
DDSD's Residential Training presents...

Communication

Participants Manual

State of Oklahoma Department of Human Service
Developmental Disabilities Services Division

COMMUNICATION

RESIDENTIAL TRAINING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective:

Upon completion of this training and given the appropriate materials, the participant will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of effective communication between people.

Secondary Objectives:

- *Recognize and be able to respond to individual styles of communication.*
 - *List ten guidelines for effective communication.*
 - *Summarize other factors that influence functional communication.*
 - *Demonstrate an understanding of problem-solving skills and be able to implement them by using conflict resolution and mediation techniques.*
 - *Identify common forms of communication alternatives.*
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COMMUNICATION

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COMMUNICATION

Primary Objective:

Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of effective communication between people.

INTRODUCTION

What is communication and why is it important? Communication is sharing information between people, either verbally or nonverbally. It allows us to influence our environment and to express our preferences and needs. This training module examines some of the ways people exchange information. It will also give you ideas about how you can help make communication as easy as possible for the people you serve.



Communication allows us to

- send messages
- affect our environment
- express preferences and needs
- control our own lives

THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is a social behavior that helps us live with other people. We use it to affect the actions of others; for example:

- We can ask for help.
- We can get someone's attention.
- We can direct that attention to objects, events and people that are important to us.
- We can say "yes" or "no."

Understanding that our own behavior conveys messages to those around us serves to make us more aware that the people we live with, work with, and come in contact with each day are also conveying information to us.

We need to be aware of the interactions involved in effective communication. When working with people with developmental disabilities, you will find that an important part of your job will be to encourage, facilitate, and foster the exchange of information. Some of the people you work with will have developed unique processes for exchanging information.

Your ability to recognize and interpret these processes will make the job easier for both you and the person with whom you are working.

Communication Uses

- Affect the Actions of others
- Ask for help
- Get someone's attention
- Direct attention to objects
- Say "no"
- Ask for things

There are many natural opportunities for such communication to be used throughout the day. It is important to be aware of these opportunities so you can help the people you serve take advantage of them when they occur.

Throughout Foundation and your Residential specific training, we've said that our goal is inclusion. If people can communicate, they're more likely to be included in other people's worlds. Therefore, if you can help the people you serve communicate, you can further their inclusion into the life of their communities.

The key to communication is to make your help simple and natural.

Let's look at some factors that influence communication...



I. Factors Influencing Communication

The following are some of the factors in our environment that influence our communication with others.

- What is being said
- Where it is being said
- Who is saying it
- How it is being said
- Who is receiving the message
- What attitude is displayed
- What body language is projected
- How the tone of voice is used
- How people are feeling
- Time of day
- Why a message is being said

COMMUNICATION FACTORS

- What is being said
- Where it is being said
- Who is saying it
- How it is being said
- Who is receiving the message
- Attitudes
- Body Language
- Tone of voice
- How people are feeling
- The time of day

How do these things affect what is being said?

Think of the common question "How are you?" **Where** this is being said and **who** is saying it affects the appropriate response. If it is said by a casual acquaintance at the shopping mall, the typical response is "Fine, thanks." (Even if you aren't.) But if you are in a hospital bed and the doctor asks "How are you?" the appropriate response would be to give a description of how you feel physically.

Who is receiving the message can also affect **how** you send it. For example, it's appropriate to approach your mother and put your hand on her shoulder to get her attention. It is not acceptable to do that to a clerk in a store or a policeman on the street.

A very important factor that affects communication involves perceptions and/or viewpoints that may bias the communication process . . .

● How Perceptions Affect Communication

As you learned in Foundation training, perceptions influence the way we view our world. Our perceptions -- our viewpoints -- are key elements in communication. Perceptions are based upon our experiences, past and present, and can be changed depending upon the ways we **choose** to view things and situations. They can affect the way we work with others.

Being aware of our perceptions is important. Perceptions can result in "mis-reading" a situation or behavior, can stifle attempts at communication, and can even lead to staff trying to control people's lives.

Example: One man who'd been told that his home was his home came in from outside with some grass clippings stuck to his shirt. The staff person refused to let him inside. The man became angry and the situation escalated into a physical battle. This occurred because of differing perceptions about who was "really" in charge.

The more aware we are of our basic perceptions, the more we can take responsibility for them, test them, and become objective in our viewpoints.



Let's look at another example of differing perceptions/perspectives . . .

SPIDER AND THE LADY

by Robert Fulghum

There is my neighbor. Nice lady. Coming out her front door on her way to work and in her "looking good" mode. She's locking the door now and picking up her daily luggage: purse, lunch bag, gym bag for aerobics, and the garbage bucket to take out. She turns, sees me, gives me the big, smiling Hello, takes three steps across her front porch. And goes...

"AAAAAAAGGGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

(That's a direct quote.) At a about the level of a fire engine at full cry.

Spider Web!

She has walked full force into a spider web. And the pressing question, of course: Just where is the spider NOW?

She flings her baggage in all directions. And at the same time does a high-kick, jitterbug sort of dance -- like a mating stork in crazed heat. Clutches at her face and hair and goes "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGGGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!" at a new level of intensity. Tries opening the front door without unlocking it. Tries again. Breaks key in the lock. Runs around the house headed for the back door.

Doppler effect of

A A A A A A A A A G G G G G G G H H H H H a a a a a
g g g g h h h ...

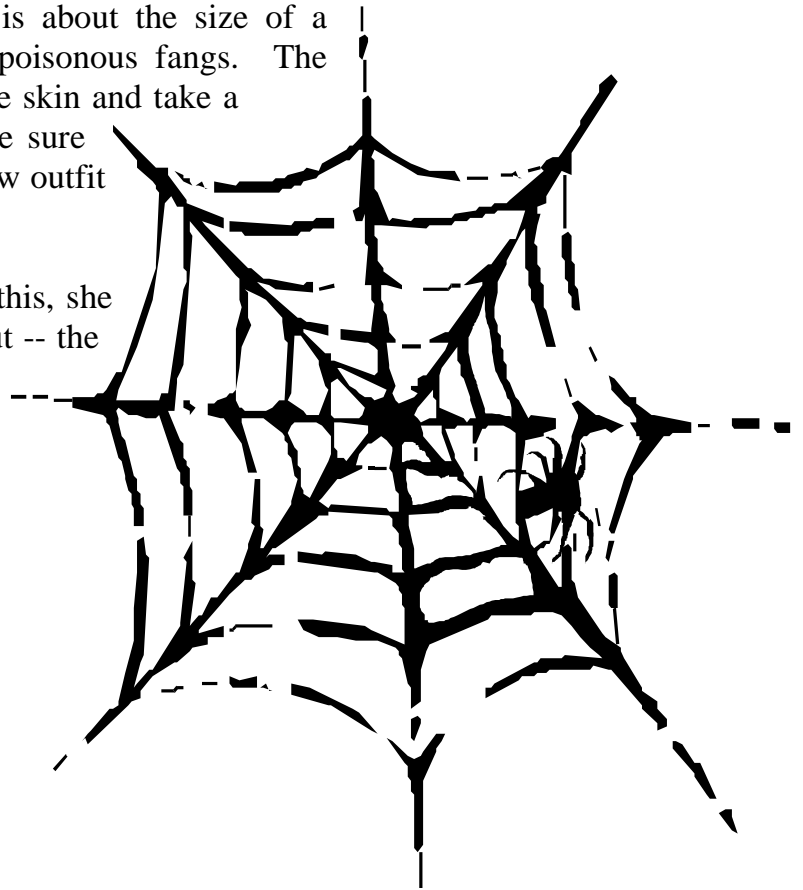
Now, a different view of the scene. Here is the spider. Rather ordinary, medium gray, middle-aged lady spider. She's been up since before dawn working on her web, and all is well. Nice day, no wind, dew point just right to keep things sticky. She's out checking the moorings and thinking about the little gnats she'd like to have for breakfast. Feeling good. Ready for action.

