

Module 1 – Communications – Part 1

Interpersonal Skills

Facilitator Guide

NOTES

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Facilitator's Guide

I. Purpose of the Facilitator's Guide

The facilitator's guide is designed to assist facilitators to deliver the workshop as an introduction to communications planning and to use the guide to develop a workshop to assist community groups to improve their communications plan or develop a communications plan or strategy.

The guide is supplemented by PowerPoint slides which can be used for the workshop or modified to meet the requirements of your participants. The workshop exercises are provided to encourage group discussion and interaction and depending on your participants and time can be modified. Notes to facilitators are contained in the exercises and throughout the guide marked with a bullet ►.

II. Facilitating the Workshop

A facilitator guide, PowerPoint slides (with notes), and Course Outline are provided for the facilitator. Participants will be provided with a Participant Guide. The material is a guideline only and can be modified to meet the needs of your participants.

a. Facilitator Profile

Effective facilitation of this workshop will require:

- Skills in group facilitation
- Knowledge of adult education principles
- Understanding of regional economic development boards, municipal and other levels of government
- Understanding of community based and/or volunteer organizations
- Understanding of community economic development
- Knowledge of interpersonal communications and communications planning

b. Participant Profile

Participants of this workshop will be a diverse group of individuals who may come from a variety of backgrounds and represent a variety of groups, organizations, or government departments. They will bring to the group a wide range of attributes, knowledge, skills and experiences.

c. Pre-Session Planning

A pre-session questionnaire or a meeting with participants is useful to assist you with developing the agenda. In some instances, the facilitator will meet with one or two key people in the organization to discuss the participants' requirements from the session.

Note: *A sample pre-session questionnaire is provided in the Facilitator's Tool kit*

i. Methodology

Activities to support the various topics are contained in the facilitator and participant guide. The activities or exercises have the following:

- Suggested time lines
- Objectives
- Advance preparation
- Exercise
- Notes to facilitator
- Facilitator resources
- Participant resources

Depending on the size of the workshop, small groups should consist of 4-7 participants. Switching the membership of the small groups provides individuals with the opportunity to hear fresh perspectives and to create the opportunity for participants to expand their network.

While the method for each activity is prescribed, it is recommended that the facilitator determine the best approach for each activity. The time lines suggested are for guidance only as the exercises may take less or more time. You can adjust according to your time and your participants. The key is to facilitate a process of empowering and assisting participants to achieve established objectives.

ii. Pre -Workshop Questionnaire

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The facilitator should try to identify the specific learning needs of each group in order to customize the structure and content of the workshop so that it will respond to the participants' needs. Types of information and questions that will assist you in designing each workshop include but may not be limited to:

- Individual information (i.e. their name, where they work and/or volunteer, relevant reporting relationships with others who may be attending, the composition of their work/volunteer group, special needs etc.)
- Past community development experience
- Knowledge of past, present and/or future community development initiatives which they were/are/ may be involved
- Background information on vision, mission, goals and activities of their community development efforts
- A list of priority expectations

You can obtain this information in a variety of ways, such as:

1. Arrange a meeting with a representative of the participant group ahead of time. This is usually the most effective and efficient way to obtain information.
2. Develop a "pre-workshop questionnaire" which provides participants with an opportunity to identify their specific interests and expectations. A sample questionnaire is provided in the Facilitator's Toolkit.
3. Develop a draft outline of your planned approach to the workshop and send it to the participants via fax, e-mail or snail mail. Ask them to provide feedback on the agenda and the learning objectives. A sample letter is provided in the Facilitator's Toolkit. You may consider incorporating additional information in this correspondence which you will need to send out to the participants.

iii. Developing/Customizing Agenda

The needs and interests of the participants and the time available will determine the topics that will be explored in the workshop. You will develop your workshop agenda based on your pre-session planning (questionnaire, interviews, and meetings) but the agenda should include the following:

- Objective of the session
- An introduction
- Establishing ground rules
- A review of the key learning objectives
- Topic overviews and activities

- Identification and discussion of issues, concerns and challenges
- A conclusion consisting of a review of expectations and completion of the workshop evaluation

iv. Materials/Supplies/Equipment

The following supplies will be required:

- flip chart stand(s) and paper
- markers, pens and pencils
- masking tape
- paper for participants
- Post-it notes or stickers for exercises
- copies of any handouts to be used
- folders and/or small binders for participant's tools

If you opt to use an overhead projector and laptop then you will need the following:

- Overhead projector
- Extra bulb for the projector
- Laptop
- Extension Cords
- Copies of overheads for participants
- Screen
- Power Bar
- Discs

Caution: Always develop a Plan B when using technology

v. Logistics

The workshop space should be comfortable as you will be spending a full day in the room. The lighting, seating, temperature, location of washrooms, availability of water or coffee, all contribute to the success of your session. Participants should be advised in advance if food will be provided during nutritional breaks or lunch. Ensure that you accommodate any special needs of your participants.

If you are not familiar with the allocated workshop space, arrange to visit it prior to the session or discuss your requirements with a representative of the organization or the facility you will be using.

This workshop has been designed to accommodate 12 to 16 participants. You will need a large room that will accommodate a U-shaped seating arrangement which

will encourage group participation. To support the small group discussions which will be taking place, break out rooms/sufficient space will be needed.

Suggested resources for participants to review prior to the session include:

vi. Housekeeping

At the beginning of the session, it is important that you address all housekeeping items. These may include but are not limited to:

- Advise participants that they will receive handouts
- Length of workshop
- Nutrition and lunch break times
- Location of the water cooler, kettle, coffee pot, washrooms, available telephone etc.
- Use of cell phones
- How messages will be handled
- Contact number
- Emergency exit

vii. Guidelines

Advise participants that you will be using a **Parking Lot** tool which is a space for questions, comments and issues that arise during the session that are not covered in the agenda or require additional material. The parking lot will be addressed at the end of the session.

Another facilitation technique that some find useful is to assign a **Timekeeper** so that the agreed upon time lines in the agenda are followed by the facilitator. The timekeeper is responsible for advising the group when the allocated time for a topic is up. Using a timekeeper allows the group to take a collective responsibility for the effective use of time throughout the session.

Establishing **Ground Rules** is a useful strategy to get the group to identify actions and behaviours that are to be followed during the session. For instance, a common Ground rule is that the group sticks to allocated times unless everyone agrees; that you address the issue and not the person; one person speaks at a time; no interruption, etc. The group decisions on ground rules provide a positive environment for the facilitator and the participants who have contributed to the rules for the session.

III. Post-session Work

The post-session work involves addressing any issues that arise from the parking lot or arranging for some follow up to address any issues. The participants are responsible for evaluating the workshop and the facilitator so an evaluation form is to be provided for each participant. A member of the group should collect the completed forms and provide them to the organization and they will then be later forwarded to the facilitator.

The facilitator should also prepare a list of lessons learned throughout the session – what worked, what needs improvement, what could change – recognizing of course that the participants and their expectations may change with the next session.

Communications Module 1 – Part 1 – Interpersonal Communications

The Communications Module is designed to be delivered over a two-day period. The first day is Interpersonal Communications and Day Two is Communications Planning.

AGENDA

Activity	Time*
Icebreaker	15 minutes
Welcome & Overview	10 minutes
Agenda Review	10 minutes
Communication Process	45 minutes
Types of Communication	
Verbal	45 minutes
Non-Verbal	45 minutes
Listening	60 minutes
Factors Influencing Communication	45 minutes
Parking Lot	30 minutes
Discussion/Evaluation	30 minutes

*** suggested times only – can be modified to meet your needs**

NOTES

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for the Interpersonal Communications module include:

- Understand the fundamentals of basic communication
- Identify various types of verbal communication
- Discuss various types of non-verbal communication
- Analyze communication and listening skills and identify and practice ways to improve skills
- Recognize various factors that influence communication

Getting Started

➤ **Icebreaker**

Select an icebreaker from the facilitator's tool kit or one of your own choice that is suitable for your group and its size. The first exercise in this module could also be used as your icebreaker.

➤ **Agenda Review**

Review the agenda with participants that you have prepared on flipchart. Discuss any changes to the content or timelines.

Some groups or facilitators may wish to assign times for the various sections, for breaks and for lunch.

Review ground rules

Assign time keeper

Discuss parking lot

Other

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Exercise 1: Getting to know you

Suggested time: 30 minutes

Objective

Give participants an opportunity to practice their communication skills

Advance preparation

None

Exercise

Pair participants and ask them to interview each other so that they may learn enough about the person to introduce him/her to the rest of the group.

Note to the Facilitator

This exercise works best when participants don't know each other but can still be used when they know each other.

It should provide an insight into how we communicate through the information we ask and communicate about others and ourselves. It will be interesting to see what people share with their partner and interviewer and what the partner and interviewee chooses to tell the group.

Facilitator resources

Prepare flipchart page with title of exercise

Participant resources

Pen/pencil and paper

➤ **Review Exercise 1 and differences in communication styles**

NOTES

1.0 What is communication?

Communicating and communication are complex interactions with a variety of definitions. A short definition is that communication is a process in which a person, through language, signs and symbols, conveys a message to another person.

In order to understand the communication process, it is important to examine the basic elements and their impact on the message. The sender, message, channel, receiver, noise/distortion and feedback and each will now be reviewed and discussed.

1.1 Sender

What influences your effectiveness as a sender?

- Language and how you use it
- Credibility
- Knowledge of content, audience and context
- Experience, attitudes and values

1.2 Message

- Written
 - Words, sentences, paragraphs
- Oral
 - Use of your voice – tone, pitch
- Non-Verbal
 - Gestures
 - Facial expressions

- Eye contact
- Environment (office set up)

1.3 Channel

- Verbal
 - Face to face meetings
 - Telephone
 - Video-conferencing
- Written
 - Reports
 - Letters

1.4 Receiver

When receiver receives the message, communication has taken place.

However, there are several characteristics of receivers that can impact the message and thus the communication process.

- Abilities
- Attitudes
- Experience

1.5 Feedback

- Receiver responds in some way
- Key component as it allows sender to evaluate effectiveness of message

1.6 Barriers

Although communication process appears to be simple, there are certain barriers throughout the process. The barriers can have a negative impact on the process.

- Inappropriate medium or channel
- Incorrect grammar, inflammatory words, words that conflict with body language
- Technical jargon
- Noise
 - Can occur at any stage
 - Interference from various sources – radio, chatter, anything that impacts attention

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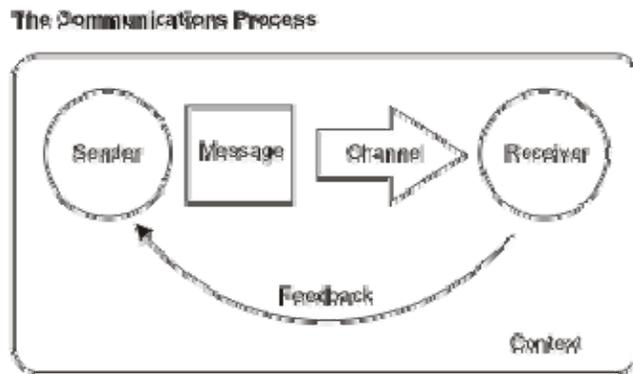
Additional Material # 1

Source:

<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/CommunicationIntro.htm>

Communications Skills - The Importance of Removing Barriers:

Problems with communication can pop-up at every stage of the communication process (which consists of **sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback** and **context** - see the diagram below) and have the potential to create misunderstanding and confusion.



