



How We Communicate Matters

February 24, 2021

Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life.

Brian Tracy



What Do You Hope to Gain?

Lindsey
Zajac

- Bachelor's Degree from Providence College
- 15 year career in Corporate Recruiting & Human Resources
- Advanced Certified Leadership Coach
- Executive Leadership Certificate from Cornell
- Authorized Everything DiSC partner
- Ahern, Murphy & Associates was founded in 1998 and has worked with over 120 clients across 32 verticals



Reminder



Conflict Prevention Tips

1. Build ***good communication skills & relationships*** before conflict occurs
2. Don't let small problems escalate
3. Respect differences
4. Be open to other perspectives
5. Acknowledge feelings
5. Focus on solving problems not changing people
6. Adapt your style to the situation and people involved

AGENDA

Defining Effective
Communication

Solutions to
Communication
problems (activity)

The 7 C's of
Communication

4 Communication
Styles

Understanding
Connection

Ways to Cultivate
Connections at
Work (activity)

How to
Communicate
Effectively

Listening Do's &
Don'ts (activity)



COMMUNICATION

Definition of Communication

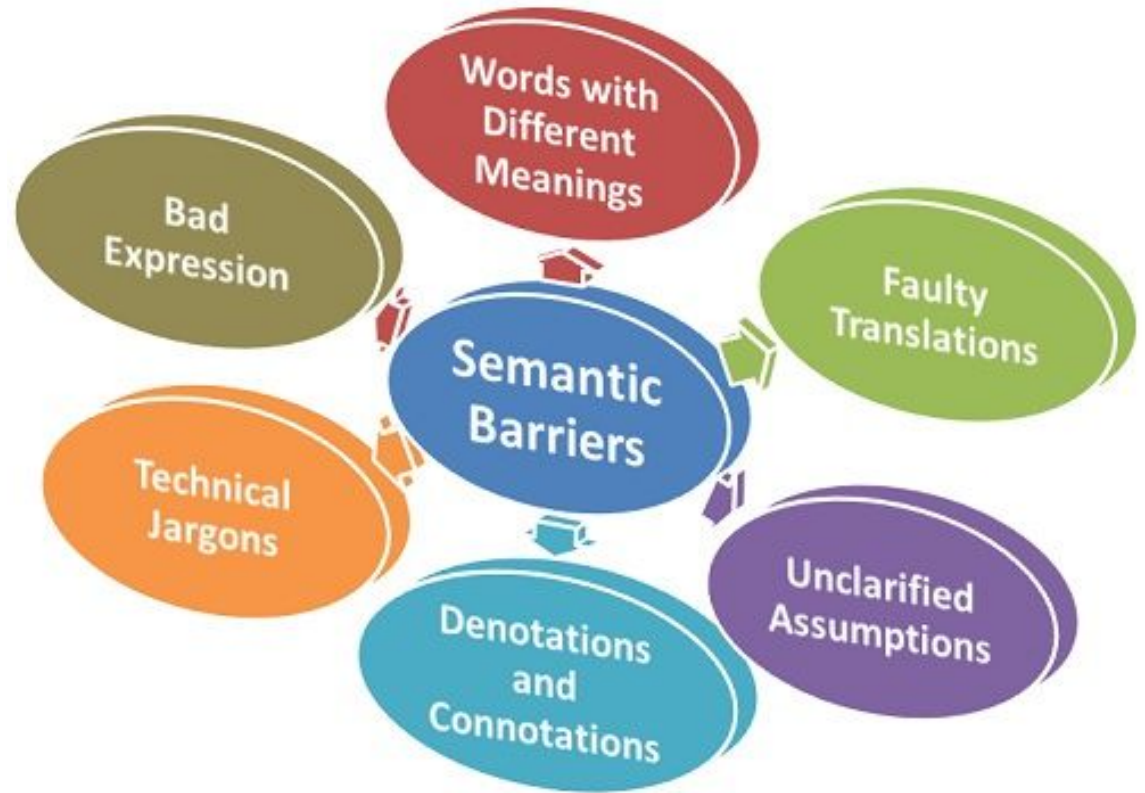
- A communication between two or more persons wherein the intended message is successfully delivered, received and understood.
- Communication is said to be effective when all the parties (sender and receiver) in the communication, assign similar meanings to the message, listen carefully to what has been said, and make the sender feel heard and understood.