All of a sudden all hell breaks loose -- earthquake, tornado, volcano. The web is torn loose and is wrapped around a frenzied moving haystack and a huge piece of raw-but-painted meat is making a sound the spider never heard before: "AAAAAAAAAAGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!" It's too big to wrap up and eat later and it's moving too much to hold down. Jump for it? Hang on and hope? Dig in?

Human being. She has caught a human being. And the pressing question is, of course: Where is it going and what will it do when it gets there?

The neighbor lady thinks the spider is about the size of a lobster and has big rubber lips and poisonous fangs. The neighbor lady will probably strip to the skin and take a full shower and shampoo just to make sure it's gone -- and then put on a whole new outfit to make certain she is not inhabited.

The spider? Well, if she survives all this, she will really have something to talk about -- the one that got away that was **THIS BIG**. "And you should have seen the **JAWS** on the thing..."



II. The Basics of Communication

From birth to death, each and every one of us uses some form of communication to relay to the people around us what we want, need, like, dislike, and what we expect. Successful communication is more than just the words we say

- We may use nonverbal methods: like a wink, a nod or a frown, handshakes or hugs;
- We may use written methods: like letters, recipes, newspapers or books;
- We may use spoken language: as in conversing, singing, or making telephone calls;
- We may use devices: such as communication boards or electronic communicators.

Examples: Nonverbal Methods: The use of sign language, picture boards or books, body language and movements that indicate needs.

Written Methods: Writing on an erasable board, typing when unable to manipulate a pencil, having someone write letters to family and friends for them.

Spoken language: Talking, making sounds that mean specific things.

Let's talk further about the basics of communication. First, verbal and nonverbal

● Verbal Communication

Spoken language is the form of communication we are most familiar with. Most people have learned to speak in the language that is used within their homes. However, there are other methods besides speech that can be considered "verbal" communication. Any sound made by an individual that represents an object or need is a form of verbal communication and can be just as effective as spoken language.

Tone of voice, length of pauses between words, pitch, speed, volume, and things like stammering or saying "uh," "um," and "er" are also ways we communicate verbally. These alternate verbal signals can:

- Emphasize the spoken message

*Example: **He's** giving this money to Herbie. (HE is the person giving the money -- no one else.)*

- Contradict the spoken message

*Example: He's giving this money to (pause) **Herbie**? (Pause suggests that there might be a question about whether or not Herbie should have the money.)*

As a residential staff member, you should always be familiar with the forms of communication used by the people you serve. You are in a position to know that person well enough to understand any communication that individual uses and therefore, will be able to respond to back. This is invaluable in determining a person's needs, wants and desires.

We'll talk more about verbal communication in a minute. First, let's look at nonverbal communication methods . . .

● Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is an important form of communication. Even when we are silent, we are transmitting information about ourselves by our facial expressions, body position, and gestures.

Examples of nonverbal communication include

- Posture
- Body orientation
- Gestures
- Touching
- Clothing
- Personal space,
- Territoriality
- Eye movement
- Physical appearance
- Facial expressions
- Sighing or yawning

Nonverbal signals should not be interpreted as facts. They can offer hints about what a person is feeling or thinking but should not be relied upon as a truth. They are also culturally dependent. In other words, identical nonverbal behaviors may be interpreted differently depending upon the background of the person observing the behavior.

Example: Direct eye contact is usually considered desirable by many people in our culture but is considered rude and intimidating by many native Americans.

● Written Communication

Another form of nonverbal communication is written communication. A well-written communication is important. In your work, you will be responsible for various types of written communication, including incident and accident reports, progress notes, communication of health changes, and notes to other staff.

Many times, your written information will be the key in determining what took place when an accident occurred, when a skill has been achieved, or what a particular person's seizure pattern may look like. You will often be communicating with supervisors, case managers, family members and other team members. The way you write has a great influence on their perceptions and attitudes.

● TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING

- Give accurate and precise information. Remember the standard rule of telling:

WHO
WHAT
WHERE
WHEN
HOW
WHY

Always assume that the person reading your written communication has no information and they must understand the situation from what you write. How much is gained by writing "Gwen had a good day?"

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE WRITING

- Give accurate and precise information
- Use tactful, easy to understand language
- Proofread carefully
- Write legibly in ink
- Record positive things
- Avoid double meanings
- Respond to previous questions / inquiries
- Keep it short and simple

-
- Use tactful, easy-to-understand language. Write as you speak, using natural, everyday expressions. Short words, clear-cut and direct, are easier to read and to understand than lengthy words.

Example: Muddy composition: "The developmental orientation of an agency must be manifested by placing upon its clients growth-oriented expectations . . . "

Clearer: "An agency's values are reflected in the way its clients are treated."

- Proofread your material and watch for missing or misspelled words and vague sentences.
- Write legibly in ink rather than pencil. Pencils can smudge or be erased easily, resulting in the possibility of mistakes occurring. Remember that other people need to read it.
- Put the positive things a person is accomplishing in progress notes. Negative comments can often become the only focus.
- Avoid any hint of double meanings. If a statement can be misunderstood, it will be.

Example: "She had a behavior." (Good? Bad? Indifferent? What exactly is meant by "behavior?") or "I redirected him to another activity." (Physically? Verbally?) **We will look at well-written and poorly written incident reports in the Nuts and Bolts module.**

- Respond to questions previously raised. Be sure to address any inquiries or concerns. If you've been asked a specific question, respond to it as accurately as possible.

-
- Don't perpetuate the concept of having to write everything in great detail. This is the old institutional model where pages and pages of documentation had to be filled out on every aspect of a person's day. Apply the "KISS" principle. **Keep It Short and Simple.**



Now, let's go back and look at the basics of effective verbal communication . . .

• **Expecting, Accepting, and Responding**

Effective communication begins with three basic tenets:

- Expecting Communication
- Accepting Communication
- Responding to Communication

When we are competent at presenting and receiving the messages with which we communicate, then there will be less misunderstanding and we will be able to more effectively meet the people we serve's needs.

The Basics of
Communication

- **EXPECT
Communication**
- **ACCEPT
Communication**
- **RESPOND TO
Communication**

• **EXPECT Communication**

For communication to be effective, you must be aware that someone is (or is trying to) communicate with you. You must expect an exchange in order to fully receive and **understand** the information they are receiving. And, as we have said before, understanding people comes from getting to know them very well.

