



Health Workforce Initiative

Hi-Touch Healthcare: The Critical Six Soft Skills

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module:

Social Graces

HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Social Graces

Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module

This publication was produced pursuant to grant agreement number 14-326-001. This project was supported by Economic and Workforce Development funds awarded to the Butte Community College District by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Copyright (c) 2016 Chancellor's Office California Community Colleges. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce this work, in whole or part, for educational use only.



Social Graces

Background Information

The term healthcare describes a continual series and full range of personal interactions between individuals in a variety of roles. Due to the complexity and sensitivity of healthcare situations, social graces in healthcare are more than just having good manners. Social graces aid in establishing the essential relationship between patients, colleagues, and supervisors. In the healthcare setting, professionals set the tone for the interaction between patients and visitors. These patients and visitors are constantly making quick but lasting assessments on the healthcare workers use of language and communication styles.

Healthcare professionals deal with patients and families during stressful and trying times. This means that healthcare professionals must hold themselves to a higher standard. In addition to patients and their families, coworkers must also be treated with professionalism, dignity, and respect. The consistent implementation of social graces aids in the confidence and trust instilled within everyone involved and serves to cultivate quality health care. Social graces reflect socially accepted rules about appropriate behavior.

In the first seven seconds of a personal interaction, an impression is formed. Once formed, that impression is difficult to change. There are eleven elements that contribute to the formation of a first impression. These elements include: cleanliness, warmth, credibility, demonstration of knowledge, levels of perceived responsiveness and helpfulness, friendliness, understanding, courteousness, confidence, and professionalism. Examination of these elements and concentrated efforts to improve even one or two can result in more positive first impressions and better client and coworker interactions.



Training



Goal: Participants will learn the basics of social graces.

WIIFM: What's in it for me? Use of social graces is an important part of interpersonal interactions whether with clients or coworkers. This session helps participants examine their existing level of social graces and provides suggestions on ways to strengthen and improve. Healthcare professionals have a higher standard than most professions because they are dealing with the dignity of patients and their ability to be healed.



Materials Provided:

- Social Graces Module PowerPoint
- Activity #1: What Is My Social Graces Score?
- “Social Graces Quiz”
- “Social Graces Quiz” Score Sheet
- Activity #2: Lasting First Impression
- Role Playing instructions
- Activity #3: Tone of Voice
- Activity #4: Outliers
- Optional Case Studies



Directions for the Trainer: Activity preparation information is included in this document and/or within the PowerPoint presentation notes. Each PowerPoint slide, as appropriate, includes detailed explanations and instructions for the trainer. *As with all Grab-N-Go Modules, you can use it all for a more detailed training, or simply use one or two of the many activities—a la carte style!*



ACTIVITY #1

“What is my Social Graces Score?”



Goal: To allow participants to self-evaluate their current use of social graces and determines areas for improvement. This is an anonymous quiz that allows participants to answer honestly and have time for self-reflection.



Materials Needed: (quantities vary by group size):

- Printed copy of “Social Graces” quiz for each participant
- Optional—printed copy of score sheet for each participant (on page 6 of the Trainer Manual or use PowerPoint Slide #7)
- Writing utensil for each participant
- PowerPoint Slide #6



Procedures:

1. Distribute one copy of the quiz to each participant.
2. Emphasize the confidentiality of the quiz and encourage participants to be honest with their answers.
3. Allow 5-7 minutes.
4. When everyone has completed the quiz, distribute the score sheet or use the PowerPoint quiz.
5. Questions for reflection:
 - How do we learn these social rules?
 - How do we enforce social etiquette?
 - How have the methods of enforcement changed over time? What has prompted these changes? What has been gained and lost?
 - Should we require training in social graces?
 - How should colleagues, supervisors, and administrations promote and enforce practice of social graces?



Quiz: Social Graces Score

Select True or False as a response to each statement. This is a confidential quiz so answer as honestly as possible.

