



Achieving a Total Safety Culture™ Series

Advanced Communication Skills for Safety

BSN 2007

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An Ideal Organizational Culture Requires Effective Communication.

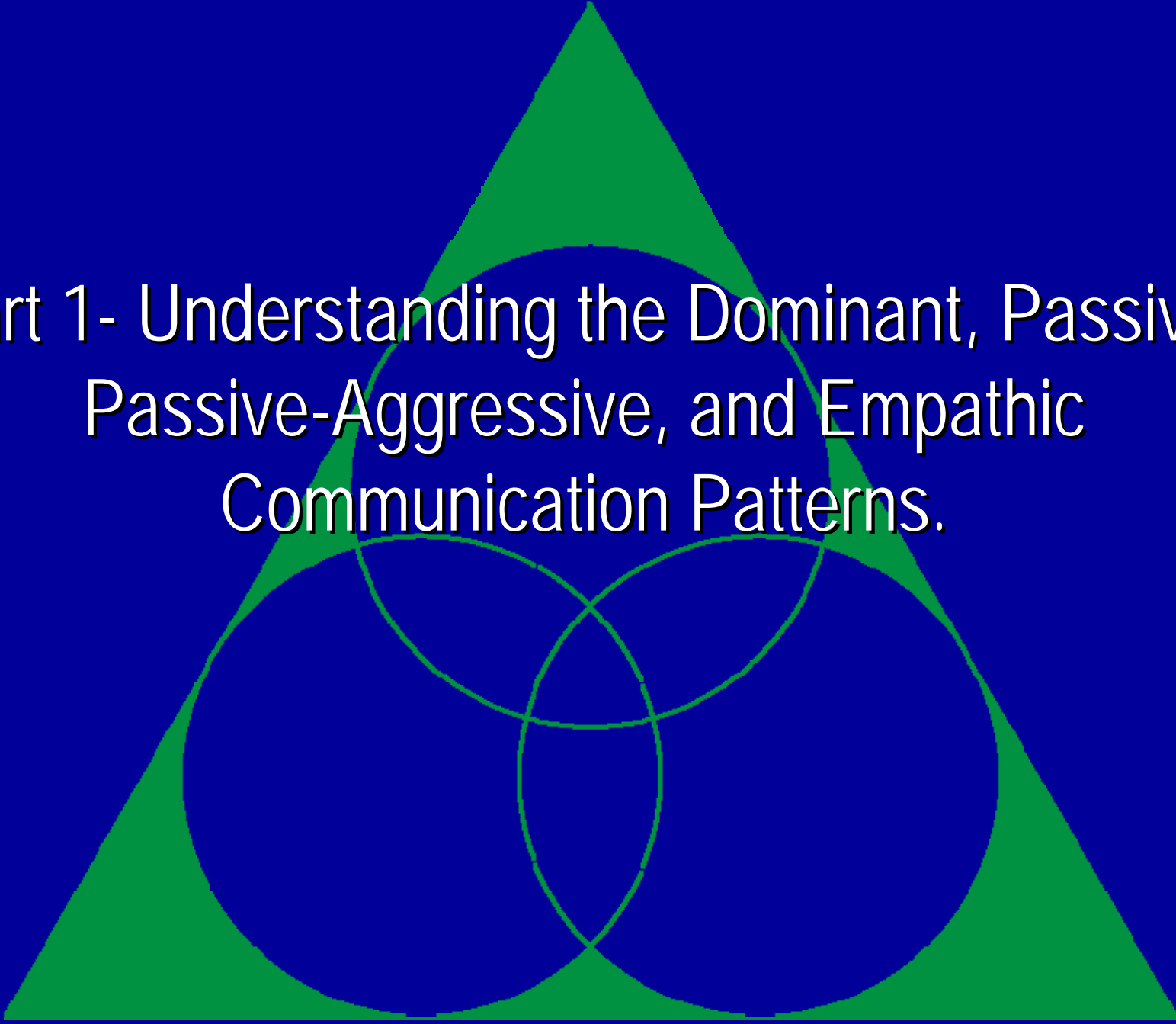
“...the status of safety in your organization is largely determined by how safety is talked about, from the boardroom to the breakroom”
(p. 117).

E. S. Geller (2005) *People-Based Safety: The Source*
(2005, p. 117)



The Workshop is Divided Into Two Parts.