To be an effective communicator and to get your point across without misunderstanding and confusion, your goal should be to lessen the frequency of these problems at each stage of this process with clear, concise, accurate, well-planned communications. We follow the process through below:

Sender...

To establish yourself as an effective communicator, you must first establish credibility. In the business arena, this involves displaying knowledge of the subject, the audience and the context in which the message is delivered.

You must also know your audience (individuals or groups to which you are delivering your message). Failure to understand who you are communicating with will result in delivering messages that are misunderstood.

Message...

Next, consider the message itself. Written, oral and nonverbal communications are affected by the sender's tone, method of organization, validity of the argument, what is communicated and what is left out, as well as by the individual style of communicating. Messages also have intellectual and emotional components, with intellect allowing us the

ability to reason and emotion allowing us to present motivational appeals, ultimately changing minds and actions.

Channel...

Messages are conveyed through channels, with verbal including face-to-face meetings, telephone and videoconferencing; and written including letters, emails, memos and reports.

Different channels have different strengths and weaknesses. For example, it's not particularly effective to give a long list of directions verbally, while you'll quickly cause problems if you criticize someone strongly by email.

Receiver...

Your message is delivered to individual members of your audience. No doubt, you have in mind the actions or reactions you hope your message will get from this audience. Keep in mind, though, that each of these individuals enters into the communication process with ideas and feelings that will undoubtedly influence their understanding of your message, and their response. To be a successful communicator, you should consider these before delivering your message, and act appropriately.

Feedback...

Your audience will provide you with feedback, verbal and nonverbal reactions to your communicated message. Pay close attention to this feedback as it is crucial to ensuring the audience understood your message.

Context...

The situation in which your message is delivered is the context. This may include the surrounding environment or broader culture (i.e. corporate culture, international cultures, etc.).

Removing Barriers At All These Stages

To deliver your messages effectively, you must commit to breaking down the barriers that exist in each of these stages of the communication process.

Let's begin with the message itself. If your message is too lengthy, disorganized, or contains errors, you can expect the message to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. Use of poor verbal and body language can also confuse the message.

Barriers in context tend to stem from senders offering too much information too fast. When in doubt here, less is oftentimes more. It is best to be mindful of the demands on other people's time, especially in today's ultra-busy society.

Once you understand this, you need to work to understand your audience's culture, making sure you can converse and deliver your message to people of different backgrounds and cultures within your own organization, in your country and even abroad.



Exercise 2 - Discuss communication barriers

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Provide participants with opportunity to discuss barriers in the communication process.

Advance preparation

None

Exercise

Facilitator leads group discussion (brainstorming) on barriers to communication and how they impact the communication process.

Note to the facilitator

Discuss issues such as inefficient use of time, morale, stress, loss revenue or opportunities, etc.

Facilitator resources

Prepare flipchart sheet with Communication Barriers and write down some examples of barriers to add to the discussion.

Participant resources

Pen/pencil paper if done on individual basis before large group discussion.

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Exercise 3 - Identify and deal with common communication problems

Suggested time: 30 minutes

Objective

Identify strategies to deal with common communication problems.

Advance Preparation

Review case studies

Exercise

Place into several groups and assign case to each group for review/discussion. Each group assigns a recorder and presenter to report back to the large group.

Notes to the Facilitator

Issues arising in the cases studies include:

Chair not aware of project

Staff person responsible does not attend meetings

Senior staff person not at meeting

Other staff did not comment

Direction given to staff person was not clear

Staff person spent considerable time on

Participant Resources

Pen/pencil and paper; flipchart to record discussion and solutions

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Exercise 3 - Case studies

1. Harbour View Town Council Development

Directions: In your groups identify and discuss some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communication process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Harbour view town council was discussing an application for a housing development adjacent to land to be obtained by the town for economic development. The land for economic development purposes had been discussed at length by the economic development committee and approved by that committee and then by council.

During the council meeting, the staff person responsible for economic development was not present. The housing development was approved but several councilors raised concerns about land acquired for economic development and the process the Town was following in its acquisition. Several councilors who know about the process did not speak up to address their colleagues' concerns and questions about the land acquisition. The media was present at the meeting as well as several residents and the local media then produced an article on the issue.

2. Midland Lake Park Association Funding

Directions: In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The president/chairperson of the board of directors of Midland Lake Park Association hears that a local similar organization may soon receive funding for a similar wetlands related project for which the Association has applied for funding. The president/chairperson calls the office to request that an email be sent to the board asking for feedback on their position on what he has heard, as he feels that he should raise a concern about funding for the other project.

The president/chairperson is on her way to a meeting and the executive director is at lunch so her assistant hears the concern and passes on the message to the executive director when he returns. The executive director immediately sends out the email to all members stating that president/chairperson is concerned that funding has been provided to a similar organization. Several board members are upset with the funding and start calling the local government office to express concern about the funding. It is discovered that the funding was not announced but was contemplated and the Association would have been consulted before any decision was made. The president/chairperson does not explain where she got the information, and insists the problem was the administrative assistant. The assistant says she gave her the impression funding was announced and they were reacting to that and showed the executive director her notes.

3. Timberland Development Association

Directions: In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Timberland Development Association is pursuing ownership of a large marina which generates significant revenue and has potential for waterfront tourism development. The executive director is very well versed in the project, where similar projects are located and the government departments and processes involved. During preparation of a board meeting, an executive member contacts him to advise him that he's heard that a similar project encountering some of the same government hurdles has had them resolved so he should follow up immediately. The executive director knows that the member is misinformed and suggests that they wait for a few days. The board member is insistent and then contacts the chair who directs the executive director to drop what he is doing and follow up on the information. The executive director has to defer working on the board package and spends the afternoon following up to find he is correct. The board meeting that evening does not have full documentation due to the afternoon project. The other board members are complaining and the executive director is unable to place blame for the problem on the chair and board member so takes the blame.

4. Economic Development Corporation Funding Proposal

Directions: In your groups identify some of the communication problems in this scenario. Consider the communications process above – sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback and barriers.

The Executive Director of the local Economic Development Corporation is working with a Town official on a funding proposal for a trail in the town. The group working with the Corporation on the trail has also taken on taken the cleanup of the lake that will be part of the trail and is confronting the Town with allegations that they feel that the town is not putting enough funding into the cleaning up of the lake and that they

continue to pollute it. The group has to write the Town to ask for support for the funding proposal.

The Town official, in a telephone conversation with the Executive Director, discusses how a confrontational approach is not always the best approach and that the group's letter should address the funding issue and not the other issues. The Town official asks the Executive Director if he could try to work with the group in writing the letter to the Town. The town official knows that support and funding for the trail will get better support if the group approaches the town about the project and not the other issues and relays this to the Director. The Town official is surprised to see later in the day an email from the Director to the group stating that the town official suggests that the letter should be non-confrontational.

➤ **Summarize communication process and challenges**

➤ **Discuss**

2.0 Types of communication

Now that we have a better understanding of the communication process, we will now focus on the various types of communication – some of which we have already mentioned above.

- Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Listening

➤ **Complete exercise 4 (next Page)**

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Exercise 4 - How we communicate

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Understand how verbal, vocal and visual elements contribute to the total message.

Advance preparation

Select participants for role play.

Exercise

Role play a brief conversation between two people and participants will observe and interpret the sender and receiver's verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Select two participants to participate in a three to four-minute role play – an exchange between a resident and town clerk.

The resident is refusing to pay interest on a business tax account despite repeated bills and statement stating that interest is now accruing as bill not paid on time. The resident is angry and challenging the clerk who is trying to explain the fact that policy has been in place, ways to appeal, etc. The resident decides to pay only the business tax amount and not the interest and then leaves the premises, leaving the clerk frustrated and having to prepare a report for council to discuss the interest.

Note to facilitator:

Ask participants to think about how much of the conversation was verbal – what was said and how it was said – and how much was visual or non-verbal and compare with the statistic below. Discuss observations and record on flipchart

Verbal (what we say) 7 %

Quality and Tone of voice 38%

Visual (non-verbal) 55%

Source: Pincus, M. (2004). *Managing Difficult People*. Avon, MA: Adams Media.

Facilitator resources : Flipchart

Participant resources: Sample communication log in Appendix.

- **Discuss and provide examples (get participants to practice as well)**

2.1 Verbal communication

Verbal communication is what we say and how we say it. There are various ways in which we use our verbal communication skills – we use them to talk, to listen, to give and receive feedback, to question.

➤ Speech

- Range
 - Musicality of your voice
 - Make musical type sounds when you speak
 - Average person has a range of 7 to 11 notes when they speak
 - Speech that is interesting to listen to has at least 7 to 11 notes
 - Monotone is less than 7 notes
 - Someone speaking with less than 7 notes had a monotone voice
 - Speech that is monotone is difficult to listen to and does not maintain attention
- Pitch
 - Point within range where voice is placed for speaking
 - Deeper voices easier to hear than high squeaky ones
- Volume
 - Loudness or softness
 - Depends on location
- Enunciation
 - Clearness of your speech
- Pronunciation
 - How you pronounce your words
 - Dialect is important factor in some areas

- Inflection
 - Change in pitch to emphasize word(s)
 - Tone
 - Convey a range of emotions
- **Refer to additional reading material on non-verbal communication**

2.2 Non-verbal communication

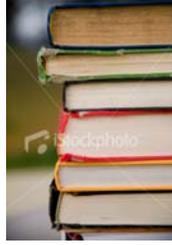
Non-verbal communication is what we say with our body. It includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups. It may also include the way we dress, our silence and other mannerisms.

Knowledge of non-verbal communication is important for those who work with others as it enables them to interpret actions and understand feelings and attitudes of others.

➤ Examples of non-verbal communication

- Body language
 - Body position (slouching, arms folded)
 - Body orientation (face to face, side to side)
 - Eye contact (direct, downward)
 - Gestures (pointing, swaying)
 - Facial expressions (communicate emotions)
 - Touch
 - Personal space
- Written Communication
 - Provides medium when we are unable to communicate verbally
 - Can provide opportunity to convey message
 - Can be interpreted for meanings or impressions
- Appearance/image
 - How we dress
 - How we present ourselves
 - How we network or act in public
- Environment
 - office set up
 - location of desk
 - boardroom seating arrangement
 - personal space

- **Summarize**
- **Complete exercise 5**
- **Refer to additional reading material on non-verbal communication**



Additional Material #2

Verbal Communication – Using your voice

Range

Anytime you speak, you are making sounds that are more or less musical. The average man, for example, has a range of from seven to eleven notes. Speech that is interesting to listen to uses this range of at least seven to eleven notes. Use less than seven, and you have the boring old monotone style that put people off.