Example: Communicating with someone who has hearing difficulties. If the person does not know you are trying to talk with him, he may not be looking in your direction and may miss your attempts. A less obvious example is someone who has such significant physical disabilities he is unable to communicate verbally. Be aware of alternate method used -- such as tapping fingers or making certain sounds for certain needs.

• **ACCEPT Communication**

Sometimes, you may feel that you are communicating effectively but the other person is either resisting or rejecting your attempts. Many factors may be involved here.

Sometimes, people feel frustrated and believe that it doesn't matter what you are saying; it won't make a difference in the particular situation anyway. Or, there may be physical barriers that are preventing that acceptance such as a language difference, hearing difficulties, etc.

A person cannot receive a spoken message if they can't hear what is being said, or if the message is spoken in words the listener doesn't understand. Universal signs may be an important method of communicating in such instances.

Example: A person who is deaf or speaks another language may answer in that other language or communicate through sign language.

- **RESPOND TO
Communication**

For the true exchange of information to take place, a message must be sent, received and responded to. Without a response, there is no way to tell if someone is really receiving or accepting the message sent. Their response determines how, in turn, we will react. If there is no response, then we are either slow to continue the communication, become agitated or frustrated, or break off communication altogether. We all know how difficult it is to talk to someone who shows no emotion or says nothing in response to a question or statement.

It is very important to note that some people you work with will not respond to your communication attempts and **THAT'S OKAY!** You should continue to communicate using all the methods you have learned -- whether or not you get a response from an individual.

Never give up! Always assume people understand!

SUMMARY

When communication is accepted and responded to:

- People **become partners** in the activities in which they participate
- People **expect a response**
- People discover that communication allows them to **affect other peoples' behavior**

You can help people make choices and assume specific roles in activities. Honoring a preference, giving what the person asks for, laughing at a joke, showing interest in a comment are all ways to respond to communication. You can teach the people you work with to expect a response, encourage them to attempt other forms of communication, and thereby help them achieve greater independence and control over their lives.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION RESPONSES

Responding to the things people do is an important part of communication. You will find a short description of a situation followed by choices that include inappropriate and appropriate responses. After reading each description, circle the appropriate response.

1. Kathy looks at you while you're holding the milk carton and lifts her glass up.
 - a. Wait till you're done eating.
 - b. You've had enough.
 - c. Sure you can have more.

2. You are at the grocery store. Nathan reaches and touches the cookies and looks at you.
 - a. You want cookies?
 - b. Don't touch things.
 - c. Let's go, we need to hurry.

3. You and Carla are cooking supper. She has trouble opening the mayonnaise jar, holds it up and starts making vocal noises.
 - a. Keep working, Carla.
 - b. Need some help?
 - c. You need to be quiet.

4. Jason is in the kitchen and unable to reach the crackers on the shelf. He reaches toward them and begins to whimper.
 - a. Stop your whining
 - b. Get away from that shelf.
 - c. You want the crackers. Okay, I'll help.

5. Andy is sitting on the porch. He watches as the neighbor's truck drives by on the street.
 - a. It's nice out here.
 - b. Look, a truck.
 - c. I wonder where Mr. Edwards is going.

-
6. You and Alice are at the movie theater. She stops at the refreshment counter and signs “popcorn.”
 - a. Okay, let’s get popcorn.
 - b. Alice, stay with me.
 - c. No Alice we’re getting candy.

 7. You are playing a game. You hold up the dice and say “who wants a turn?” Kate gets up and points to the dice.
 - a. Stay in your seat Kate.
 - b. We’ll let Morgan go first.
 - c. Oh, Kate wants a turn.

 8. You and Michael go to the ice cream parlor. Michael takes out his symbol billfold and points to the symbol of a sundae.
 - a. What do you want?
 - b. Okay, a small chocolate sundae.
 - c. You want a sundae, what flavor?

 9. Dennis goes to the closet, looks at the empty shelf, looks at you and shrugs his shoulders.
 - a. Hmm. Where’s your basket?
 - b. Don’t mess with things in your closet.
 - c. It’s not time to work on your project.

 10. You and Linda are putting a puzzle together. Linda has difficulty getting a piece to fit. She hits the table and cries.
 - a. Do you want me to lose that puzzle?
 - b. Stop making that noise.
 - c. Let me help you.

 11. The doorbell rings and Robin runs to the door.
 - a. Tell Robin to go and sit down.
 - b. Ask “Who is it?”
 - c. Tell Robin “Get away from that door.

III. Communication Styles

Secondary Objective

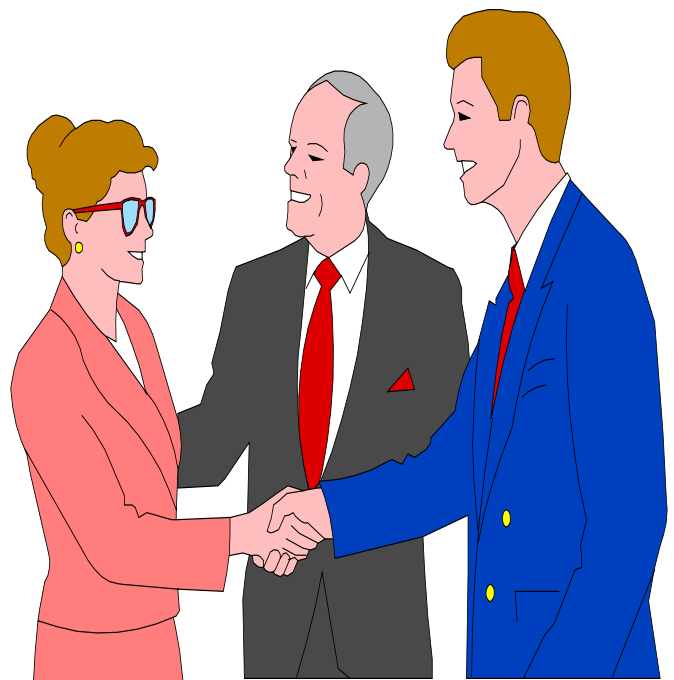
Recognize and be able to respond to individual styles of communication.

It is helpful to determine what style of communicator you are and to be able to recognize communication styles in other people. There have been numerous studies done on different communication styles. We are not preparing you to analyze these styles, but the bottom line is that they can be helpful in understanding the way people communicate. For our purposes, we will use the communications style index that breaks styles into four distinct groups. They are as follows:

- Communication Styles
- Relationship oriented
 - Thinking oriented
 - Action oriented
 - Intuition oriented

- Relationship-oriented
- Thinking-oriented
- Action-oriented
- Intuition-oriented

Recognizing communication styles can help you effectively deal with some of the more common communication problems you may run into. Also be aware that people are not "locked" into any one style. Often we use a mixture of styles and methods to communicate.



One of the most important aspects of being aware of the type of communication style you use is that it allows you to "flex" your style to fit someone else's. If you are basically an intuitive communicator and you want to get a point across to someone who uses the analytical style, you should be more assertive and to the point. Or, vice versa, if you are an action-oriented communicator and want to communicate effectively with someone who is a thinker, you should have your facts down and show things in black and white.