- Part 1- Understanding the Dominant, Passive, Passive-Aggressive, and Empathic Communication Patterns.
- Part 2- Learning techniques to improve communication skills to become empathic communicators.



Part 1- Understanding the Dominant, Passive,
Passive-Aggressive, and Empathic
Communication Patterns.

Exercise: Defining Key Communication Skills

Directions: Please spend 3-5 minutes considering the most important aspects of communication, including ways to deliver and receive feedback. Please write down your answers in the spaces below and be prepared to report out your answers.

There are Various Communication Patterns.

1. Dominant
2. Passive
3. Passive-Aggressive
4. Empathic

The empathic communication pattern is most effective. Other patterns are ineffective and can damage organizational culture.



1. We Need to Identify Dominant Communication Patterns.



Dominant Communicators Have Certain Beliefs.

- “Others should think the way I do.”
- “I am seldom if ever wrong.”
- “My opinions supercede yours.”
- “People who disagree with me are either disloyal or misinformed.”

Dominant Communicators Exhibit Certain Behaviors.

- Publicly criticizes others.
("You know you're supposed wear a hard hat. The rest of us are.")
- Quick to blame others when problems arise.
- Tends to act bossy and negative.
- Frequently bullies others.
("I told you to quit speeding on that forktruck! I'm not going to tell you again!")
- Uses verbally aggressive and threatening language.
- Fails to show appreciation for others' accomplishments.
- Frequently interrupts others, finishes others' sentences.
- Dismisses new ideas without hearing the rationale first.



Here Are Some Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues of Dominant Communicators.

Verbal Cues

- "Because I said so."
- "You must, never, always..."
- "If you were a team player you would understand."
- "Don't ask why, just do it."

Non-Verbal Cues

- Glares at others.
- Frowns and shakes head.
- Maintains a rigid posture.
- Speaks too loudly and/or quickly.



Dominant Communicators Have Negative Effects on Other Employees.

- Provokes fear, counter-control, and alienation.
- Fosters resistance, defiance, sabotaging, striking back, forming alliances, lying, and covering-up behaviors.
- Damages corporate culture and morale.
- Hinders optimal organizational performance.



2. We Need to Identify Passive Communication Patterns.



Passive Communicators Have Certain Beliefs.

- “Don't express your true feelings.”
- “Don't make waves.”
- “Don't disagree with others.”
- “Others' opinions are more important than mine.”



Passive Communicators Exhibit Certain Behaviors.

- Typically remains quiet, even when being treated unfairly.
- Asks permission unnecessarily.
- Frequently complains instead of taking action.
("They never give us time to do these safety audits.")
- Allows others to make choices for them when it is unnecessary.
- Spends too much time avoiding conflict.
- Tends to be overly self-critical.
- Overly agreeable. No real point of view is expressed.

Here Are Some Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues of Passive Communicators.

Verbal Cues

- "This is probably wrong, but..."
- "You should do it instead of me."
- "You have more experience than I do."
- "I don't know if I can do this."

Non-Verbal Cues

- Fidgets.
- Nods head too often, may be seen as "kissing up."
- Shows little facial animation, sighs a lot.
- Slumped posture.
- Speaks too softly.

Passive Communications Have Negative Effects on Others.

- Others “don’t know where they stand” with the passive communicator. This leads to frustration and mistrust.
- Leadership credibility is undermined because the passive communicator is seen as weak and ineffective.
- Hinders open communication. People may become overly concerned with how comments are perceived or interpreted.

3. We Need to Identify Passive-Aggressive Communication Patterns.



Passive-Aggressive Communicators Have Certain Beliefs.

- "When you have an issue with someone, it is better to go behind their back to deal with it."
- "When you disagree with someone, it is best to keep it to yourself or tell other people at a later time."
- "Get back at others if they cross you, even if it takes a while."
- "Build coalitions against others instead of dealing with people directly and honestly."

Passive-Aggressive Communicators Exhibit Certain Behaviors.

- Appears to agree with others when they really don't.
- Expresses concerns about an individual to other people instead of that individual him/herself.
("That new guy *never* wears his PPE.")
- Makes sarcastic remarks and takes subtle digs at others.
- May send harsh messages via email and copy others on those emails.
- Holds grudges and values "getting even."

Passive-Aggressive Communicators Exhibit Certain Behaviors (cont.).

