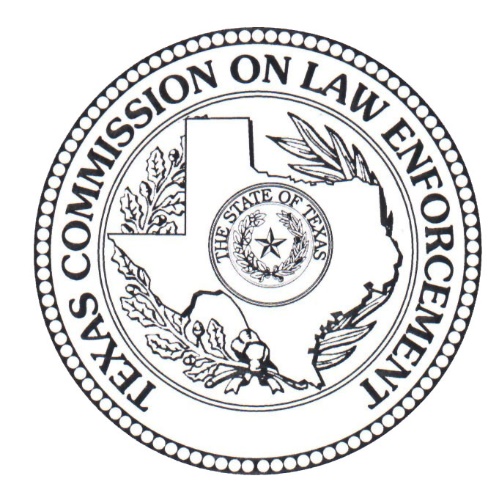
Interpersonal Communications

in the

Correctional Setting

(Intermediate)



Course #3503

April 2021

Interpersonal Communications

in the Correctional Setting

(Intermediate)

ABSTRACT

This instructor resource guide (IRG) is designed to provide the instructor with the learning objectives and teaching steps needed to construct a complete and effective lesson plan. By itself the IRG is not a lesson plan but is a guide for the instructor to build on and may be used as a student handout as well.

This guide is designed to assist the instructor in developing an appropriate lesson plan to teach the course learning objectives. The basic communications skills model which has been used by correctional agencies for more than thirty-five years to train officers and counselors was developed by Dr. Robert R. Carkhuff, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Carkhuff Institute of Human Technology, and his associates. Permission has been given by the publishers cited in the reference materials to use the material in the development of this correctional training material.

This course is designed to provide the county corrections officer with an understanding of basic communication skills and the ability to use them. Management of inmate population within a correctional setting has changed in recent years. In the past, staff have been asked to put themselves on the line without all the knowledge and skills they really needed. Staff have had to cope with ever increasing legal, physical, and emotional demands. With the recent development of more in-depth mental health training and de-escalation skills among staff, learning the principles of interpersonal communication is more important than ever. This course is one of the Intermediate Core courses required by TCOLE to receive the Intermediate Certification as a County Corrections Officer.

**Note to Trainers: It is the responsibility of the training coordinator to ensure this curriculum and its materials are kept up to date. Refer to curriculum and legal resources for changes in subject matter or laws relating to this topic as well as the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement website at** [**www.tcole.texas.gov**](http://www.tcole.texas.gov) **for edits due to course review.**

**Target Population:** Texas County Jail Personnel

**Student Prerequisites:**

* Basic County Jail License or employment in a jail

**Instructor Prerequisites:**

* Certified TCOLE Instructor and documented knowledge/training in course subject matter OR
* Documented subject matter expert

**Length of Course:** 16 hours minimum

**Equipment:**

* None

**Training Delivery Method(s):**

* Online
* Instructor-led, classroom-based
* Instructor-led, virtual classroom

**Method(s) of Instruction:**

* Lecture
* Discussion
* Videos

**Assessment:** Assessment is required for completion of this course to ensure the student has a thorough comprehension of all learning objectives. Training providers are responsible for assessing and documenting student mastery of all objectives in this course.

A competency test with answer key is provided as part of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Instructor Guide. The Commission highly recommends a variety of testing/assessment opportunities throughout the course which could include: oral or written testing, interaction with instructor and students, case study and scenario, and other means of testing students’ application of the skills, as the instructor or department deems appropriate.

Unless otherwise indicated, the minimum passing score shall be 70%.

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**Reference Materials:**

* Blakeman, John D. 1977. *IPC: Interpersonal Communication Skills for Correctional Management*. Amherst, Mass: Human Resource Development Press.
* Blakeman, John D. 1977. *IPC, Trainer's Guide: Interpersonal Communication Skills for Correctional Management*. Amherst, Mass: Human Resource Development Press.
* Interpersonal Communications in the Correctional Setting. (2004). National Institute of Corrections. <https://nicic.gov/interpersonal-communications-correctional-setting-ipc>

Intermediate Communications in Corrections:

Interpersonal Communications

Learning Objectives

UNIT 1 Introduction

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list three basic components and associated elements of the interpersonal communications model.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list five characteristics of effective managers.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list three purposes of this training program.

UNIT 2 The Basics—Sizing Up the Situation

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe the four “sizing up” skills.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list four things that a staff member might look for if he or she toured the work area prior to going on shift.

UNIT 3 Positioning

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define positioning.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list three major parts of positioning and be able to briefly describe each.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to explain why it is important to be “unpredictable” in positioning oneself.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe at least two duty stations with the appropriate location for positioning oneself identified for each duty station.
  5. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list two situations when direct contact with an inmate is appropriate and two situations when such contact is not appropriate.

UNIT 4 Posturing

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define the term posturing.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the three components of good posturing.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to discuss distracting behaviors that he or she has observed other staff exhibit and /or that he or she has personally exhibited in the past.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify why good posturing is important in interpersonal communication.

UNIT 5 Observing

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the four primary components of observing.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the three things considered during the first part of observing.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least four clues that can be used to develop interferences.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list three things in relation to environment that might reflect inmate values.
  5. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to select the appropriate term which describes an inmate or person whose behavior is clearly spelled out in instructional examples.
  6. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to demonstrate their ability to identify specific behaviors which would indicate negative, neutral, or positive relationships
  7. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define how to evaluate/determine whether a situation indicates there will be trouble or not.

