

Interpersonal Skills

This class is presented by the Public Library Academy and sponsored through a grant from IMLS.



Introductions

Tell us about yourself! What is your name? Where do you work? What is your job title?

Feel free to share a little about your learning goals for this class or some details to help us get to know you a little better.



Class Objectives

- Use trauma informed communication tools to de-escalate a situation
- Recognize feelings of stress
- Apply practiced scripts to different conversations with coworkers or the public

Trauma Informed Communication Skills



Conflict Triggers

- Conflict triggers are your personal hot button issues
- They cause you to feel threatened and can trigger a fight or flight response
- They are unique to each person – not everyone will be “triggered” by the same things

Communication Styles

- Socioeconomic backgrounds can affect communication styles
- There are “hidden rules” to living in poverty, middle class, and wealth
- Most libraries are staffed and run by people with middle class backgrounds

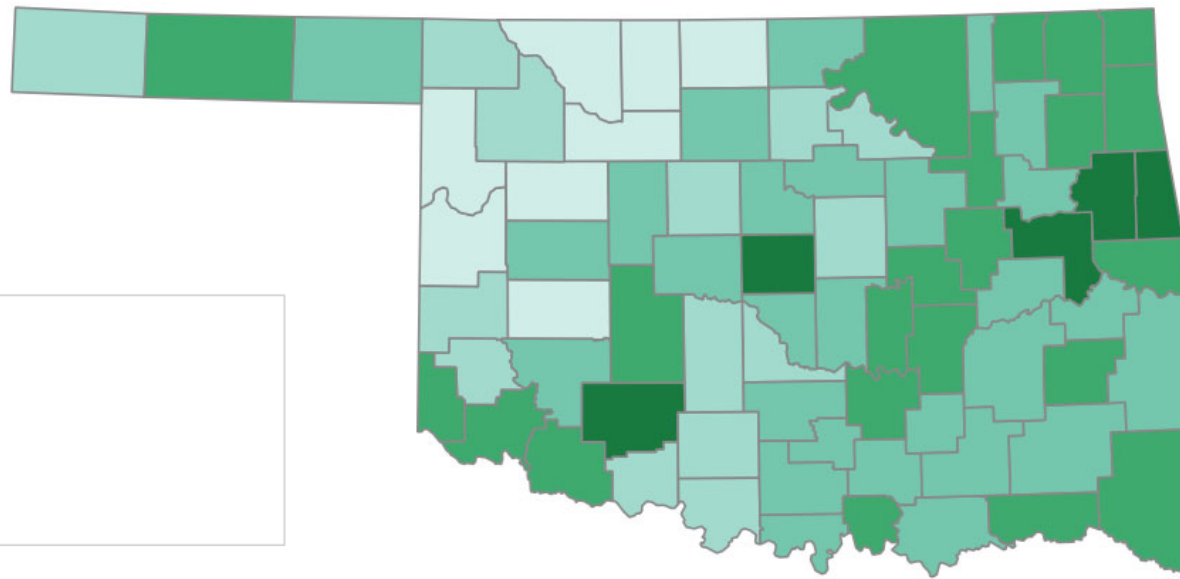
Poverty and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

- People who grew up in poverty may struggle with the “hidden rules” of middle class
- Individuals experiencing homelessness pose additional communication barriers
 - Shortened time horizon
 - View respect differently
 - Are habituated to punishment

Diversity Index by County: 2020

Oklahoma: 59.5%

- Diversity Index**
- 65.0% or more
 - 55.0% to 64.9%
 - 45.0% to 54.9%
 - 35.0% to 44.9%
 - Less than 35.0%



Pennies in the Cup

- It takes 5 positive interactions to offset 1 negative
- Every time you ask a customer to comply with a rule, you remove 5 pennies from the cup
- If you do not have enough pennies, you may face pushback or a full-blown conflict

De-Escalation Tools

Strategies

Expectation Management

- Avoid conflict by telling customers ahead of time exactly what they can expect

Pre-emptive Acknowledgement

- If negative emotions are unavoidable, you can manage a customer's reaction by acknowledging their emotions up front

Communication Pitfalls

Avoid:

- Inviting yourself into conversations
- Lots of unfinished sentences
- Over explaining
- Asking too many questions
- Leading with a disclaimer

Crucial Conversations



Yes, And Technique

- Based on one of the core principles of improv
 - Shoot down/block – reject the person and their idea
 - Yes, and – saying yes, and building on their suggestion
 - Yes to the person, but the idea needs work

Difficult Conversations

- Think of a time that a customer service experience did not go well. What could have been done differently that might have made it go better?
- Script a scenario:
 - Upholding a library policy
 - Addressing a mistake by a coworker/supervised employee
 - Pull from your own Common Complaints sheet

Communication is Imperfect

- These scripts and skills will help improve your communication, but there will always be interactions that don't go well – and that's okay
- You cannot make every customer happy, every time
- Reflect on what went well and what went wrong for next time

Reflection Question

- What skills have you learned that will improve or change how you communicate in the future?

Coping With Stress

Breathing Techniques

- Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4, and breathe out for 4
 - Suggestion: As you breathe in, think to yourself “I breathe in peace and calm.”
As you breathe out, think “I breathe out stress and tension.”
- Lion’s Breath – Breathe in through your nose and fill yourself completely up with air. Open your mouth as wide as you can and breathe out with a “HA” or roar sound.

Grounding Techniques

- Count objects of a specific color
- List 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can taste, 2 things you can touch, and 1 thing you can smell

Class Evaluation



bit.ly/IPSfy25



Log Attendance



1. Write your name on your certificate
2. Visit bit.ly/3PWYm0H
3. Fill out the form and upload a picture of your certificate

Thank you!

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