



High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson HS.77

COMMUNICATION METHODS ON TEAMS

Unit. Stage Two of Development—WE

Problem Area. How Do We Play as a Team?.

Precepts. **M4:** Communicates appropriately with co-workers and supervisors.

National Standards. NL-ENG.K12-4 — Communication Skills — Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Identify benefits of effective team communication.
- 2 Assess effectiveness of communication methods within a team.
- 3 Demonstrate possible methods to communicate effectively as a team member.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Communication and Interpersonal Communication Impact video series. National FFA Organization.

Maxwell, John C. *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork.* Nashville, Tennessee. Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Baseball, bat, glove, and any other baseball attire
- ✓ Baseball park music, if available
- ✓ HS.77.AS.A—one for each student
- ✓ One copy of HS.77.TM.A to cut up



Interest Approach

The stage for the entire class is a baseball setting, where the focus is on communication methods in teams. Begin the class with a baseball, bat, glove, and a baseball cap or even a jersey, if you have one. This will stimulate a visual perception for the first objective. Build a feeling in the students of being at a base ball game. Use some ballpark music in the background, if available.



Hot Dogs! Peanuts! Popcorn! Play ball! The sun is bright. The grass is green. A light breeze cools your face. Hey batter, batter, batter, swing batter. That's strike two. The organist plays. The scoreboard is flashing. The batter digs in. The pitch. The swing. Thwack! He is going back, back, back—and it's out of here: a home run. He really connected with that one. Those were all sounds we would hear in an afternoon at the ballpark. What you may not always see or hear through the rumble of the crowd is the communication that goes on among each team. Imagine what it would be like if the pitcher couldn't communicate with the catcher before a pitch. Imagine no base coach waving a runner on to home, or hold him to prevent an out. As we can see, even on a baseball team, communication is essential. Today we will explore how communication is important in many other team settings. Are you ready team?



SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Identify benefits of effective team communication.

I. Benefits to effective team communication

- A. Helps the team be successful
- B. Builds trust within a team
- C. Helps teammates work together
- D. Allows the sharing of ideas among team members
- E. Helps in setting expectations and guidelines
- F. Keeps members informed and up to date with team actions
- G. Facilitates inclusion, ownership, belonging, and a respect for teammates



Can anyone think of any more ideas to add to our list?

Have the students come up with all of the different kinds of communication that go on at a baseball game. Use the props mentioned earlier to stimulate thought. Some examples are: signs and head nods between the pitcher and catcher; signs and talking between the batter and coach; cheers of encouragement; comments toward the umpire; and verbal chatter between teammates. The crowd also gets into the action and communicates their feelings about how the game is going. Have students act these ideas out in class.



Think of all the different kinds of communication that go on at a ballgame. Share those with the teammate sitting next to you. What are some of those communications happening at a ballgame?.

Have the students line up in several ways around the room to bring home the point that, just like a baseball team, every team must communicate to be successful. Tell the students they need to get in a line from shortest to tallest, age, alphabetically by first name, middle name, last name, or numerically by the last four digits of their phone number. Challenge them to do a couple of these without talking. This will help bring home the point about how nonverbal communication is also very important.



To be successful, players on a baseball team must communicate. That communication has to start from the very beginning of the game. Game strategies are discussed, infield responsibilities are given, and the crowd begins to roar as it anticipates the first pitch.

Before we head out on the field, we need to know the line-up. Prepare yourself for a successful game of communication between you and your teammates. I am going to give you the starting line-up, then you need to get into that order. There will be several line-ups before we are done. Any pre-game questions before we start. When you hear the words, "Play ball," you need to get into your positions. Line up from shortest to tallest. Play ball!



Continue to do this with the other line-ups you want to add. After each one, have the students give themselves a round of applause as if they are changing innings. Make sure to throw in a couple in which they can not talk when attempting to figure out the correct line up.



Wow, we not only learned a little about our teammates, but we were successful. We were successful because we were able to communicate. Even with the curveball of not being able to talk, you were still able to communicate. Some benefits to team communication are that it will help in being successful, build trust within a team, help team mates work together, and allow the sharing of ideas between team members. Everyone wants to be a part of a team. To hit a home run, you have to have effective team communication.

Objective 2. Assess effectiveness of communication methods within a team.

II. Methods of team communication to be assessed:

- A. Use effective verbal communication
- B. Use effective nonverbal communication
- C. Use written and media forms of communication
- D. Try more than one method of communication
- E. Use clear language
- F. Give constructive feedback
- G. Ask questions for clarification
- H. Listen to teammates
- I. Read nonverbal communication
- J. Accept constructive feedback
- K. Communicate in a positive manner
- L. Create an honest environment of communication

Use HS.77.AS.A to have the students assess how successful they are in communicating within a team.



In a baseball game, you have to figure out what your strengths and weaknesses are so you can put together the best game plan possible. Silently think about a team in which you are involved. It is time to assess how effective you are as a team communicator. When you receive the activity sheet, you can begin. What questions do you have.

Hand out activity sheet and give students a few minutes to complete.