UNIT 6 Listening

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the four steps in listening.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify how other basic skills support good listening techniques.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least ten words or phrases that would be key words in a correctional environment.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list three degrees of intensity and mood.

UNIT 7 The Add-Ons—Communicating with Inmates

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify two pillars of communication used in the corrections environment.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least two qualities/skills displayed by staff members who are good communicators.

UNIT 8 Responding to Inmates—Identifying Content

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define the term identifying content.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying content.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least two situations in which an officer might respond to content in order to get more information.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify common attitudes and how responding to inmates is beneficial.

UNIT 9 Responding to Inmates—Identifying Feeling

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define identifying feeling.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying feeling.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list five basic feeling words.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify the three levels of intensity for feeling.
  5. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list two situations where it would be useful to defuse negative feelings by making an appropriate response.
  6. **Learning Objective:** The student will demonstrate their ability to identify the emotion being observed, the intensity level of the emotion, and an appropriate response to gain more information.

UNIT 10 Responding to Inmates—Identifying Meaning

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define the term identifying meaning.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying meaning.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify two effective responses that clearly demonstrate meaning.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify when it is appropriate to refer the inmate to a mental health worker or other specialist.

UNIT 11 Asking Questions

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify the techniques used in asking questions.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define “thinking about what was said or not said.”
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list four questions you can ask yourself when thinking about what was said or not said.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will list examples of specific phrases that indicate the inmate is withholding information.

UNIT 12 The Applications—Managing Behavior

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the three application skills used in managing behavior.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define “managing behavior” and explain its importance to an institutional setting.

UNIT 13 Handling Requests

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe the two steps in handling requests.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least two necessary elements in checking things out.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least three reasons for giving an inmate a reason for your response.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe a staff member’s option in taking care of an inmate’s basic needs.

UNIT 14 Making Requests

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to identify the two steps involved in making requests.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define “taking action” and at least three techniques to use in taking action.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define mild and direct request format and give an example of each.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define softening a request.

UNIT 15 Reinforcing Behavior

* 1. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to define reinforcing behavior.
  2. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list the two parts of reinforcing behavior.
  3. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to describe when physical force should be used to correct negative behavior.
  4. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least four negative reinforcements that can be used and behaviors that you might negatively reinforce.
  5. **Learning Objective:** The student will be able to list at least four positive reinforcements that can be used and behaviors that you might positively reinforce.

Intermediate Communications in Corrections:

Interpersonal Communications

# UNIT 1. Introduction

## The student will be able to list three basic components and associated elements of the interpersonal communications model.

1. Basics: Sizing Up the Situation
   1. Position
   2. Posture
   3. Observe
   4. Listen
2. Add-Ons: Communicating with Inmates
   1. Respond
      1. Content
      2. Feeling
      3. Meaning
   2. Ask questions
3. The Applications: Managing Behavior
   1. Handle requests
   2. Make requests
   3. Reinforce

## The student will be able to list five characteristics of effective managers.

1. Fair
2. Gives orders respectfully
3. Backs you up
4. Makes you feel appreciated
5. Makes you feel like part of the organization
6. Predictable and consistent
7. Listens
8. Has knowledge of job
9. Is a good role model

## The student will be able to list three purposes of this training program.

1. Gives trainees practical skills
2. Equips trainees to apply those skills to management of people
3. Develops each trainee so that he/she can make effective use of his/her strengths as a communicator

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario to introduce the content. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario A: Have two volunteers simulate an inmate who refuses to go into a single cell and an officer who must get him to go in. They do not need to do anything. Make the point that the training is designed to give officers additional tools to use to persuade the inmate to go into the cell prior to having to use a higher level of force.

# UNIT 2. The Basics—Sizing Up the Situation

## The student will be able to describe the four “sizing up” skills.

1. Position
2. Posture
3. Observe
4. Listen

## The student will be able to list four things that a staff member might look for if he or she toured the work area prior to going on shift.

1. Changes in routine
2. Grouping of inmates
3. Noise levels
4. Changes in inmates' physical appearance

# UNIT 3. Positioning

## The student will be able to define positioning.

## Positioning means putting yourself in the best possible position to see and hear individual groups. You keep yourself at a safe distance (i.e. place yourself far enough away to be safe) while remaining close enough to see and hear what is going on (groups and/or individuals).

