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Selected Assignments for Interpersonal Communications

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Activities/Assignments:

Chapter: Self

Students are asked to rank themselves with regard to the following attributes. They are asked which percentile they'd place themselves in the respective categories, ranging from (bottom) 10% to 90% (top ten percent). Rankings are then noted by a show of hands.

- Leadership
- Friendship (a good friend)
- Trustworthiness
- Talent
- Driving
- "How well you are doing in this class as compared to others in the room"

In most cases, most students will rank themselves above, or even far above average, though of course this is impossible (most students can't be above average in the class compared to others in the class).

A discussion should ensue about how we misjudge - positively--our own characteristics and whether this might not be, in some cases, a healthy misjudgment.

Chapter: Perception

Observe the student sitting next you. Try to guess, without asking, how he or she would answer these questions (inferring the answers just by observation, not asking directly);

- Eats cereal regularly
- Listens to rap music more than any other kind
- Has read a novel (not required in a class) in the past three months
- Has younger siblings
- Is majoring in....
- Enjoys horror movies
- Is or has been a vegetarian
- Cares a great deal about politics
- Currently has a boyfriend or girlfriend or married

Students will explain how they derived their judgments and then check their answers with each other to determine how well they did. Students will then report on this activity in a class discussion.

Topics to be noted include material from chapter 4 (e.g. cauterization, interpretation, halo effect, perception schema etc.

Chapter—Nonverbal Communication

1. Students are asked to observe people (they don't know) for fifteen minutes – they could do so in a coffee shop, while riding on public transportation, at a store. etc. In class they will then report on these observations identifying four types of nonverbal behaviors discussed in the chapter (e.g. kinesics, haptics, chronemics, proxemics, eye contact).

Chapter: Public Speaking

Audience Analysis.

Students will look around the room and try to guess what percent of the class confirms to the following states of affairs or beliefs. The point of this exercise is a) to reinforce the importance of distinguishing between one's own beliefs and that of one's audience and b) to recognize that one's assumptions about one's audience are often seriously mistaken.

Student's answer will range from 0% (no one in the class) to 100% (everyone in the class)

- Have tattoos
- Think legalizing gay marriage was a good idea
- Think its perfectly cool for women to ask men they meet for the first time out for a date
- Can name the vice president of the United States
- Think sixteen-year-olds accused of a murder should be tried as an adult
- Favor legalizing prostitution
- Think, when all is said and done, America is still the best country in the world.
- Exercise regularly

Homework Assignment for Chapter: Public Speaking:

Critically review a college informative speech you can find on YouTube (there are hundreds). Your grading should be 0- for absent to 5 for exceptional in each of these categories:

Introduction:

- a. Thesis statement: constructs a focus thesis statement on an informative topic
- b. Presented an effective attention getter
- c. Previews the main points of the speech
- d. Related topic to audience

Body: **a.** Organized main points and subpoints in a clear, distinctive pattern
b. Establishes credibility – reference to legitimate sources
c. Provided clear transitions between main points
d. Provided effective conclusion that included summary of mainpoints

Delivery:

- a. Maintained eye contact
- b. Articulated words clearly
- c. Maintained audience interest
- d. Used effective gestures
- e. Used time appropriately

GENERAL COMMENTS

Chapter Listening:

1. Students practice paraphrasing:

Paraphrasing practice. Students will exchange comments about an embarrassing incident in their lives, recall a enjoyable experience, mention an incident they found especially irritating, insulting, or upsetting. The other student will something listen to the comments and try to rephrase the comment in a manner that demonstrates they understood (empathically) what is being related. Students will then reverse roles. A class discussion of the paraphrasing process follows.