

Corrections Staff and Offender Communication Task Analysis

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Introduction

This following is a task analysis for Corrections Staff and Offender Communication training. This training is being built to enhance communication between staff and offenders and encourage more positive interactions. This analysis will lay the basis for the new training and entails what will be covered in the course.

Task Analysis

- I. Reality versus entertainment (Facts)
 - A. Movies and television show officers being mean, rude, and degrading to offenders; treating offenders as if they are kids, subhuman
 - B. Reality is you cannot treat them this way; this is their life, home; are adults, still human, just made a mistake
- II. Communication Style (Cristerna, 2014) (Concepts)
 - A. Complete assessment to determine own communication style
 - B. Passive
 - a. Avoid expressing opinions/feelings, protecting their rights, and meeting their needs; poor eye contact, slumped body posture; speak softly or apologetically
 - C. Aggressive
 - a. Tend to be verbally or physically abusive; low tolerance for frustration; use humiliation and interrupt frequently; use criticize or blame to attack others; piercing eyes and bad listeners
 - D. Passive-aggressive
 - a. Passive on surface but actually acting out of anger in subtle way; alienated from others; feel incapable of handling issue directly; undermining; mutter to themselves instead of confronting person or issue
 - E. Assertive
 - a. Clearly states feelings; advocates for themselves; clear; appropriate; respectful; in control of emotions; calm and clear tones; good listeners; maintain good eye contact
- III. Tone of Voice (Meyer, 2016) (Interpersonal Skills)
 - A. Serious
 - 1. Serious means speaking with importance of the situation
 - 2. Be serious when a task needs completed or a situation has an important value
 - B. Professional
 - 1. Professional means being courteous, not using profanity
 - 2. You should be professional in every interaction
 - C. Casual
 - 1. Casual means speaking like you would to a friend
 - 2. Be casual when having a general conversation

- D. Respectful
 - 1. Respectful means being courteous, polite
 - 2. You should always be respectful in every interaction
- E. Irreverent
 - 1. Irreverent means being disrespectful
 - 2. This should never occur in interactions
- F. Enthusiastic
 - 1. Enthusiastic is having a sense of excitement, being congratulatory
 - 2. Use when they have shared an accomplishment, completed a task correctly
- G. Unemotional
 - 1. Unemotional is not showing if you are happy, sad, mad, etc.
 - 2. Should remain unemotional when dealing with issues such as interviewing a conduct violation, an offender becoming disrespectful to you.
- H. Calm
 - 1. Calm is having an even tone, not showing many emotions
 - 2. Should remain calm in every situation so you can maintain control
- IV. Using the right words (Interpersonal Skills)
 - A. Positive language is not using profanity, not being pessimistic, cynical, or degrading
 - B. Keep it simple, specific, clear
 - 1. Not all offenders comprehend, have high school level of understanding
 - 2. Tasks need to be broken down and to the point
 - 3. Be on point, not adding unneeded words or steps
 - C. Respectful words should be used as you would want them used to you
 - D. Mindful of words and surroundings
 - 1. Remember you are speaking to a criminal. Think before you speak as your words could set off a trigger
- V. Body Language (Mlodinow, 2012) (Interpersonal skills)
 - A. Tells people how you are feeling more than words. Shows you are paying attention and interested
 - 1. Have arms uncrossed to show you are not closed-off
 - 2. Have open stance to show you are welcoming to the conversation
 - 3. Sitting on the edge of your seat to show you are paying attention
 - 4. Maintain eye contact to show you are listening
 - B. For corrections employees, must stay aware of body position
 - 1. Be aware of your body position. Stay open but not putting yourself in danger
 - 2. Be aware of the offender's whole body and what they are doing
- VI. Assessing the situation (Procedures)
 - A. Look at offender's body language.
 - 1. Observe if they are being closed-off, defensive, gloomy
 - B. Assess mood
 - 1. Observe if they seem to be happy, sad, angry
 - C. Assess tone of voice

1. Listen and identify if they are being serious, causal, urgent, enthusiastic, etc.
- D. When to be firm/serious
1. Offender is starting to escalate the situation
 2. Offender is not listening to directives
 3. Offender needs to be moved to another area due to another situation
- E. When to be understanding/helpful
1. Offender is upset
 2. You are aware offender received bad news (e.g. denied parole, family trouble, death notice)
 3. Offender is having a mental health episode
 4. Offender is asking for help or guidance
- F. When to be a peer
1. Offender is smiling, in a good mood
 2. In passing (e.g. greeting you)
 3. Offender is being respectful
 4. Offender is trying to have respectful, calm conversation

Objectives

Objectives	Domain	Level	Content Structure	Performance
Upon completing an assessment, determine your personal communication style preference using the information provided.	Cognitive	Evaluation	Concept	Recall
Using a role play, demonstrate how to effectively communicate with each communication style.	Cognitive	Application	Interpersonal	Application
Through a group activity, analyze the different tones of voice and body language and apply them to different scenarios.	Cognitive	Analysis; Application	Interpersonal	Application
After completing the unit, the learner will be able to correctly assess a situation and how to properly interact with the offender.	Affective	Organizing	Attitude	Recall Application

References

- Cristerna, J. (2014). The 4-types of communication styles. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140626185020-15628411-the-4-types-of-communication-styles>
- Meyer, K. (2016). The four dimensions of tone of voice. Retrieved from <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/tone-of-voice-dimensions/>
- Mlodinow, L. (2012). How we communicate through body language. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/subliminal/201205/how-we-communicate-through-body-language>