorry for pulling Airman ____ off the job yesterday, but I really needed him."

Note: There are no absolutely right or wrong answers here. There are a number of problems in this scenario. The important thing is to get the trainees to think about the scenario, communication, and how breakdowns in communication can lead to conflict.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

What element(s) of the communication process broke down in this example?

How specifically did they break down?

What could the people in the scenario have done to avoid the conflict in the first place?

Now that the conflict has arisen, how could the people in the scenario resolve it?

After the trainees discuss the scenario, emphasize the connection between the elements of communication they have been learning and conflict management. Poor communication among all the Sailors in the scenario caused the conflict. Good communication could have avoided it or resolved it quickly. Conflict can never be completely avoided, but it can be managed so that it does not become destructive and affect mission readiness.

e. Terms Used in Conflict Management

(1) **Anger** – A strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism.

e. **Slide 1-3-7**, Terms Used in Conflict Management

Elicit definitions from the trainees for each of the following terms before giving them these definitions.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- (2) **Aggression** - A forceful action or procedure (as an unprovoked attack) especially when intended to dominate or master. Hostile, injurious, or destructive behavior or outlook especially when caused by frustration.
- (3) **Assertive** - Inclined to be bold and confident; self-assured.
- (4) **Suppressing** - Control and refrain from showing of emotions; keep under control; keep in check; "suppress a smile"; "keep your temper"; "keep your cool".
- (5) **Expressing** - Articulate; either verbally or with a cry, shout, or noise
- (6) **Calming** - Causing to become peaceful. Freeing from fear and anxiety.
- (7) **Stress** - A state of mental or emotional strain or suspense. Difficulty that causes worry or emotional tension.
- (8) **Antagonistic** - Indicating opposition or resistance. Arousing bad feelings or hostility. Incapable of getting along with.
- (9) **Disagreement** - A conflict of people's opinions, actions, or characters. A difference between conflicting facts, claims, or opinions. The speech act of arguing or disputing.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- (10) **Opposition** - The action of resisting something that you disapprove or disagree with. A body of people united in being against something.

f. Conflict

Any time two or more human beings spend time together (e.g., marriage, school, or work) conflict will arise at some point. Conflict can be defined as follows:

Disagreements between and among individuals; to fight, battle, or contend. These interactions can be antagonistic, incompatible, or contradictory. Conflict can also be a sharp disagreement or opposition.

(1) Destructive Conflict

As you can easily imagine, unresolved conflict can be very destructive. Some destructive effects of conflict within a group are:

- (a) Diverts energy
- (b) Destroys morale

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

f. **Slide 1-3-8**, A Good Definition of Conflict

Slide 1-3-9, Destructive Conflict

Give examples of each of these bad effects from your own experience or that of people you know and/or solicit them from the trainees.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- (c) Hardens opposing positions in the group, which reduces group members' ability to work together
- (d) Produces irresponsible and regrettable behavior
- (e) In extreme cases, it can even threaten the survival of the group

(2) Constructive Conflict

We are used to thinking of conflict as something negative and always to be avoided. However, conflict can be constructive. There is even some research indicating that groups with no conflict are less productive than those with resolved and well-managed conflict.

So how can conflict be constructive? It can:

- (a) Open up issues of importance.
- (b) Result in the solution of problems.
- (c) Increase the involvement of other individuals.
- (d) Cause sincere desire to communicate.
- (e) Serve as release to pent-up emotion, anxiety, and stress.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

Examples of such cases would be emergency situations like a fire or flood on a ship or a combat situation where cooperation is essential.

(2) **Slide 1-3-10**, Can Conflict be Constructive?

Ask trainees to try to come up with ways conflict can be constructive.

(a) **Slide 1-3-11**, Ways Conflict Can Be Constructive

(e) **Slide 1-3-12**, Ways Conflict Can Be Constructive Cont.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- (f) Help build cohesiveness among people.
- (g) Help individuals grow personally.

g. The Navy's Conflict Resolution System

Since conflict can only be constructive if it is resolved and well-managed, and destructive conflicts can spiral out of control, the Navy has developed a system for resolving disputes. It consists of the Informal Resolution System (IRS) and provisions for filing formal grievances.