- Sabotages people behind their backs.
- Withholds assistance to others.
- May give others "the silent treatment."
- Criticizes after the fact.

Here Are Some Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues of Passive-Aggressive Communicators.

Verbal Cues

- "I knew that wouldn't work."
- "If that's the way you want it."
- "After everything I've done for you..."
- "When was the last time you helped me?"
- "The problem with (insert name here) is..."

Non-Verbal Cues

- Avoids eye contact.
- Remains silent when angry (for the moment).
- Appears withdrawn.



Passive-Aggressive Communicators Have Negative Effects on Others.

- Increased factions, favoritism, and "back-stabbing."
- Increased gossip.
- Low interpersonal trust.
- Diminished job performance.
- Increased uncertainty and job dissatisfaction leading to low morale on the job and at home.



These effects can often result in high turnover rates.

4. We Need to Identify Empathic Communication Patterns.



Empathic Communicators Have Certain Beliefs.

- "Personal opinions and the opinions of others are important."
- "The *process* of coming to a decision (not just the decision itself) is important."
- "Getting input from others boosts morale and generally leads to better decision making."

Empathic Communicators Exhibit Certain Behaviors that we ALL Should Use.

- Communicates using choices instead of demands.
- Tends to be proactive, assertive, and action-oriented.
- Tends to be realistic in expectations.
- Communicates in a direct, honest manner.
 - ✧ SINCERITY is key!
- Works to achieve goals without compromising others.

Here Are Some Verbal and Non-Verbal Cues of Empathic Communicators We ALL Should Use.

Verbal Cues

- “I choose to...”
- “Let’s discuss this issue.”
- “What alternatives do we have?”
- “What do you think?”

Non-Verbal Cues

- Exhibits open, natural gestures.
- Demonstrates attentiveness with appropriate facial expressions.
- Maintains direct eye contact.
- Exhibits a confident and relaxed posture.
- Demonstrates appropriate vocal volume and tone.

Empathic Communicators Have Positive Effects on Others.

- Increased motivation to achieve and “go beyond the call of duty” for the organization.
- Improved sense of appreciation and respect.
- Increased levels of trust, respect, honesty, and openness.
- Enhanced organizational culture, morale, and performance.