Pitch

Pitch is the point within the vocal range where the voice is placed for speaking. If your pitch is too high or too low your voice will tire easily and is not flexible enough to be used to its best advantage.

TIP . . . Keep your pitch a little lower than normal. Slightly deeper voices are easier to hear than high squeaky ones

Volume

The volume or loudness of your voice will depend upon the conditions under which you are talking. The size and acoustics of the room, then number and location of participants and the level of noise in the immediate area all are factors which can affect the volume. Volume, the range, should not become monotonous. Very effective emphasis can be achieved by speaking softly which you are talking. The size and acoustics of the room in the immediate area or very loudly as the occasion demands.

TIP . . . Make sure that you vary your volume BUT be sure to be heard. Project your voice and consider the volume of your music and the acoustics of your exercise room.

Enunciation

Enunciation demands that each letter, syllable or word you use be uttered definitely, audibly and distinctly

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way of sounding words. Mispronunciation, especially of key words, can mislead a listener or just as bad, lower your credibility as a fitness leader.

TIP . . . Take some time before your class to discover the pronunciation of and practice using words that are unfamiliar or familiar words that are often mispronounced

Inflection

Inflection is basically a sliding change of pitch. When accompanied by a sudden and wide change of volume or range, you get emphasis on single words or phrases than can be effective and interesting to hear.

TIPS • Don't overuse this technique. Your words will sound affected and insincere.

- Do practice using inflection wisely as it is a certain way to improve the interest - holding quality of your speaking

Change of Pace

This one involves both rate of speed of the presentation and pauses in speaking.

TIPS • The larger the class-the slower the rate should be

- The lower the ability level of the class the slower you must speak. Beginners are at a disadvantage - they are unfamiliar with the activities and the language.
 - Difficult or new material requires a slower rate of presentation.
 - Pauses should be clean, definite breaks in the presentation of material. They give people time to let what was just said "sink in". ALSO pauses can be used to help you think on the fly especially if you've been asked a difficult or embarrassing question.
- This one involves both rate of speed of the presentation and pauses in speaking.

Verbal Mannerisms

Verbal mannerisms should always be avoided. Here are the most common examples:

- Use of "pet" words or expressions over and over again in a lesson: e.g. "Right"? "You know what I mean?". "OK".
- Word Whiskers: e.g. "Er-r-r" or "and-a-a-a-", i.e. audible pauses.
- Constant repetition of certain phrases is also annoying

Source: College of the North Atlantic (2006). *Interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution*. College of the North Atlantic and Municipal Training and Development Corporation.



Additional Material # 3

Non-verbal Communication

When Demosthenes was asked what was the first part of oratory he answered, "action"; and which was the second, he replied, "action"; and which was third he still answered, "action." People tend to believe actions more than words!

Have you ever heard anyone say, "His actions spoke so loudly I couldn't hear what he said?" Have you ever wondered whether anyone has said this about you? What we do is a means of communication, subject to interpretation by others. Did you ever stop to think that even failure to act is a way of communicating?

Today, many researchers are concerned with the information sent by communication that is independent of and different from verbal information; namely, the non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is organized by language; non-verbal communication is not.

Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another. Most of us spend about 75 percent of our waking hours communicating our knowledge, thoughts, and ideas to others. However, most of us fail to realize that a great deal of our communication is of a non-verbal form as opposed to the oral and written forms. Non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, body posture and motions, and positioning within groups. It may also include the way we wear our clothes or the silence we keep.

In person-to-person communications our messages are sent on two levels simultaneously. If the nonverbal cues and the spoken message are incongruous, the flow of communication is hindered. Right or wrong, the receiver of the communication tends to base the intentions of the sender on the non-verbal cues he receives.

Categories and Features

G. W. Porter divides non-verbal communication into four broad categories:

Physical. This is the personal type of communication. It includes facial expressions, tone of voice, sense of touch, sense of smell, and body motions.

Aesthetic. This is the type of communication that takes place through creative expressions: playing instrumental music, dancing, painting and sculpturing.

Signs. This is the mechanical type of communication, which includes the use of signal flags, the 21-gun salute, horns, and sirens.

Symbolic. This is the type of communication that makes use of religious, status, or ego-building symbols.

Our concern here will be with what Porter has called the physical method of non-verbal communication.

Knowledge of non-verbal communication is important managers who serve as leaders of organizational "teams," for at least two reasons:

- To function effectively as a team leader the manager must interact with the other members successfully. Non-verbal cues, when interpreted correctly, provide him with one means to do so.
- The team members project attitudes and feelings through non-verbal communication. Some personal needs such as approval, growth, achievement, and recognition may be met in effective teams. The extent to which these needs are met is closely related to how perceptive the team leader and team members are to non-verbal communication in themselves and in others on the team.

If the team members show a true awareness to non-verbal cues, the organization will have a better chance to succeed, for it will be an open, honest, and confronting unit. Argyle and his associates have been studying the features of nonverbal communication that provide information to managers and their team members. The following summarizes their findings:

Static Features

Distance. The distance one stands from another frequently conveys a non-verbal message. In some cultures it is a sign of attraction, while in others it may reflect status or the intensity of the exchange.

Orientation. People may present themselves in various ways: face-to-face, side-to-side, or even back-to-back. For example, cooperating people are likely to sit side-by-side while competitors frequently face one another.

Posture. Obviously one can be lying down, seated, or standing. These are not the elements of posture that convey messages. Are we slouched or erect? Are our legs crossed or our arms folded? Such postures convey a degree of formality and the degree of relaxation in the communication exchange.

Physical Contact. Shaking hands, touching, holding, embracing, pushing, or patting on the back all convey messages. They reflect an element of intimacy or a feeling of (or lack of) attraction.

Dynamic Features

Facial Expressions. A smile, frown, raised eyebrow, yawn, and sneer all convey information. Facial expressions continually change during interaction and are monitored

constantly by the recipient. There is evidence that the meaning of these expressions may be similar across cultures.

Gestures. One of the most frequently observed, but least understood, cues is a hand movement. Most people use hand movements regularly when talking. While some gestures (e.g., a clenched fist) have universal meanings, most of the others are individually learned and idiosyncratic.

Looking. A major feature of social communication is eye contact. It can convey emotion, signal when to talk or finish, or aversion. The frequency of contact may suggest either interest or boredom.

The above list shows that both static features and dynamic features transmit important information from the sender to the receiver.

Tortoriello, Blott, and DeWine have defined non-verbal communication as:

". . . the exchange of messages primarily through non-linguistic means, including: kinesics (body language), facial expressions and eye contact, tactile communication, space and territory, environment, paralanguage (vocal but non-linguistic cues), and the use of silence and time."

Let's review these non-linguistic ways of exchanging messages in more detail.

Kinesics

Lamb believes the best way to access an executive's managerial potential is not to listen to what he has to say, but to observe what he does when he is saying it. He calls this new behavioral science "movement analysis." Some of the movements and gestures he has analyzed follow:

Forward and Backward Movements. If you extend a hand straight forward during an interview or tend to lean forward, Lamb considers you to be an "operator"- good for an organization requiring an infusion of energy or dramatic change of course.

Vertical Movements. If you tend to draw yourself up to your tallest during the handshake, Lamb considers you to be a "presenter." You are a master at selling yourself or the organization in which you are employed.

Side-to-Side Movements. If you take a lot of space while talking by moving your arms about, you are a good informer and good listener. You are best suited for an organization seeking a better sense of direction. Lamb believes there is a relationship between positioning of the body and movements of the limbs and facial expressions. He has observed harmony between the two. On the other hand, if certain gestures are rehearsed, such as those made to impress others, there is a tendency to separate the posture and the movements. The harmony disappears.

Studies by Lamb also indicate that communication comes about through our degree of body flexibility. If you begin a movement with considerable force and then decelerate, you are considered a "gentle-touch." By contrast, if you are a "pressurizer," you are firm from beginning to end. The accuracy of Lamb's analyses is not fully known. However, it is important that corporation executives are becoming so sensitive to the importance of non-verbal messages that they are hiring consultants, such as Lamb, to analyze non-verbal communications in their organizations.

Facial Expressions

Facial expressions usually communicate emotions. The expressions tell the attitudes of the communicator. Researchers have discovered that certain facial areas reveal our emotional state better than others. For example, the eyes tend to reveal happiness or sadness, and even surprise. The lower face also can reveal happiness or surprise; the smile, for example, can communicate friendliness and cooperation. The lower face, brows, and forehead can also reveal anger. Mehrabian believes verbal cues provide 7 percent of the meaning of the message; vocal cues, 38 percent; and facial expressions, 55 percent. This means that, as the receiver of a message, you can rely heavily on the facial expressions of the sender because his expressions are a better indicator of the meaning behind the message than his words.

Eye Contact

Eye contact is a direct and powerful form of non-verbal communication. The superior in the organization generally maintains eye contact longer than the subordinate. The direct stare of the sender of the message conveys candor and openness. It elicits a feeling of trust. Downward glances are generally associated with modesty. Eyes rolled upward are associated with fatigue.

Tactile Communication

Communication through touch is obviously non-verbal. Used properly it can create a more direct message than dozens of words; used improperly it can build barriers and cause mistrust. You can easily invade someone's space through this type of communication. If it is used reciprocally, it indicates solidarity; if not used reciprocally, it tends to indicate differences in status. Touch not only facilitates the sending of the message, but the emotional impact of the message as well.

Personal Space

Personal space is your "bubble" - the space you place between yourself and others. This invisible boundary becomes apparent only when someone bumps or tries to enter your bubble.

How you identify your personal space and use the environment in which you find yourself influences your ability to send or receive messages. How close do you stand to the one with whom you are communicating? Where do you sit in the room? How do you position yourself with respect to others at a meeting? All of these things affect your level of comfort, and the level of comfort of those receiving your message.

Goldhaber says there are three basic principles that summarize the use of personal space in an organization: The higher your position (status) in the organization,

- a. the more and better space you will have,
- b. the better protected your territory will be, and
- c. the easier it will be to invade the territory of lower-status personnel

The impact of use of space on the communication process is related directly to the environment in which the space is maintained.

Environment

How do you arrange the objects in your environment - the desks, chairs, tables, and bookcases? The design of your office, according to researchers, can greatly affect the communications within it. Some managers divide their offices into personal and impersonal areas. This can improve the communication process if the areas are used for the purposes intended.

Your pecking-order in the organization is frequently determined by such things as the size of your desk, square feet in your office, number of windows in the office, quality of the carpet, and type of paintings (originals or copies) on the wall.

It is obvious that your personal space and environment affect the level of your comfort and your status and facilitate or hinder the communication process.

