**Course: Agricultural Communications**

**Standard:** Students will develop an understanding of ethics and trends in agricultural communications.

**Unit Objectives:**

1. Describe the role of professionalism in communication.
2. Explain the importance of ethics in communication.
3. Explore the publicity of agriculture in contemporary media.
4. Provide examples and explain the role of crisis communication in agriculture.
5. Summarize trends in agricultural communication.

Resources

The ethics curriculum developed for the American Agricultural Editors Association (AAEA) is in the lesson plan folder. Seven units cover these topics:

Ethics

Codes of Ethics

Ethics in Agricultural Journalism

Ethics in Agricultural Advertising

Ethics in Agricultural Public Relations

Ethics in Agricultural Photography and Images

Ethics and the Law

PowerPoint presentations are provided for Crisis Communication and Publicity of Agriculture in Contemporary Media.

Society of Professional Journalists: <http://www.spj.org>

Public Relations Society of America: <http://www.prsa.org>

Online Case Studies for Ethics and Crisis Communication: <http://aec.ifas.ufl.edu/agcommcase/ethics.html>

Materials Needed (Equipment):

* 7 Habits for Highly Effective Teens, Literacy Book

Facilities: Classroom

Interest Approach:

Using the ABC handout, have the students complete the Think-Pair-Share activity.  Explain to students that they will (1) think individually about a topic; (2) pair with a partner and discuss the topic; and (3) share ideas with the rest of the class.

Think:  Ask students to come up with a word for each letter of the alphabet that would relate to the unit of Ethical Leadership and Communication in Agriculture. Students "think" about what they know or have learned about the topic for a given amount of time (usually 1-3 minutes). Have them write in a red color.

Pair:  Each student should be paired with another student. Teachers may choose whether to assign pairs or let students pick their own partner.  Remember to be sensitive to learners' needs (reading skills, attention skills, language skills) when creating pairs.  Students share their thinking with their partner, discuss ideas, and ask questions of their partner about their thoughts on the topic (2-5 minutes). Make any changes to their worksheet in blue writing.

Share:  Once partners have had ample time to share their thoughts and have a discussion, teachers expand the "share" into a whole-class discussion. Allow each group to choose who will present their thoughts, ideas, and questions they had to the rest of the class. Have the students make any changes to their worksheet in green writing.

After the class “share,” you may choose to have pairs reconvene to talk about how their thinking perhaps changed as a result of the “share” element.

**Activity:** Throughout the Unit read *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. Use the reading guide with the book.

Objective A: Describe the role of professionalism in communication.

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| **Curriculum (Content)**  **(What to teach)** | **Instruction (Methodology)**  **(How to teach)** |
| What is Leadership?  What is Ethics?  What is Communication?  What do the 3 have in common?  **Leader**   * A leader is a person who has the ability to create a condition in which other people interact. * Leaders can create an environment of Heaven or Hell. * TRUE leaders take a responsibility for what’s going on inside themselves, inside their conscious.   1. This creates an image of positive or negative   What is Leadership?  What is Ethics?  What is Communication?  What do the 3 have in common?  **Leadership**   * Leadership is about who you are. * Leadership is about what you do. * Leadership is about how well you work with others. | Slides 1- 4  Worksheet: Your Best & Worst Leadership Moment  Slides 5-6 |

**Activity:** Leadership Island

**” you will proceed to the front**

Objective B: Explain the importance of ethics in communication.

