

UNIT 3

The Power of *Words and Action*

Unit Overview



Learning Goals

Integrated Education & Training Skills: Students will analyze verbal and non-verbal communication in healthcare settings to determine the speaker's/author's purpose or perspective, while building critical thinking skills needed to interpret cues and respond appropriately in situations.

Essential Question: How can understanding verbal and non-verbal communication help healthcare professionals interpret others' perspectives and respond effectively situations?

By the End of This Unit, You Will Be Able To:

Understand and explain what someone means in a healthcare setting by paying attention to both their words and body language. You'll also learn how to figure out their point of view and respond in a professional way.

Vocabulary *Preview*

Directions: Read each word and its definition.

Verbal Communication

Definition: Using spoken words to share information, ask questions, or give instructions.

Example: A physician's assistant tells a patient about their diagnosis.

Non-Verbal Communication

Definition: Using body language, facial expressions, gestures, or tone of voice to send a message.

Example: A doctor yawns and avoids eye contact while a patient describes their symptoms.

Implied Communication

Definition: A message that is not said directly, but is understood from the situation, tone, or body language.

Example: The technician can tell that the patient is nervous because he tenses his body during the ultrasound.

Perspective

Definition: What someone believes, feels, or thinks about a topic.

Example: The author believes communication is important for patient safety.

Purpose

Definition: The reason someone says or writes something (to inform, persuade, or entertain).

Example: The author wrote the article to inform readers about communication in healthcare.

Vocabulary *Preview*

Reflect and Respond: Why might a healthcare worker choose verbal communication over written?



Communication in

Healthcare



Why Communication Matters

Communication is one of the most important skills in healthcare. It helps you:

- Share ideas and information
- Work well with patients and coworkers
- Make sure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected

These are examples of interpersonal skills: abilities that help you communicate and work effectively with people.

What Is Communication?

Communication means sharing ideas and information. In healthcare, it connects:

- Patients
- Healthcare workers
- Families

Good communication helps everyone understand what is happening and what to do next. There are several types of communication that may be used in the health science industry. Look at the chart on the next page to see the different types of communication.

Types of Communication in Healthcare

| Type of Communication | What It Means | Example |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Verbal | Spoken words used to share information | A nurse explains how to take medicine to a patient. |
| Non-Verbal | Body language, facial expressions, gestures | A doctor smiles and nods to show understanding. |
| Written | Information shared through writing | A medical assistant writes a report about a patient visit. |
| Implied | Messages understood through tone, context, or silence | A patient hesitates before answering, suggesting they may be uncomfortable. |

Why It's Important in Healthcare

- Helps patients feel safe and cared for
- Prevents mistakes
- Builds trust between patients and staff
- Makes teamwork easier

You just read a short informational text about communication in healthcare. Now, let's take it a step further.

In healthcare, you'll often need to figure out what someone really means—whether it's a patient, a coworker, or even a written message. That's where critical thinking comes in: it helps you understand not just what someone says, but why they say it and what they believe.

We use those same skills when we read. Just like you might read between the lines with a patient, you can also read between the lines in a text.

To do that, we ask two important questions:

- Why did the author write this?
- What does the author believe or feel about the topic?

These questions help us explore two key ideas: the author's purpose and the author's perspective.

Author's Purpose

What Is Author's Purpose?

Directions: Scan the QR video to watch a short video on Author's Purpose.

Key Purposes to Remember

Authors usually write for one of these three reasons:

1. Persuade

- **What It Means:** The author wants you to think or feel a certain way.
- **Example:** An ad that tries to sell you something.

2. Inform

- **What It Means:** The author wants to teach you something new.
- **Example:** A news article or a textbook.

3. Entertain

- **What It Means:** The author wants to make you laugh or enjoy the story.
- **Example:** A comic, story, or poem.



Quick Tip!

When you read something, ask yourself:

Why did the author write this?

This is called the **author's purpose**.