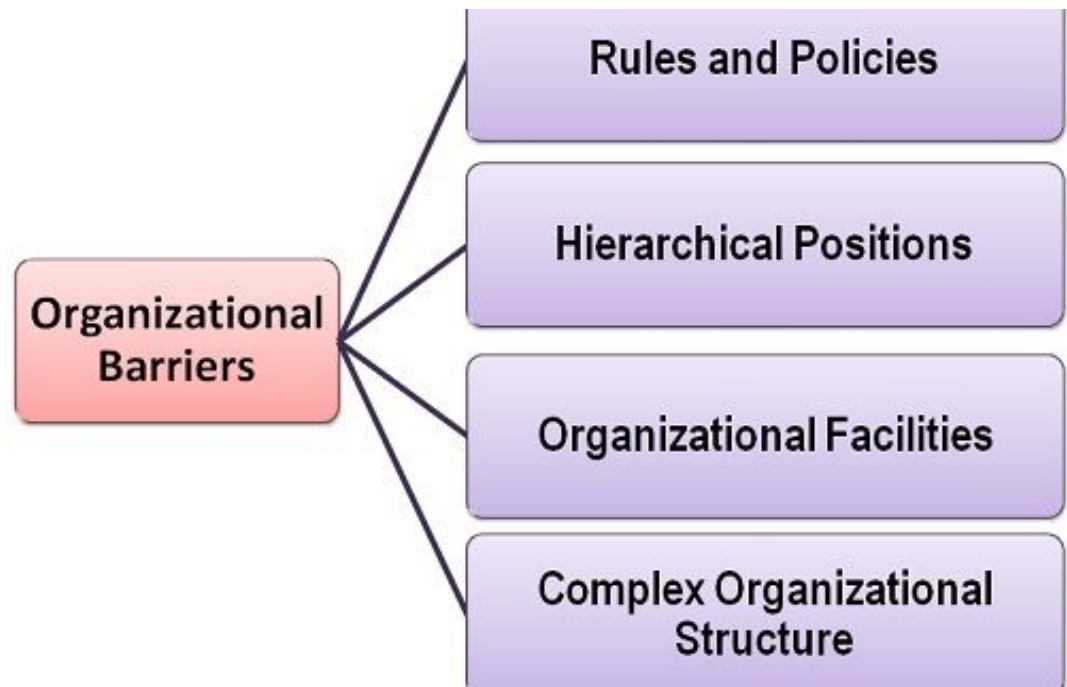
When Communication Goes Wrong...



Causes of Communication Breakdowns at Work



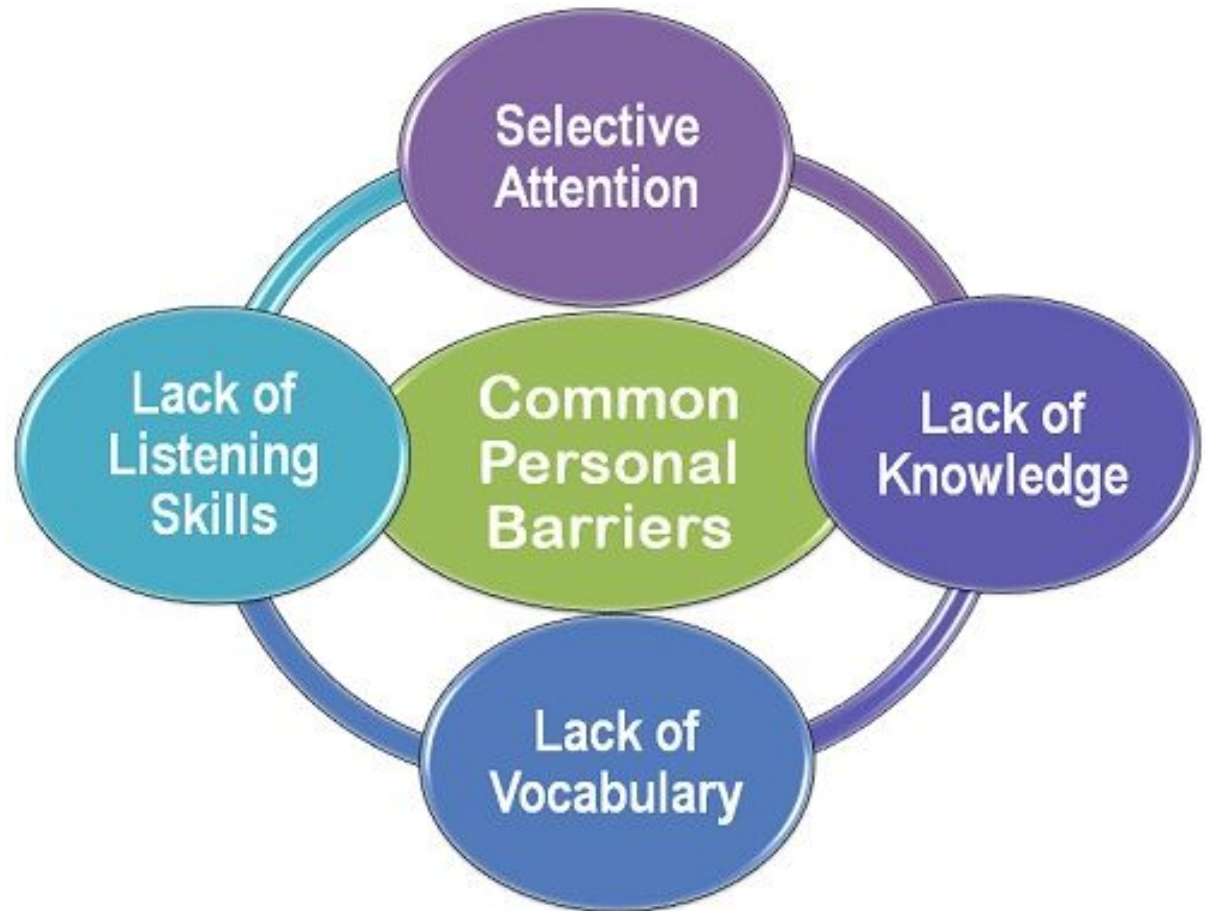
Causes of Communication Breakdowns at Work