(1) Informal Resolution System (IRS)

The IRS attempts to resolve complaints within the chain of command and at the lowest possible level.

Keep in mind, though, that the complainant in a dispute can initiate formal grievance procedures at any time during IRS.

(a) Resolution Options under IRS

- i. Two-party approach - With this option, parties to a conflict discuss and resolve it among themselves.
- ii. Three-party approach - A supervisor, co-worker, Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) Manager, or counselor can get involved when:

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

g. **Slide 1-3-13**, Conflict Resolution in the Navy

(1) **Slide 1-3-14**, Informal Resolution System (IRS)

(a) **Slide 1-3-15**, Resolution Options under IRS

- i. Explain two-party approach.
- ii. Tie in conflict resolution to the five-step decision making process:

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

One party to the conflict does not feel comfortable approaching the other.

1. Define the issue.
2. Gather information.
3. Evaluate the information.
4. Consider alternatives and implications.
5. Implement the decision.

The parties cannot reach an agreement.

Since both parties don't always agree with a third party decision, the complainant may ask for additional relief.

If a complainant disagrees with a supervisor's decision he or she can submit a request chit up the chain of command for relief. Each supervisor has the responsibility to try to resolve the dispute before it reaches the next level.

iii Commanding Officer's Request Mast

If a resolution recommended by the chain of command fails to resolve the complaint, a complainant has the right to communicate with the CO via request mast.

If the CO cannot resolve the complaint, the complainant has the right to file a formal grievance.

(2) Formal Grievances

(2) **Slide 1-2-16**, Formal Grievances

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

Sometimes disputes cannot be settled informally or within the chain of command. In those cases, there are channels for filing formal grievances.

If you are involved in a dispute or you have a complaint that involves criminal acts, you should immediately report it to the Navy Criminal Investigative Service.

h. Communication, Conflict Management, and Values

How do communication and conflict management relate to your personal values and Navy Core Values?

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

h. **Slide 1-3-17**, Navy Core Values and Communication

QUESTION: How do communication and conflict management relate to Navy Core Values and your personal values?

Ask trainees how good communication skills and effective conflict management relate to Navy Core Values and their own values. Some possibilities:

ANSWER: Practice honor by using communication skills to “make honest recommendations and accept those of junior personnel” and “encourage new ideas and deliver bad news even when it is unpopular.”

ANSWER: Have the courage to communicate directly, but in a way that will best accomplish your missions. Sometimes NOT being confrontational can take more courage than being confrontational. Have the courage to use your communication and conflict resolving skills to create the best possible atmosphere in the workplace.

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

- i. Summary
 - (1) Communication Process: **sender** encodes **message**, transmits it through a **transmission medium** (speech, writing, electronic media) to a **receiver**, who **decodes** it and provides **feedback**.
 - (2) Non-verbal communication (personal space, gestures, eye contact, facial expression etc.) is as important as verbal communication. It can vary from culture to culture.
 - (3) Conflict can be destructive, but if handled properly, can also be constructive.
 - (4) The Navy has two methods of resolving disputes, the Informal Resolution System (IRS) and Formal Grievance Procedures. The Navy's preferred method of conflict resolution is the IRS. If that does not resolve the conflict, then a formal grievance can be filed.

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

ANSWER: You should be committed to learning to communicate with your shipmates. Good communication can be a matter of life and death in, for example, a dangerous workplace or a combat situation. Conflict and poor communication can negatively affect your mission accomplishment, a mission to which you, as a Sailor, are committed.

- i. Review key points. Take questions.
 - (1) **Slide 1-3-18**, Summary

LESSON PLAN

Navy Pride and Professionalism

Lesson 1.3 Communication and Conflict Management

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

Ask if there are any questions.

If timing is appropriate take a 10 minute break