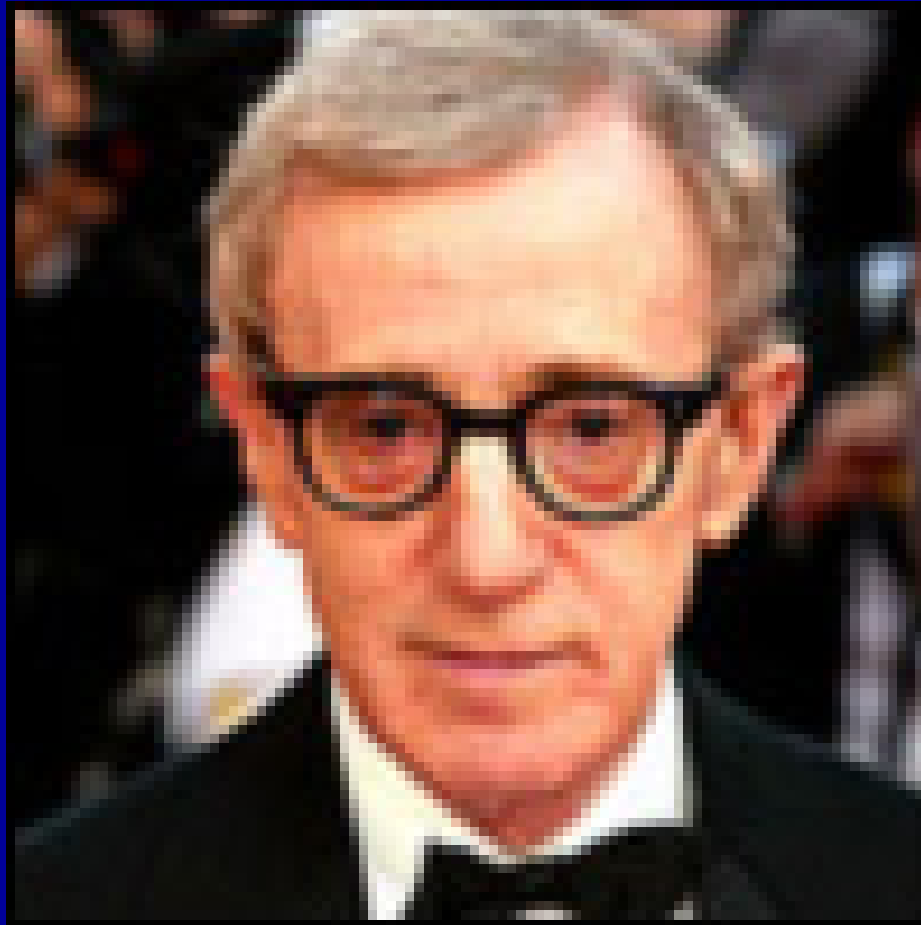


Can You Identify the
Communication Patterns of
These Famous People?

Bobby Knight?



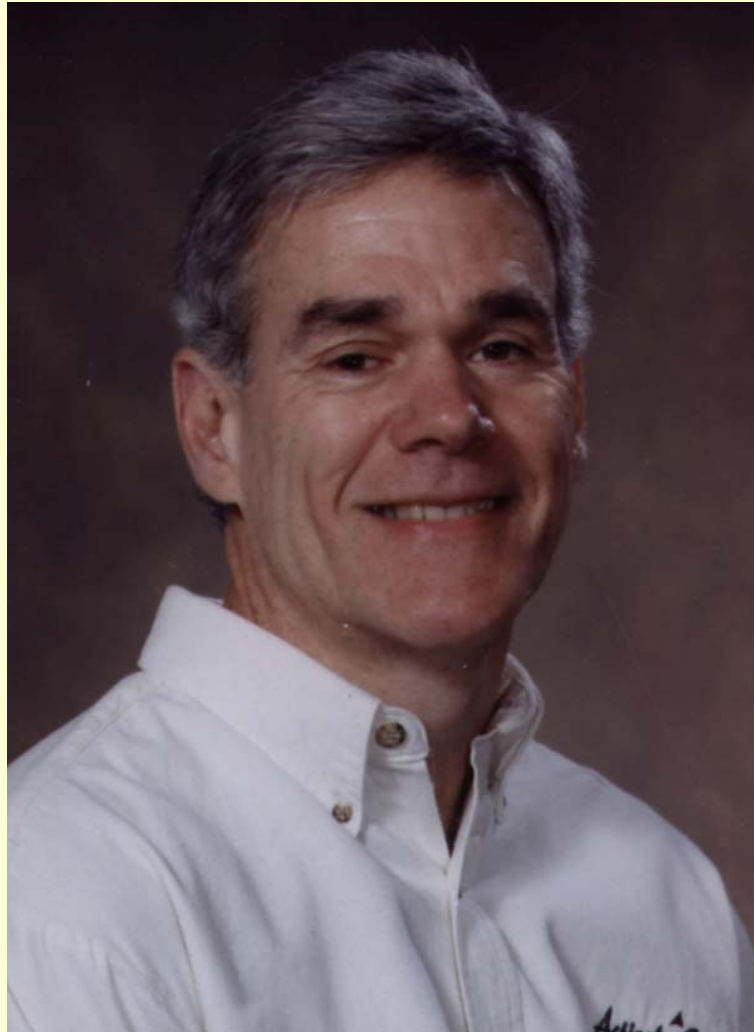
Woody Allen?



Oprah?



E. Scott Geller?



Exercise: Improving Your Empathic Communication Skills

DIRECTIONS: Identify current weaknesses in your communication pattern. Based on these weaknesses list 5 strategies you need to implement in order to improve.