Author's Purpose

The PIE Method

A helpful way to remember an author's purpose is to think of PIE:

- **P – Persuade:** The author tries to convince you to do or believe in something.
- **I – Inform:** The author gives you facts or information about a topic.
- **E – Entertain:** The author provides something enjoyable or emotionally engaging.

When finding the author's purpose use the graphic organizer below to help you organize your thoughts.

| Purpose | Definition | Clue Words or Features | Common Examples | Your Notes |
|----------------------|--|--|--|------------|
| P – Persuade | To convince the reader to do or believe something. | Should, must, best, in my opinion, ads, editorials | Ads, speeches, opinion articles, advocacy pieces | |
| I – Inform | To provide facts, data, or instructions. | Dates, statistics, steps, facts, nonfiction tone | Textbooks, news articles, medical manuals | |
| E – Entertain | To amuse or emotionally engage the reader. | Humor, suspense, characters, emotion, dialogue | Stories, poems, comics, personal narratives | |

Using the article about **Communication in Healthcare**, see if you can find the author’s purpose in healthcare.”

What is the title or topic of the piece?

What was the author trying to do? (Circle one)

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

What clues helped you figure it out?

Write one sentence that shows the author’s purpose clearly.

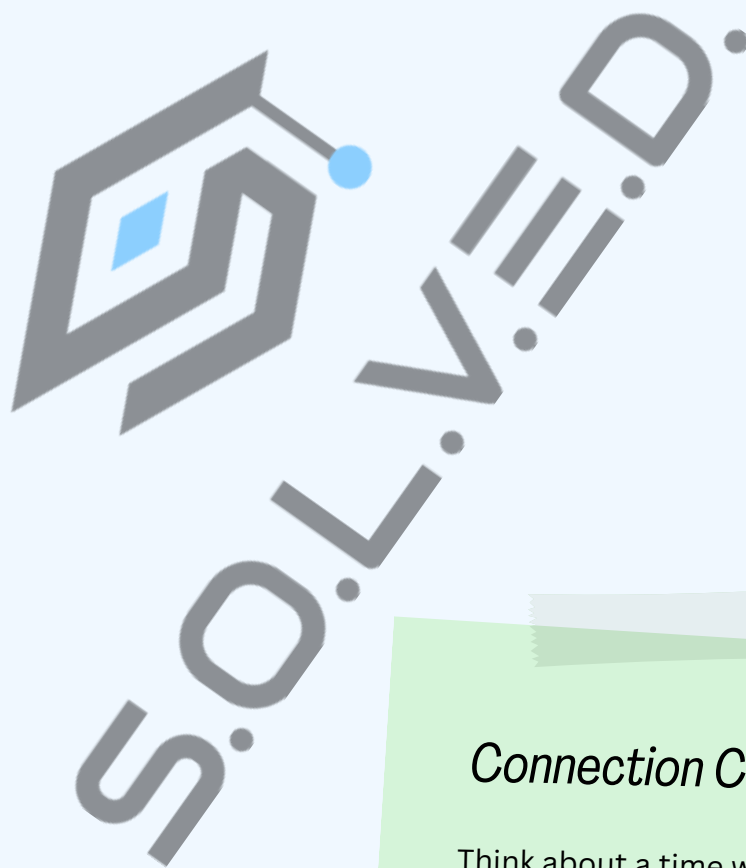
Author's *Perspective*

Graphic Organizer

| What the Text Says | What Is the Author's Purpose? (Why did they write this?) | What Is the Author's Perspective? (What do they believe?) |
|---|--|---|
| Helps patients feel safe and cared for... Builds trust... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To inform <input type="checkbox"/> To persuade <input type="checkbox"/> To entertain | The author believes communication builds trust and prevents mistakes. |
| It helps you share ideas and information... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To inform <input type="checkbox"/> To persuade <input type="checkbox"/> To entertain | The author believes communication helps people work together and avoid confusion. |
| Make sure everyone feels safe, heard, and respected. | <input type="checkbox"/> To inform <input type="checkbox"/> To persuade <input type="checkbox"/> To entertain | |
| There are several types of communication that may be used in the health science industry. | <input type="checkbox"/> To inform <input type="checkbox"/> To persuade <input type="checkbox"/> To entertain | |

Author's *Perspective*

Reflect and Respond: Why do you think the author calls communication a “skill”? How could poor communication affect a patient’s experience?



