

Communication is one of the most beneficial tools to have for successful endeavors. Over the span of my four years at Louisiana State University (LSU), I have had many opportunities to enhance my communication skills through various courses and events. These opportunities include but are not limited to C-I courses, paid jobs, and other leadership experiences. It is with these endeavors that I have been able to grow my knowledge and implementation of communication in future interests such as the medical field. Communication tools and tactics are crucial for any fieldwork and many may benefit in a variety of ways such as a more efficient workforce, an enhanced set of skills for the workplace, and a plethora of knowledge in the professional setting.

In the medical field, communication tactics and tools are of utmost importance for success as they can help in properly conveying messages to others in healthcare. In this setting, medical jargon is needed to appropriately communicate with others. However, this language can be difficult to fully comprehend for patients and families who have little knowledge of it. Thus, miscommunication as a whole can result and this can be evidently shown by a person's body language, facial expressions, and tone when speaking. For instance, during my time at LSU I worked at The Urgent Care facilities and communication issues would sometimes arise mainly due to medical jargon from prescribed medications, treatment services, or insurances. I noticed that when patients do not comprehend the medical services being done, they may show confusion or even a lack of confidence. When communication barriers are present when explaining prescription medications or insurance details, many patients and family members may show frustration from not understanding. This may then result in a patient's poor experience with the practice and ultimately a loss of profit. By being able to work around the medical jargon or explain information in a way that is more comprehensible, those who are unfamiliar with it may better understand. This can be seen in someone who has confidence throughout when speaking, is articulating clearly, and appears comfortable in the discussion. Consequently, an increase of business and profit can ensue as patients and families would be more willing to seek services from those who can fully understand their issues at-hand.

At LSU, I have been grateful to have many opportunities, such as C-I courses or other college experiences, to help improve my communication skills. The C-I courses I have completed include BIOL 4105 (Parasitology), BIOL 4161 (Vertebrate Physiology Laboratory), BIOL 1208 (Biology Laboratory for Science Majors I), KIN 3660 (Stress Management), KIN 4606 (Introduction to Health Promotion), LSU 1001 (First Year Seminar). In each course, I was able to effectively show my communication skills through written, spoken, visual, and technological projects. For instance, in KIN 4606, I presented a health promotion project on preventing foodborne illnesses in pregnant women. I named the project Countering Active Disease-causing Entities in Nutrition, or C.A.D.E.N., after my baby cousin who passed away from similar issues. In this piece, I properly conveyed the information so well that my professor recorded my presentation to be used as an example for future classes. Regarding other college experiences that have helped improve my

communication skills, I have co-founded and been elected President of an organization at LSU (MEDLIFE at LSU) that caters to providing medical access and resources to low-income families. I have also had other leadership roles in LSU's Sci-Lead Council, which allowed me to express the importance of collaboration within science majors. I have also been involved in LSU research for two years and further blossomed my communication skills through collaboration with my mentors and colleagues, as well as through presenting at research conferences. It is through research that I have learned how to not only hear but listen to others, critically think, and simplify difficult scientific jargon. When presenting my project on natural products inhibiting glucocorticoid resistant breast cancer, I am to always further clarify any abbreviations or break down complex terms as the individuals I am speaking to may not be familiar with the topics being discussed. Overall, all experiences have been successful as I believe I have contributed to making an impact on my peers and communities.

Due to my C-I courses and other college experiences, I have a plethora of communication skills and tools to implement for my endeavors post-graduation. Some skills and tools include but are not limited to listening, reading body language and tone, clearly articulating, simplifying jargon, and presenting confidently. My post-graduation plans involve attending a post-baccalaureate program and medical school to earn my Master's and Medical Doctor's degrees, respectively. These programs incorporate a great deal of collaboration and insightful discussions for topics such as health disparities, treatment options, or other phenomena of today's clinical research. Thus, it is important to mentally decipher and elucidate the subject matter, as well as be clearly expressive when engaging in professional dialogue. In conclusion, communication is a vital factor within healthcare or any field of study. For future students seeking to communicate more effectively and succeed, I would highly advise practicing communication skills as much as possible with different facets of people - friends, family members, professors, or other mentors. An employed student may consider practicing these tactics with employers, coworkers, or people whom he or she is serving such as customers or patients. I also believe it is beneficial to practice communication skills with oneself. For example, I enjoy recording myself speaking via my phone's video capabilities or Zoom. In this manner, I am able to comfortably view my mistakes, correct any speaking habits such as "Um" or "Like", and study my body language and tone. This allows me to grow more self-awareness with my own person so that I am mentally self-aware when communicating with others. It is also important to note that communication skills are different for every person and each person requires a different level of practice. However, it is with practice that communication may be perfected.