Causes of Communication Breakdowns at Work



Causes of Communication Breakdowns at Work



Common Communication Barriers

Cultural
differences

Making
Assumptions

Email Overload

Listening skills

Written
communication
quality

Appropriate
communication
tools

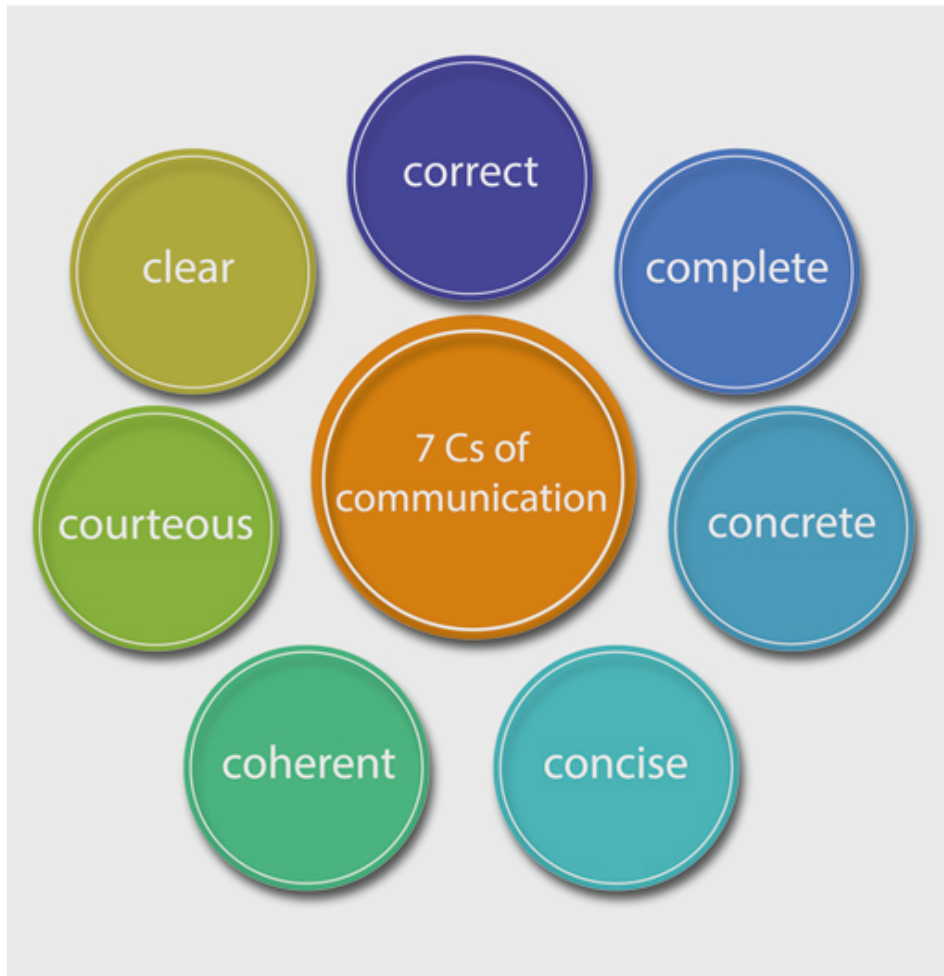
Effective Communication

Barriers	Possible Solutions???
Cultural Differences	
Making Assumptions	
Email Overload	
Listening Skills	
Written Communication Quality	
Appropriate Communication Tools	



Improving Communication in the Workplace

Remember the 7 C's!

