

# Business Verbal Communications

LESSON  
#3

## Study Guide



# Business

# Soft Skills

# Career Enhancement

**A Business Soft Skills lesson  
for your career enhancement**



**BUSINESS  
SOFTSKILLS, INC.**

Level One / 2.0

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## Lesson #3    “Verbal Communication”

### LESSON #3 “Business Verbal Communications”

One of the most important soft skills is the ability to communicate effectively. This lesson defines the communications cycle, presents five rules of effective communications in the workplace, introduces the “*Positive Speak*” concept, and gives advice and examples on the proper and improper use of metaphors.

<b>Video Lesson Timing</b>															
VIDEO	Entire Lesson	Open	Intro	CHAPTERS									Exercize	Review & Quiz	Summary
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
Verbal Comm	26:09:00		1:08	2:20	4:18	3:10	2:12	3:07	3:47				3:48	2:20	

### Script

**[“As Spoken” script – not edited for grammar]**

#### **OPENING**

Hello, my name is Galen Guseman. In this lesson, we are going to discuss the importance of human communications. Effective Verbal Business Communications is the cornerstone of business soft skills. The business world IS communications. You are always communicating with peers, bosses, customers, vendors, and even family. The typical business person spends over 75% of their time interfacing with others so it is no surprise that most organizational problems are due to poor communications. It’s been proven that when communication levels improve, stress levels decrease! So let’s get into Effective Verbal Communications.

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

### CHAPTER 1

It's been said that before you can be a good employee or leader, you must be a good communicator. In order to do this you must understand the five basic rules of the Communications Cycle. Once you understand and use these rules, you'll be able to be an effective communicator.

The most efficient form of communications on earth is the fully functional computer networking system. Computers are programmed to be able to transmit large amounts of information with no mistakes or “misunderstandings.” If there are problems, the computers continue retrying the communications until they are successful. By analyzing how computers talk to each other, we can learn how to be skillful communicators.

### *The Communications Cycle*

Let's look at this diagram of a computer network to see how a Communications Cycle works between computers.

The first step is to get the attention of the computer you want to talk to.

“Computer #1 calls out to computer #3, basically getting its attention over the other computers

Computer #3 responds with, “Yes, I am and ready to listen to you.”

Computer #1 says, “OK, here comes the information.”

Computer #3 Listens and if it does not understand something, it will respond with, “STOP, I do not understand, send again.”

Computer #1 will resend the information until Computer #3 understands.

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

Then **Computer #3** says, “I have received the information and understand. I now have information for you, are you ready to receive?”

**Computer #1**, “Yes, start sending.”

**Computer #1** will then say, “I have received the information and understand. Do you have any additional information to send?”

**Computer #3** says, “No, I am done. Do you have any additional information to send?”

**Computer #1**, “No, I am done – terminating communications.”

**Computer #3**, “Terminating communications.”

The communications cycle is now complete. As you’ve seen, there was no way for miscommunications to have occurred.

## CHAPTER 2

Now, let’s apply these concepts to people by analyzing the five rules of effective communications.

The first rule is “Getting their attention.”

If you walk into a room full of people and just start talking, no one will know WHO you are talking to and may or may not listen.

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But if you come into the room and say, “Hey Bob!” and Bob turns around and says, “Yes, Carl,” you now have his attention and can start your communications cycle. Never start a conversation until you know you have the listener’s attention.

The second rule is “Communicate clear, concise information.”

Make sure you are speaking loud enough and using words, phrases and terminology that the other person can understand. You typically talk to your boss different than customers and different to peers. Some people will know all the acronyms and metaphors that you use and others won’t. Some people will need more background information than others. So, it is important to find the same communications level with the other person. If you don’t, your communications cycle will get bogged down and eventually die. Also, don’t try to talk for a long period of time. Give the other person a chance to respond, or acknowledge that they understand. By the way, never use words that you do not totally understand. If you do, the communications cycle will be distorted.