Connection Corner

Think about a time when you didn't communicate well. What happened? How did it make you or someone else feel? What could you do differently next time?

Reading Between

The Lines

Read, Think, and Apply

Directions: Read each situation. Choose the best answer that shows good communication in healthcare. Circle your answer. Then use the self-check answer key on the following page to see if you got your answers right.

- 1) A patient looks nervous and doesn't say anything. What should the nurse do?
 - A. Ignore the patient and move on
 - B. Use kind words and ask, "Are you feeling okay?"
 - C. Talk fast and use medical words

- 2) A doctor is explaining a new medicine. What is the best way to help the patient understand?
 - A. Use simple words and ask if they have questions
 - B. Use long medical terms
 - C. Talk only to the nurse

- 3) A patient speaks a different language and looks confused. What should the healthcare worker do?
 - A. Speak louder
 - B. Use hand gestures and ask for a translator
 - C. Walk away

✓ Check Your Answers

| Question | Correct Answer | Explanation |
|----------|----------------|--|
| 1 | B | This shows verbal communication and empathy. It helps the patient feel safe and opens the door for honest conversation. |
| 2 | A | This is clear verbal communication. Using simple language and checking for understanding helps prevent confusion and medical errors. |
| 3 | B | This combines non-verbal communication (gestures) with a professional solution (translator) to make sure the patient understands and feels |

Knowledge *Check*

Communication in Healthcare

Directions: Read the text below and answer the following questions about communication in healthcare.

Communication, or the act of talking and understanding, is very important in the world of healthcare. Healthcare professionals need to communicate and listen to each other in many ways to make sure the patient gets what they need. This can be done through words, which are called verbal communication, like talking and answering questions. It can also be done through actions, which are called nonverbal communication, like smiling or making eye contact.

Have you ever felt like the doctor was in a hurry, or you didn't understand what to do after leaving the doctor's office? Or maybe you had questions but didn't get to ask them? This can happen if those in the healthcare industry do not communicate well. Healthcare professionals need to understand that different people communicate in different ways. This can depend on where they come from or what language they speak at home.

It's also important for healthcare professionals to pay attention to nonverbal cues, like how a patient is sitting or if they look worried. What about a patient who is anxious and doesn't say a word? You will have to determine where they are concerned. When doctors and nurses are talking to patients, they should listen carefully, be respectful, and pay attention to the patient's body language. They should speak clearly and simply, not use big medical words that might confuse the patient and allow the patient to ask questions.

So, whether it's talking, listening, or understanding body language, good communication is a key part of healthcare. And remember, it's not just about what we say, but also how we say it and how we show it.

Knowledge *Check*

Communication in Healthcare

- 1) What is the author's main purpose in this passage?
 - A. *To entertain readers with a story about a doctor*
 - B. *To persuade patients to ask more questions*
 - C. *To inform readers about the importance of communication in healthcare*
 - D. *To describe different types of healthcare jobs*

- 2) What is the author's perspective about communication in healthcare?
 - A. *It's only important for doctors, not nurses*
 - B. *It's confusing and not worth focusing on*
 - C. *It's only useful when patients speak English*
 - D. *It's a key skill that helps patients feel safe and understood*

- 3) Which sentence from the passage best shows the author's perspective?
 - A. *"This can be done through words, which are called verbal communication."*
 - B. *"Have you ever felt like the doctor was in a hurry...?"*
 - C. *"Good communication is a key part of healthcare."*
 - D. *"Healthcare professionals need to communicate and listen in many ways."*

- 4) What critical thinking skill is most important when a patient looks nervous but doesn't speak?
 - A. *Memorizing medical terms*
 - B. *Ignoring the patient's body language*
 - C. *Asking respectful questions and observing nonverbal cues*
 - D. *Speaking louder so the patient understands*

