



Teen Leadership 20

Intended Audience:

- Teens

Lesson Objectives:

Participants will:

- learn how to increase communication skills through effective speaking and listening.

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- a bag of pretzel sticks – enough for 20 to 30 sticks per team.
- napkins or paper towels – enough for one per person.

Do Ahead:

- Review lesson

Cooperative Communication

BACKGROUND

Communication is listed as one of the skills necessary for success in the 21st Century Workplace. Additionally, it is an important life skill that will benefit teens as they grow into competent, caring adults.

Many people think of communication as just speaking, however it works best when it is a two-way street. Listening and asking questions are also important in the communication process.

As a speaker and a listener, it is also important to consider non-verbal cues from the person with whom you are communicating. This lesson will help teens focus on speaking and listening.

WHAT TO DO

Activity:

Pair up with another person and sit back to back. Place a paper towel down flat in front of each person. Give each person 10-15 pretzels.

The pair decides who will be the communicator and who will be the receiver. The communicator will go first and make a design/shape on their napkin out of pretzels.

The communicator will then explain their design/shape one pretzel stick at a time. Example: "I put the first stick horizontal in the middle of the napkin."

The receiver of the information cannot ask any questions during the activity. Once the activity is completed, the pair will look and see how well they match.

Now it is time to switch roles. The receiver now becomes the communicator, but this time the receiver CAN clarify and ask questions.



Sources:

Gilbertson, A., Morreim, P., Skelly, C., Stevenson, A., (2006, October). *Ten-Minute Leadership Lessons*. Presented at the national conference of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, Milwaukee, WI.

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TALK IT OVER**Reflect**

- What was it like to follow directions and not be able to ask questions?
- Did you find yourself getting frustrated?
- Discuss what it was like to be able to talk?
- Why was this easier?
- Which is better one-way, or two-way communication? Why?
- Is asking questions an important part of the communication process? Why or why not?
- Will this activity help change the way you communicate with people? How?
- How will you try to be a better listener?

Apply:

- Be a better listener.
- Be aware of how clearly you explain things.
- Make sure you ask questions to get clarification if you are unsure of what someone is saying.
- How will you apply what you have learned in real-life situations?

Please take time to complete the Participant and Facilitator evaluations, found online at go.osu.edu/TeenLeadership20.