Just like a baseball team practices during the season, we also need to assess how effective we are as communicators and continue to try to improve. The assessment you just did is a good tool to use to see what you need to work on.



Objective 3. Demonstrate possible methods to communicate effectively as a team member.

III. The demonstration of methods in Objective 2

Use a *Party Host Moment* to have the students demonstrate the different areas that are listed on the team communication assessment activity sheet.

Cut up HS.77.TM.A and assign the different methods to students in the class and pick a party host. For this activity the party host is the coach, or coaches, depending upon class size. Have the setting be one of teammates sitting in the dugout communicating. The coach is giving them a speech between innings about how the ballgame is going and what they need to do in the final innings. After a couple of minutes of the students role-playing in the dugout, have the coach guess which method each one of them is demonstrating.



The seventh inning stretch is about to take place. You will enter the dugout and communicate with your teammates about the ball game. Each of you will be given a method from the activity sheet you just completed. That method is the one you are to demonstrate. I will also designate a coach, whose job is to try to figure out what technique each player is demonstrating.

Coach, you are giving your team a pep talk between innings, and telling them what is going well, and what they are going to have to do to win the game. What questions do you have.

Give each student a method, and designate a coach. You may want to put together more than one group if numbers allow. Begin activity.

When completed, process the activity by having the coach and the teammates guess what method the different players were playing. Have them discuss what they saw or heard that made them guess the methods they did.



Review/Summary

The review is a chance to use a type of communication to check for understanding. The students will engage a *Descartes Moment* to accomplish this task.



Professional baseball players receive fan mail all the time. Letters come from very young fans and very old fans. It is a highlight for players to hear from their fans. This is your chance to write a fan letter.

Pick your favorite baseball player—or, if you don't have one, write the letter to good old Charlie Brown. He played baseball in some of his classic cartoons. Explain to the player what you know about communication in teams, what you think you know, and what you still do not understand. Sign it as if you were his biggest fan. What questions or curveballs can I take a swing at. Begin.



►Extended Classroom Activity:

Find a team in a movie, or a local team. Have students evaluate the team on how well they communicate by using the team communication assessment sheet. After viewing the movie or local team, have them put together a report that discusses how effective the team was at communicating.

►FFA Activity:

Have students sit in on a chapter officer team meeting or a goal-setting session of a committee. They should evaluate the group on how well they communicate by using the team communication assessment sheet. After viewing the meeting, have them put together a report that discusses how effective the team was at communicating.

►SAE Activity:

Use the team communication assessment sheet to evaluate how well you communicate with the people that help you with your SAE program. Then have one of those people fill out the sheet about you. Compare the answers and see if there is a way to improve on how effective you are as a communicator.

✓ Evaluation

A written test is available to measure the objectives.

Answers to Assessment:

Short Answer

1. Answers will come from: helps the team be successful; builds trust within a team; helps teammates work together; allows the sharing of ideas between team members; helps in setting expectations and guidelines; keeps members informed and up to date with team actions; facilitates inclusion, ownership, belonging, and a respect for teammates.
2. Answers will come from: use effective verbal communication, use effective nonverbal communication, use written and media forms of communication, try more than one method of communication, use clear language, give constructive feedback, ask questions for clarification, listen to teammates, read nonverbal communication, accept constructive feedback, communicate in a positive manner, and create an honest environment of communication
3. Answers will vary.



COMMUNICATION METHODS ON TEAMS

►Short Answer

1. Describe two benefits of having effective communication within a team.
2. List five methods of communication within a team.
3. Pick two methods of communication. Give an example for each of what a team could do to increase their effectiveness in that area.



METHODS OF TEAM COMMUNICATION TO BE ASSESSED:

- ◆ **Use effective verbal communication**
- ◆ **Use effective nonverbal communication**
- ◆ **Use written and media forms of communication**
- ◆ **Try more than one method of communication**
- ◆ **Use clear language**
- ◆ **Give constructive feedback**
- ◆ **Ask questions for clarification**
- ◆ **Listen to teammates**
- ◆ **Read nonverbal communication**
- ◆ **Accept constructive feedback**
- ◆ **Communicate in a positive manner**
- ◆ **Create an honest environment of communication**



TEAM COMMUNICATION— ASSESSING HOW EFFECTIVE OF A TEAM COMMUNICATOR I AM

A team that I am involved with is:

Rate yourself in the following team communication methods: Five being all the time and one being never.

Use effective verbal communication:	5	4	3	2	1
Use effective nonverbal communication:	5	4	3	2	1
Use written and media forms of communication:	5	4	3	2	1
Try more than one method of communication:	5	4	3	2	1
Use clear language:	5	4	3	2	1
Give constructive feedback:	5	4	3	2	1
Ask questions for clarification:	5	4	3	2	1
Listen to teammates:	5	4	3	2	1
Read nonverbal communication:	5	4	3	2	1
Accept constructive feedback:	5	4	3	2	1
Communicate in a positive manner:	5	4	3	2	1
Create an honest environment of communication:	5	4	3	2	1