Paralanguage

Is the content of your message contradicted by the attitude with which you are communicating it? Researchers have found that the tone, pitch, quality of voice, and rate of speaking convey emotions that can be accurately judged regardless of the content of the message. The important thing to gain from this is that the voice is important, not just as the conveyor of the message, but as a complement to the message. As a communicator you should be sensitive to the influence of tone, pitch, and quality of your voice on the interpretation of your message by the receiver.

Silence and Time

Silence can be a positive or negative influence in the communications process. It can provide a link between messages or sever relationships. It can create tension and uneasiness or create a peaceful situation. Silence can also be judgmental by indicating favor or disfavor - agreement or disagreement.

For example, suppose a manager finds a couple of his staff members resting.

If he believes these staff members are basically lazy, the idleness conveys to him that they are "goofing off" and should be given additional assignments.

If he believes these staff members are self-motivated and good workers, the idleness conveys to him that they are taking a well-deserved "break."

If he is personally insecure, the idleness conveys to him that they are threatening his authority.

Time can be an indicator of status. How long will you give the staff member who wishes to speak to you? How long will you make him wait to see you? Do you maintain a schedule? Is your schedule such that your subordinates must arrange their schedules to suit yours? In a healthy organization, the manager and his subordinates use time to communicate their mutual respect to each other.

Closing Thoughts

Regardless of your position in the organization it is important for you to develop some sensitivity to nonverbal messages. Cooperation improves as we recognize and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues. Of course you have been aware of non-verbal communications all of your life, **but how much thought have you given them?**

Source:

<http://www.zeromillion.com/business/management/non-verbal-communication.html>

NOTES



Exercise 5 - Interpreting Non-Verbal Behaviour

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Discover what you know about non-verbal behaviour

Advance Preparation

None

Exercise

Ask participants to think about some non-verbal behaviours they have observed. Use the flipchart to record.

Note to facilitator

Some questions to start the discussion:

- Some looks at you with a blank stare?
- Someone jingling coins in their pocket
- Someone use tapping their fingers
- Someone sitting with arms folded

Facilitator resources

The facilitator should mimic some of the body language or ask participants to get involved.

The exercise can be extended if time permits to give the group an opportunity to practice and observe some non-verbal actions.

See appendix for additional information on body language.

Participant resources

NOTES



Exercise 6 - How are your listening skills?

Suggested time: 30 minutes

Objective

Identify listening skills

Advance preparation

Complete checklist

Exercise

Participants complete the checklist and discuss their findings.

Note to the facilitator

You may need to read the questions to the group if you have people with limited reading or visibility skills.

Facilitator resource

checklist and flipchart

Participant Resources

checklist

NOTES



Exercise 6 - Rate your Listening Skills

1. I take notes to help me remember the points
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
2. I am not easily distracted
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
3. I keep my emotions in check when I don't what is being said
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
4. I wait until someone is finished talking before I decide how I feel
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
5. When someone is talking, I smile, nod, and try to keep eye contact with my speaker
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
6. I watch the speaker's body language
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
7. I judge what was said, not the speaker
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
8. I don't interrupt
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__
9. If I'm not sure, I will put what the speaker said into my own words
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

10. I listen not only for what was said but also for why it's said
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

11. I listen for the speaker's emotions
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

12. I allow for silences
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

13. I don't finish someone else's sentences for them or fill in words unless I'm asked
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

14. I ask questions when I don't understand
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

15. I ask questions to get more information
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

16. I'm a patient listener. I'm not thinking about what I'm going to say while someone else is talking
Yes__ No__ Sometimes__

How to rate your answers

If you have ticked any **no** answers you may want to work on improving your listening skills. If you have ticked **sometimes** answers you may want to think about the situations that cause you to do those things.

With practice, we can all become better listeners, as listening skills are important in our daily personal and professional lives.

Good listeners use these ideas

- Take notes
- Be ready to tell someone what you've heard
- Listen with your mind, body and heart
- Don't be quick to judge
- Ask questions
- Paraphrase

- Make contact
- Let the speaker finish
- Judge the issue and not the person

Source: Parker, Barbara. J. (2001) Tea you can trot a mouse on. Volume 1. Hubbards, NS: The Wee Society.

➤ **Summarize exercise 6**

➤ **Review**

2.3 Listening

Listening is the cornerstone for good communication and is often the least developed skill. Often the sender is more concerned with the message and how they appear, than listening to the receiver.

The exercise just completed provides you with some insight into your listening skills and whether you need to improve them.

We will now further discuss listening.

Types of listening

- **Pseudo**
 - Listen to meet some other need
 - Make people think you are interested
 - Keep alert to see if you are being rejected
 - Get some time before your next comment
 - Pretend to be listening to be polite
 - Natural to be pseudo listening some times
- **Active**
 - Listen without barriers (time, emotional)
 - Listen to the entire message by focusing on verbal and non-verbal message
 - Listen using your non-verbal communication skills
 - Listen to the person without interrupting, judging or arguing
 - Clarify and ask questions or paraphrase

Improving Listening through Feedback

Feedback can help you better understand yourself and another person. How you encourage or receive it depends on your level sensitivity level – some are very sensitive and others are unaffected.

Skills used in providing feedback include:

- Paraphrasing
- Perception Checking
- Describing behaviour
- Making “I” statements

Feedback is an important feature in interpersonal communication.

▪ **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing allows you to test whether you understand what you heard from another person. You can restate what was said, or state their idea or information in your own words to show that you know what was said.

- Tests your understanding of communicator’s message
- Allows communicator to clarify a misunderstanding
- Provides climate where communicator can feel understood
- Provides communicator with sense that what they are saying is important
- Provide example and ask for examples

I don’t think this office is doing to do it for me.

You want to move to another space?

Yes, that is what I would like.

- **Perception Checking**

Perception checking is stating in your own words what you perceive the other person is feeling.

- Describe other's feelings or behavior
- Indicates to person that you want to understand their feelings
- State interpretation of behavior
- Ask if interpretations are accurate
- Provide example and ask for examples
 - Were you disappointed that your team wasn't selected?*
 - You didn't say anything in the meeting about the new policy – do you agree with it?*

- **Describing Behaviour**

Describing behaviour states only what has been observed and not what was said so is a good check of your ability to observe and report what you observed.

- State what has been observed
- Does not judge behaviour
- Use it when you want to let person be aware of their behaviour
- Use it when you want someone to be aware of a negative behaviour
- Provides a non-threatening opening to further communication
- Provide example and ask for examples
 - Say: Andrew, Bill has not had a chance to finish the presentation*
 - Do not say: Andrew you are always interrupting*

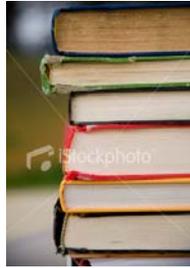
- **Making I Statements**

- Use when you want to explain your feelings
- Use to reduce level of tension in conflict situation
- How to make an I statement
- When (description of behaviour, not person), I feel (description of the feeling, because (tangible or real effect) or how about if (suggestion for change)
 - Pushes speaker to define what disturbs him/her about the situation
- When – separates person from problem
- I feel – speaker is taking responsibility for his/her actions and clarifying his/her feelings, and indicating trust in the listener
- Because – pushes the speaker to look inside to define what bothers him/her about the situation
- Provide example and ask for examples:

Reaction may be: You make me so mad when you arrive late for the meeting.

Say: When you arrive late I feel frustrated because I find it difficult to continue the agenda when some matters have been discussed.

NOTES



Additional Material # 4

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Feedback can help you:

- to better understand another person
- to be understood

There are four basic interpersonal communication skills that will help when it is important that people understand each other.

Paraphrasing

What is it? Paraphrasing is one way to test your understanding of what another has said. Stating the idea, information or comments of the other in your own words or giving an example that shows what you think a person is talking about is paraphrasing.

When to Use it? Anytime you want to check your understanding of what you have just heard.

Why Use It?

- To test your understanding.
- To let the other person know you are interested in them and what they have to say.
- To reveal that you understand the others view so they may be more receptive to your ideas.

Perception Checking

What is it? Perception Checking is stating in your own words that you perceive the other to be feeling. A good perception check conveys the message "I want to understand your feelings- is this (making a statement about the others feelings) the way you feel about it?"

When to use it? Use perception checking anytime you need to:

- check on whether your inference (guess) on how the other person is feeling is correct.
- get the other's feelings out in the open.

Why use it?

- feelings need to be recognized and acknowledged.
- to test for accuracy of perception
- to show your interest in the person and develop rapport

Describing Behaviour

What is it? This skill capitalizes on your powers of observation and your ability to report clearly and accurately what you have observed. There are two tests a statement you make must pass before it can be considered a behaviour description.

1. It states only what is observed rather than inferences or generalizations about the other person's motives, feelings, attitude, personality traits.

Behaviour Description	Possible Inference
1. David walked out of training session 20 minutes before it finished	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• David was annoyed• David had an appointment
2. Betty did not answer when Mary asked her a question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Betty was embarrassed• Betty didn't hear the question• Betty resented the question.

2. A behaviour description is non-evaluative. It does not say or imply what was good, bad, wrong or right.

Behaviour Description	Evaluative Statement
1. David walked out of training session 20 minutes before it finished.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• David is rude• David doesn't care
2. Betty did not answer when Mary asked her a question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• David is irresponsible• Betty doesn't like Mary• Betty is rude• Betty doesn't know the answer

When to use it?

- When you want another person to know you are responding to a particular behaviour of theirs by describing it clearly enough that they know what you have observed.
- When you observe behaviours that you feel are having a negative impact or have affected the group in some way.

Why use it?

- It is non-threatening opening to further communication.
- It makes communication easier because you can more clearly convey what the other person is doing or has done that affects you or the group.

Making "I" Statements

What is it? When you make clear what feelings you are experiencing by naming or identifying them you are using or making "I" statements.

"I" statements must:

- a) refer to "I", "me", or "my"
- b) specify or describe some kind of feeling.

They must not be confused with expressing feelings. Expressions can be misread.

EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS

"Yesterday's meeting was a disaster".

"You are one of my better groups".

DESCRIPTION OF FEELINGS

"I am disappointed about the way I handled yesterday's meeting".

"I like working with you. I appreciate the way everyone participates in the exercises and discussions".

When to use it:

- When it is important for others to understand how you feel.

Why use it?

- To avoid any mis-interpretation of your feelings
- To give information to others about what is going on inside you that is necessary for understanding and the further development of your relationship.

Tips for Giving Feedback:

Effective verbal feedback that is meant for constructive personal improvement should focus on:

- specific (here and now) information rather than general (there and then) commentary.
- the behaviour rather than the person.
- observations (what, how, when) rather than inferences (why)
- constructive change (positive) rather than destructive commentary (negative).
- behaviour descriptions which are in terms of "more or less" rather than "either/or".
- an appropriate amount on information for the received to use rather than how much information may have to the receiver rather than the "release" experienced by the sender.
- behaviour which is changeable rather than fixed.
- sharing of ideas and information in order to generate alternatives, rather than giving advice which suggests specific solutions.

In learning to give feedback, it is helpful to have a pattern in mind that will organize your thinking. Here is one to remember.