## The student will be able to list three major parts of positioning and be able to briefly describe each.

1. Distancing—should be adequate to allow for both safety and seeing/hearing a particular situation.
   1. The primary goal is safety, but safety is not enough; we must also be able to see things that the inmates are doing.
   2. You could be safe at an officer station or in a control center; however, these designs will always create blind spots for observation, which ultimately compromises long term safety.
2. Facing the inmate—positioned for the most effective line of vision, i.e., so that officer can observe everything he/she wants and needs to.
   1. Your left shoulder should be lined up with the left boundary line of the area you are watching, while your right shoulder lines up with the right boundary line of the area you are watching.
   2. This allows you to observe the entire field of your responsibility by turning your head.
   3. If the field of responsibility is too large for you to view, you will need to move around and constantly reposition yourself.
   4. Facing the inmates help the officer size up the situation and react appropriately by optimizing the field of vision.
3. Looking directly—to really understand what is happening, the officer needs to look directly at a situation.
   1. Even if you have the correct position, and you are facing the inmates, you will not see details of a situation, unless you look directly at a group when necessary.
   2. In addition, looking directly at group of inmates communicates that you are not threatened by the group of inmates.
   3. This does not mean that you engage in a staring contest, after all, you still need to observe the larger group as well.
   4. Looking directly at an inmate’s face, is a good way to make the other party aware of our efforts to contact them.
   5. Looking directly at inmates will also provide you with clues as you develop your observational skills, you may see any of the following clues:
      1. Clenched fists (a sign of aggressiveness, anger, frustration, and possibly impending violence)
      2. Tightly rolled pant legs (possibility of preparing for a fight, rolling pant legs prevents the inmate from tripping over the fabric)
      3. An inmate refusing to make eye contact (which at the very least communicates comfortability)

## The student will be able to explain why it is important to be “unpredictable” in positioning oneself.

It is always important to change the order of doing things, especially when supervising a large area or when you cannot always remain squared in one position, so that your behavior cannot be easily predicted.

## The student will be able to describe at least two duty stations with the appropriate location for positioning oneself identified for each duty station.

1. Recreation Area – Observing from outside the recreation area would be ideal, however, if necessary to observe from within the recreation area, observing from a position where your back is against the wall helps ensure you can observe as much as possible.
2. Inmate Housing Area – Walking through the housing area, provides the ability to make closer observations, while positioning oneself with from an elevated position allows the officer to view the entire housing area at once.
3. Supervising Working Inmates – While supervising a work assignment, officers need to position themselves at a vantage point to view all inmates working, while being aware of other inmates potentially entering into the work area.

## The student will be able to list two situations when direct contact with an inmate is appropriate and two situations when such contact is not appropriate.

There is no absolute rule regarding how far or how close you position yourself—as an experienced staff member, use your experience, knowledge of the situation and /or individuals involved, and common sense to pick an appropriate distance.

1. Direct eye contact
   1. When you want an inmate to know that you mean business
   2. When you want to know what is going on
2. Non-direct eye contact
   1. Key is to balance your eye contact so that you and the other party are both comfortable with it.
   2. Officers should train themselves to observe their environment by using multiple senses.
      1. Listening for noises that are out of the ordinary
      2. Using peripheral vision
      3. Judging the atmosphere using your intuition

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario B: Get two volunteers to help you. Have them play the role of two offenders coming down a corridor toward you, the officer. Have them be engaged in a heated discussion. Explain the scenario to the class and then demonstrate.

Have the class identify “best positioning.”

# UNIT 4. Posturing

## The student will be able to define the term posturing.

1. Posturing is holding your body in such a way that shows strength, confidence, interest, and control.
2. When an officer appears strong and confident, inmates believe they are strong and confident.

## The student will be able to list the three components of good posturing.

1. Standing tall – This is something that takes practice; each time you see yourself in front of a mirror, you should check your posture.
   1. Are your shoulders straight?
   2. Is your chest caved in?
   3. Do I look strong and confident?
2. Eliminating distracting behaviors – Distracting behaviors like biting your nails, tapping your foot, clicking your pen, or fidgeting with your keys does not communicate confidence, but neither does standing still and stiff like a statue.
3. Inclining slightly forward – The intention here is to communicate interest and concern by shifting your weight slightly forward. This is even demonstrated while sitting in a chair.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Make the statement: Imagine someone leaning back in a reclined position vs. someone leaning forward in a chair. What do these positions communicate?

## The student will be able to discuss distracting behaviors that he or she has observed other staff exhibit and/or that he or she has personally exhibited in the past.

1. Distracting behaviors that staff exhibit
   1. Leaning against ledges or walls
   2. Hands in pockets
   3. Playing with keys
   4. Clicking ink pens
   5. Biting fingernails
   6. Being too rigid
   7. Exaggerated shifting
   8. Not making eye contact

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Engage the students with the question “What are distracting behaviors that you exhibit?”

## The student will be able to identify why good posturing is important in interpersonal communication.

1. Your posture—how you carry yourself—communicates a lot to the inmate population.
2. Posture can convince the inmate population of your confidence.
3. Posture can communicate concern, or determination to listen.

# UNIT 5. Observing

## The student will be able to list the four primary components of observing.

1. Looking at behavior, appearance, and environment.
2. Making inferences about feelings, or climate of a group of people.
3. Deciding if a situation is normal or abnormal.
4. Deciding if a situation indicates potential for trouble, or if it suggests there will be no trouble.

## The student will be able to list the three things considered during the first part of observing.

1. Behavior – references an action while conscious or active.

Examples include:

* 1. Playing basketball
  2. Reading a book/newspaper
  3. Pushing another inmate
  4. Yelling

1. Appearance – references an adjective describing a person, even if unconscious or dead.

Examples include:

* 1. Old / Young
  2. Race or Ethnicity
  3. Gender
  4. Wearing dirty clothes/uniform – or sloppy uniform

1. Environment – references the particular people, places, or things around the inmate. An inmate’s environment may also give you clues about the inmate’s value system.

