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## **Effective Communication**

**Goal:** Communicate effectively orally and in writing with peers, supervisors, patients, family, and the community, with sensitivity to nonverbal communication.

### **Communication Stoppers:**

- \* **Criticizing:** Making a negative evaluation of the other person, their actions, or attitudes.
- \* **Name-calling:** Putting down or stereotyping the other person.
- \* **Diagnosing:** Playing amateur psychiatrist.
- \* **Ordering:** Commanding the other person to do what you want to have done.
- \* **Moralizing:** Telling someone what they “should” or “ought” to do.
- \* **Excessive/  
Inappropriate  
questioning**

### **Listening: the Key to Communication**

*“H e w h o a n s w e r s b e f o r e l i s t e n i n g - t h a t i s h i s f o l l y a n d h i s s h a m e .” - Proverbs 18:13*

### **Gender Communication**

Understanding the other’s way of talking is a giant leap across the communication gap between women and men, and a giant step towards opening the lines of communication.

## Gender Communication Goals

- \* Foster Awareness and acceptance of gender differences.
- \* Explore how differences might be tapped as assets in the workplace.
- \* Enhance work relations between gender.

## Gender Differences

**Men:** Language is a way of establishing independence and imparting knowledge, maintaining status.

Men offer solutions- "Here is a solution," this is how you can fix it.

**Women:** Language is a way of establishing rapport: negotiating relationships and establishing connections.

Women sympathize- "I understand; I have felt the same way."

## Nonverbal Communication

YOU CANNOT NOT COMMUNICATE!

*"What you are speaking so loudly I cannot hear what you say."*  
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Nonverbal Communication

- \* Have you ever tried not to communicate?
- \* 90% of communication occurs nonverbally.
- \* Problem: nonverbal communication is ambiguous.
- \* Double messages.

## Proxemics

- \* Best defined as personal space and territory.
- \* Personal space is an invisible, flexible bubble that surrounds us.
- \* Differs by gender.
- \* Differs by culture.

## Physical Appearance

- \* Physical appearance is large in scope and includes such dimension as body

shape, body image, and physical attractiveness, clothing cosmetics, hair, and accessories.

\* Example: physically attractive people are considered more credible.

\* Example: children perceive unattractive children as mean and aggressive.

## **Body Types and Perceptions**

### **Endomorphic**

Dependent, calm, relaxed, complacent, contented, sluggish, placed, leisurely, cooperative, affable, tolerant, warm, forgiving

### **Mesomorphic**

Dominant, cheerful, confident, energetic, impetuous, efficient, enthusiastic, competitive, determined, outgoing, argumentative, talkative, active domineering

### **Ectomorphic**

Detached, tense, anxious, reticent, self-conscious, meticulous, reflective, precise, thoughtful, considerate, shy, awkward

### **Height**

Tall-rated as more extroverted and attractive, related to status

## **Kinesics**

\* Defined: the study of human body movements, including such phenomena as gestures, posture, facial expressions, eye behavior, and rate of walk.

\* Fact: women are better decoders than men.

\* Fact: different cultures use different nonverbal codes.

## **Vocalics**

\* Defined: how we say words and includes accent, emphasis, vocal quality, pitch, rate, pause (including silence), or anything that adds to the meaning we associate with the verbal.

\* Loudness

\* Pitch

\* Duration

\* Quality

\* Regularity

\* Articulation

\* Pronunciation

\* Silence

\* Dialects

- \* Gender Differences
- \* Breathly
- \* Thin

## **Seek to Clarify Your Ideas Before Communicating**

The more systematically we analyze the problem or idea to be communicated, the clearer it becomes. This is the first step toward effective communication. Many communications fail because of inadequate planning. Good planning must consider the goals and attitudes of those who will receive the communication and those who will be affected by it.

## **Examine the True Purpose of Each Communication**

Before you communicate, ask yourself what you REALLY want to accomplish with your message – obtain information, initiate action, change another person's attitude? Identify your most important goal and then adapt your language, tone and total approach to serve that specific objective. Don't try to accomplish too much with each communication. The sharper the focus of your message, the greater its chances of success.

## **Consider the Total Physical and Human Setting Whenever You Communicate**

Meaning and intent are conveyed by more than words alone. Many other factors influence the over-all impact of a communication, and the manager must be sensitive to the total setting in which he communicates. Consider, for example, your sense of TIMING, i.e., the circumstances under which you make an announcement or render a decision; the PHYSICAL SETTING, whether you communicate in private, for example, or otherwise; the SOCIAL CLIMATE that pervades work relationships within the company or a department and sets the tone of its communications; CUSTOM AND PAST PRACTICE, the degree to which your communication conforms to, or departs from, the expectations of your audience. Be constantly aware of the total setting in which you communicate. Like all living things, communication must be capable of adapting to its environment.

## **Consult with Others, Where appropriate, in Planning Communications**

Frequently, it is desirable or necessary to seek the participation of others in planning a communication or developing facts on which to base it. Such consultation often helps to lend additional insight and objectivity to your message. Moreover, those who have helped you plan your communication will give it their active support.

## **Be Mindful While You Communicate of the Overtones as well as the Basic Content of Your Message**

Your tone of voice, your expression, your apparent receptiveness to the responses of others – all have tremendous impact on those you wish to reach. Frequently overlooked, these subtleties of communication often affect a listener's reaction to a message even more than its basic content. Similarly, your choice of language – particularly your awareness of the fine shades of meaning and emotion in the words you use – predetermines in large part the reactions of your listeners.