"When you/I

I felt

How about if you

Source:

College of the North Atlantic (2006). *Interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution*. College of the North Atlantic and Municipal Training and Development Corporation

NOTES



Exercise 7 - Review paraphrasing

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Discuss some ways to provide feedback through paraphrasing.

Advance preparation

None

Exercise

Discuss the paraphrasing exercises below.

Note to the facilitator

This exercise can be used if you have limited time and do not want to do the lengthier exercise 9.

Facilitator resources

Exercises on following page

Participant resources

NOTES



Exercise 7 - Paraphrasing Exercise

Pick the most appropriate paraphrase:

1. Council has decided to deny a staff member a professional development request and advises the town manager to write the staff member and advise her of the decision but do it in a nice way.
 - a. What do you want me to say?
 - b. Do I tell her the truth
 - c. So I should explain tactfully that there is no money in the budget despite the knowledge and skills she will get from the course?
 - d. I should encourage her to apply again next year and we'll consider it?

2. You are working on a deadline and a co-worker comes to you looking for some time to discuss a project. You quickly respond that you don't have time as you are on a short deadline and the co-worker says sarcastically "well I don't want to interrupt your important work," and leaves the office. You have relied on him recently for some assistance and sense he is feeling rejected. You go to his office:
 - a. You are a little testy today aren't you?
 - b. I don't appreciate it when you judge the importance of my work
 - c. It appears that you feel that your project is very important and my input is require at this time
 - d. I am working on a major deadline and hope that you can appreciate it and will talk to you later

3. The board chair calls you asks you to get quotes on a computer that he thinks should be purchased. He knows the computer expense is not allocated in the budget but states that you to find the money to get the computer.
 - a. You realize that we don't have the money right now
 - b. Where would you like me to call?
 - c. You want to take the time on an item that is not approved in our budget
 - d. I understand you want to get a computer but you realize that the expense is not allocated and perhaps we should run it by the board first

NOTES



Exercise 8 - Practice Giving and Receiving Feedback

Suggested time: 20-30 minutes

Objective

Review and discuss some effective ways to provide feedback through Paraphrasing, Perception Checking, Describing Behaviour and Making I Statements

Advance preparation

None

Exercise

Break group into smaller groups and assign the exercises on next page to them. Ask them to review individually and create a response, and then within the group discuss and select/develop a best response.

Each group shares their response with the rest of the larger group.

Paraphrasing Exercise

Write an effective paraphrase for the following statements, and remember to include the facts and feelings.

A coworker and team member has been going through a difficult time with a family problem, which she has shared confidentiality with you. As a result, you are sensitive to her moods as well as her lack of full effort on your joint project. You have a final report due on Friday and on Monday when you mention it to her she retorts angrily “I am not having a good week so I’ll see what I can do and besides it is only Monday, what’s the rush?”

Exercise 8 – continued

Perception Checking

Provide a perception check for the following:

Why is it that everyone seems to tune out when I try to discuss some new approaches to getting volunteers for the tourism project?

Describing Behaviour

Write a positive and negative response for the following issue.

John regularly interrupts others when they are speaking and then takes over the discussion with his opinions.

You don't

say: _____

You

say: _____

Making "I" statements

Respond to the following with an "I" statement. Remember to take responsibility for your feelings and to include the behaviour and effect.

You feel that you are taking on new responsibilities as whenever something needs to be done that doesn't fit into someone's job description it gets passed on to you. You already take work home and not being paid any overtime for it. Today a board member asks you to do a favor and you have a difficult time refusing the request as that is the way you are! At the end of the day, a staff person asks you to do something that she could easily do. You respond with an "I" statement.

- **Summarize verbal, non verbal and listening**
- **Complete Exercise 8 and Discuss**
- **Refer to Appendix – Responses that Block Communication**
(can be reviewed if time permits)
- **Discuss**

NOTES

3.0 Ways we communicate

We use our verbal, non-verbal, listening, paraphrasing and feedback skills when we communicate on one on one and group settings, formal and non-formal settings, at home, at work, in our volunteer capacity.

In the next section, we will explore some common ways in which we communicate and will focus on some new methods of communication such as voice mail and email.

➤ **Complete Exercise 9 – Public Speaking (next page)**

NOTES



Exercise 9 - Public Speaking Strategies

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Learn about public speaking strategies

Advance preparation

Exercise

Discuss why you fear public speaking – list reasons on flipchart

Discuss some strategies that have worked for you as a public speaker

Note to facilitator

Use flipchart to capture participant responses to this question and some strategies. It will be useful for participants to see.

Facilitator resources

Flipchart

Participant resources

- **Summarize exercise 9**
- **Discuss**

3.1 Speeches

- Ranked among highest of fears
- Requires using voice characteristics
- Provides immediate feedback
- Excellent communication strategy to get message to particular audience
- Effective speech tools
 - Preparation
 - Performance
 - Post-Presentation

3.2 Presentations

- Less formal than speeches
- Allows wider use of variety of tools
 - Multi-media
 - Handouts
 - Discussion

3.3 Correspondence/Office Communication

- Letters
- Memos
- Policies
- Reports

3.4 Telephone

- One-on-one
- Conference calling

3.5 Voice Mail

- Allows flexibility in personal and professional life
- Requires commitment to return calls
- Does not replace one-on-one conversation

➤ Complete Exercise 10

3.6 Email

- Popular form of communication
- Lack of attention to detail, spelling, and other standards
- Encourages instant feedback
- Lack of privacy
- Replace formal communication

3.7 Websites

- Provides information on person or organization
- Enables individual or organization to control/edit material

3.8 Blogs

- Provides new method of communicating
- Provides venue to post thoughts, interact with people

NOTES



Exercise 10 - Email Practices

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Objective

Discuss some advantages and disadvantages of email

Advance preparation

Exercise

Using brainstorming, ask participants to generate a list of advantages and disadvantages of email.

Note to the facilitator

The exercise is a good way to get participants to identify some of the characteristics of email that they use or condone which really impact communication. Discuss how email can be a non-verbal communication technique.

Facilitator resources

Flipchart

If possible, provide some examples of emails

Participant resources

- **Summarize**
- **Review/Discuss**
- **Refer to additional material – Responses That Block Communication and discuss if time permits**

NOTES

4.0 Factors influencing effective communication

This last section of the interpersonal communication skills module will be an opportunity to discuss some of the factors that influence our daily communication in our personal and professional lives. These factors are certainly not inclusive and are meant only to generate discussion and further reflection on what impacts our communication skills and practices.

4.1 Special needs / accessibility

- Recognize that some participants with visual, aural and physical disabilities
- Ensure that you provide an accessible location and environment for all participants

4.2 Environment / setting

- Room size
- Seating arrangement
- Temperature
- Lighting
- Audio/visual
- Group size
- Side conversations
- Chairpersons abilities

4.3 Literacy skills

- Recognize different literacy levels
- Present using various methods

4.4 Cultural factors

- Learn cultural background of participants/audience
- Reveal your cultural needs to speaker
- Adjust to differences

4.5 Email etiquette

- Treat email like written correspondence
- Potential for immediate distribution

4.6 Tone

- Way you communicate can impact the message

4.7 Respect

- Respect organizational structure and protocols

4.8 Gender neutrality

- Respect gender-neutral guidelines in writing and communicating

4.9 Jargon

- Minimize jargon
- Avoid acronyms

4.10 Others



Additional Material # 5

RESPONSES THAT CAN BLOCK EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Evaluation Response

The phrases "You should...", "Your duty...", "You are wrong," "You should know better," "You are bad," "You are such a good person" create blocks to communications.

There is a time for evaluation, but if it is given too soon, the speaker usually becomes defensive.

Advice-Giving Response

"Why don't you try...," "You'll feel better when...," "It would be best for you to ...,"

"My advice is..." are phrases that give advice.

Advice is best given at the conclusion of conversation and generally only when one is asked.

Topping Response, or My Sore Thumb

"That's nothing, you should have seen...", "When that happened to me, I...", "When I was a child...", "You think you have it bad..." are phrases of "one-upmanship."

This approach shifts attention from the person who wants to be listened to and leaves him or her feeling unimportant.

Diagnosing, Psychoanalytic Response

"What you need is...", "The reason you feel the way you do is..." "You don't really mean that," "Your problem is ..." are phrases that tell others what they feel.

Telling people how they feel or why they feel the way they do can be a two-edged sword. If the diagnoser is wrong, the speaker feels pressed; if the diagnoser is right, the speaker may feel exposed or captured. Most people do not want to be told how to feel and would rather volunteer their feelings than to have them exposed.

Prying-Questioning Response

"Why," "who," "where," "when," "how," "what" are responses common to us all.

But such responses tend to make the speaker feel "on the spot" and therefore resist the interrogation. At times, however, a questioning response is helpful for clarification, and in emergencies it is needed.

Warning, Admonishing, Commanding Response

"You had better," "If you don't," "You have to," "You will," "You must" are used constantly in the everyday work environment.

Usually such responses produce resentment, resistance, and rebellion. There are times, of course, when this response is necessary, such as in an emergency situation when the information being given is critical to human welfare.

Logical, Lecturing Response

"Don't you realize...," "Here is where you are wrong...," "The facts are...," "Yes, but..." can be heard in any discussion with two people of differing opinions.

Such responses tend to make the other person feel inferior or defensive. Of course, persuasion is part of the world we live in. In general, however, we need to trust that when people are given correct and full data they will make logical decisions for themselves.

Devaluation Response

"It's not so bad," "Don't worry," "You'll get over it," or "Oh, you don't feel that way" are familiar phrases used in responding to others' emotions.

A listener should recognize the sender's feelings and should not try to take away the feelings or deny them to the owner. In our desire to alleviate emotional pain, we apply bandages too soon and possibly in the wrong place.

Whenever a listener's responses convey non-acceptance of the speaker's feelings, the desire to change the speaker, a lack of trust, or the sense that the speaker is inferior or at fault or being bad, communication blocks will occur.

5.0 Parking Lot

Discuss any issues that arise throughout the day that are not part of the workshop.

6.0 Discussion/Questions/Summary

7.0 Evaluation

Ask participants to complete an evaluation which covers the material, the facilitator and the space/resources.

8.0 Appendices

- **Stimulating Discussion**
- **The Seven Secrets of Attractive Body Language**
- **Communications Glossary**
- **Communications Log**
- **Facilitator Tools**

NOTES

STIMULATING DISCUSSION

The success of any discussion depends upon participation. An atmosphere of free exchange can be created only when people see that a mutual sharing of opinions and ideas is welcome. The skillful use of questions will encourage discussion.

You should be constantly on the alert for cues from the group that suggest problems. If people begin to fidget, look bored, or show by their expressions that they don't understand or disagree, you should ask questions to find out what is going on.

Questions are of four basic types:

- General - which elicit a broad range of potential responses.
- Specific - which focuses in on an idea, leaving a limited range of responses.
- Overhead - which are asked of the group allowing volunteers to respond.
- Direct - which are asked of a selected individual.

