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COMM 112R

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Reflection Paper

In this paper, I will be discussing how this course has helped me improve my communication skills and how it has reflected the way I communicate with others. As an introvert person, I always seem to be less expressive about my thoughts and feelings. With the help of this course, I have gained confidence and learned how to communicate properly. Now in my daily life I focus on using interpersonal communication skills such as active listening; when someone is talking to me, body language; how I conduct myself in front of others and making sure I show positive attitude when I am around a group of people. I greatly believe that effective interpersonal communication skills are the key to any strong relationship.

Flipgrid discussion boards have helped me learn how to be comfortable when talking in front of a camera. Working in the IT field, I often have to be part of a video conference and sometimes have to share information via recording myself. Prior to enrolling in this course, I used to lack confidence speaking in front of a camera. I used to try avoiding taking the lead and not sharing my thoughts during meetings because I was unsure of how I would look and sound in front of a group of people. Recording myself through Flipgrid was extremely convenient for me. It gave us multiple attempts to record our self. In this way I could practice however many times before submitting the discussion. Now I am more comfortable during video conferences, and I share my thoughts and ideas with others without any hesitation. This is one of the several interpersonal communication skills I have gained that has a positive impact on my work life and on my personal life as well.

I was able to learn about the four horsemen in the relationship. After reading about each horseman, I was able to figure out which ones were the most destructive if used in my own relationship. I chose stonewalling to be most distressing for me, and after more details on it, now, anytime I realize myself unknowingly using stonewalling horseman, I try to correct it immediately. I use the technique that it was mentioned in the article by Ellie Lisitsa “stop the discussion and ask your partner to take a break:” (Lisitsa, 2022). It is so helpful at the time of conflicts; it allows time for the partner to think about the situation more clearly without feeling rushed as they will be angry during the conflicts and will say stuff that could hurt one another. Besides Stonewalling communication patterns, I also read about the other three horseman; criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and I found them greatly informative. I try to apply the knowledge about these horsemen by being careful with my words when communicating with my partner, so we do not push each other into situations where we have to use any of these horsemen.

Critical thinking and active listening are other great interpersonal communication skills that I have learned through this course. Having to do lots of reading in this course to answer discussion board questions has improved my critical thinking skills on how to analyze and better understand the most important parts of information. Critical thinking skills are important for everyone to have personal growth in life and to focus on details. I personally attempt to do critical thinking in situations with unclear motives. It has encouraged me to be curious about things, to have a clear understanding before declaring the conclusion. Critical thinking is in simple words, can be described as viewing the vast image and having the ability to use only the necessary information to help resolve the issue. Active listening was something I was not completely sure about prior to reading the chapter in this course textbook. After taking the listening skill quiz, I found out that I am an analytical listener, which means I tend to listen to the whole message before passing any judgments (Beebe, et al,.2019, chapter 5). Now that I have found out what my listening style is, it helps me remember what details I need to pay more attention to before giving my opinion.

Body language is one of the important interpersonal communication skills I find extremely useful. I have learned from this course that not just verbal communication is important for an effective conversation; it requires proper non-verbal communication as well. Person’s body language and tone of voice can alone indicate your interest in the conversation, as it was also mentioned in the textbook “People who are thought to have more power, for example, are thought to more freely express their anger and disgust than are people who have less power and status.” (Beebe, et al,.2019, chapter 7). Positive and negative body language could easily interpret your state of mind to another person when engaging in a conversation. Having a relaxed posture, a smile on the face, making eye contact while talking, and being attentive can help break any sort of obstructions between you and the other party. On the other hand, negative body language such as tensed body posture, looking somewhere else, multi-tasking while exchanging words with others, playing with a pen, or other things could give a bad impression on another person. They will have a serious issue trusting you with your decisions and your ability to contribute any ideas or thoughts on something.

In conclusion, all I can say is that learning about all the interpersonal communication skills has benefited me to have strong and balanced personal and professional relationships. I was able to find out some of the communication ways I was using in my relationship were incorrect and also found out what ways I could use to correct them to be a good communicator. These skills have influenced me to show positive attitude and be open with expressing my thoughts and feelings. I started to believe that it is always better to express your thoughts about others than just staying quiet and assuming others will read our minds.

References

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