## **Take the Opportunity, When it Arises, to Convey Something of Help or Value to the Receiver**

Consideration of the other person's needs – the habit of trying to look at things from his point of view – will frequently point out opportunities to convey something of immediate benefit of long-range value to him. People on the job are most responsive to the manager whose messages take their own interests into account.

## **Follow Up Your Communication**

Our best efforts at communication may be wasted, and we may never know whether we have succeeded in expressing our true meaning and intent if we do not follow up to see how well we have put our message across. This you can do by asking questions, by encouraging the receiver to express his reactions, by follow-up contacts, by subsequent review of performance. Make certain that every important communication has "feedback" so that complete understanding and appropriate action result.

## **Communicate for Tomorrow as well as Today**

While communications may be aimed primarily at meeting the demands of an immediate situation, they must be planned with the past in mind if they are to maintain consistency in the receiver's view; but most important of all, they must be consistent with long-range interests and goals. For example, it is not easy to communicate frankly on such matters as poor performance or the shortcomings of a loyal subordinate, but postponing disagreeable communications make them more difficult in the long run and is actually unfair to your subordinates and to your company.

## **Be Sure Your Actions Support Your Communications**

In the final analysis, the most persuasive kind of communication is not what you say but what you do. When a man's action or attitudes contradict his words, we tend to discount what he has said. For every manager this means good supervisory practice, such as clear assignment of

responsibility and authority, fair rewards for effort and sound policy enforcement, serve to communicate more than all the gifts of oratory.

## **Seek not only to be Understood, But to Understand; Be a Listener**

When we start talking, we often cease to listen in that large sense of being attuned to the other person's unspoken reactions and attitudes. Even more serious is the fact we are all guilty, at times, of inattentiveness when others are attempting to communicate to us. Listening is one of the most important, most difficult, and most neglected, skills in communication. It demands we concentrate not only on the explicit meanings another person is expressing, but also on the explicit meanings, unspoken words and undertones that may be far more significant. Thus, we must learn to listen with the inner ear if we are to know the inner man.

### **Avoiding Breakdowns in Communication**

*By Dr. Hap LeCrone*

1. Try to understand how the other individual in a conversation feels by putting yourself in their shoes. Focus on what they are saying and the feelings that are associated with the words. Resist the urge to shift your thinking away from the other individual and on to your own planned response to them.
2. Try to maintain eye contact when possible.
3. Be sensitive to the possibility that the listener has not heard you. If you suspect that this is possible, ask him to tell you what he thought he heard. Explore with them, if necessary, the meaning of what you are trying to convey to them.
4. If you are not completely sure that you understand the other person's meaning in a conversation, stop and explore this with them, rather than letting the conversation grow and develop on inaccurate assumptions.
5. Analyze your goals in conversation and see if instead of listening you instead often are attempting to change the other person and control the outcome of the conversation.
6. Refrain from blaming type statements such as "You should have known better" or "You always foul things up."

7. Refrain from letting your own sense of inadequacy or insecurity interfere with your ability to hear what the other person is saying. Individuals with poor self-esteem often misinterpret what is being said to them, because of their own negative self-talk. While listening to the individual communicating, they may be making false assumptions such as, “Their lack of attentiveness to me in this conversation means they don’t care or they don’t like me.”

**“You can’t expect to connect with others until you can connect with yourself!”**

*Connecting with others requires using your head and your gut – your mind and your body! So before you begin, get in touch with your perspective, your presence and your power. And always know where you stand.*

**“Powerful communication is not an isolated achievement”**

*Becoming a great communicator is an ongoing journey. The deeper you’re willing to go and the further you’re willing to reach, the better your results will be. Again and again – over and over - right now and always!*

**“Effective communication begins only after you’ve clarified the results you want”**

*Great communicators don’t dump information. Instead, they challenge themselves to know what they want from each and every communication. They dig deep, beyond the easy answers, to determine the action they want their listeners to take. For that action is the real reason you are communicating – and the real heart of successful connection.*

**“You can’t connect when you’re thinking more about yourself than you are about your listeners”**

*Communication is a two-way process. Once you know what you want to achieve, you must turn your attention to your listeners. Who are they? What are they concerned about? What message will speak to them? Such awareness of your audience is essential to connecting and to moving forward.*

**“Effective communication is about response – not performance”**

*It doesn't take a song and dance to motivate your listeners. In fact, successful communication happens when you turn the spotlight on your listeners. When you connect to your audience's reality, you will inspire them to respond.*

**“It's not what you say. It's what your listeners hear”**

*It's easy to get caught up in what you want to say. But words are only a vehicle and if your audience can't accept them, it doesn't matter how eloquent they are. At all times, shape your message to speak to the needs and motivations of your listeners.*

**“In a critical communication situation, no one is merely a passive receiver”**

*There is no way around it – your listeners will always sift what you say through their current perspectives. To who they are and what they do. To what they believe and how they feel. Your awareness and empathy are essential to successful connections.*

**“You can't be effective if you have the right presentation and the wrong audience”**

*People are at their best when they believe in what they're doing. That's why great communication requires connecting to your listener's world. When you do, you harness a great energy. It's an energy that inspires. It's an energy that gets things done!*