ESL BRAINS

Communication is not that easy!

"We have two ears and one mouth

so that we can listen twice as much as we speak."

— Epictetus, a Greek philosopher

1. **Discuss the questions.**
   - What does the quote mean? Do you agree with it?
   - When we communicate, what is more important: listening or talking?
   - What are the qualities of a good communicator?
   - What problems might occur when communicating with someone?

2. **Complete the table with the words in the box. Some words can be matched to more than one verb.**

animosity	confusion	feedback	ideas	meaning
message	miscommunication	misunderstanding		thoughts

RECEIVE	SHARE	GRASP
PREVENT	**INTERPRET**	**LEAD TO**

3. **Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs from the table above and then discuss these points.**
   a) Asking people questions usually …… miscommunication.
   b) One of the most common reasons that …… misunderstandings is the use of complicated sentence structures.
   c) It only makes sense to …… positive feedback as it keeps everyone happy.
   d) People with various knowledge, experience and cultural backgrounds …… messages in different ways.

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4. **Watch the first part of a video [https://youtu.be/gCfzeONu3Mo](to 03:10) titled "How miscommunication happens (and how to avoid it)" and choose the correct answers.**

a) The transmission model:
   1) means that communication is a one-way process
   2) involves communicating complex concepts
   3) includes feedback from the other person

b) In the transactional model:
   1) there is no exchange of information
   2) just one person assigns meaning
   3) people give and receive feedback

c) Perceptual filters:
   1) improve communication by adding extra information
   2) limit the number of messages we receive
   3) change meanings and interpretation of messages we receive

5. **Complete these rules of good communication with the words in the box.**

engage	express	filters	gut	open

#1: ..... actively with the verbal and nonverbal feedback of others, and adjust your message to facilitate greater understanding.
#2: Listen with your eyes and ears, as well as with your..... . Remember that communication is more than just words.
#3: In the rush to ..... ourselves, it's easy to forget that communication is a two-way street. Be ..... to what the other person might say.
#4: Be aware of your personal perceptual ..... . Elements of your experience, including your culture, community, and family, influence how you see the world.

6. **Watch the second part of the video (from 03:10) and check your answers in ex. 5.**

7. **Discuss the rules above. What do they mean? How easy do you think it is to follow these rules?**

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8. Discuss the questions.

- Do you think that people tend to use too many words to communicate their ideas?
- What can we do to be better communicators?
- In what kinds of situations do you have to ask someone to rephrase what they've said?

9. Match the phrases to the correct categories.

- In other words, …
- I don't quite follow…
- Can you elaborate on that?
- I don't fully understand…
- Could you be more specific?
- I didn't catch that.
- Could you repeat?
- To put it another way…
- Just to be clear, you're suggesting that…
- To be more specific…
- Can you say that again?
- I don't get it…
- Would you mind speaking more slowly?
- So, you're saying that…
- If I understand you correctly, …
- Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're saying that…
- Let me clarify that…

You want someone to clarify what they've said	You didn't hear something
You want to explain/clarify something you've already said	**You want to check if you understood what someone has just said**

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10. What would you say in these situations? Use the expressions from the table on the previous page to complete these dialogues.

a) A: First, you need to know the nuts and bolts of running a business.
B: ……
A: It means that you need to know at least some basic details about running a business.

b) A: I'm going to finish this task soon.
B: …… Everyone's waiting for you.
A: Yeah, I'll finish by Friday.

c) A: If you want to add a new vendor to the system, you have to click this button and type the vendor's details.
B: That's it? I'm not sure if I know what to do. ……
A: Ok, so you click this button and type your vendor's details. Remember that all fields should be filled in. Then, you click 'accept' in the top right corner. After a second, you'll see the information on your screen on whether your form has been completed correctly or not. If not, you need to repeat the process.

d) A: So, I asked her if she knows… and how about... But she…
B: I'm sorry, but I've just switched off. ……

e) A: He wasn't really honest with us.
B: ……
A: Yes, he was a liar.

f) A: Your name, please.
B: Jane Kowalski. K – O – W – A – L – S – K – I.
A: Sorry, …… . Would you mind speaking more slowly?

g) A: You should present the product, talk about all its advantages, give them the price and make sure they buy it.
B: If I understand you correctly, I just need to sell it.
A: Yeah, …… , just sell it.

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