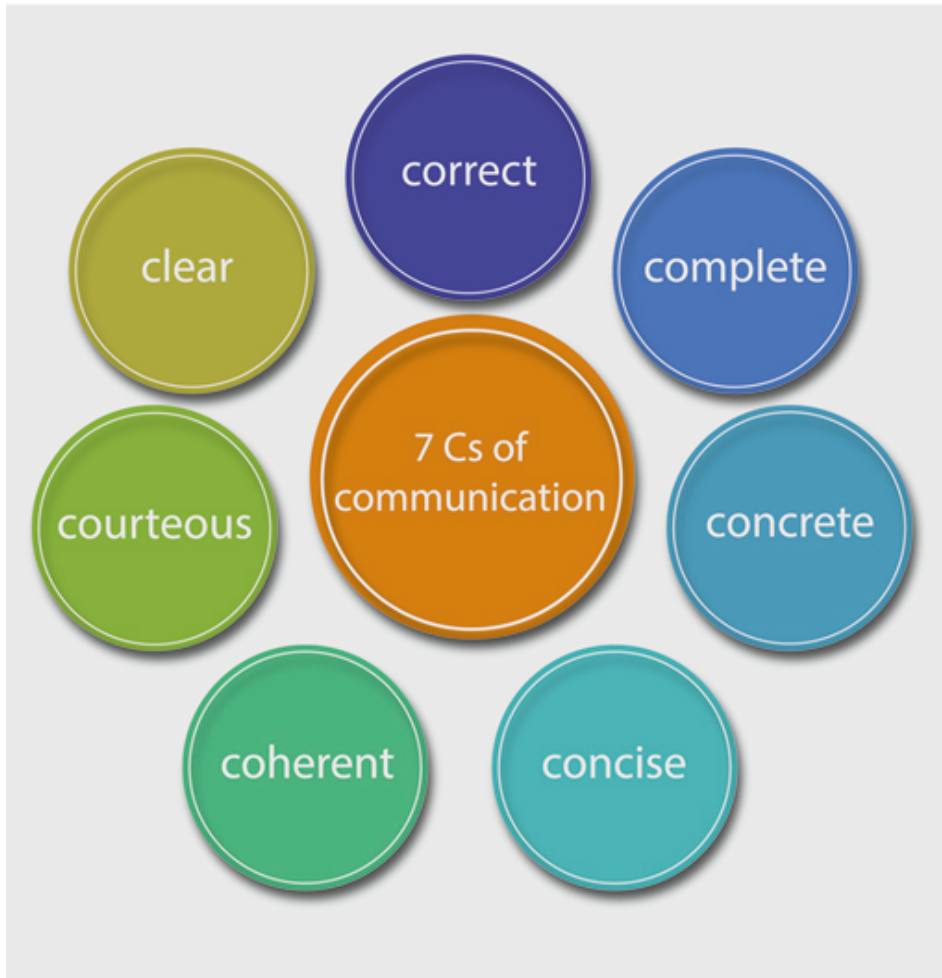


Clear- What is the purpose of your message? Emphasize one point at a time do not cover several points in one sentence.

Correct- Accurate information should be used with no grammatical and spelling errors. Correct messages have a greater impact on the receiver.

Complete- It must include all the relevant information as required by the intended audience. Complete information supplies your audience with all the information that they will need to make an informed decision or take action.

Applies to both written and oral communication!



Concrete- Clear with no room for misinterpretation. All the facts and figures should be clearly mentioned in the message to substantiate whatever the sender is saying.

Concise- Precise and to the point. Try to convey the subject matter in the least possible words. This helps in retaining the receiver's attention.

Coherent- It's logical. You've connected all your points and made them relevant to the key topic.

Courteous- Sender takes into consideration both the feelings and viewpoints of the receiver such that the message is positive and focused to the audience.