Rule three, is “Get Acknowledgement” that the other person has heard you and understands what you were saying. If they didn’t, repeat the information in various forms until it is understood. If you continue without doing this, you will just be stacking misunderstanding on top of misunderstanding and there will never be accurate communication. You must do the same when listening.

Some people try to control the conversation by interrupting with “acknowledgments.” They do this to try to stop you because they felt they GOT what you were saying. AND, if you signal acknowledgements too often you will confuse the speaker and they will think you don’t comprehend.

But to confuse things further, when more than one “acknowledgment” occurs, the speaker usually feels they are not communicating and they will repeat themselves or try to communicate harder. Once again the communications cycle will break down.

The fourth rule is, “Listen.”

When someone is talking, concentrate on what they are saying and do not focus on what you are going to say in response. Make sure you can see the speaker and hear them. Wait until they have completed their thought and pause for any response. As soon as they do, acknowledge them. If you don’t understand something, ask about it! Listening is 50% of the communications cycle and it is very important to pay attention to the speaker.

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The fifth and final rule is “Properly terminate the communications cycle.”

This is very important because you must know if ALL the information has been shared and completed. Nothing is worse than finding out you did not get all of the information. Finalizing the communications cycle can be simply saying “are we done?” or anything that indicates the information flow has been completed. Try not to get into the bad habit of starting to repeat some or all of the information. It is OK to summarize it in order to clarify but don't get into an endless process of repeating.

### CHAPTER 3

Another major part of communication is body language. So what IS body language anyway? Can your body actually SPEAK to others? It certainly CAN! Your stance, gestures, eye contact and body movement are all part of your body language. And this can reveal what you are thinking or how you feel. Studies estimate that 55% to 93% of communication is visual. So your voice may be saying one thing but your body language is saying another. This will end up totally confusing the other person, or make them feel that they have not communicated, and don't know why!

So, let's look at some POSITIVE body language starting with the eyes. Always look into the eyes of people when you are talking or listening to them. People want to feel special and unique. When you look away during the communications cycle, they feel that you have lost interest, don't care, or don't understand or are trying to hide something. All of these are communication breakers!

Body language is also revealed by your facial expression. If you're frowning or have a furrowed brow, it will be assumed that you don't agree or understand the conversation. Conversely, if you slowly nod while smiling it tells the other person that you are agreeing and understanding.

Crossing your arms always looks like you are “blocking” or disagreeing with the speaker. It is always better to keep your arms to your side or just interlace your fingers across your chest if you are sitting because it will transmit “neutral” signals.

Meetings are a very important environment to be aware of your body language. You do not want to inadvertently give out “wrong” body language, especially to people who really don't know you very well. It is important to always maintain a “neutral” position or body language. To do this, maintain your posture, look at the person speaking and try not to show any emotion that could be misinterpreted. And although the meeting may be boring, like most are, never look bored. Always avoid NEGATIVE body language.



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Remember, you may be transmitting body language that you are totally unaware of, especially if you are tired or not feeling well. This is “accidental body language” that you didn’t want seen, but it may cause communications problems! So remember, in business, your body language speaks volumes. Always keep eye contact, maintain your posture, be totally aware of how you look and make it a habit to transmit positive body language

### CHAPTER 4

Now we are going to see a couple of situations using body language. Look at this first vignette and see how you feel.

#### First Vignette

**Galen:** which employee do you think is paying attention and communicating the best? Remember, others will be watching you in the work place. Which type of reputation would you like to have – attentive and professional or not caring? Ok, let’s look at another vignette.

#### Second Vignette

**Galen:** Now, if you were a manager in this meeting and both the employees in the red and blue shirts had requested a transfer to your department, which one would interest you? This is just a couple of examples of body language and you can see how powerful it can be, in both a positive and negative way. Always be aware of your body language.