It isn't quite as simple as that. We are all mixtures of those styles. No one is purely analytical or purely amiable. You have a dominant style you typically use but are also influenced by other components of your personality.

To determine which style you are, let's take the following assessment...

Communication Self Assessment Test

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable
<input type="checkbox"/> Peaceful
<input type="checkbox"/> Submissive
<input type="checkbox"/> Controlled
<input type="checkbox"/> Reserved
<input type="checkbox"/> Patient
<input type="checkbox"/> Shy
<input type="checkbox"/> Obliging
<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly
<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent
<input type="checkbox"/> Inoffensive
<input type="checkbox"/> Dry Humor
<input type="checkbox"/> Mediator
<input type="checkbox"/> Tolerant
<input type="checkbox"/> Listener
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive
<input type="checkbox"/> Balanced
<input type="checkbox"/> Reluctant | <input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous
<input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive
<input type="checkbox"/> Strong-willed
<input type="checkbox"/> Competitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-reliant
<input type="checkbox"/> Positive
<input type="checkbox"/> Sure
<input type="checkbox"/> Outspoken
<input type="checkbox"/> Forceful
<input type="checkbox"/> Daring
<input type="checkbox"/> Confident
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent
<input type="checkbox"/> Decisive
<input type="checkbox"/> Mover
<input type="checkbox"/> Tenacious
<input type="checkbox"/> Leader
<input type="checkbox"/> Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Productive
<input type="checkbox"/> Bold | <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical
<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-sacrificing
<input type="checkbox"/> Considerate
<input type="checkbox"/> Respectful
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Planner
<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled
<input type="checkbox"/> Orderly
<input type="checkbox"/> Faithful
<input type="checkbox"/> Cultured
<input type="checkbox"/> Idealistic
<input type="checkbox"/> Deep
<input type="checkbox"/> Musical
<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful
<input type="checkbox"/> Loyal
<input type="checkbox"/> Chartmaker
<input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionist
<input type="checkbox"/> Behaved | <input type="checkbox"/> Animated
<input type="checkbox"/> Playful
<input type="checkbox"/> Sociable
<input type="checkbox"/> Convincing
<input type="checkbox"/> Refreshing
<input type="checkbox"/> Spirited
<input type="checkbox"/> Promoter
<input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous
<input type="checkbox"/> Optimistic
<input type="checkbox"/> Funny
<input type="checkbox"/> Delightful
<input type="checkbox"/> Cheerful
<input type="checkbox"/> Inspiring
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrative
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixes easily
<input type="checkbox"/> Talker
<input type="checkbox"/> Lively
<input type="checkbox"/> Cute
<input type="checkbox"/> Popular
<input type="checkbox"/> Bouncy |
|--|--|--|--|

Totals _____

Totals _____

Totals _____

Totals _____

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blank
<input type="checkbox"/> Unenthusiastic
<input type="checkbox"/> Reticent
<input type="checkbox"/> Fearful
<input type="checkbox"/> Indecisive
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninvolved
<input type="checkbox"/> Hesitant
<input type="checkbox"/> Plain
<input type="checkbox"/> Aimless
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonchalant
<input type="checkbox"/> Worrier
<input type="checkbox"/> Timid
<input type="checkbox"/> Doubtful
<input type="checkbox"/> Indifferent
<input type="checkbox"/> Mumbler
<input type="checkbox"/> Slow
<input type="checkbox"/> Lazy
<input type="checkbox"/> Sluggish
<input type="checkbox"/> Compromising | <input type="checkbox"/> Bossy
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsympathetic
<input type="checkbox"/> Resistant
<input type="checkbox"/> Frank
<input type="checkbox"/> Impatient
<input type="checkbox"/> Unaffectionate
<input type="checkbox"/> Headstrong
<input type="checkbox"/> Proud
<input type="checkbox"/> Argumentative
<input type="checkbox"/> Nervy
<input type="checkbox"/> Workaholic
<input type="checkbox"/> Tactless
<input type="checkbox"/> Domineering
<input type="checkbox"/> Intolerant
<input type="checkbox"/> Manipulative
<input type="checkbox"/> Stubborn
<input type="checkbox"/> Lord over others
<input type="checkbox"/> Short-tempered
<input type="checkbox"/> Rash
<input type="checkbox"/> Crafty | <input type="checkbox"/> Bashful
<input type="checkbox"/> Unforgiving
<input type="checkbox"/> Resentful
<input type="checkbox"/> Fussy
<input type="checkbox"/> Insecure
<input type="checkbox"/> Unpopular
<input type="checkbox"/> Pessimistic
<input type="checkbox"/> Aimless
<input type="checkbox"/> Negative
<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Too sensitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Introvert
<input type="checkbox"/> Moody
<input type="checkbox"/> Skeptical
<input type="checkbox"/> Loner
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspicious
<input type="checkbox"/> Revengeful
<input type="checkbox"/> Critical
<input type="checkbox"/> Hard to work with | <input type="checkbox"/> Brassy
<input type="checkbox"/> Undisciplined
<input type="checkbox"/> Repetitious
<input type="checkbox"/> Forgetful
<input type="checkbox"/> Interrupts
<input type="checkbox"/> Unpredictable
<input type="checkbox"/> Haphazard
<input type="checkbox"/> Permissive
<input type="checkbox"/> Angered easily
<input type="checkbox"/> Naïve
<input type="checkbox"/> Wants credit
<input type="checkbox"/> Talkative
<input type="checkbox"/> Disorganized
<input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent
<input type="checkbox"/> Messy
<input type="checkbox"/> Show off
<input type="checkbox"/> Loud
<input type="checkbox"/> Scatter brained
<input type="checkbox"/> Restless
<input type="checkbox"/> Changeable |
|---|---|---|---|