Current Weaknesses

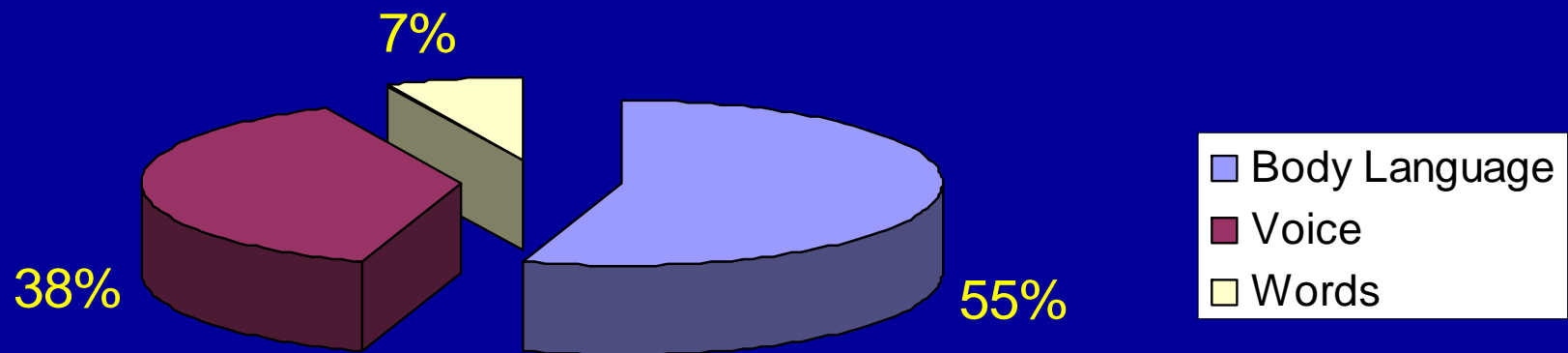
Improvement Strategies

Part 2- Techniques to Improve Empathic Communication



- Improving Non-Verbal Communication and Body Language.
- Improving Verbal Communication.
- Improving Verbal Communication for Safety: Rewarding and Corrective Feedback.

A. Most of the Message We Send To Others Is Through Body Language and Vocal Patterns (Voice).

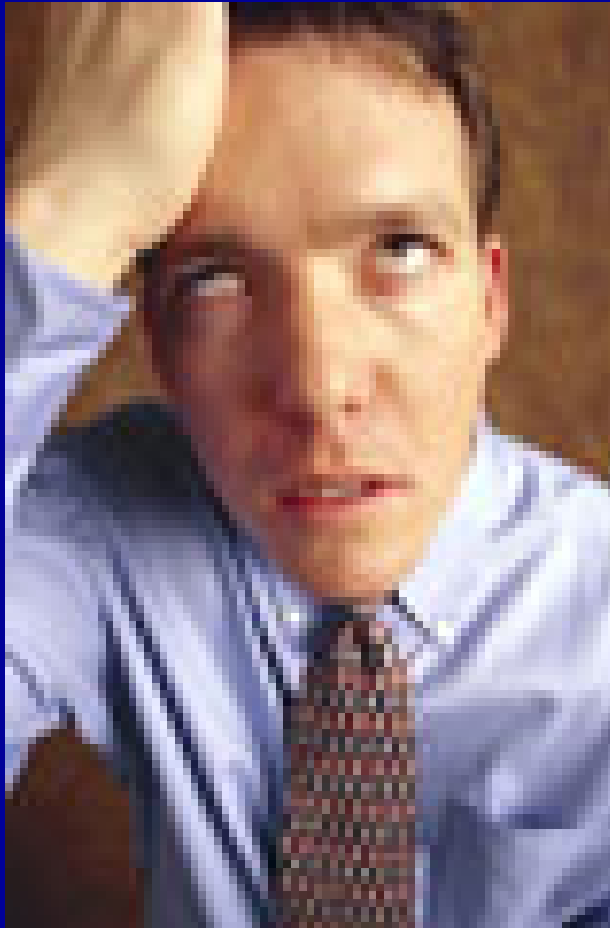


- Albert Mehrabian

Emotional Messages Are Conveyed Through Body Language and Facial Expressions.



Emotional Messages Are Conveyed Through Body Language and Facial Expressions (cont.).



Emotional Messages Are Conveyed Through Body Language and Facial Expressions (cont.).



Emotional Messages Are Conveyed Through Body Language and Facial Expressions (cont.).



Follow These Guidelines to Improve Body Language and Vocal Patterns.

Body Language

- Smile sincerely.
- Don't fidget.
- Avoid slouching or maintaining an overly erect posture.
- Maintain eye-contact and nod head periodically to show the speaker you understand his/her points.

Vocal Patterns

- Watch vocal volume.
 - ✧ Loud volume reflects aggression.
 - ✧ Soft volume reflects weakness.
- Watch pace of speaking.
- Maintain appropriate vocal tone.
 - ✧ High pitched vocal tone reflects tension or anger.
 - ✧ Lower pitches increase credibility.
- Speak in a firm, clear, and pleasant tone.