Communication Examples: *What's Missing?*

**Remember, you are looking for the message to be clear, concise, concrete, correct, complete, coherent and courteous.*

1. Courteous?
2. Complete?
3. Concrete?

1. "I need Q4 financial details ASAP!"
2. "A new corporate wide payroll system will be effective March 1, 2021. All payroll administrators must complete the required training prior to March 1st."
3. "Please provide turnover data from the past two years and put it on a slide for the Board of Director's meeting next month."



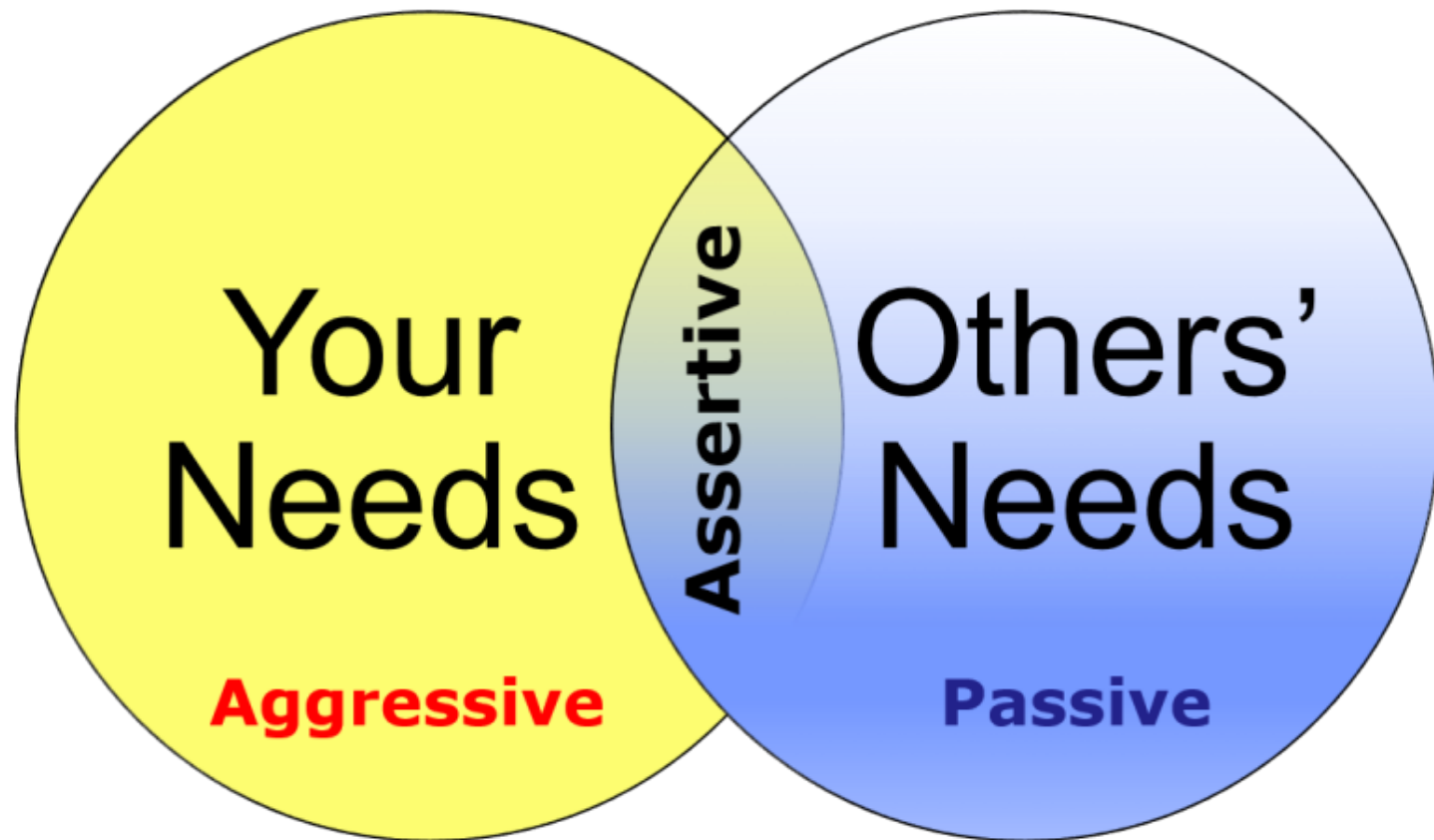
Communication Styles

1. Passive

2. Aggressive

3. Passive-Aggressive

4. Assertive



Passive Communication Style

- Typically very quiet. Rarely take a strong stance or assert themselves. Usually don't share their needs or opinions. May not always express their feelings.
- You will notice:
 - Inability to say no
 - Poor posture
 - Easy-going attitude
 - Lack of eye contact
 - Soft voice
 - Apologetic demeanor
 - Fidgeting