Examples include:

* 1. Inside of his/her assigned cell
  2. Inside of another inmate’s assigned cell
  3. Surrounded by members of a specific gang

## The student will be able to list four clues that can be used to develop inferences.

Inferences stand the best chance of being accurate if they are based on detailed and concrete observations, rather than vague, general ones.

1. Feelings – Knowing how a person or a group of people are feeling is crucial in determining the potential for problems.
   1. Inmates exercising or smiling may be considered “Happy”
   2. Inmates wringing their hands, or pacing, may be interpreted as being “Anxious”
   3. A group of inmates may be characterized as “Tense” when the officer observes inmates tightly clustered and talking in low tones
2. Relationships – this observation is more challenging because it includes the relationships between the inmates themselves, and the relationship between the inmates and the officer. Relationships are usually labeled as:
   1. Neutral – The relationship is yet to be defined, usually based on a lack of familiarity or unpredictability of one parties’ decision.
   2. Positive – The relationship is productive and predictable based on experiences and credibility established over time.
   3. Negative – The relationship is contentious based on previous experiences or a demonstrated lack of respect.
3. Energy levels – this indicates a great deal about how much and what type of trouble an inmate can and/or will cause. An inmate’s energy levels may also indicate a need for intervention.
   1. Low Energy Levels
      1. Inmates with low energy levels often display the following characteristics:
         1. Look and act defeated
         2. Slow movements
         3. Heads hang down
         4. Low energy inmates may need encouragement to increase their activity or may need to be monitored to prevent self-harm or suicide.
      2. Behaviors exhibited by inmates with low energy levels are:
         1. Lethargic
         2. Lack of eye contact
         3. Sleeping a lot
   2. High Energy levels
      1. Inmates with high energy levels often display the following characteristics:
         1. Eagerness to participate in activities (playing cards and other games, or cleaning)
         2. Friendly and social
         3. Active through exercise, or participating in program opportunities
         4. High energy inmates may engage in gang activity or may be eager to use physical violence.
      2. Behaviors exhibited by inmates with high energy levels are:
         1. Playing cards
         2. Engaged in program activities
         3. Participates in cleaning cells
   3. One of the most critical things to observe regarding energy levels are fluctuations in energy levels, which may indicate trouble. Some key times to observe inmates for changes in energy levels are:
      1. Visitation
      2. Court hearings
      3. Holidays
      4. Attorney visits

To determine if a situation or inmate may cause trouble, the decision should be based both on observations, behaviors or patterns observed on shift, and the officer’s knowledge of the correctional environmental in general.

1. Values – The general rule is that whatever an inmate gives energy to, is what the inmate values—the more energy, the higher the value.
   1. Knowing what an inmate values has implications for effective management.
   2. When you know what a person wants and does not want, you have an edge in managing that person. Some examples of inmate values are:
      1. Neatness
      2. Certain books, such as the bible, or a specific author
      3. Artwork
      4. Quality of work if they are assigned work duties
         1. High quality of work = values work ethic
         2. Low quality of work = not satisfied with assignment
      5. Social interactions while working
      6. If an inmate is pursuing education and programs you can infer values based on:
         1. The way they talk about pursuing programs
         2. Completing work/studying while outside of class
         3. Subject matter they pursue

## The student will be able to list three things in relation to an inmate’s environment that might reflect inmate values.

1. Describe observations that can be made in the place where an inmate lives that reflect an inmate’s values.
   1. The cleanliness of the cell
   2. Books found in the cell
   3. Artwork found in the cell
2. Describe observations that can be made in the place where an inmate works that reflect an inmate’s values.
   1. Quality of the work being done
   2. Social interaction while working
3. Describe observations that can be made in the place where an inmate learns that reflect an inmate’s values
   1. What the inmate is studying
   2. Completing work assignments outside of classroom

## The student will be able to select the appropriate terms which describe an inmate or person whose behavior is clearly spelled out in instructional examples.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Either read or have the scenario acted out. Provide students with the prompts for observing the scenario. Reasons for the answers should be descriptions of the appearances and behaviors demonstrated. Engage the class in a discussion of the observation and how to proceed with the inmate.

1. Scenario: A new young inmate is sitting alone at a table in the dayroom. Several older, longer term inmates sit down and start talking with the new inmate. He looks down, and after a few minutes gets up, goes into his cell, and returns with several commissary items. Leaving the commissary on the table, the young inmate goes to his cell and shuts the door.
   1. The student will note the feelings they can anticipate.
      1. Fear and/or shame – based on him returning to his room
      2. Anger – based on the fact he was taken advantage of
   2. The student will note what they think is the relationship to the group of inmates.
      1. Although beginning with a negative experience, since this inmate is new to the housing area and he is young, this is a neutral relationship as it is yet to really be defined.
   3. The students will recognize the inmate’s energy levels.
      1. Based on the inmate returning to his cell and closing the door, his energy level is low, reflecting a defeated mentality.
      2. The group of inmates will have high energy levels based on the successful manipulation of the younger inmate.
2. Scenario: A middle-aged inmate is doing push-ups in his cell, he is staring at the ground and with every repetition he lowly mumbles a list of names. As he completes his workout, you observe him writing. Later in the dayroom, you observe that same inmate pacing back and forth in front of three specific cells with clenched fists.
   1. The student will note the feelings they can anticipate.
      1. Based on the clenched fists the inmate is angry.
   2. The student will note what they think is the relationship to the other inmates.
      1. Based on the pacing in front of three specific cells, mumbling the list of names and the clenched fists the relationship is a negative relationship
   3. The students will recognize the inmate’s energy levels.
      1. Based on the inmate exercising, and appearing eager to use physical violence, he is demonstrating a high energy level.