- 5) Why does the author include examples like "smiling" and "making eye contact"?
 - A. *To show how to become a doctor*
 - B. *To explain nonverbal communication in healthcare*
 - C. *To confuse the reader with too many details*
 - D. *To persuade patients to smile more*

ANSWER KEY ON PAGE 197

Project-Based Learning

Storytelling & Communication in Healthcare

Driving Question: How can healthcare professionals use storytelling to better understand a patient's perspective, communicate clearly, and make sure their message has a clear purpose?

| Elements | What to Think About |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Author's Purpose | Why is someone telling this story? What do they want the listener to learn, feel, or do? |
| Author's Perspective | What does the storyteller believe or feel about the topic? How do their experiences shape the message? |
| Critical Thinking | What's being said—and what's not? What clues help you understand the deeper meaning? |
| Communication in Healthcare | How do healthcare workers use stories to explain, comfort, or connect with patients? What makes communication hard sometimes? |

Step 1: Research

Use books, videos, or trusted websites to explore:

- How is storytelling used in healthcare?
- What are some examples of stories helping patients or healthcare workers?
- What is the purpose and perspective behind those stories?

Take notes on:

- Who is telling the story?
- Why are they telling it?
- What do they believe or feel?



Project-Based Learning

Storytelling & Communication in Healthcare

Step 2: Interview

Interview a healthcare worker, patient, or caregiver. Ask:

- Have you ever used or heard a story in a healthcare setting?
- What was the purpose of the story?
- What did the storyteller believe or feel?
- How did it help communication or build trust?

Take notes and highlight:

- The storyteller's purpose
- The storyteller's perspective
- Any nonverbal or emotional communication clues

Step 3: Analyze the Information

Use your research and interview notes to answer:

- What do the stories have in common?
- How do purpose and perspective shape communication?
- What communication problems can storytelling help solve?

Step 4: Create a Storytelling Tool

Design a resource that teaches others how to use storytelling in healthcare. Your tool should:

- Show how storytelling helps communication
- Explain how to identify purpose and perspective in a story
- Help solve a real communication problem in healthcare

Step 5: Present Your Tool

Share your storytelling tool with the class. Be sure to explain:

- What you learned from your research and interviews
- How your tool helps healthcare workers understand purpose and perspective
- Why storytelling is important in real-life healthcare communication

Project-Based *Learning*

Reflect Activity: What I Know Now?

Write a short reflection (1–2 paragraphs) answering:

- What did you learn about communication in healthcare?
- How do author's purpose and perspective help you understand others better?
- How will you use storytelling in your future career?



Student Self-Assessment

Checklist

Storytelling Tool Title:

Main Communication Problem Addressed:

Before you turn in your project, check each box:

Research & Content

- I explained how storytelling is used in healthcare.
- I included examples from my research that show the purpose and perspective behind real stories.
- I took notes on who told the story, why they told it, and what they believed or felt.

Interview Insights

- I interviewed a healthcare worker, patient, or caregiver about storytelling in a healthcare setting.
- I identified the storyteller's purpose and perspective.
- I noted any emotional or nonverbal communication clues.

Critical Thinking

- I analyzed what the stories had in common.
- I explained how purpose and perspective shape communication.
- I described how storytelling can solve communication problems in healthcare.

Storytelling Tool Design

- I created a resource that teaches others how to use storytelling in healthcare.
- My tool shows how storytelling improves communication.
- I included tips for identifying purpose and perspective in a story.
- My tool addresses a real communication problem in healthcare.

Presentation

- I clearly explained what I learned from my research and interview.
- I showed how my tool helps healthcare workers understand purpose and perspective.
- I explained why storytelling is important in real-life healthcare communication.

Reflection: What I Know Now

- I described what I learned about communication in healthcare.
- I explained how understanding an author's purpose and perspective helps me understand others better.
- I reflected on how I will use storytelling in my future healthcare career.