_____ Total Column One

_____ Total Column Two

_____ Total Column Three

_____ Total Column Four

Communication Styles: Self Assessment Test Example

Amiable	Driver	Analytical	Expressive
X ___ Adaptable	X ___ Adventurous	___ Analytical	___ Animated
___ Peaceful	X ___ Persuasive	X ___ Persistent	___ Playful
___ Submissive	X ___ Strong-willed	___ Self-sacrificing	X ___ Sociable
___ Controlled	___ Competitive	X ___ Considerate	___ Convincing
___ Reserved	X ___ Resourceful	___ Respectful	___ Refreshing
___ Patient	X ___ Self-reliant	X ___ Sensitive	X ___ Spirited
___ Shy	___ Positive	X ___ Planner	___ Promoter
X ___ Obliging	___ Sure	X ___ Scheduled	___ Spontaneous
X ___ Friendly	___ Outspoken	___ Orderly	X ___ Optimistic
___ Consistent	___ Forceful	X ___ Faithful	___ Funny
___ Inoffensive	___ Daring	___ Cultured	X ___ Delightful
___ Dry Humor	X ___ Confident	___ Idealistic	X ___ Cheerful
___ Mediator	X ___ Independent	___ Deep	X ___ Inspiring
___ Tolerant	X ___ Decisive	___ Musical	___ Demonstrative
X ___ Listener	X ___ Mover	X ___ Thoughtful	X ___ Mixes easily
___ Permissive	___ Tenacious	___ Loyal	___ Talker
X ___ Balanced	X ___ Leader	___ Chartmaker	X ___ Lively
___ Reluctant	___ Chief	___ Perfectionist	___ Cute
	X ___ Productive	___ Behaved	X ___ Popular
	X ___ Bold		___ Bouncy
Totals _____	Totals _____	Totals _____	Totals _____
___ Blank	___ Bossy	___ Bashful	X ___ Brassy
___ Unenthusiastic	___ Unsympathetic	___ Unforgiving	X ___ Undisciplined
___ Reticent	X ___ Resistant	___ Resentful	___ Repetitious
___ Fearful	X ___ Frank	___ Fussy	___ Forgetful
___ Indecisive	X ___ Impatient	___ Insecure	___ Interrupts
___ Uninvolved	X ___ Unaffectionate	___ Unpopular	___ Unpredictable
___ Hesitant	X ___ Headstrong	___ Pessimistic	___ Haphazard
___ Plain	X ___ Proud	___ Aimless	___ Permissive
___ Aimless	___ Argumentative	___ Negative	X ___ Angered easily
X ___ Nonchalant	___ Nervy	___ Withdrawn	___ Naïve
___ Worrier	X ___ Workaholic	___ Too sensitive	___ Wants credit
___ Timid	___ Tactless	___ Introvert	X ___ Talkative
___ Doubtful	X ___ Domineering	___ Moody	___ Disorganized
___ Indifferent	X ___ Intolerant	X ___ Skeptical	___ Inconsistent
___ Mumbler	X ___ Manipulative	___ Loner	___ Messy
___ Slow	___ Stubborn	___ Suspicious	___ Show off
___ Lazy	X ___ Lord over others	___ Revengeful	___ Loud
___ Sluggish	X ___ Short-tempered	___ Critical	___ Scatter brained
X ___ Compromising	___ Rash	___ Hard to work with	X ___ Restless
	___ Crafty		___ Changeable
7	24	8	17
Total Column One	Total Column Two	Total Column Three	Total Column Four

IDENTIFYING THE COMMUNICATION STYLES

AMIABLE

- Relationship oriented
- Reacts slowly
- Makes a maximum effort to relate
- Has little concern for affecting change
- Relates action to present time
- Provides support and tends to reject conflict

ANALYTICAL

- Thinking oriented
- Reacts slowly
- Makes maximum effort to organize
- Has little concern for relationships
- Relates actions to historical time frame
- Acts with caution and tends to reject involvement

DRIVER

- Action oriented
- Reacts swiftly
- Makes maximum effort to control
- Has little concern for caution in relationships
- Relates action to the present time frame
- Takes direct action and tends to reject inaction

EXPRESSIVE

- Intuition oriented
- Reacts rapidly
- Makes maximum effort to get involved
- Has little concern for routine
- Relates action to future time frames
- Acts impulsively and tends to reject isolation

GETTING ALONG WITH A DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLE

AMIABLE PROFILE:

ROLE: THE MEDIATOR

- Asks questions more often than makes statements
- Speaks softly and slowly
- Seldom interrupts others
- Pauses before answering questions
- Seldom uses voice to emphasize
- Tends to lean backward
- Comfort zone: Most comfortable in making decisions when strong personal ties are established first.
- Delays decisions until they have strong support data as backup. Need support and feedback from others on decisions. Cooperative in their interactions with others

GETTING ALONG WITH AMIABLE:

- To pay value: Give them attention!
- Let them save: Relationships
- Take time to be agreeable.
- Support their relationships and feelings
- Give brief benefits that answer WHY.
- For decisions give them guarantees and assurances
- Specialty: SUPPORTIVE!
- Backup style: Acquiesces

ANALYTICAL PROFILE

ROLE: THE THINKER

- Limited facial expression
- Infrequent eye contact while listening
- Minimal body movement
- Shows a narrow range of personal feelings
- Uses fact oriented language
- Limited vocal variety
- Uses specific language
- Comfort zone: Most comfortable when risk has been worked out of problems and data has been completed that supports their conclusion. They prefer details rather than global statements.

GETTING ALONG WITH THE ANALYTICAL:

- To pay value: Give them activity!
- Let them save: FACE
- Take time to be accurate.
- Support their principles and thinking.
- Give benefits that answer HOW.
- For decisions give them evidence and service.
- Specialty: Technical
- Backup style: AVOIDER

DRIVER PROFILE:

ROLE: THE DOER

- Makes statements more often than ask questions
- Speaks fast
- Frequently interrupts others
- Answers questions immediately
- Frequently uses voice for emphasis
- Tends to lean forward
- Comfort zone: Most comfortable when in charge and taking initiative. Responds well in situations where they map out plans and others carry them out. They enjoy risks and problems as a challenge.

GETTING ALONG WITH THE DRIVER:

- To pay value: Give them results!
- Let them save: TIME!
- Needs climate that allows to build own structure.
- Take time to be efficient
- Support their conclusions and actions
- Give benefits that answer WHAT!
- For decisions give them options and probabilities
- Specialty: CONTROL!
- Backup style: AUTOCRATIC

EXPRESSIVE PROFILE:

ROLE: THE TALKER

- Varied facial expression
- Frequent eye contact while listening
- Expansive body movement
- Shows a broad range of personal language
- Expansive vocal variety
- Uses general language
- Comfort zone: Comfortable thinking up new activities, inspires other to work.

GETTING ALONG WITH THE EXPRESSIVE:

- To pay value: Give them credit or applause!
- Let them save: EFFORTS!
- Needs climate that inspires to their goals.
- Support their dreams and intuitions.
- Give them benefits that answer WHO!
- For decision give them testimony and incentives.
- Specialty: SOCIAL!
- Backup style: Attacker

ERRORS YOU MAY MAKE IN MAKING YOUR PRESENTATIONS

IF YOU ARE AN EXPRESSIVE, YOU MAY:

- Be scattered in your comments – jumping about too much
- Raise too many issues
- Appear ego-centered
- Too lengthy
- Appear rigid
- Appear too judgmental
- Appear condescending
- Be too abstract
- Concentrate too much on the concept; not enough on the “How”
- Not really “close”

IF YOU ARE A DRIVER, YOU MAY:

- Try to close too fast
- Not ask enough questions
- Command
- Jump in conversation and not let the customer finish
- Tell too strong-put customer on the defensive
- Not take time to learn objections

IF YOU ARE AN ANALYTICAL, YOU MAY:

- Over-explain
- Be too non-committal
- Monotonic
- Not expressive feelings enough – lack affect
- Appear pedantic
- Get involved in asking too many questions
- Want to lay out presentation in too rigid a fashion

IF YOU ARE AN AMIABLE, YOU MAY:

- Spend too much time talking about the past
- Forget to cite facts
- Over-simplify
- Rely too much on your personality and not on data
- Tell too many anecdotes or stories
- Take too long to get to main point of your presentation
- Not push to bring objectives out in the open
- Avoid bringing to the surface unpleasant facts