Methods to encourage a good working relationship

1

Take a direct approach- Initiate 1 on 1 conversations where they are more comfortable expressing themselves

2

Pointedly ask for ideas and opinions- Allow plenty of time for them to think over their responses

3

Use broad language that encourages a more in-depth response- Avoid yes/no questions. Stay patient with long silences

Aggressive Communication Style

- Express thoughts and feelings often. Dominate conversations, often at the expense of others. May react before thinking. Should learn to maintain a calm, even-tempered approach.
- You will notice:
 - Interrupting people while they are speaking
 - Sneering or smirking
 - Invading personal space
 - An overbearing posture
 - Using aggressive gestures
 - Maintaining intense eye contact



Methods to encourage a good working relationship

Be

Be calm and assertive- Try not to be intimidated by them. Focus your conversation on an actionable approach.

Keep

Keep conversations professional- Direct the conversation away from personal issues or emotions.

Know

Know when to walk away- Walk away if they become too demanding or you are no longer making positive progress.



Passive-Aggressive Communication Style

- Appear passive on the surface but often have more aggressive motivations driving their actions. Their words may sound agreeable, but their actions don't always align with what they say. Can be quietly manipulative to turn a situation into one that benefits them. You will notice:
 - Muttering
 - Using sarcasm
 - Exhibiting denial
 - Presenting a happy face when they are clearly upset
 - Giving the silent treatment

Methods to encourage a good working relationship

Make

Make clear requests- Try not to leave room for misinterpretation or confusion

Confront

Confront negative behavior- Try taking them aside to talk about your observations. Consider looping in a manager if your conversation doesn't produce change

Ask

Ask for their feedback- Directly ask them for their feedback in 1:1 situations to try to elicit honest communication, ideas and feedback



Assertive Communication Style

- Typically the most respectful and productive type of communication in the workplace. Thoughts and ideas are shared confidently, while being respectful and polite. Readily take on challenges but know how to say no. Have an ability to make others feel comfortable. You will notice:
 - Expansive gestures
 - Promotes collaboration and idea sharing
 - Expresses their ideas and feelings in a productive way
 - Good posture
 - A clear voice
 - Friendly eye contact

How to be a more assertive communicator

Express

Express your needs and ideas with confidence

Practice

Practice active listening

Encourage

Encourage others to share their ideas

Exercise

Exercise emotional intelligence

Openly Aggressive Behavior

I am direct in expressing my needs, desires, and opinions giving little or no thought to other people's needs.

I win, you lose.

Assertive Behavior

I clearly and directly express my needs, desires, and opinions in a way which is considerate of others.

I win, you win.

Which one do you identify with?

Passive Aggressive Behavior

I indirectly make sure that others are aware of my needs, desires, and opinions and give little or no thought to theirs.

I win, you lose.

Passive Behavior

I do not express my needs, desires, and opinions directly and I put others' needs above my own.

I lose, you win.

Definition of Connection

“In dance...the connection is the primary means of communication between the lead and the follow”

“A link, a relationship, a relation, an interconnection, an interdependence, a bond, a coupling...an attachment”



Communication or



Connection?

Communication or



Connection?

Communication or



Connection?

“Everyone Communicates...Few Connect”

“What the Most Effective People Do Differently”

John C. Maxwell (2010)

Connecting Principles:

- Connecting increases influence in every situation
- Connecting is all about focusing on others
- Connecting goes beyond words
- Connecting requires energy
- Connecting is more skill than natural ability



“Everyone Communicates...Few Connect”

“What the Most Effective People Do Differently”

John C. Maxwell (2010)

Connecting Practices:

- Connectors connect on common ground
- Connectors do the difficult work of keeping it simple
- Connectors create an experience everyone enjoys
- Connectors inspire people
- Connectors live what they communicate



Connecting at Work

- “Knowing your colleagues better means you can know how to work with them better, and ultimately produce better outcomes.”

-Amy Aughinbaugh, Business Analyst



“Missing the Connection”

“You have just 7 seconds to make the right first impression!”



“We are bombarded with 35,000 messages a day...and use over 130,000 words per week”

“Missing the Connection”



“Missing the Connection”



Connection



Connection



Connection



**“CONNECTION IS WHY
WE’RE HERE; IT IS
WHAT GIVES PURPOSE
AND MEANING TO OUR
LIVES.”**

BRENÉ BROWN



What Are Some Ways We Can Cultivate
Better Connections at Work?