Follow These Guidelines to Improve Verbal Communication.

- Be assertive, confident, and action oriented.
 - ✧ Express opinions directly and honestly.
 - ✧ Communicate with choices instead of demands.
- Show respect for others' opinions.
 - ✧ Listen carefully. Thank others for their input.
 - ✧ Solicit opinions and ideas from others when making decisions.
 - ✧ Don't ignore or verbally attack others with different opinions.
- Invite others to join conversations, especially in meetings.
 - ✧ Reach out to people being excluded from conversation.
 - ✧ When an idea is dropped without acknowledgement, bring the idea up again to discuss and reach closure.

Follow These Guidelines to Improve Verbal Communication (cont.).

- Confront problems as soon as they occur.
 - ✧ Address the person directly, not others. Treat that person like family.
 - ✧ Don't let negative feelings build up.
- Share information about yourself.
 - ✧ Sincere disclosures about one's self engenders trust and liking.
 - ✧ Ensure that self-disclosures are appropriate and professional.
- *Ask others about themselves and how they are doing.*
 - ✧ *Spend more time getting to know others.*
 - ✧ *Actively caring about others increases trust, liking, respect and morale.*

Follow These Guidelines to Improve Verbal Communication (cont.).

- Use stories when appropriate to convey positions or establish rapport.
(“The same thing happened to me once, ...”)
- Use appropriate, tasteful humor.
(Sarcasm, ridicule, and off-color jokes are not appropriate.)
- Speak constructively and positively.
(Avoid complaining, whining, and venting.)
- Request feedback after sharing ideas and opinions.
 - ✧ “What do you think?”
 - ✧ “Do you agree with that?”

Effective Listeners Use Their “EARS.”

E- Explore by asking questions.

A- Affirm to show you're listening.

R- Reflect your understanding.

S- Silence. Listen some more.



Clinical Psychologists use Rogerian Therapy to actively listen.

- From Cole (2002)

Here are Guidelines for Communicating with Difficult People.

- Don't take it personally.
- Keep your cool.
- Exchange information not emotion.
- Let them know you understand the message but don't appreciate the delivery.
- Don't lose sleep over it. They don't suffer when you are upset, you do.



Follow These Guidelines When Communicating Through Email.

- Use verbal feedback, not email, for sensitive issues and/or performance feedback.
- Keep the language constructive and focused on problem solving.
- Be as concise and direct as possible.
- Watch for spelling errors which might detract from the message being sent.
- Avoiding bombarding people with an excessive number of emails at a given time (especially in companies with slow servers).
- Respond to emails as quickly as possible.

Follow These Guidelines When Communicating Via Telephone.

- Answer the phone with a warm, professional greeting.
- Be patient and don't interrupt.
(This is difficult because facial and body cues are unavailable over the phone.)
- Paraphrase long comments to ensure that both parties are on the same page.
- During conference calls, address your comments to all parties.
(Use people's names during conference calls to engage them in the discussion.)
- When leaving voice mail, be direct and succinct. Leave your name, reason for the call, and contact information.
(Rambling messages decrease credibility.)
- Respond to voice mail quickly.

Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Corrective Feedback for Safety Behaviors.

Giving Corrective Feedback

- Be friendly, positive, and respectful.
 - ✧ Acknowledge others' skills and experience.
 - ✧ Keep the focus on behaviors.
- Ask questions to facilitate discussion.
- Clearly specify the future, alternative desired behavior(s).

Receiving Corrective Feedback

- Actively listen. Be open minded and objective, not defensive.
- Clarify the future desired behavior with the speaker.
- Accept feedback without resentment.
- Thank the person for providing feedback.

Don't forget PRAISE!

Communication Problems: Here are Actual Responses from Airline Mechanics to Pilots' Reported Problems.

- Pilot: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.
- Mechanic: Almost replaced left inside main tire.
- Pilot: Test flight OK, except auto land very rough.
- Mechanic: Auto land not installed on this aircraft.
- Pilot: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
- Mechanic: Evidence removed.
- Pilot: IFF inoperative.
- Mechanic: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

Here Are Some Famous Last Words.

- "The absence of praise is often taken as criticism."
- "Keep your words soft and sweet in case you have to eat them later."
- "A diplomat is one who thinks twice before not speaking."
- "The only people who listen to both sides of an argument are the neighbors."

– From Cole (2002)