Another potential communication problem is word usage. It is important that you never use words that you do not fully understand, especially in business as this will cause miscommunications and give you a bad reputation. If you want to improve your vocabulary, great, just know WHAT the words mean, how and when to use them. The same thing can be said about acronyms. Now an acronym is a word formed from the initial letters of words in a set phrase, such as FEMA for “Federal Emergency Management Agency” or ASAP for “As Soon As Possible.” Every industry and sometimes every company have their own set of acronyms. If you’re new to either, ask for the meaning of these “new” words. If you’re hearing them for the first time, write

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

them down and ask your supervisor. Then keep your list handy until you can use them as easily as everyone else. But, don't try to use acronyms that you're unsure of because you will cause miscommunications if you do!

### CHAPTER 5

#### Positive Speak

Now I'd like to talk about how your speaking demeanor can affect your reputation. Oh, speaking of your reputation, let's discuss what this really means to you. Some people don't believe that a reputation means much, because as soon as you move to another job, there are new people involved. True or False? Well, that's false in the business world. You are ALWAYS being watched.

Not just by your boss, but by your peers, other managers, human resources, even customers. Co-workers will talk about you, both good and bad. If you have a reputation for easily getting angry, or always complaining, you will eventually be perceived as NOT being a team player. THAT reputation will be difficult to change. So start a good reputation and it will return with great rewards.

One of the best ways to get a good reputation is to develop “good working habits.” A prime example of this is to make sure that you are always positive when communicating. We call this “Positive Speak.”

#### CASE STUDY #114

*In fact, let's look at a Case Study about Positive Speak. We are going to see the same manager give two different people the same job. Let's listen in on what they have to say.*

***Boss: Hi Justin, how are you today?***

***Justin: I don't know, just a little tired I guess.***

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

**Boss:** Well, I need your help with a special project. I want you to look at the Peterson contract, pull out the milestones and get the related dates.

**Justin:** I've never really done that before.

**Boss:** I understand but I'm short handed in that area and I really need your help.

**Justin:** I have a lot of other things to do first.

**Boss:** I want this to be your top priority.

**Justin:** Isn't the Peterson contract really thick?

**Boss:** No, all our contracts are the same.

**Justin:** Ok, but it may take me a while to get it done.

**Boss:** Just do your best.

**Galen:** Now let's see how it goes with Ryan.

**Boss:** Ryan, how are you today?

**Ryan:** Oh, great sir, how are you?

**Boss:** I'm good. I need your help with a special project.

**Ryan:** Yeah! What can I do for you?

**Boss:** I need you to look at the Peterson contract, pull out the milestones and get the related dates.

**Ryan:** Like a contract brief?

**Boss:** Exactly!

**Ryan:** Well, I've never did one before but I understand the concept. When do you need it by?

**Boss:** I want you to make this your top priority.

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

*Ryan: Okay. I will get started right away and give you a progress report in the morning.*

*Boss: Good. If you have any questions just give me a call!*

*Ryan: Okay, great! And, thank you for the opportunity*

*Boss: You're welcome Ryan. And thank you for your help.*

*Galen: If you were the manager, who would you want to do this job? Justin was very negative throughout the whole discussion while Ryan was giving “PositiveSpeak.” You can see where Ryan is going to get a good reputation as a positive performer, while Justin gets a reputation as a loser who gives up easily. You want to create a habit of always using “Positive Speak” in the business community.*

### CHAPTER 6

I want to take a few minutes to talk about metaphors. Metaphors are a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another. For example, instead of saying, “Now, it’s Bill’s turn,” you might say, “The ball is in his court.” Metaphors can be used to help make a point or to make speaking more colorful, but you should not use them too often. Also, if you’re working with people from other countries or cultures, they may not understand them or may find them embarrassing.