General and overhead questions are less threatening and therefore are better to start a discussion. Direct and specific questions are best used after peoples become comfortable with group discussion.

The following examples provide some useful guidelines for generating discussion.

1. Ask For Feelings And Opinions

Use a method of asking questions that will help people express their ideas, draw people out, and encourage discussion. For example:

- What is your reaction to ...?
- How do you feel about...?
- What is your thinking on...?
- What brings you to conclude that...?
- What are some other ways to get at...?
- What prompted your decision to...?
- How did you happen to learn that...?
- How did you feel when you found out that...?
- Would you say that...?

2. Paraphrase

One way to help people reach mutual understanding is to paraphrase; that is, to ask one person to repeat what someone else said to state what that person meant:

- Are you asking me to...?
- Let me see if I understand your position. Are you saying that...?
- I'm not sure I understand. Are you saying that....?

- Before we go on, let me paraphrase what I think you are proposing....?
- Let me restate your last point to see if I understand.
- What I am hearing is....Is that right?
- Before you go on, do you mean that ...?

3. Encourage Participation

Sometimes people tend to hold back. They can be encouraged to participate by such questions as:

- Steve, how do you feel about this ?
- Mary, how would you answer John's questions?
- Before we go on, I'd like to hear from Bill on this.
- We have heard from everyone but Jane. Jane, what is your feeling on this?
- Abe, do you understand what Maria said?
- We haven't heard from Sylvia yet. Sylvia, how do you feel about this?

4. Ask For A Summary

- A lot of good ideas have been presented in the last few minutes. Will someone please summarize the major points before we go on?
- I have heard a number of proposals. Will someone summarize what has been agreed upon?
- It is clear Jim does not agree. Jim, will you summarize your major objections?
- I have lost track. Will someone summarize what has been done so far?

5. Ask For Clarification

- I didn't understand that last comment. What would you do if...?
- The examples you gave concern week day operation. Do they also apply to weekends....?
- I saw Maureen shaking her head. Maureen, would it help if we took a minute to explain how these new instruction apply to your department?
- It is still not clear to me. What do I do when.....?

6. Ask For Examples

- Dorothy, will you give some examples of what you mean?
- John, can you expand on that? I'm not sure I understand

7. Test For Consensus

- It seems that we have come to agreement on this issue. Let me ask for a show of hands on this. Does everyone accept the idea that....?
- Glenda, is that your feeling too....?
- Before we go on to the next issue, let me check to make sure that all have agreed to?

8. Initiate Action

- How do you think we should?
- Frank, how would you suggest that we proceed on this?
- I'd like some suggestion on possible ways to get started. Pierre, how would you propose we get started?

9. Explore An Idea In More Detail

- What are some other ways to approach this problem?
- Are there other things we should consider?
- Otto, what would you add to what has been said?

10. Do A Quick Survey

- Let's see a show of hands. How many are for this proposal?
- Beverly, why don't you ask the others how they feel about your proposal?
- How does everybody feel about this? Let's start with Barry.

11. Suggest A Break

- We have been working on this problem for about an hour. I propose we take a 10 minute break.

12. Suggest A Procedure

- I noticed that Carla has done most of the talking on this issue. I suggest we go around the table to see how others feel.
- Would it help if we put the agenda items in rank order of importance before we started.

13. Suggest They Try Something

- Bridget, I don't think you heard what Willie was trying to say. Why don't you tell us what you heard her say before you state your objections.
- Let's go around the table so that everyone gets a change to comment on this.

14. Stop The Action & Ask The Group To Talk About Something

- Let's stop the discussion for a few minutes. I think it might help if each of us told the group what he or she is feeling, right now.

15. Share Your Feelings

- I feel you are not giving Harry a chance to explain his position.
- I'm frustrated. I think we should take this problem up next week when we have more facts. How do the rest of you feel?

16. Reflect What You Think Someone Is Feeling

- George, I get the impression that you are not satisfied with my answer. Is that right?
- Kim's comments tell me that he needs to ask some questions on this • is that right, Kim?

17. Be Supporting

- Let's give Tony a chance to tell it the way he sees it.
- Dave, you had your say, now it's Janice's turn. Give her a chance to explain.

18. Question Assumptions

- Your proposal assumes that unless we use threats, they won't cooperate. Is that right?
- Your suggestion assumes that we cannot meet the schedule. Is that right?
- Your objection assumes that we will not get promised deliveries. Is that a good assumption?

19. Check Targets Or Orientation

- Are we asking the right question?
- Are these the most important goals?
- Is this the best way to get their co-operation?
- Is this the only way to get it done?

20. Confront Differences

- Nick, you haven't said so but it is clear to me that you don't agree. Is that right?
- Martha, you seem to be holding back on this. Is there something here you disagree with?

21. Role Reversal

- Why don't you take the role of a customer for a few minutes. Now, as a customer, how would you react this proposal?
- Pretend you are the district manager for a moment. How would he react to this proposal?
- How would you feel if I treated you that way?

22. Look Into The Future

- If we did it this way, what is the worst thing that could happen?
- If it doesn't work, what have we lost?
- If it works, how will it effect next week's schedule?

23 Focus on Action Choice

- We have considered every possibility, we must choose from these three alternatives.
- We have discussed both sides carefully. It's time we made a choice.

THINGS TO AVOID

1. Unanswerable Questions

Be sure that the questions you ask can be answered by the group or by some member of the group.

2. Question of Simple Assent Or Dissent

Unless followed by other questions of the Why, When, Where, How, What, Who sort, a yes or no answer leads nowhere.

3. Vague, Indefinite, Ambiguous Questions

To get satisfactory answers, you must ask good questions. Sometimes you may need to rephrase your question or break it down into sub-questions if not immediately understood. Above all never try to play with words or trap a person into an incorrect or misleading answer.

4. Witness-Chair Interrogation

You may have to ask a person questions in the interest of clarification, but remember that you are not out to prove anything. Your conduct should never be that of a courtroom cross-examination where the person answering feels threatened.

NOTES

The Seven Secrets of Attractive Body Language

Face: Have an animated face and making smiling part of your regular repertoire. Make sure you flash your teeth.

Gestures: Be expressive but don't overdo it. Keep your fingers closed when you gesture, your hands below chin level, and avoid arm or feet crossing.

Head Movement: Use Triple Nods when talking and Head Tilt when listening. Keep your chin up.

Eye Contact: Give the amount of eye contact that makes everyone feel comfortable. Unless looking at others is a cultural no-no, lookers gain more credibility than nonlookers.

Posture: Lean forward when listening, stand straight when speaking.

Territory: Stand as close as you feel comfortable. If the other person moves back, don't step forward again.

Mirror: Subtly mirror the body language of others.

Source: Pease, A & B. (2004). *The definitive book of body language*. New York: Random House.

NOTES

Communications Glossary

Advertising

Advertising is bringing a product (or service) to the attention of potential and current customers. Advertising is focused on one particular product or service. Thus, an advertising plan for one product might be very different than that for another product. Advertising is typically done with signs, brochures, commercials, direct mailings or e-mail messages, personal contact, etc.

Body Language

Body language is an outward reflection of a person's emotional state as each movement or gesture can indicate what a person may be feeling or thinking at the time. For instance, folded arms may indicate that the person is feeling defensive or fearful. Body language is an important part of the communication process.

Blog

A blog (short for web log) is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order.

Branding

Branding involves a strong, consistent message about an organization, product, service or community which differentiates it from others. It is an image and feeling that people have and consists of their perceptions and experiences, some of which you can influence.

Channel

Messages are conveyed through channels which can be face to face meetings, telephone calls, letters, emails, and reports.

Describing Behaviour

Describing behaviour is a communication tool in which you state only what was observed and not what was said.

Email

An electronic message sent via internet to another person. Can be basic message or can include attachments such as letters, reports, photos, etc.

Enunciation

Enunciation is how clear you speak.

Feedback

Feedback is what you get from your audience in reaction to your message.

“I” statements

A communication tool to use when you want to explain your feelings. The tool is good for reduce tension and conflict.

Making an “I” statement:

When (describe behaviour and not person)

I feel (describe the feeling that you get)

Because (tangible or real effect) or how about (a suggestion for change)

Making I statements pushes the speaker to define what disturbs him/her about a situation.

Inflection

Inflection is the change in the pitch of your voice to emphasize words.

Listening

Listening involves listening to what another person is saying. Active listening is a way of listening that focuses entirely on what the other person is saying and confirms understanding of both the content of the message and the emotions and feelings underlying the message to ensure that understanding is accurate. Hearing is a passive skill.

Marketing

Marketing is the wide range of activities involved in making sure that you're continuing to meet the needs of your customers and getting value in return. Marketing is usually focused on one product or service. Thus, a marketing plan for one product might be very different than that for another product. Marketing

activities include "inbound marketing," such as market research to find out, for example, what groups of potential customers exist, what their needs are, which of those needs you can meet, how you should meet them, etc. Inbound marketing also includes analyzing the competition, positioning your new product or service (finding your market niche), and pricing your products and services. "Outbound marketing" includes promoting a product through continued advertising, promotions, public relations and sales.

Medium

The medium is the way to get your message across to your audience. More than one medium is media.

Media

Media are the medium to carry message and include traditionally include radio, television, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and now include websites, electronic newsletters, etc.

Media (press) release

A media or press release is a newsworthy announcement that is sent to your media list.

Message

The message refers to what you are communicating and can be written, oral and can be impacted by the sender's tone, method of organization, what is communicated, and the individual's style of communicating.

Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is what we say with our body – includes facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, etc.

Noise

Noise refers to noise in a message and can include interference from various sources and impacts the receiver's attention.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is a communication tool that allows you to restate or state in your own words, what was said in order to understand what you heard.

Perception checking

Perception checking is stating in your own words what you think another person is feeling.

Pitch

The pitch of your voice is the point within range where voice is placed for speaking. Some people have a deep voice and some have a high pitched or squeaky voice.

Promotion

Promotion keeps the product in the minds of the customer and helps stimulate demand for the product. Promotion involves ongoing advertising and publicity, such as mention in the media. The ongoing activities of advertising, sales and public relations are often considered aspects of promotions.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to how you pronounce your words.

Public relations

Public relations includes ongoing activities to ensure the organization or company has a strong public image. Public relations activities include helping the public to understand the organization or company and its services or products. Often, public relations are conducted through the media, that is, newspapers, television, magazines, etc. As noted above, public relations is often considered as one of the primary activities included in promotions.

Publicity

Publicity is mention in the media. Organizations usually have little control over the message in the media, at least, not as they do in advertising. Regarding publicity, reporters and writers decide what will be said.

Public service announcement (PSA)

A PSA is a brief announcement about an upcoming event that is publicized by local media at no cost.

Range

The range of your voice refers to the musicality of your voice.

Sales

Sales involves most or many of the following activities, including cultivating prospective buyers (or leads) in a market segment; conveying the features, advantages and benefits of a product or service to the lead; and closing the sale (or coming to agreement on pricing and services). A sales plan for one product might be very different than that for another product.