## The student will demonstrate their ability to identify specific behaviors which would indicate negative, neutral, or positive relationships.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Either read or have the scenario acted out. Reasons for the answers should be descriptions of the appearances and behaviors demonstrated. Engage the class in a discussion of the observation and how to proceed with the inmate.

1. Scenario: Two inmates are talking loudly at a table in the dayroom, the two inmates are arguing about a third person they both know from outside of the facility. The third person is a female, named Sonya. One inmate subtly begins rolling his pant leg tightly around his ankles. The second inmate is leaning across the table shouting about how recently he spoke to Sonya.
   1. What type of relationship do these two inmates have?
2. This is a negative relationship based on the conflict centered around one mutual party and the anticipated use of violence.
3. Scenario: Two inmates are talking about their high school they attended. Both inmates are smiling and talking about one teacher, saying that they both used to get annoyed because of the way that teacher always used to chew his food in the classroom. Both inmates begin laughing.
   1. What type of relationship do these two inmates have?
4. This is an example of a positive relationship, based on the two inmates’ level of familiarity and historical referencing, both inmates are smiling and there is no sign of aggressive behavior.
5. Scenario: One inmate approaches an officer and asks for a grievance form. The officer says he will get one for him in a few minutes. The inmate says, “Thank you” and returns to his table. A few minutes later the officer approaches the table and gives the inmate the form.
   1. What type of relationship does that inmate have with the officer?
6. Based on the officer following through with the request and the inmate saying, “Thank you,” this is an example of a positive relationship.
7. Scenario: A group of inmates start chanting, “He’s a liar” towards an officer. Another officer enters the housing area to relieve the officer for the evening. The inmate population begins clapping as the first officer leaves.
   1. What type of relationship do the inmates have with the first officer?
8. Based on the lack of respect and the celebration of the officer leaving, this is an example of a negative relationship.

## The student will be able to define how to evaluate/determine whether things are normal or abnormal for a given inmate at a given time.

1. Compare present observations of the inmate with any past ones/or with any comments which other officers may have made about the inmate.
2. Determine if current behavior is normal for that inmate

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** The instructor may reflect on previous scenarios and ask the students to predict if there was reason to believe things were normal/abnormal for the given inmate and/or if the situations may have led to trouble.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario C: TAC instructor asks TJA instructor a question about good places to eat in town.

While question is being asked, TJA instructor focuses attention on something else (adjusting video projector, trying to find something in the teaching outline, etc.) and exhibits distracting behavior (tapping a pen, jingling keys, etc.). It is apparent that even though listening, the instructor is preoccupied and focusing on something else.

Finally, the exasperated TAC instructor says something like “Hey, are you listening to me or what?”

When the point has been made, stop the action and review the scenario with the class.

* How did you feel? (to the other instructor)
* What were you thinking? (to the other instructor)
* What were you all thinking? (to the students)
* Did the question appear to be important to me? (primary instructor)
* Did the question appear to be important to the instructor?

# UNIT 6. Listening

## The student will be able to list the four steps in listening.

1. Suspend judgment
   1. This can be a difficult thing to do, especially in relation to an inmate since society itself has passed a level of judgement on them.
   2. Most officers overcome this by judging an inmate on what they do now in jail rather than previous outside actions.
   3. This can be exceedingly difficult to do while listening to inmates complain about other inmates, the jail system itself, the judicial process, and/or officers.
   4. If you cannot overcome this barrier, you will not be able to hear the real verbal cues you need to hear that could prevent danger or assist someone.
2. Pick out key words
   1. Listening requires the listener to be able to pick out key words.
   2. In addition to picking out key words you should also consider the person who is involved.
3. Identify the intensity of what is said
   1. Statements can be made with varying levels of intensity, the louder or more emotional the statement, the more intense it is.
   2. Loudness and emotion are not always the same thing, for instance a quiet and low tone could still contain a lot of emotion.
4. Reflect on mood
   1. Reflecting on mood is a result of identifying intensity.
   2. One question you should ask is, “What kinds of feelings are being expressed or implied?”
   3. Another question, “Is this mood normal or abnormal for this time and place?”

Note: There can always be exceptions for instance, an inmate could say, “I’m going to kill you” quietly and without emotion and still mean it.

## The student will be able to identify how other basic skills support good listening techniques.

1. A good position will help an individual hear better.
2. Proper posturing gives appropriate signals to the inmate and will encourages him/her to speak.
3. Observing an inmate’s behavior while speaking may give some cues as to the validity of what he/she is saying.

