

## Module 8 v Activity 11 v COMMUNICATION

Activity: Practicing Communication Skills

Materials Needed: Blank sheet of paper for each student

Directions:

1. Say this to the students:

We are going to play a game that will show us some important things about communication. Pick up a sheet of paper and hold it in front of you. Now close your eyes; no peeking and absolutely no talking. Simply listen closely to the directions I will give you and follow them.

2. Give the following directions while you demonstrate with your sheet of paper:

- ◆ The first thing I want you to do is fold your sheet of paper in half. (Give them time to do this.)
- ◆ Now tear off the upper right-hand corner.
- ◆ Fold it in half again and tear off the upper left-hand corner of the sheet.
- ◆ Fold it in half again. Now tear off the lower right-hand corner of the sheet.
- ◆ Now you can open your eyes and see what you have. If I did a good job of communicating, and you did a good job of listening, all of our sheets should look the same! (Hold your sheet up for them to see. It is highly unlikely that any of them will match yours.)

3. Observe differences. There will probably be much laughter.

4. Ask the participants why their papers did not match yours. (You will probably get responses like "You didn't let us ask questions!" or "Your directions could be interpreted in different ways.")

5. Point out to the group what a "poor job" you did as a communicator during this activity. Not only did you not allow for questions but you failed to recognize an important fact about the communication process: **The listener rarely makes the same assumptions as the speaker.** This means that when someone is told something, he or she will interpret the message based on personal experiences. Communicating has to be an interactive process so that the speaker and the listener can understand each other.