#### CASE STUDY #115

*Here is a case study on a presentation given by the President of a local company, metaphorically speaking.*

**President:** *Thank you for coming today. Thank you. If I can run this past you, I think we need to hit the ground running and keep the eye on the ball and make sure that we are singing from the same hymn book. And at the end of the day it is not a level playing field but if the rabbit does not jump, we got ‘em! But we can’t afford to leave it on the backburner; we’ve got a lot of irons in the fire, right now.*

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*If we add in the fudge factor, things may end up slipping to the left and, if they do, we will need to be ready to run a tight ship. I don't want to re-invent the wheel but we must get right down in the weeds on this one. And if push comes to shove, it could be a whole new ball game. I suggest we test the water and if we can make hay while the sun shines, then we are cooking with gas. If not, we are in a world of hurt. And I'm sure the shakers and movers will then be on our side from day one. I can take it to the head honchos and if they want the whole enchilada, why we can start the ball rolling. We may have to fine-tune or we may be hung out to dry if it becomes a show-stopper. But I know, I know that there is light at the end of the tunnel and I think we have backed a winner here. It will not get blown out of the water, as long as our ducks are in a row.*

*And I think the ball will stay in play, and we can come up smelling like a rose. We also need to nail our colors very firmly to the mast and look at the big picture. If we march to the beat of a different drummer it could end up to be a sticky wicket. So I've put in my two cents worth and I don't want to rock the boat or teach anyone to suck eggs but we must keep this very firmly in our sights or it could fall between the cracks. And I don't want to be seen as rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic but if the shoe fits, wear it.*

*At the end of the day, it's like a big game of Space Invaders. Why, the aliens are getting closer and if we don't zap them it'll be game over for us. So remember, my door is always open and I'm firmly flexible. The ball is in your court; so make sure it is a slam dunk before doing an end run!*

*Thank you for your time!*

**Galen:** Kind of sounds like a politician huh? Well, this of course, is an extreme example but we wanted to make an impression on you so we took it to the max. Bottom line, it is OK to use metaphors, just use them properly and don't overdo it. The key is to never cause any form of miscommunications by using metaphors.

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

### Review and Quiz

Questions in **BOLD** answers underlined

Ok, it is time to get a pencil and piece of paper out, we are going to see a review and have a quiz on the key points of Effective Verbal Business Communications. Once in a while you will see a slide come up with a missing word or multiple choice question. You'll have eight seconds to write down the answer before it appears. Ready? OK, good luck. Here we go into the Review and Quiz on Effective Verbal Business Communications.

Using the Communication Cycle

Is the key to effective

verbal communications

Five Rules Of Effective Verbal

Business Communications

Rule #1

Get their attention

The speaker should

always have your

attention

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

### Rule #2

Communicate clear,  
concise information

- Use words, phrases and terminology
- that can be understood
- Find the same communications level

### When Communicating information

you should:

- A) Always look away from the person**
- B) Never use words you do not understand**
- C) Keep talking until you complete your thought**

### Rule #3

Get Acknowledgment that you were understood

- Clarify any misunderstandings
- Do not use too many acknowledgements

### Rule #4

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

Listen

- Concentrate on what is being said
- Do not focus on what you are going to say
- Wait until they are finished

**Always acknowledge**

**that you**

**understand**

Rule #5

Terminating

the communications cycle

- Finalizing the communications cycle is important
- Summarize, but do not repeat

Body language can be 55% to 93%

of communications

**An example of positive body language is:**



## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

- A) looking into the other person’s eyes
- B) Moving around a lot
- C) Keeping hands in your pocket

Stay away from negative body language such as crossed arms

Negative body language can give you a bad reputation.

Always be aware of your body language.

**Create a habit of  
always using  
“Positive Speak.”**

Use metaphors properly but do not overdo it.

Never use words you don’t fully understand.

**Never use  
acronyms**

## **Lesson #3    “Verbal Communication”**

**you do not know**

### **SUMMARY**

If you missed any of the quizzes, just replay the indicated chapters until you understand the information. Verbal Business Communications is a major cornerstone of business soft skills. Once you learn the basic communications cycle and how to project positive body language, you'll be an effective communicator.

Don't forget to make “Positive Speak” a habit in your daily business communications. The business world is LED by people who are effective communicators. It is very important that you practice these rules and concepts. When you know and use them, you too can become a successful, business professional.

Thank you for watching and good luck!