## The student will be able to list at least ten words or phrases that would be key words in a correctional environment.

1. Snitch
2. Kite Out
3. Smash on sight of (SOS)
4. Catch a Charge
5. Gang
6. Stealing
7. Cho-Mo
8. Depressed
9. Escaped
10. Kill
11. Shank
12. Green light

## The student will be able to list three degrees of intensity and mood.

1. Intensity
   1. High
   2. Moderate
   3. Low

Note: Determined by volume, emotion, and voice pitch.

1. Mood
   1. Positive
   2. Negative
   3. Neutral

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario D: Ask for three volunteers from class. Roles are two inmates. One works in the kitchen preparing meals, and the other dislikes the quality and quantity of the food served. The discussion gets rather heated and both inmates finally have to be separated to avoid a fight. The third volunteer is an officer watching and listening.

# UNIT 7. The Add-Ons – Communicating with Inmates

## The student will be able to identify two pillars of communication used in the corrections environment.

Responding to inmates and asking questions are two pillars of communication. The use of these communication skills promotes understanding which in turns promotes a safe environment.

## The student will be able to list at least two qualities/skills displayed by staff members who are good communicators.

1. Good listener
2. Genuine concern
3. Not over-reacting
4. Posture
5. Asks questions
6. Relaxed

# UNIT 8. Responding to Inmates – Identifying Content

## The student will be able to define the term identifying content.

Identifying content is the skill of seeing and hearing what is really happening and the ability to mirror that understanding back to the inmate.

## The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying content.

1. Thinking about the content
   1. In answering questions internally, you should always stick close to what is actually going on or what is actually being said.
   2. Examples:
      1. What are the inmates saying?
      2. What are the inmates doing?
2. Reflecting back the content
   1. When reflecting back information, you get confirmation that you have appropriately identified the content.
   2. Examples:
      1. What are you reading?
      2. You are saying that your thoughts are racing?
      3. Who are you talking to?

## The student will be able to list at least two situations in which an officer might respond to content to get more information for a given situation.

1. Inmate Snuffy is sitting in the dayroom watching television.
   1. Is a response needed to gain more information? (No)
   2. What would the appropriate response be? (N/A)
2. Inmate Johnson approaches the officer station and begins complaining about her work assignment.
   1. Is a response needed to gain more information? (Yes)
   2. What would the appropriate response be? (Officers will have a variety of responses, the instructor will determine appropriateness, or the student may select from multiple choice options.)
3. Inmate Smith is pacing in her cell talking loudly to herself, the only name that you can consistently hear is “Jessica.”
   1. Is a response needed to gain more information? (Yes)
   2. What would the appropriate response be? (Officers will have a variety of responses, the instructor will determine appropriateness, or the student may select from multiple choice options.)

## The student will identify common attitudes and how responding to inmates is beneficial.

1. A common inmate attitude is “The Inmate vs. The Officer”
2. Responding to inmate behavior can combat the “me against them” mindset.
   1. Inmates who have committed to destructive action and who have done destructive things in the past will likely not respond to identifying content.
   2. This response will, however, give many other inmates an opportunity to talk things out.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario E: An inmate tells an officer that he thinks his cellmate is suicidal and the officer must find out if he is.

# UNIT 9. Responding to Inmates – Identifying Feeling

## The student will be able to define the term identifying feeling.

Identifying feeling is the ability to capture in words the specific feeling being experienced by an inmate.

## The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying feeling.

1. Thinking about feeling
   1. Considering how the inmate is feeling, you begin the process of empathizing which is a crucial step in building rapport with inmates.
   2. Example:
      1. What is the emotion behind what the inmate is saying?
      2. What emotion is the inmate portraying with their actions?
2. Reflecting the feeling
   1. Showing the inmate that you are paying attention to their feelings can be more powerful than showing that you understand the content of their actions or words
   2. Example:
      1. You seem depressed.
      2. I think you may be frustrated with the way things are going right now, is that right?

## The student will be able to list five basic feeling words.

1. Happy
2. Angry
3. Confused
4. Sad
5. Scared

## The student will be able to identify the three levels of intensity for feeling.

1. High Intensity
   1. Example: Boiling mad or Extreme Anger
2. Medium Intensity
   1. Example: Frustration or Confusion
3. Low Intensity
   1. Example: Up-tight or Nervous - scared

## The student will be able to list two situations where it would be useful to defuse negative feelings by making an appropriate response.

1. The threat of physical harm
2. Addressing a depressed person
   1. The student will demonstrate their ability to identify the emotion being observed, the intensity level of the emotion, and an appropriate response to gain more information.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Either read or have the scenario acted out. Reasons for the answers should be descriptions of the appearances and behaviors demonstrated. Engage the class in a discussion of the observation and how to proceed with the inmate.

1. Scenario: Inmate Rodriguez, and indigent inmate, has spent the past 3 days being very social. Today he has been trying to make a phone call all day. You have overheard Inmate Rodriguez offer a few inmates commissary items in exchange for telephone calls.
   1. Based on the narrative section, what emotion can you identify in Inmate Rodriguez? (Anxiety, Nervousness, Fear)
   2. Based on the narrative, what is the level of intensity for this feeling? (Low Intensity)
   3. What is an appropriate response to the emotion that will allow you to get more information? (You seem \_(emotion)\_, what is going on?)
2. Inmate Thompson, a known gang member, has not exited his cell at all today. You have seen him standing at his cell door staring out of the window at a small group of inmates most of the morning.
   1. Based on the narrative section, what emotion can you identify in Inmate Rodriguez? (Afraid, Anxious)
   2. Based on the narrative, what is the level of intensity for this feeling? (High Intensity)
   3. What is an appropriate response to the emotion that will allow you to get more information? (You seem \_(emotion)\_, what is going on?)