Sender

The sender is the person who sends the message and who must be credible, must know the subject, the audience and context in which the message is delivered.

Target Audience

A target audience is the audience your message is intended to reach

Verbal communication

Verbal communication is what we say and how we say it. It includes the range, pitch and volume of our voice, our enunciation and pronunciation, inflection and tone of our voice.

Website

A website is an internet site containing information on a government department, business, organization or individual for public viewing.

NOTES

Sources:

www.managementhelp.org - Basic Definitions of Advertising, Marketing, Promotion, Public Relations and Publicity, and Sales by Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD

www.8020info.com - Tourism Development From a Branding Strategy Perspective

www.mindtools.com/CommSkll?Communicationintro.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Pease, A & B. (2004). The definitive book of body language. New York: Random House.

NOTES

Communications Log

This simple log will assist you to determine the percentage of time you spoke, listened or were silent.

Time	Activity	% speaking	% listening	% time silent
8 a.m.				
9 a.m.				
10 a.m.				
11 a.m.				
12 noon				
1 p.m.				
2 p.m.				
3 p.m.				
4 p.m.				
5 p.m.				
6 p.m.				
7 p.m.				
8 p.m.				
9 p.m.				
10 p.m.				
11 p.m.				
12 p.m.				

NOTES

Facilitator Tool Kit

1. Tools and Techniques

General

Before starting a facilitated session there should be some form of "contract" or agreement between the facilitator and the group. Many advocate that this should be written but this is not necessary providing there is a clear understanding on the basic issues such as;

- the role of the group
- the role of the facilitator
- the broad aims of the session (note these need to be checked with the group)

For facilitated sessions it is useful to breakdown the traditional barriers that exist between people. To assist with this it is often better to lay chairs out in an informal style that facilitates open discussion.

The main aim of the facilitator must be to remain neutral and ensure that there is the "buy-in" of all members of the group throughout the process. In order to ensure that the "buy-in" is there from the start it is necessary to agree the common aims of the group and to agree to a process for meeting those aims before starting that process. This makes facilitated sessions appear to go slowly at the beginning but this apparent slowness will be compensated for as the group gets into its stride and the common goals and "buy-in" throughout ensures that they work as one.

Brainstorming - useful for developing ideas



Brainstorming is a useful method for identifying a wide range of ideas to solve a problem. It involves the group calling out the ideas which are then be recorded onto a flip chart. All ideas should be recorded and the session should be as free flowing as possible. Sessions can last any time from a few minutes to hours depending on the difficulty and complexity of the problem. Often the best ideas can come when the session appears to be all but finished.

When the free flow appears to slow it is often useful if the facilitator suggests a different situation such as "What would a politician do if he had this problem" or "How would they solve it in the navy".

It is useful to post a set of rules at the beginning of the brainstorm. These should be agreed with all those taking part. A suggested set is as follows;

- No discussion of ideas
- Everyone to contribute
- Problem definition displayed
- Lots of ideas
- Positive encouraging atmosphere
- Allow time for thought
- Accept every idea no matter how crazy

Conceptual Models - useful for understanding initial ideas

When a group comes together to investigate a possible way forward for the future its individual members often have clear ideas of how they would see the future mapped. It is important that each member of the group has an opportunity to express those ideas at an early stage so that all members of the group can recognize the basic paradigms behind the thinking of the others in the group. Often these conceptual models are quite different but are still complimentary and can be used as the basic building blocks of the final deliverable.

Conceptual models are best recorded as a mixture of graphics and words on a flip chart.

Ranking and Rating- used for analysis of data

Following a brainstorm it is often useful to analyze the list formed to determine priorities. There are a number of methods of undertaking this type of analysis.



Simple Tally

Each member of the group are given the chance to come to the sheets with the list of ideas and to place tally marks against (say) the top 5 items in their view. Items are prioritized according to the tally score. This is useful for its speed; it also has the benefit that group members need to get up out of their seats to write at the flip chart.

Weighted Tally

A slight variation on the above is the *weighted tally*. Each member of the group is asked to come to the front and score the ideas on the list from (say) five to one with five being their top score. The additional "gearing" has the effect of separating close scoring.

Consensus Marking

Where time is short, the list is long and the group is small. The members of the group can be asked to call out marking against (say) 1 to 10 for each item on the list. Providing the group is working well together an initial call may be challenged until a consensus is reached. The debate that ensures in reaching the consensus is often useful in increasing the understanding of the particular point.

The Multiplier Tally (or Consensus)

Often there are two criteria against which items need to be judged, for example "effectiveness" and "ease of implementation". Once again tally style scores are taken from each of the participants but this time it will be under each category. The two numbers are then multiplied to create the final priority list, although it is sometimes useful to also look at high scores under each of the criteria.

Force Field Analysis - useful for the analysis of the merits of apparently conflicting ideas

Simple Force Field

In its simplest form two ideas or solutions are written down either side of a line. The group is then asked to identify pressures that will move the line in either direction to either of the solutions. For example if the problem to be solved was inaccuracy in expense claims and one solution was to place them on computer while the other was a more complex paper form then the pressures may be as follows.

Towards the computer system;

Most errors are mathematical computer will resolve this
Computer system will check mileage to counter dishonesty
Computer system will check for level of expense against guidelines
VAT correctly accounted
User has previous expense claims to hand to check details

Towards the paper systems;

Some users still not familiar with computers
Paper system allows receipts to be submitted at the same time
If arrows are placed against the "forces" with their length approximately proportional to their effect then the picture of which is the best solution

Neutral Statements Force Field

The Force Field analysis can be used to assess up to about 5 options using a variation. Each of the options is identified with a symbol and a series of neutral statements is determined by which the options can be judged. For the example above such statements may include speed of payment, consumer usability, system usability, accuracy, outlying office use. Marking judgements are usually developed by consensus with the group and the appearance for the two options above might be something like that shown below.

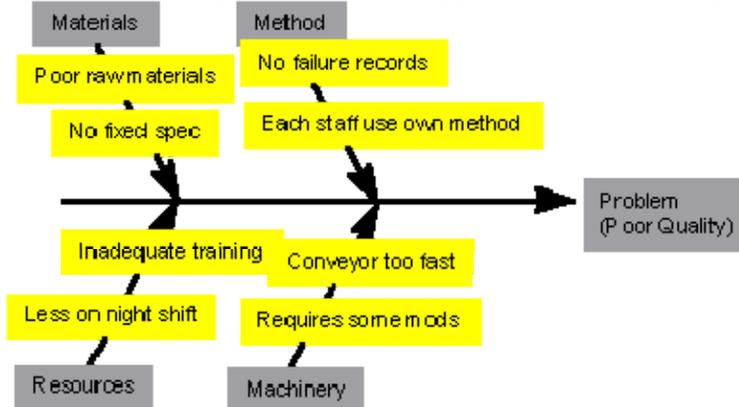
Black Ball Analysis - useful for comparing a number of options

For Black Ball analysis each of the options is given a name and are then listed down the side of a flip chart. The participants are then asked for the criteria against which they wish to judge the various options. The number of criteria should ideally be restricted to about 6 to make for a practical way forward. Each criteria is then taken in turn and the options discussed. If an option fully meets the specific criteria it is given a black ball. If it partially meets the specific criteria it is given a half black ball and if it generally does not meet the criteria it is given a white ball. A simple addition at the end yields the answer as to the best option

while the overall pattern of balls on the flip chart can sometimes be used to identify areas where, for instance, all of the options are weak.

Cause and Effect Analysis and Solution Effect Analysis (Fishbone) - useful for determining the root cause of a problem or for analysis of potential solutions

This form of analysis can best be appreciated from a diagram.



The headings at the end of each arm need to reflect the nature of the problem. In cause and effect the team is looking at potential factors that may lead to the "effect" or problem. The solution / effect diagram is the same shape but works the other way round. At the head is the solution the team are looking for potential effects out on the arms. This is useful for testing whether there are likely to be any likely unwelcome side effects to a solution.

Fishbone diagrams can be used as part of the normal tool kit in meetings or workshops or alternatively they can be pinned to the wall and contributions sought on "Post-It-Notes"™ over a period of time.

Whichever system is used the result will be a series of categorized possibilities along the arms (or bones!). The next aim is to look for links between those possibilities to begin to understand the root causes in the case of cause and effect or possible unwanted effects in the case of solution effect.

Process Flow Diagrams - useful for determining a series of actions

Process flow diagrams outline in order the steps necessary to complete a task. It is not always easy to recognize all of the steps necessary and it is frequently necessary to use a variant of the brainstorm to collect a list of likely steps. Each member of the group is asked to write onto "Post-It-Notes"™ suggestions for the steps; these are collected and categorized before starting the diagram. The easiest way forward is to then ask for the first and last steps followed by the step nearest the middle. The gaps between these can then be looked at in a similar way by filling an item near the middle each time until the overall diagram takes shape.

Analysis at the end should endeavour to remove any steps which cause a return backwards as these are where the inefficiencies are to be found. With the addition of time and resource allocation process flow diagrams become a planning network.

Source: <http://www.users.waitrose.com/~dhollis/tq/facilt.htm>

2. Icebreakers

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/icebreak.html> or the

For the following activities, it often helps to break the group into couples or trios. The smaller groups allow for more discussion, keeps participants from mentally wondering off, builds rapport, and allows for "one-on-one" relationships.

You can also break a large group into small groups by having them discuss the activity with the person behind them, or having people take a different seat when they return from breaks or activities. The idea is to get them to meet and learn about other people besides their friends or favorite partner.

Icebreakers

Icebreakers are structured activities that are designed to relax learners, introduce them to each other, and energize them in what is normally an unduly formal atmosphere or situation. Icebreakers are not normally related to the subject matter, where as "openers" are related to the subject matter that is to be discussed. In addition, they often help to break up the cliques and invite people to form random groupings in a non-threatening and fun way.

The term "icebreaker" comes from "break the ice", which in turn comes from special ships called "icebreakers" that are designed to break up ice in the arctic regions. And just as these ships make it easier for other ships to travel, an icebreaker helps to clear the way for learning to occur by making the learners more comfortable by helping to bring about conversation.

Listed below are a few icebreakers to help get you started.

The Magic Wand

You have just found a magic wand that allows you to change three work related activities. You can change anything you want. How would you change yourself, your job, your boss, coworkers, an important project, etc.? Have them discuss why it is important to make the change. Another variation is to have them discuss what they would change if they become the boss for a month. This activity helps them to learn about others' desires and frustrations.

Marooned

You are marooned on an island. What five (you can use a different number, such as seven, depending upon the size of each team) items would you have brought with you if you knew there was a chance that you might be stranded. Note that they are only allowed five items per team, not per person. You can have them write their items on a flip chart and discuss and defend their choices with the whole group. This activity helps them to learn about other's values and problem solving styles and promotes teamwork.