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| **Curriculum (Content)**  **(What to teach)** | **Instruction (Methodology)**  **(How to teach)** |
| What is Communication?  **Communication**   * Communication is not a thing, it’s a process. * Communication is not linear. It is circular. * Communication is complex. * Communication is irreversible. * Communication involves the total personality   Communication- The process by which information is exchanged by individuals through a common System  **Types of Communication**   * Dyadic (2-person)- Formal   1. Both people send and receive the message   2. Verbal & non-verbal stimulus * Small Group- 3 or more members of a group * Public- “public” places, formal and structured, speaker addresses large group in an event as a speaker. * Mass- Most formal and very expensive.   **The Combination of Ethics & Leadership…**  Leadership is primarily a symbolic activity also known as communication. The words & behaviors of leaders greatly influence the reactions of others.   * Leaders use symbols to create reality. * Leaders communicate about the past, present, and future. * Leaders make conscious use of symbols to reach their goals   **Leadership is first, and foremost, a communication based activity!**  **Communication Models**   * One Way- information travels from one source to a second * Interactive- Information is exchanged between two source   **What is Ethics?**  **ETHICS**   * It’s the standards & morals in the way we conduct ourselves. * It is also a judgment about whether human behavior is right or wrong. * The study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; moral philosophy * “Ethics is what you do in the dark when no one is watching.” Rushworth Kidder (2003), the founder of the Institute of Global Ethics * The system or code of morals of a particular person, religion, group, profession, etc. * Making the right decision for your company or business, and admitting to wrong doing and attempting to make amends, if a mistake is made. * Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist's credibility.   **Why is Ethics Important?**   * “An unwritten contractual agreement exists between journalists and their readers.” The Human Journalist - Willis, 2003   + “As journalists, we believe we best serve our readers through fairness, accuracy, honesty, and intelligence.” Standards of Integrity of the American Agricultural Editors Association * “Public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. The duty of the journalist is to further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues.” Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics * Journalists must maintain:   + Credibility - the trust of readers   + Integrity   + Trustworthiness   + Respect   + Responsibility   + Fairness   **The Combination of Ethics & Leadership…**   * The ethical implementation of a leader plan is important. * Unethical leadership can & will have devastating impacts.   **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?**  **To Lie Or Not To Lie? The Choice Is Yours!**   * Lying   1. Damages your character   2. Destroys trust   3. Reputation of not only, but the group you represent * The lying shadow   1. Lie, particularly for selfish ends   2. Use of information solely for personal benefit   3. Deny having a knowledge   4. Gathering information in violation of others   5. Withholding important information   6. Sharing information with the wrong people   7. Putting others in moral blinds, insisting that they withhold information that others have a right to know   **The Challenge**   * Responsibility * Power * Privilege * Loyalty * Consistence   **The Challenge of Responsibility**   * YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU! * Leaders are not only responsible for you but for the actions others that you are in charge for. * The challenge of responsibility is so important * Responsible leaders: * Acknowledge & try to correct ethical problems * Admit they have a duty to followers * Take responsibility for the consequences of their actions * Takes responsible steps to protect their followers * Hold themselves to the same standards as follow   **The Challenge of Power**   * Leaders must decide when to employ power, what type of power, and how much power.   **The Challenge of Privilege**   * Leaders reap social benefits such as status, privileges, and respect. * Leaders deserve additional privileges because they have a broader range of responsibilities.   **WHERE IS THE BALANCE?**  **The Challenge of Loyalty**   * Leaders have to balance a variety of duties (loyalties) when making a decision. * Admirable leaders put the needs of others above selfish concerns. * Broken loyalties are harmful to a reputation.   **The Challenge of Consistency**  *“Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or says it!”*  *~Malcolm X*   * Leaders deal with a variety of followers, and situations, making it difficult to consistently. * Moral judgments are critical to the practice of leadership. * Leaders have the responsibility to make reasoned, ethical decisions and to act on those choices.   **Components of Ethical Behavior**   * Component 1: Moral Recognition   *Identify the existence of ethical problem*  Increasing Moral Recognition:   * 1. Engage in active listening & learn of the consequences of your choices   2. Challenge your schemas to make sure you are not overlooking any possibilities   3. Use ethical terms when describing a problem   (Terms: right, wrong, values, fairness, immoral, etc.)   * Component 2: Moral Judgment   *Deciding which course of action to take*  Increasing Moral Judgment:   * 1. Educate yourself about ethics   2. Base decisions on widely accepted ethical principles   3. Be alert to the possibility of faulty reasoning * Component 3: Moral Motivation   *Following through on choices*  Increasing Moral Motivation:   * 1. Create a rewarding environment & manage your emotions   2. Focus on the positive   3. Monitor your emotions & bring them in line with your goals * Component 4: Moral Character   *Implementation*  Increasing Moral Motivation:   * 1. Evaluate your past history   2. Believe that you CAN make a difference   3. Master the context   4. Build your communication competence so that you can put your choices into action.   **Ethics VS Morals & Values**   * Ethics, morals and values are often terms that are interchangeable. Here are the distinct differences… * **VALUES**- signify what is important. They are the basis for a moral code. * **MORALS**- code of conduct governing behaviors. * **Ethics**- provide a systematic, rational way to work though situations to determine a course of action.   **5 Ethical Perspectives**   * **Moral Rules-** the action itself should be considered, not what happens as a result of that action.   1. Actions speak louder than words! * **Virtues-** look at the overall character that is desired.   1. What would say and do? * **Outcomes-** looks at the results of the actions   1. Greatest good for the greatest number of people. * **Principles-** a combination of rules including:   1. Respect- right to make independent choices   2. Beneficence- be of benefit   3. Non maleficence- Minimize harm   4. Justice- Treating others equitably * **Care-** looks at the underlying power structures of a situation. | Slides 7- 15  Worksheet: Willingness to Communicate  Brainstorm a list on the board of Ethics in Journalism  Avoid plagiarism  Treat sources, subjects, colleagues and clients with respect  Avoid conflicts of interests  Admit mistakes  Don’t accept gifts, favors, fees or free travel  **Activity:** Modeling Communication  Slides 16-34  Slide 2 from Ch1PPT.pptx in the AAEA Ethics Curriculum  Ask students why ethics is important.  Slide 3 from Ch1PPT.pptx contains phrases and sentences that say why those sources believe ethics are important.  Six major reasons why ethics are important:  -Credibility = the trust of readers   * Integrity = the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. * Trustworthiness = deserving of trust or confidence; dependable; reliable * Respect = To feel or show regard for; esteem. * Responsibility = being responsible (which is answerable or accountable, as for something within one's power, control, or management). * Fairness = the state, condition, or quality of being fair, or free from bias or injustice. (fair is free from bias, dishonesty, or injustice)   Activity: Case Studies  Have students read case study about  <http://aec.ifas.ufl.edu/agcommcase/ethics.html> |