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario F: An inmate who is charged with capital murder and has no bond tells the officer that he will not be there when the officer returns from his days off. The officer must try to identify the feelings the inmate is having.

# UNIT 10. Responding to Inmates—Identifying Meaning

## The student will be able to define the term identifying meaning.

1. After mastering identifying content and identifying feeling, you can now combine the two and capture effectively where the inmate is in the moment.
2. Identifying meaning requires you to paraphrase the content of an inmate’s statement in such a way as to provide a meaningful reason for the inmate’s feeling.
3. By putting together the content, feeling, and meaning and responding to all three, you demonstrate to the inmate that you have listened to their experience and demonstrates that you genuinely care. Taking the time to effectively demonstrate the meaning is a critical step in building rapport with the inmates.

## The student will be able to list the two steps in identifying meaning.

1. Thinking about the meaning
2. Reflecting back the meaning

## The student will be able to identify the effective components of a response that clearly identifies meaning.

1. Responding at the highest level identifies content, feeling and meaning.
2. An example of how to respond at this level includes the following:
   1. You feel \_\_(intensity and emotion)\_\_ because \_\_(reason)\_\_.
   2. You are saying that because \_\_(reason)\_\_ that is making you feel \_\_(intensity and emotion)\_\_.

## The student will be able to identify when it is appropriate to refer the inmate to a mental health worker or other specialist.

1. If the communication goes deeper than you feel you can manage.
2. If the information gathered during the exchange should be communicated to a mental health worker or other specialist.
3. Examples of this may include during the conversation you have learned:
   1. The inmate has stopped taking their prescribed medication.
   2. The inmate is feeling suicidal.
   3. The inmate has been sexually abused.

# UNIT 11. Asking Questions

## The student will be able to identify the techniques used in asking questions.

1. Use the 5 “W”s and “H” method
   1. Who?
   2. What?
   3. When?
   4. Where?
   5. Why?
   6. How?
2. Thinking about what was said or not said
3. Responding to the answer

Note: The reality is that, for a variety of reasons, inmates will refuse to answer questions, especially if you have failed to build rapport. Questions can be effective in opening a conversation when used in conjunction with the basic skills of interpersonal communication and responding to observations and the things you have heard or seen.

* 1. The student will be able to demonstrate the concept of “thinking about what was said or not said.”

1. Being able to make sense out of the inmates' answers/responses is only the first step.
2. You must also recognize the answers that you are still not getting.
3. Thinking carefully about the words the inmate chose to use in answering your question.
   1. The student will be able to list four questions you can ask yourself when thinking about what was said or not said.
4. How does he look?
5. What's he saying?
6. What did he say?
7. What didn't he say?

## The student will list examples of specific phrasesthat indicate the inmate is withholding information**.**

1. I am not a snitch – Usually indicates they want to talk in a more private location
2. I just cannot go back in there (or) I’m not going back in there – Usually indicates they have been assaulted
3. I am not a man anymore – Usually indicates the person is a victim of sexual abuse

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario G: Have one student assume the role of an inmate who refuses to take a shower. The other is an officer who must talk to the inmate about the problem due to several complaints from other inmates. (Prior to starting secretly tell the student playing the inmate that the reason he refuses to shower is because the “water goes right through me” because he is experiencing mental problems. Advise him to tell the officer if he asks enough questions regarding “why” he won’t shower).

# UNIT 12. The Applications—Managing Behavior

## The student will be able to list the three application skills used in managing behavior.

1. Handling requests
2. Making requests
3. Reinforcing behavior

## The student will be able to define managing behavior and its importance to an institutional setting.

1. Managing behavior means taking charge; in an institution, inability to manage behavior means that all other efforts are wasted.
2. Appropriate behavior is necessary to serve the interests of the institution, the individual staff member, and the individual inmate.

# UNIT 13. Handling Requests

## The student will be able to describe the two steps in handling requests.

1. Check things out
   1. Verifying the information the inmate shared with you
   2. Referring back to policy and/or procedures
   3. Familiarizing yourself with the inmate rules and expectations
2. Give a response and a reason
   1. The student will be able to list at least two necessary elements in checking things out.
3. Use basic skills
4. Know rules and regulations
5. Decide if requests are legitimate
6. Check out inmate and situation
   1. The student will be able to list at least three reasons for giving an inmate a reason for your response.
7. This reduces the likelihood that the inmate will repeat the request once they understand the reason you say, “No.”
8. The inmates become more accepting of the response when they understand the “why” behind it.
9. When requests are granted the inmates are more likely to know that you are acting within the limits of your authority.
   1. The student will be able to describe a staff member’s option in taking care of an inmate’s basic needs.
10. Basic needs cannot be withheld; taking care of basic needs is a must.
11. Officers must treat those requests for things that an inmate is entitled to by law, policy, or procedure very seriously.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario H: The inmate whose mother died wants to go to the funeral and policy says it’s up to the Sheriff. Have two groups act out “Guided Practice” in front of the class.