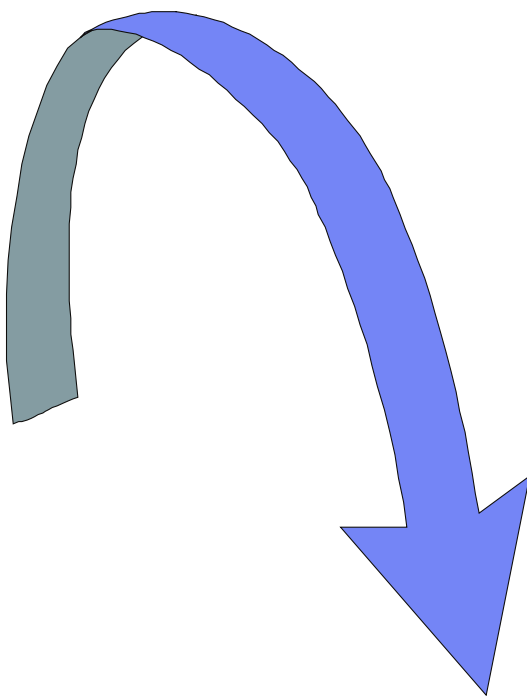
THE FOUR COMMUNICATION STYLES: A SUMMARY

	DRIVER	EXPRESSIVE	AMIABLE	ANALYTICAL
Backup style	Autocratic	Attacker	Acquieser	Avoider
Measure Person Value by	Results	Applause	Attention	Activity
For Growth Needs to	Listen	Check	Initiate	Decide
Let Them Save	Time	Effort	Relationships	Face
Needs Climate That	Allows to Build Own Structure	Inspires to Their Goals	Suggests	Provides Details
Takes Time to Be	Efficient	Stimulating	Agreeable	Accurate
Support Their Thinking	Conclusion and Actions	Dreams and Intuitions	Relationships and Feelings	Principles and
Give Benefits that Answer	What	Who	Why	How
For Decisions Give Them	Options & Probabilities	Testimony & Incentives	Guarantees & Assurances	Evidence
Specialty	Control	Social	Support	Technical

*To break our discussion about communication down a little further, let's consider **FUNCTIONAL** communication. Here are some guidelines for day-to-day, practical communication . . .*

FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION

Functional communication is defined as communication that helps an individual achieve a specific goal. It may be verbal or nonverbal but whatever the form, it aids the person in clarifying a need or satisfying a desire. Certain communication guidelines help focus the communications between people, making them understandable and useful to the individuals involved. Here are some of those guidelines.



I. Communication Guidelines

Secondary Objective:
List ten guidelines for effective communication.

Most communication guidelines are never specifically taught to us. We learned through experience that we should do certain things like:

- look at the person you are talking to,
- take turns talking,
- ask questions,
- answer questions,
- don't interrupt conversations.

As you work with people who may not have learned these skills, it is important that you always model appropriate communication manners and help them identify and learn the many skills necessary for good communication. Some considerations of good communication techniques might be as follows:

1. Never forget that everyone deserves respect and courtesy. As you learned in your Foundation training, talking "down" to people or talking to an adult as if speaking to a child is disrespectful. Use the person's name, not "honey," or "sugar," etc. People often speak louder or slower or in a higher pitch with people who are elderly or who have a disability. This is usually unnecessary and disrespectful.
2. Tone of voice often speaks louder than words. Many people understand much more of the words and tone of your voice than you realize.

-
3. Be aware of the noise and distraction level. This can have a major effect on communication.
 4. Be open and honest. Listen carefully to what people are saying and respond with understanding, accuracy, and honesty. What you say should be genuine and constructive.
 5. Be sensitive. All people can be vulnerable, have their feelings hurt, desire approval, and want to succeed.
 6. Match your sentence length and complexity to the understanding level of the person with whom you are talking. Use short simple sentences and common vocabulary with people who have limited or no speech. Learn the sign language or other communication system of those who use alternative forms of communication.
 7. Combine gestures and demonstrations with speech to increase the effectiveness of your communication. For example, say "June, would you help me fold these clothes" while you point to the clothesbasket.
 8. Praise people. Everyone enjoys being given positive feedback.
 9. Be aware of your body language. The way we position ourselves in relation to another person, the way we move and our facial expressions convey powerful messages
 10. Talk about things of interest to the person.
 11. Respect the other person's personal space. Rushing up to someone or standing too close can cause people to feel uncomfortable.

-
12. Communicate interactively, provide opportunity for the other person to respond. The response may be either verbal or nonverbal such as eye contact or a smile. Whatever it is, it means you have communicated and affected that person
 13. Avoid power struggles. Nobody enjoys being given orders and ultimatums. Remember that this is a *home*, not a military base.
 14. If someone is angry, acknowledge these feeling. Stay calm, don't take it personally. Listen and let the person know you are listening by stating what you think he or she is saying. Keep your voice quiet and calm, don't get drawn in. Do communicate that you care.
 15. People cannot talk about things they have not experienced. Sometimes we wonder why the people we serve are not good communicators and then we look at their daily routines. They may have nowhere to go, no opportunities for recreation, hobbies, or a social life. Talk about things as they happen. Explain words, actions and social expectations as opportunities arise. Make sure there are a variety of meaningful, stimulating activities available. People need recreational and leisure activities in order to have things to talk about.
 16. Don't be embarrassed to ask someone to repeat what they have said. It is okay to ask someone what they said if you didn't understand.
 17. Give opportunities for choices. Observe body movements and gestures and respond to them as communication. Help people participate in activities. Some people need only the opportunity. Other people need additional support such as assistance to take turns, modeling of appropriate responses, etc. Successful experiences and interactions provide a positive foundation for increasingly effective communication.

-
18. Learn to listen. Sometimes (most times), we choose what we hear or see. We tend to think that listening, like breathing, is a reflex. What happens, in reality, is that we hear but don't truly listen. If you are to build rapport and trust, you must learn to listen to **facts, ideas, and feelings**. You must also learn to clarify what you have heard through the use of good questioning and active listening techniques.



99 WAYS TO SAY “VERY GOOD”

1. You're on the right track now!
2. You've got it made!
3. SUPER!
4. That's RIGHT!
5. That's good.
6. You're really working hard today.
7. You're very good at that.
8. GOOD WORK!!
9. That's coming along nicely.
10. That's much better.
11. I'm happy to see you working like that.
12. Exactly right.
13. I'm proud of the way you worked today.
14. You are doing that much better today.
15. You've just about got it.
16. That's the best you have ever done.
17. You're doing a good job!
18. THAT'S IT!
19. Now you've figured it out.
20. That's quite an improvement.
21. GREAT!
22. I knew you could do it.
23. Congratulations!
24. Not Bad!
25. Keep working on it: you're improving.
26. Now you have it!
27. You are learning fast.
28. Good for you!
29. Couldn't have done it without you.
30. Aren't you proud of yourself?
31. One more time and you'll have it.
32. You really make my job fun.
33. That's the right way to do it.
34. You're getting better everyday.
35. You did it that time!
36. That's not half bad!
37. Nice going.
38. You haven't missed a thing.
39. WOW!
40. THAT'S THE WAY!
41. Keep up the good work.
42. TERRIFIC!!
43. Nothing can stop you now.
44. That's that way to do it!
45. SENSATIONAL!!
46. You've got your brain in gear.
47. That's better.
48. That was first class work.
49. EXCELLENT!!