Objective C: Explore the publicity of agriculture in contemporary media.

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| **Curriculum (Content)**  **(What to teach)** | **Instruction (Methodology)**  **(How to teach)** |
| **History of Communication in Agriculture**   * 3000 BC – Appearance of the plow * 1793 – Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin * 1810 – First agriculture magazine, *Agricultural Museum,* was established in District of Columbia * 1811 – First agricultural production fair held in U.S. (Massachusetts) * 1819 – Magazine *American Farmer* was released in wide circulation * 1862 - The Morrill Act was passed * Established land grant universities * AGRICULTURE SCHOOLS!!! * 1905 – First class in ag journalism offered at Iowa State University * 1908 – Agricultural Journalism department created at University of Wisconsin, Madison * 1917 – The Smith-Hughes Act passed   + Established vocational agriculture classes * 1920 – Iowa State University offered B.S. in Agricultural Journalism * 1921 – First farm market news radio report broadcast (KDKA, Pittsburgh) * 1944 – National Association of Farm Broadcasters organized * 1952 – Newspaper Farm Editors of America established * 1970 – Agriculture Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) established * University organization for Ag Communication and Journalism majors * 2006 – Utah State University offered a B.S. in Agriculture Communication and Journalism | Slides 35-38 |

Objective D: Provide examples and explain the role of crisis communication in agriculture.

Objective E: Summarize trends in agricultural communication.

**Activity:** Hand out the “Tell Your Story…” handout. In 250 words or less have the kids tell a story about the picture. Have a few students share their stories out loud. Share with the class the information about the dust bowl. Now have the students rewrite the story about the dust bowl.

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| **Curriculum (Content)**  **(What to teach)** | **Instruction (Methodology)**  **(How to teach)** |
| **Agriculture Literacy**   * Possessing knowledge and understanding of our food and fiber system * For the first time in human history, the majority of people will have no contact with the source of their food….   …other than buying or eating it   * The average U.S. citizen is three or more generations removed from the farm. * Food is taken for granted.   + Issue has no personal relevance.   + Sentimentality persists, but far less than in past.   + More questioning of farmers’ competency. * The ignorant are very easily misled.   + We believe that we understand subjects that we do not.   + We fear the wrong things.   + We don’t fear the right things. * The U.S. public has many misconceptions about agriculture.   + Many we are taught!   + Others come from superficial reporting by media or through advertising.   + Once something is in print, it is repeated, endlessly, as factual. | Slides 39-49  What is the Problem?  Literacy- Perception  You can’t expect that people know the basic information |

**Why Should I Care?**

**Who produces chocolate milk?**

**Brown cows make chocolate milk!**

**RIGHT?**

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| * The business of agriculture is a huge success…   1. the communication of agriculture is NOT.   + 23% of jobs in * Agriculture literacy has been left to the agricultural produce. * Increased knowledge of agriculture and nutrition. * Participate in establishing the policies that will support a competitive agricultural industry in this country and abroad. * Employment opportunities exist across the board in agriculture. * Agriculture is too important a topic to be taught only to the small percentage of students considering careers in agriculture and pursuing vocational agricultural studies. * Agricultural literacy includes an understanding of agriculture’s history and current economic, social, and environmental significance to all Americans. This understanding includes some knowledge of food and fiber production, processing and domestic and international marketing. |  |

Evaluation: Ethical Leadership & Communications in Agriculture Test

References:

Wolanyk, B. (Producer). (2006). *Addressing misconceptions about agriculture*. [PPT]. Retrieved from [www.svonline.net/~iaw/MisconceptionsPresentation.ppt](http://www.svonline.net/~iaw/MisconceptionsPresentation.ppt)

Hackman, M., & Johnson, C. (2009). *Leadership, a communication perspective*. (Fifth ed.). Long Grove, IL: Weveland Press, Inc.

**Meets USOE Standards and Objectives:**