1. I say “good morning” to co-workers when I enter work each day. **T or F**

2. I clean up after I use the break room. **T or F**

3. I say “thank you” when someone does something nice for me. **T or F**

4. I arrive on time for meetings. **T or F**

5. I keep my anger under control. **T or F**

6. I think it’s okay to tell jokes about race or sex as long as they are tasteful. **T or F**

7. I think it is okay to “drop in” on acquaintances if I want to tell them something or ask them something. **T or F**

8. If I send an email message, I make sure that it is relevant, appropriate, clear, and checked for spelling and grammatical errors. **T or F**

9. I am respectful of my co-worker’s space. **T or F**

10. I make promises to others that I may not be unable to keep. **T or F**



Social Graces Quiz Score Sheet

Scoring

- Questions 1 – 5: 1 point for True; 0 points for False
- Questions 6 & 7: 1 point for False; 0 points for True
- Questions 8 & 9: 1 point for True; 0 points for False
- Question 10: 1 point for False; 0 points for True

Score Interpretation

0-5 Uh oh, it's time for charm school. Seriously, you seem to be committing a number social graces faux pas. Hasn't anyone said anything to you about your behavior? If you keep it up, your career is probably going nowhere (and you may lose the job you have now!).

6-8 Not bad! You seem to have your office manners mostly in control. But don't stop here – take a look at areas you can improve upon and you should see your career rolling forward.

9-10 Congratulations! You are probably one of those people described as “a pleasure to work with.” Your social graces will move you far on the road to success.



ACTIVITY #2

Lasting First Impression



Goal: To demonstrate that not making a good first impression immediately affects how the other person feels about the other person.



Materials Needed:

- A copy of the “Lasting First Impression” role playing instructions
- PowerPoint Slide #13

Planning Note:

- Print the participant instructions on page nine. Print one page for every two participants and cut each page in half. There should be a Partner #1 stack of instructions and a Partner #2 stack of instructions.



Procedures:

1. Announce that this is a role playing activity.
2. Divide participants into pairs. Explain that each person will be provided with instructions describing his or her role.
3. Distribute the instructions you have printed to the participants. Make sure that one person has instructions for Partner #1 and the other person has instructions for Partner #2. Instruct the participants that they are not to show their instructions to their partners.
4. Provide a couple of minutes for participants to quietly read the instructions before beginning the activity.
5. Explain that the activity will last 3 minutes.
6. Ask if there are any questions and then begin activity.
7. After three minutes, ask the partners to share with one another their observations and experience of the role playing activity.
8. After the participants have shared their experiences of the activity with one another, bring the group together and ask questions such as:
 - Partner 2:
 - How did you feel about your interaction?
 - Did you know who the person was or what s/he wanted?
 - Did you trust him/her?
 - Did you feel well cared for?
 - How could be done differently?



ACTIVITY #2

Lasting First Impression

- How will you feel the next time the nutritionist arrives?
- Partner 1
 - Have you ever seen someone enter a patient room and start an interaction like this?
 - Have you ever participated in a similar type of interaction?
 - What could be done differently?
 - How will you feel the next time you have to work with this patient?



Role Playing Instructions



Partner 1

You are playing the part of the nutritionist. You are coming in to get the patient's order for the day's meals. Do not smile. Do not make eye contact. Do not introduce yourself.

Start the interaction by asking the patient what s/he wants for dinner. Use a pleasant tone of voice, but continue to avoid eye contact. Do not smile.

Tell the patient that s/he must choose between two options for each meal.

Methodically advance through the choices of each meal. As you progress through breakfast, lunch, or dinner, become increasingly frustrated or annoyed. When the patient makes the dinner selection, abruptly turn away and "leave" the room



Partner 2

You are playing the part of the patient. You are tired of being sick, you want to go home, and you hate the bland hospital food. You see the nutritionist as simply a waitress waiting to take your order from a terrible menu. Plus, you finally found a decent channel on the television and want to distract yourself from this terrible place.



ACTIVITY #3

Tone of Voice



Goal: To demonstrate how tone of voice can impact the reception of words.



Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint Slide #17



Procedures:

1. Announce that this is a role playing activity.
2. Divide participants into pairs. If there are an odd number of participants, the trainer should also participate.
3. Give participants a couple of minutes to quickly read through the instructions before the activity begins.
4. The conversation should proceed as follows:
 - Partner 1: Do you want me to cover while you go to lunch?
 - Partner 2: Yes. (*Your tone of voice should reflect that you have been waiting for over an hour to take your lunch break. Your partner is always late to relieve you for your break!*)
 - Partner 1 repeat the same question: Do you want me to cover while you go to lunch?
 - Partner 2: Yes. (*Use a tone of voice that reflects the pleasant surprise that your partner is on time and offering to cover you for a well-deserved break.*)
5. Report out
 - How did it feel to be Partner 1? Partner 2?
 - Is tone of voice a useful tool for communication? How could Partner 2 better communicate his/her perspective?



ACTIVITY #4

Outliers



Goal: To practice social graces in difficult situations. Awkward moments inevitably occur in the workplace. These awkward moments can often appear to be a breach of social graces. Preventing and recovering from these awkward moments can be easier if you have a prepared set of strategies.



Materials Needed:

- Poster paper or flip chart paper
- Magic markers for each participant
- PowerPoint Slide #18



Procedures:

1. Divide participants into teams of about 3-5 people.
2. Give teams about 7-10 minutes to make a list of embarrassing or stressful situations in the workplace. This might include forgetting someone's name, receiving an unwanted gift from a client, noticing a colleague's poor personal hygiene, or etc.
3. Have teams rotate lists. They will have 5 minutes to find and suggest the use of specific types of social graces to apply to each situation.
4. Have each team pick out one or two situations and solutions to share with the large group.
5. Discussion: how can the practice of social graces be encouraged in your workplace?



Optional Case Studies



Case Study # 1

Phyllis is a physical therapist that has worked at the hospital for 20 years. She is assigned to work on a surgical floor. One of her assigned patients is he is Stan, an elderly male patient that has just had a hip replacement. He is alert and oriented. Phyllis has never met Stan. Phyllis walks into Stan's room and says "Hey Sweetie, let's get started." Stan just sits and stares at Phyllis and doesn't move. Phyllis puts her right hand on her right hip and repeats "Let's get going!" Stan, who is still trying to figure out who Phyllis is and what she wants, starts to speak. Phyllis goes to Stan's bedside, throws off the covers and forcefully moves Stan's legs so they are hanging over the bed as she repeats, "Let's get started!"

Questions for thought:

1. How can Phyllis change the way she entered her patient's room? Why should she make the suggested changes?
2. What did the body language gesture of putting her hand on her hip communicate to Stan?
3. Why was it appropriate for Phyllis to remove the covers and to move Stan's legs?
4. How would you handle a patient that acts like Stan and doesn't respond to your requests?



Case Study # 2

Sam is a day shift RN that is receiving report from Bill, a night shift RN. Their facility requires that the shift change report be given at bedside. Bill is tired after working all night and reluctantly leaves the nursing station where he is sitting to head to the first patient's room. Sam looks back at the computer station where Bill was sitting and sees crumpled notes, a coffee cup, a water container, and a protein bar wrapper. As Sam and Bill enter the room, Sam notices that there are syringe and needle wrappers, an empty medication vial, and IV tubing with a full secondary bag sitting on the bedside table. In a chair in the corner of the room sits a pile of dirty and crumpled linen. Sam is exasperated and says it was a terrible night. Sam thinks to himself: Bill's rooms always look like this!

Questions for thought:

1. How has Bill shown that he is lacking in social graces?
2. How can Sam provide effective feedback that will be well received?
3. Have you had this happen to you? What did you do?

Do you reflect on yourself and find that you are sometimes like Bill? If so, what does it say about you and how can you improve?



References

¹ Princeton University WordNet, A Lexical Database for English (2010, October 27). Social Etiquette. Retrieved from

<https://wordnet.princeton.edu/wordnet/tools/search/index.xml?q=social+étiquette+defined>

¹ (2016). Healthcare Professionalism: How Important is Proper Bedside Manner? South University

website. Retrieved from <http://source.southuniversity.edu/healthcare-professionalism-how-important-is-proper-bedside-manner-132067.aspx>