Cultivating Connections at Work...

- Know Yourself
- Accept and Embrace Others
- Thank People
- Be Authentic
- Focus on Your Purpose & Commonality
- Disarm



Connection Tips to Try

Write

Write a hand written thank you note

Pick up

Pick up the phone

Ask

Ask interesting and meaningful questions

Answer

Answer questions with honesty, rather than abstraction

Turn

Turn the video on

Communication excellence is a choice!



So is the art of CONNECTING...

Effective Communication Is Verbal & Nonverbal



- ✓ Spoken words
- ✓ Content of your words
- ✓ Body language
- ✓ Facial expression
- ✓ Tone, pitch, pace

How We Communicate & Connect

Delivering the Message



- Your manager
- Senior management

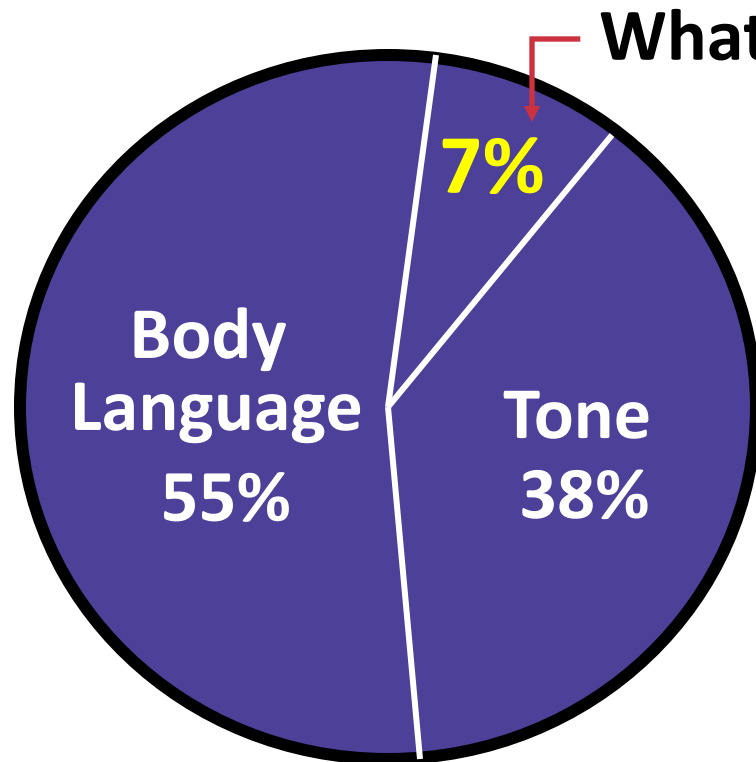


- Peers
- Customers



- Your team

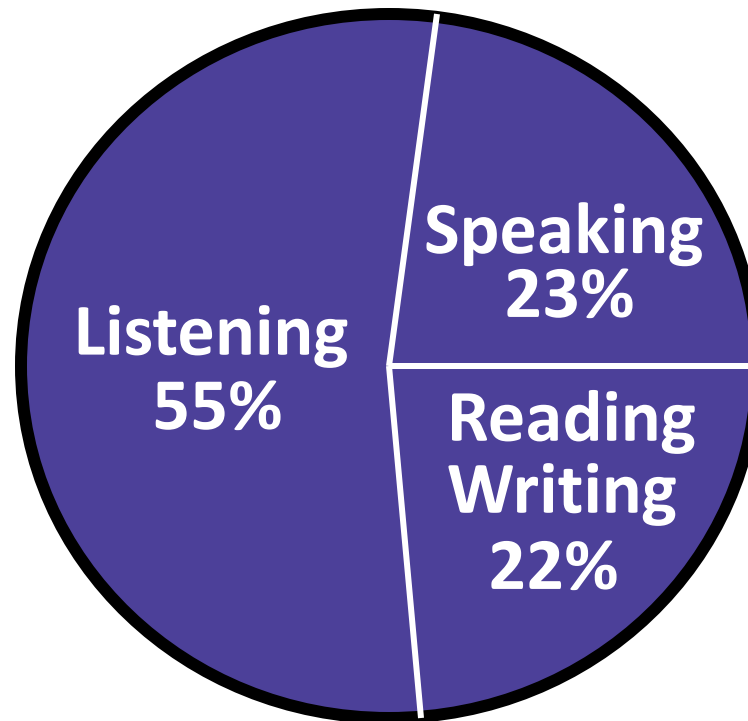
How We Communicate Part I



What we actually say!