# UNIT 14. Making Requests

## The student will be able to identify the two steps involved in making requests.

1. Check things out
2. Taking appropriate action

## The student will be able to define “taking action” and at least three techniques to use in taking action.

1. Taking action means selecting the best way to make your request.
2. Techniques
   1. Be specific
   2. Use mild/polite format or direct format
      1. A mild format is simply a polite request: "I would appreciate it if you would...," "would you please, etc.
      2. A direct format is simply to identify what you want done: "I want you to..."
   3. Get stronger when necessary
   4. Use your responding skills
   5. The student will be able to define softening a request.

Softening a request involves toning it down and making it more palatable by putting it in the form of a request rather than a direct order; i.e., "I'd like you to stop (or please stop) ...

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenario. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario I: Due to overcrowding and classification considerations, an officer must move an inmate to a different housing unit away from his friends.

# UNIT 15. Reinforcing Behaviors

## The student will be able to define reinforcing behavior.

The ability to administer negative and positive consequences effectively to control behavior.

## The student will be able to list the two parts of reinforcing behavior.

1. Reinforce positively and negatively
2. Use verbal and non-verbal techniques

## The student will be able to describe when physical force should be used to correct negative behavior.

Physical force should be used only when there is a threat of physical harm to you, the inmate, or other staff or inmates. It should be used as a last resort.

## The student will be able to list at least four negative reinforcements that can be used and behaviors that you might negatively reinforce.

Note: Always refer to department policy.

1. Negative reinforcements
   1. Restricting access to dayroom privileges (refer to departmental policy)
   2. Restricting phone privileges
   3. Restricting television privileges
   4. Educational assignments in lieu of formal disciplinary
   5. Additional cleaning assignments in lieu of formal disciplinary
   6. Formal disciplinary sanctions
   7. Removal from voluntary work programs
2. Behaviors you might negatively reinforce
   1. Arguing with other inmates or officers
   2. Failing to follow facility rules
   3. Lack of cell cleanliness
   4. Lack of personal hygiene (refer to departmental policy)
   5. Noise levels
   6. Graffiti
   7. Improper wearing of uniform

## The student will be able to list at least four positive reinforcements that can be used and behaviors you might positively reinforce.

Note: Always refer to department policy.

1. Positive reinforcements
   1. Additional dayroom access
   2. Additional phone privileges
   3. Access to movies
   4. Access to board games
   5. Additional recreation equipment
2. Behaviors you might positively reinforce
   1. Consistent cell compliance
   2. Cleanliness of the housing area
   3. Lack of contraband after security inspections
   4. Successful completion of education or rehabilitative programs
   5. Consistent attendance of religious programs

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Use the following scenarios to serve as summary of content. Have students provide constructive criticism for the demonstrations and recommend ways the officer might improve their response.

Scenario J: Get three volunteers from the students. One will be the apprentice who is an officer who wants the inmates to clean their cell and make a request for them to do so. The other two are the inmates who are not belligerent, but no cooperative either and try to get out of cleaning the cell. They may blame each other for messing it up. The officer must continue talking to them until they agree to comply. The rest of the class will become the coaches following the demonstration and make suggestions if appropriate.

Scenario K: A group of inmates is arguing over what to watch on TV. There is only one TV and the number of inmates wanting to watch each show is equal.

Scenario L: Get two volunteers from class. One is an officer who is trying to get an inmate to go into his cell. The other is an inmate who is standing outside the cell with his arms crossed and refuses to go into the cell. The inmate will not be violent unless the officer places his hands on him. The officer should attempt to convince the inmate to go into the cell. The instructor is the coach who should watch the students attempt to get the inmate to go into the cell and then demonstrate an alternative method using choices.

He might say to the inmate “You are going to go into the cell. You can either walk in there on your own or I will suit up a team and they will put you in there. If you force me to get the team, there is a very good chance of you or one of my team members getting hurt. If one of them gets hurt you will be facing disciplinary case and very probably additional criminal charges. The choice is yours.”

Scenario M: Get three volunteers from the class.

One is Inmate James Rodriguez, who has been a model inmate for the past 6 months. Inmate Rodriguez consistently attends church services and always volunteers for additional cleaning duty. Inmate Rodriguez has kept his cell clean for the past six months.

Another is Inmate Joseph Richardson, who just yesterday was assigned to the same cell as Inmate Rodriguez.

The third volunteer is the officer assigned to work the housing unit and is making observations.

The officer observes the cell to be out of compliance and addresses Inmate Rodriguez and Inmate Richardson.

Inmate Rodriguez is shouting at the top of his lungs to the officer, demanding that Inmate Richardson be moved out of the housing unit.

The officer may attempt to assign Inmate Richardson to another cell in the same housing unit, Inmate Rodriguez insists that Inmate Richardson be moved out of the housing unit completely.

The instructor is the coach who should watch the student attempt to resolve the conflict. The instructor may introduce alternative options for the student to resolve the conflict.

He may encourage Inmate Rodriguez to not ruin his record of good behavior for this instance. Encourage the officer to recognize Inmate Rodriguez’s past good behavior and instruct Inmate Richardson that you will hold him accountable to cleanliness standards.