The Interview

Break the group into two-person teams (have them pick a partner that they know the least about). Have them interview each other for about twenty minutes (You can also prepare questions ahead of time or provide general guidelines for the interview). They need to learn about what each other likes about their job, past jobs, family life, hobbies, favorite sport, etc. After the interviews, reassemble the group and have each team introduce their team member to the group. This exercise helps them to learn about each other.

Who Done That?

Prior to the meeting, make a list of about 25 items relating to work and home life. For example, a list for a group of trainers might have some of the following:

- Developed a computer training course
- Has delivered coaching classes
- Is a mother
- Knows what ADDIE means and can readily discuss it
- Enjoys hiking
- Has performed process improvement
- Served in the Armed Forces
- Is a task analysis expert

Ensure there is plenty of space below each item (3 or 4 lines) and then make enough copies for each person.

Give each person a copy of the list and have them find someone who can sign one of the lines. Also, have them put their job title and phone number next to their names. Allow about 30 minutes for the activity. Give prizes for the first one

completed, most names (you can have more than one name next to an item), last one completed, etc. This activity provides participants with a list of special project coaches and helps them to learn about each other.

The ADDIE Game (Analysis, Design, Development, Implement, Evaluate)

Make up a reasonable problem scenario for your organization where people need to get introduced, e.g. "The manufacturing department is bringing in 20 temporaries to help with the peak season. They want us to build a short activity that will allow the permanent employees to meet and introduce themselves to the temporaries." Break the group into small teams. Have them to discuss and create a solution:

- Analyze the problem - Is it a training problem? If they decide that it is not a training problem, then remind them that most problems can be solved by following an ADDIE type approach.
- Perform a short task analysis - How do people get to know each other?
- Design the activity - Develop objectives, sequence.
- Develop the activity - Outline how they will perform the activity and trial it
- Implement - Have each small team in turn, introduce themselves in front of the group using the activity they created.
- Evaluate - Give prizes to the most original, funniest, etc. by having the group vote.

This activity allows them to learn about each other's problem solving styles and instructional development methods, it also introduces the members to each other.

This method can also be used to introduce the ADDIE method to new trainers.

Time - about 60 minutes.

Finish the Sentence

Go around the room and have each person complete one of these sentences (or something similar):

- The best job I ever had was...
- The worst project I ever worked on was...
- The riskiest thing I ever did was...

This is a good technique for moving on to a new topic or subject. For example, when starting a class and you want everyone to introduce themselves, you can have them complete "I am in this class because..."

You can also move on to a new subject by asking a leading question. For example if you are instructing time management, "The one time I felt most stressed because I did not have enough time was ..."

Reviews

While icebreakers are used to start a learning session, reviews are used in the closing of a session or module. They help to reinforce key concepts or topics.

Frame Game

Give each learner four blank cards and instruct them to fill in four different responses on the subject: "What were main concepts or learning points of the material we just covered?" Give them about five minutes to complete the exercise, then collect the cards, shuffle them, and randomly deal three cards to each learner. (Note: If desired, the trainer can make up four cards of her own, but they should be philosophically unacceptable with the principles presented. That is, play devil's advocate.)

Ask everyone to read the cards they just received, and then to arrange them in order of personal preference.

Place the extra cards on the table and allow them to replace the cards in their hand that they do not like. Next, ask them to exchange cards with each other. They must exchange at least one card.

After about three minutes, form them into teams and ask each team to select the three cards they like the best. Give them time to choose, then have them create a graphic poster to reflect the final three cards.

Select or vote on best poster that best represents the topic.

Rearrange the Classroom (Change)

Prior to class, set the desks up in the old "traditional" classroom row style.

Except, that you should set your stage (podium, flip chart, etc.) in the back of the class. Start your presentation (you will be behind them, facing their backs).

Explain to them that this is how a lot of change is implemented in organizations.

The leaders get behind their employees and attempt to "push" them into change.

And the attempt to change is about as successful as trying to conduct a class this way.

Also, point out that this is how a lot of traditional organizations are set up, in nice even rows (departments), where it is hard to communicate and learn from each other. But, real teams develop when we break out of our boxes and design organizations that have cross functional teams working with each other. Ask them to rearrange the room so that real learning, communication, and teamwork can take place. Depending upon your learners, you might have to give them a few pointers to get started, but then get out of the way.

During the next break or after lunch, have them rearrange the room again, using some of the techniques that they learned. This can be repeated several more times, depending upon the length of the presentation. But, each time they change the setting, it needs to reinforce a concept that they previously learned.

Toy Story

Using Legos, Tinker Toys, clay, log cabins, etc., have each person or small group build a model of the main concept that they have just been presented. After a given time period, have each person or team present their model to the group. They should describe how their model relates to their work or the subject being taught.

Encourage creativity!

Ball-Toss

This is a semi-review and wake-up exercise when covering material that requires heavy concentration. Have everyone stand up and form a resemblance of a circle. It does not have to be perfect, but they should all be facing in, looking at each other. Toss a nerf ball or bean bag to a person and have tell what they thought was the most important learning concept was. They then toss the ball to someone and that person explains what they thought was the most important concept. Continue the exercise until everyone has caught the ball at least once and explained an important concept of the material just covered.

Process Ball

This is similar to the above exercise, but each person tells one step of a process or concept when the ball is tossed to them. The instructor or learner, in turn, writes it

on a chalkboard or flip chart. For example, after covering "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," you would start the ball toss by having everyone give one step in the pyramid of needs, e.g. Safety, Physiological, Esteem, etc.

Motivators

Motivators are designed to help encourage the learners.

Positive Reinforcement Cards

Whenever a learner arrives to class on time from breaks, lunch, etc. give them one playing card. You can also hand out cards to people who volunteer for activities, are helpful, answers a difficult question, etc. At the end of the day, play one hand of poker. However, the only cards that are used are the ones that were given out throughout the day. Give a small prize to the best hand (you can also pick the top two or three hands if you are able to give away more prizes). Note that the more cards a person has, the better the chance of winning.

Calm Down!

Sometimes the problem is not warming up, but the need to calm or "come down to reality" after a session of intensive material is given. Also, to get the full benefit of new material, some "introspective time" might be needed.

Have the learners lay their heads on their desks, lay on the floor, or get in a comfortable position. Then, have them reflect on what they have just learned. After about five minutes, say a key word or short phrase and have them reflect on it for a couple of minutes. Repeat one or two more times then gather the group into a circle and have them share what they believe is the most important points of the concept and how they can best use it at their place of work.

Note: This may seem like slack time to many, but reflection is one of the most powerful learning techniques available! Use it!

3. Sample Pre-Session Questionnaire

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Position: _____

How long have you been with the organization? _____

How do you think you learn best?

- By listening (Audio Learner)
- By doing -- practical, hands-on method (Tactile Learner)
- By seeing a demonstration by instructor, slides, or visual aids (Visual Learner)
- By discussing concepts with others or asking questions (Interactive Learner)
- By practicing – role plays, practice demonstrating skills (Kinaesthetic Learner)
- A combination of the above (examples)

 Not sure how you prefer to learn

What do you expect from this workshop? Do you have any specific expectations?

Do you have special considerations you want to share with the facilitator?
(Learning challenges)?

Other comments

Adapted from the Trainers Handbook and Success Strategies for Adjunct Faculty.

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Pre-session Questionnaire

Adapted from *The Trainer's Handbook* and *Success Strategies for Adjunct Faculty*.

DATE: _____ *2 pages total*

The following information will enable the instructor to meet your individual learning needs more accurately. All information will be kept confidential.

Name: _____

Course: _____

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

(Daytime) _____ (Evening) _____

Email: _____

Employer _____

Position

Title _____

Briefly describe the duties/responsibilities of your current position:

In your current position, do you supervise people? _____ If yes, how many? _____

Excluding college and university education, what other training have you attended (workshops, conferences, management training, seminars)?

How do you think you learn best?

- By listening (Audio Learner)
- By doing -- practical, hands-on method (Tactile Learner)
- By seeing a demonstration by instructor, slides, or visual aids (Visual Learner)
- By discussing concepts with others or asking questions (Interactive Learner)
- By practicing – role plays, practice demonstrating skills (Kinaesthetic Learner)
- A combination of the above (examples)

Not sure how you prefer to learn

What is one specific thing you want to learn from this training program?

What concerns do you have about participating in this training program?

Do you have special considerations you want to share with the trainer (Learning challenges)?

Other comments

4. Session Evaluation

Please rate your reaction

Activity	5	4	3	2	1
Agenda followed					
Expectations met					
Material covered					
Activities conducted					
Participant materials					
Facilitator					
Physical facilities					
Refreshments					

Other Comments:

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Some facilitating phrases

1. What do we need to discuss or take action on in this meeting? In what order should we discuss these items? How should we divide our time among those agenda items; we have only a total of ___ minutes.
2. Let's take a few moments to brainstorm (task). Or, How about if we hear everyone's ideas and suggestions before we discuss or vote on any one of them?
3. Let's go around the room and have each person in turn indicate.....
4. How about if we take the next ___ minutes to do a ____ (exercise) with the purpose of ____ (task or outcome). Does that seem appropriate at this time?
5. I need help. I'm not sure what would be the best approach for accomplishing ____ (task). How would you suggest we approach it?
6. What are the underlying problem(s)/concern(s)/need? OR What is the desired outcome? OR I still don't have a handle on the underlying problem.
7. I feel the need to establish priorities. I'm afraid we're trying to accomplish too much in one day.
8. John, what do you think about this one?
9. Good suggestion. Did everyone hear that? Thanks.
10. If I heard you correctly, you think (feel).....
11. How about if we break into three groups of 8 and take 20 minutes to discuss ___ and come up with some suggestions to share with the rest of the group.
12. Summarize: The ideas presented so far are.....
13. Have you considered? How about? Would it be appropriate to?
14. Do we all agree that?

15. I'm concerned about _____ (behavior of the group)

16. Say a little more about that.

Facilitator Competencies

The following four clusters and a list of skills and attributes have been identified as necessary for effective facilitation.

Personal Attributes	Team Attributes
Displays confidence	Has professional boundaries
Is adaptable	Respects self-disclosure
Demonstrates sense of humour	Is willing & able to assess self
Displays sensitivity	Is aware of sensitive issues
Is resourceful	Believes in purpose/mission
Exercises confidentiality	Has strong desire to bring about change
Demonstrates respect	Believes in process
Listens well	Facilitation Skills/Processes
Is approachable	
Knows own prejudices	Understands and conducts research
Displays enthusiasm	Has planning skills
Has desire to work with people	Seeks more knowledge of facilitation
Is flexible	Understands mission statement
Communicates well	Able to co-facilitate
Is objective	Provides a model
Instructional Skills	Prepares well
	Keeps people focused
Makes members feel important	Has problem-solving skills
Eases transition through problem solving	Handles resistance
Can summarize	Has delegation skills
Has motivational skills	Attends to the group
Possesses critical thinking skills	Is able to read the group
Is able to resolve conflict	Displays neutrality
Is able to draw people out	Respects ground rules
Has organizational skills	
Has time management skills	
Gives and receives feedback	

NOTES

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