“Can you get me that report by Monday?”

How We Communicate Part II



When people talk, listen completely
Most people never listen

– *Ernest Hemingway*



Communication & Connection

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.



Do we listen only to respond?



Do our actions speak so loudly that no one can hear what we say?

Listening

Do's	Don't

Active Listening



- **Give your full attention; focus**
- **Let the speaker finish each thought before you speak**
- **Don't focus on what you'll say next**
- **Listen for main ideas**
- **Ask questions**
- **Paraphrase to demonstrate understanding**

Be aware of the speaker's nonverbal messages by listening with your eyes

*“People judge you during the first five seconds by simply looking at you. They judge you again five seconds after you begin to speak”
-Lillian Brown author of Your Public Best*



Your Public Best by Lillian Brown

Positive Body Language

1. Body position is open
2. Slight Smile, Head Erect, Eyes Upward
3. Extend Body Fully, Lean Forward
4. Light up Facial Expressions



Your Public Best by Lillian Brown

Positive Body Language

- 5. Turn Everything Upward
- 6. Show Alertness in Your Face
- 7. Smile and Keep your Mouth Relaxed
- 8. “Embrace” Your Audience



Your Public Best by Lillian Brown

Negative Body Language

1. Look Like a Loser
2. Slouching, Frowning, Eyes Downcast
3. Slump Backward, Legs Crossed
4. Wringing Hands Nervously
5. Ignore the People Around You



Your Public Best by Lillian Brown

Negative Body Language

- 6. Look Indifferent or Grim
- 7. Look Downward, Yawn, Chew Lip
- 8. Fidget with Pen, Pencil, Glasses
- 9. Look to Space, Act Bored or Squirm
- 10. Repel or Reject your Audience



Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are!



“Connectors Live What They Communicate”

Model the Way...

- The way you live outweighs the words you use
- Your credibility is your currency
- Communication is a direct reflection of leadership style



“The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains...the great teachers demonstrate”

Communication & Connection

Do's



- Speak at a moderate pace
- Repeat key points
- Confirm listener understanding
- Listen carefully to questions
- Smile
- Speak in friendly phrases and tones
- Respect your listener

Don't's

- Raise your voice
- Curse
- Order (if at all possible)
- Criticize the person
- Make aggressive gestures
- Ramble on
- Interrupt



Which Form of
Communication Do You Use
Most Often at Work?

- Text
- Email
- Phone
- Video conference
- In person

True or False Quiz

1. Facial cues, vocal cues, and body language convey messages that a written note cannot. **TRUE**
2. Texts and e-mails can be open to interpretation. People can read into a message and make conclusions that the sender did not intend. **TRUE**
3. If the matter is delicate in nature, the interaction should be face to face. **TRUE**
4. Texting or e-mailing an employee with bad news is ok. **FALSE**
5. Using electronic communication to deliver incredibly good news- like a job offer or promotion- is advisable. **FALSE**
6. Employees shouldn't deliver their own bad news by text or e-mail. (i.e. resigning, requesting extended leave, serious complaint etc.) **TRUE**



Recap

- Communication in the workplace matters. It is integral to getting work done efficiently and effectively, while delivering results.
- Remember the 7 C's of Communication the next time you need to deliver a message (written and oral).
- Depending on the communication style of your co-workers (passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, and assertive) you may need to utilize different methods to work more effectively.
- Great communicators are also great connectors.
- Connection increases your influence in every situation.
- Effective Communication is both Verbal & Nonverbal.
- Pay attention to your body language, facial expressions, tone of voice and pace when you are communicating.
- Active Listening is integral to effective communication (listen to understand).
- Be mindful of your communication mediums and when to use them (text, email, phone, video, in-person).

“Take advantage of every opportunity to practice your communication skills so that when important occasions arise, you will have the gift, the style, the sharpness, the clarity, and the emotions to affect other people.”

~ Jim Rohn

"The Priority Matrix"

<p><u>DO MORE OF...</u></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p><u>START DOING</u></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><u>DO LESS OF...</u></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p><u>STOP DOING</u></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Review, Revise, Refocus

Q&A



Thank you for *your time!*

For more information on the coaching, trainings, or workshops that Ahern, Murphy & Associates provides:

- Visit our website-www.ahernmurphy.com



- Contact me directly- Lindsey@ahernmurphy.com
(315) 382-8888