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

### Lesson #3 “Business Verbal Communications” Test

#### True or False

1. The most efficient communications is a fully functional computer network system .....T or F
2. The communications cycle reduces misunderstandings .....T or F
3. It is not important to get someone’s attention before starting a conversation ....T or F
4. Use the same terminology when speaking to your supervisor or customers .....T or F
5. It really doesn’t matter if the other person hears you, just keep talking.....T or F
6. Always focus on what you are going to say when someone is talking to you ....T or F
7. Always terminate the communications cycle .....T or F
8. Body language is only a minor part of communications.....T or F
9. Never look into someone’s eyes when talking because it will make them nervous .....T or F

### Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

10. Crossing your arms show you are interested in what is being said to you .....T or F
11. Body language is important even in meetings .....T or F
12. There is no such thing as “accidental” body language .....T or F
13. It is OK to use words you do not fully understand .....T or F
14. When you hear new acronyms, write them down and their meaning .....T or F
15. Do not worry about your reputation in your current job .....T or F
16. You are always being watched and evaluated by the people around you .....T or F
17. Do not overuse metaphors.....T or F
18. Metaphors can be used to make a point .....T or F
19. Effective Verbal Communications can help you become a better employee.....T or F
20. Never interrupt unless you do not understand something .....T or F

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

### Answers

1. The most efficient communications on earth is a fully functional computer network system

**TRUE**

2. The communications cycle reduces misunderstandings

**TRUE**

3. It is not important to get someone’s attention before starting a conversation

**FALSE**

4. Use the same terminology when speaking to your supervisor or customers

**FALSE**

5. It really doesn’t matter if the other person hears you, just keep talking

**FALSE**

6. Always focus on what you are going to say when someone is talking to you

**FALSE**

## Lesson #3 “Verbal Communication”

7. Always terminate the communications cycle

**TRUE**

8. Body language is only a minor part of communications

**FALSE**

9. Never look into someone’s eyes when you are talking to them because it will make them nervous

**FALSE**

10. Crossing your arms shows you are interested in what is being said to you

**FALSE**

11. Body language is important even in meetings

**TRUE**

12. There is no such thing as “accidental” body language

**FALSE**

13. It is OK to use words you do not fully understand

**FALSE**

## **Lesson #3    “Verbal Communication”**

14. When you hear new acronyms, write them down and their meaning

**TRUE**

15. Do not worry about your reputation in your current job

**FALSE**

16. You are always being watched and evaluated by the people around you

**TRUE**

17. Do not overuse metaphors

**TRUE**

18. Metaphors can be used to make a point

**TRUE**

19. Effective Verbal Communications can help you become a better employee

**TRUE**

20. Never interrupt unless you do not understand something

**TRUE**

## **Lesson #3    “Verbal Communication”**

### **QUICK REFERENCE CARD**

[See next page]

The Quick Reference Cards for this lesson are located on the next page. These cards provide the rules and key points of this lesson.

The Quick Reference pages can be printed on a heavy card stock then cut into individual cards for easy access. They can also be printed in the 8 ½ x 11 format and laminated or put into a notebook .

Use them whenever you need a quick referral to key points of this lesson.



**Five Rules of effective communications**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

1. Get the attention of the person you are talking to
2. Communicate clear and concise information

**Five Rules of effective communications**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

3. Get acknowledgement
4. Listen
5. Properly terminate the communications cycle

**Keep your body language positive**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

1. Maintain eye contact
2. Watch your posture
3. Avoid frowning or furrowing your brow
4. Transmit “neutral” body language by keeping your arms at your side

**Keep your body language positive**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

5. Avoid negative body language, especially with people who don't know you
6. Be aware of transmitting “accidental body language”

**Proper word usage is essential**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

1. Never use words that you do not fully understand
2. Make sure you understand all acronyms

**Proper word usage is essential**

**Verbal Communications**

**Lesson 3**

**Level One**

3. Cultivate and practice “positive speak”
4. Use metaphors wisely and be sensitive to other cultures