-
50. That's the best ever.
 51. You've just about mastered that.
 52. PERFECT!
 53. That's better than ever.
 54. Much better!
 55. WONDERFUL!
 56. You must have been practicing!
 57. You did that very well.
 58. FINE!
 59. Nice going.
 60. You're really going to town!
 61. OUTSTANDING!
 62. FANTASTIC!
 63. TREMENDOUS!
 64. That's how to handle that!
 65. Now that's what I call a fine job.
 66. That's great.
 67. Right on!
 68. You're really improving.
 69. You're doing beautifully.
 70. Superb!
 71. Good remembering!
 72. You've got that down pat.
 73. You certainly did well today.
 74. Keep it up!
 75. Congratulation. You did _____ right!
 76. You did a lot of work today.
 77. Well look at you go!
 78. That's it.
 79. I'm very proud of you.
 80. MARVELOUS!!
 81. I like that.
 82. Way to go!
 83. Now you have the hang of it!
 84. You're doing fine.
 85. Good thinking.
 86. You are really learning a lot.
 87. Good going.
 88. I've never seen anyone do it better.
 89. Keep on trying!
 90. You outdid yourself today.
 91. Good for you!
 92. I think you've got it.
 93. I'm so proud of you.
 94. Good job _____(name).
 95. You figured that out fast.
 96. You remembered!
 97. That's really nice
 98. That kind of work makes me happy.
 99. It's such a pleasure to teach when you work like that.

II. Other Factors

Secondary Objective

Summarize other factors that influence functional communication.

There are other functional communication skills that may help us communicate with other people. Some of these that we will discuss in this section of training are:

- **Developing a “Shared Focus”**
- **Creating a Positive Atmosphere**
- **Using Humor to Communicate**

Let's talk about each in more depth...

• Developing a “Shared” Focus

When a person is already interested in something, it provides a real reason to communicate with other people. They “share” that interest with them and so have a common ground from which to develop a relationship. The interaction will be more reinforcing than if you initiated a topic which was not of interest to the person.

A shared focus is also a way of respecting personal interests and preferences.

- Identifying an activity in which a person has exhibited interest is the best way to develop a shared focus.
- Support staff who join in and facilitate communication about a topic that was selected by the person for whom they work are showing respect for the individual choices made by that person.
- Enhancing communication about an enjoyed activity is a real way of showing that the person’s preferences are valued.

Staff persons should not dominate communication through their preferences or choices. In other words, when a person is already interacting with someone or something in the environment, a choice of the communication topic has been made. It is now up to the staff to join in and facilitate communication about that topic.



The best way to develop a shared focus is to join in an activity that a person is already showing an interest in doing: an enriched environment is very important.

Meaningful activities such as getting dressed, preparing meals, shopping, helping with household chores, and working or going to school, are important and contribute to that enriched environment.

• **Creating A Positive Atmosphere**

To create an atmosphere that aids functional communication, you must always expect communication to occur. There is no substitute for knowing the individual well. Some methods of creating such an atmosphere include.

- Give as many opportunities as possible for the person to communicate during daily routines and activities.

Example: "I'm going to the store, Maria, want to come along?" or, "Tom, how do you feel about working on the yard?"

- Accept the form in which communication comes, even if it is expressed in a form that is not typical.

Example: Barbara taps her little finger on the table when she is thirsty.

- People should never be ignored, it not only leaves needs unmet, but destroys self-image and decreases the desire to communicate.

Example: Staff talk in front of Juna as if she isn't present and can't hear.

Don't forget the following communication tool, humor. The use of humor can lighten a mood, can help increase learning, and aid in communication in general...

● **Using Humor to Communicate**

Don't forget one of the most important methods of functional communication — the use of humor. Humor used properly can create trust and a willingness to communicate when other methods fail.

A joke told every now and then, or just a laugh at the absurdities of a situation can act as stress relief or open up communication in difficult situations.

However, derogatory humor that might be offensive or hurt another person's feelings should never be used. And just kidding around can sometimes be a risky business. Kidding can be taken seriously and turn what was meant to be a playful incident into a serious situation.

It's safest to tell a joke or a story about yourself and leave the kidding and slapstick stuff to Saturday Night Live.



III. Assertive Vs. Aggressive Communication

- **What does it mean to be aggressive?**

Aggressive behavior means getting needs met, but doing so at the expense of other team members; being insensitive or outright antagonistic to others' feelings, ideas, and needs concerning the individual you work with in order to get your way.

- **What does it mean to be assertive?**

Assertive behavior means knowing what the person wants and needs and helping that person make it clear to others what those needs are. It means working in self-directed ways to meet needs while showing respect for others. Assertive people communicate openly and directly.

One way to become more assertive is to openly state your opinions and ideas at the team meeting regarding the wants and needs of the person you serve.

● ASSERTIVE Communication

Assertive communication:

- **Helps solidify your own thoughts and ideas.**
One important benefit of being assertive is that it enables you to keep in close touch with the person and his or her needs, opinions, and ideas.
- **Helps to get the person's needs met.**
Further, being assertive makes it much more likely that you will get the needs of the person you work with met when cooperation or help from others is necessary. When others know what the person needs and wants, they are more able and willing to cooperate with you to meet those needs. We often make the mistake of assuming that other people know the person as well as we do and that they know how he or she feels or wants and that we should have to tell them this information. However, this is not true. **Failure to tell others what you know can have lasting negative effects on the person and his or her plan.**
- **Highlights your own perspective.**
When you fail to disclose distinctive attitudes and opinions regarding the person's wants and needs, you deny the person's individuality and there may be no one else to advocate for him or her -- particularly when the person cannot speak for him or herself. It's incredible how much better you feel when you have the courage to be open and honest with others, especially about ideas and issues that are very important to you and the individuals you serve.

Of course, stating what you think and feel can bring disagreements and conflicts to the surface during the team meeting. The **way** you state your opinions and feelings is very important. There are many techniques you can use to communicate more effectively. We will discuss only one method you may find useful.

Assertive Communication

- Helps solidify your own thoughts and ideas.
- Helps to get the person's needs met.
- Highlights your own perspective.

● Stating Your Case

● "I-Messages"

Stating your case should take the form of what we will call "**I-messages.**" An I-message is a statement that describes you; it is an expression of your feelings and experiences. Since I-messages express only your inner reality, they do not contain negative evaluations, judgements, or interpretations of others.

Examples:

1. *I think Bill could do well in supported employment . . .*
2. *I'm feeling outnumbered here . . .*
3. *I feel like my opinion doesn't count . . .*

● "You-messages"

"You-messages" on the other hand are negative judgments or evaluations aimed at the other person. While they are most often used to express anger, embarrassment, fear, or hurt, they are definitely not self-disclosing messages because they do not express your own feelings concerning the needs or interests of the person you serve. Regardless of how they're intended, You-messages generally come across as aggressive and accusatory because they say, in effect; "It's your fault!" or "You're to blame!" They are non-productive and often are counter productive.

- Examples:*
1. *You don't know what Bill needs . . .*
 2. *You are ganging up on me . . .*
 3. *You should get to know Bill better . . .*

A You-message does not automatically turn into an I-message. If it is preceded by an "I feel" or "I think" then it is really a You-message in disguise.

-
- Examples:*
- 1. I feel YOU should get to know Bill better .*
 - 2. I think YOU are ganging up on me . . .*
 - 3. I think YOU don't know what Bill needs . .*

However, using I-messages won't always provide for smooth sailing. Sometimes the other party to your communication will resist your I-message and confront you with a You-message.

Role Play: "I and You" messages

Scenario #1:

In this example, both parties are using You-messages.

EXAMPLE:

You: I think Bill should be in a supported employment program.

Program Coordinator: He's not ready. Let's think about the workshop.

You: You don't know what you're talking about. With a little help, he would do well working in the community.

Program Coordinator: You don't understand what's Involved in having someone work in the community. Let's stick to the workshop.

You: It's obvious you don't care about my opinion. I might as well shut up. You're going to do what you want to do anyway.

Program Coordinator: You're just being bull headed. The workshop is obviously the best placement for Bill.

You: The only person you care about is you. Go ahead and put him in the workshop. You're going to do that anyway.

In the first part of this example the Program Coordinator resisted your I-message and attacked with a YOU-message. As soon as you become aware of the other's resistance, you should shift gears. After sending your I-message, you shift to listening to the other's feelings; from initiating to responding. Then, follow up with another I-message, alternating between initiating and responding. Here is an example:

Scenario #2:

Now consider Scenario #2. One person responds with I messages.

EXAMPLE:

You: I think Bill should be in a supported employment program.

Program Coordinator: He's not ready. Let's think more about the workshop.

You: I've watched Bill work. I feel he would do well working in the community with a little help.

Program Coordinator: You don't understand what's involved in having someone work in the community. Let's stick to the workshop.

You: I'm feeling like my opinion is really not being considered here. Why do you feel that supported employment is not an option?

Program Coordinator: You are just being bull headed. The workshop is obviously the best placement for Bill.

EXAMPLE:

You: I want to have an open mind. I think we all want what's best for Bill. Maybe you could help me understand why you feel the workshop would be better than supported employment?

Program Coordinator: Well, mainly because of his behavior.

You: If behavior were not a problem, would you consider supported employment?

Program Coordinator: Yes, I guess so.

You: Well, I've watched Bill at work. It appears to me the only time he acts up is when he is really bored or is asked to do a task that makes no sense. The workshop is really routine. I think we are setting Bill up to fail by putting him in that situation. I feel there's less chance of him becoming bored if he were in the community working at a challenging job. Could we consider a time limited trial to see how he might do?

Program Coordinator: Well, I suppose we could try. What does the rest of the team think?

When you use You-messages, it comes off as an attack on the other person. I-messages, on the other hand, can help diffuse explosive situations. Do you see how this can help?

Role Play: "I"/"You" Messages

You are in a team meeting being held for the benefit of a man named Frank. Frank really needs to improve his communication skills. The speech pathologist, who has met with Frank one time to do an assessment, is insisting that a behavior management plan be written for Frank or she will not see him for further therapy. She says Frank was very difficult and was abusive toward her. She is afraid of him.

The number ones will play the speech pathologist role, insisting that Frank have a Behavior Support plan. The number twos will play an advocacy role. As a number two, you are a staff member who has worked with Frank for approximately 3 years. You know that Frank never has had such problems and you wonder why he acted up with the speech pathologist. Indeed, you really question whether the behavior was really that bad.

Round 1: *The speech pathologist uses many YOU messages.*

The residential staff member responds using YOU messages.

Round 2: *The speech pathologist uses many YOU messages.*

The residential staff member responds with I messages.

Round 3: *The speech pathologist and residential staff member listen and respond to each other using I messages.*

ASK: *How did you feel when both parties were using YOU messages? Did it feel any better when some of you responded with I messages? What about when both parties used I messages?*

IV. Proactive/Reactive Principles

An important principle that defines us as individuals and influences how we approach problem-solving is **PROACTIVITY**. Our behavior is significantly influenced by the decisions we make. We have to take the initiative and the responsibility to make things happen. Highly proactive people recognize that responsibility. They do not blame circumstances or conditions for their own behavior. The behavior is a product of their own conscious choice, based on facts and values, rather than upon the conditions they find.

Individuals who allow circumstances to work upon them, to be acted upon by either the situation or the environment, are said to be **REACTIVE**. A reactive individual often believes that situations are out of his control, that circumstances (or people) are forcing him to do what he is doing. He feels increasingly victimized and not in charge of his life. This behavior is a product of a belief that he is not free to choose his own actions.

Let's look at some examples of proactive and reactive language...

- **Examples of Proactive Language**

Let's look at our alternatives.
I can choose a different approach.
I can control my own feelings.
I can create an effective presentation.
I will choose an appropriate response.
I choose.
I prefer.
I will.

- **Examples of Reactive Language**

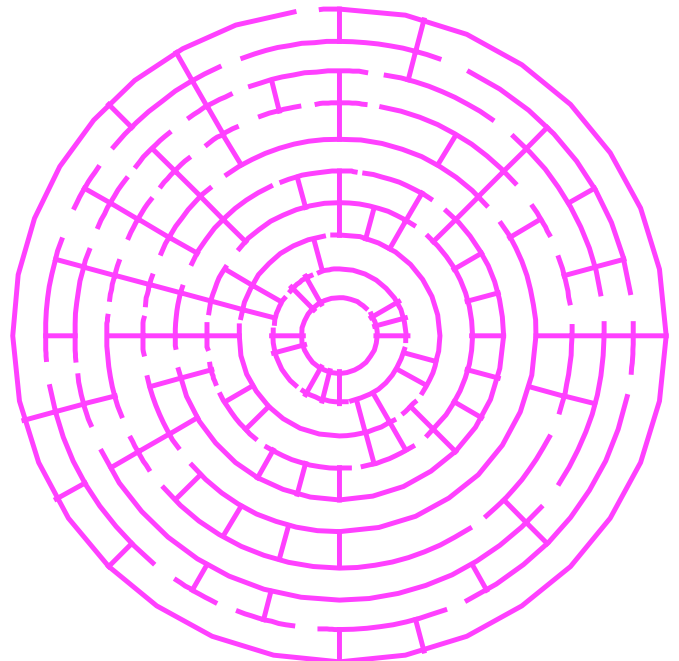
There's nothing I can do.
That's just the way I am.
He makes me so mad.
They won't allow that.
I have to do that.
I can't.
I must.
If only.

Problem-solving Skills and Communication

Secondary Objective;

Demonstrate an understanding of problem solving skills and be able to implement them by using conflict resolution and mediation techniques

In conjunction with communication difficulties, you may be faced with a wide-variety of problems and opportunities as you work with the people you serve and other staff members. There are many problem-solving models that you can either use directly or adapt to fit your specific needs.

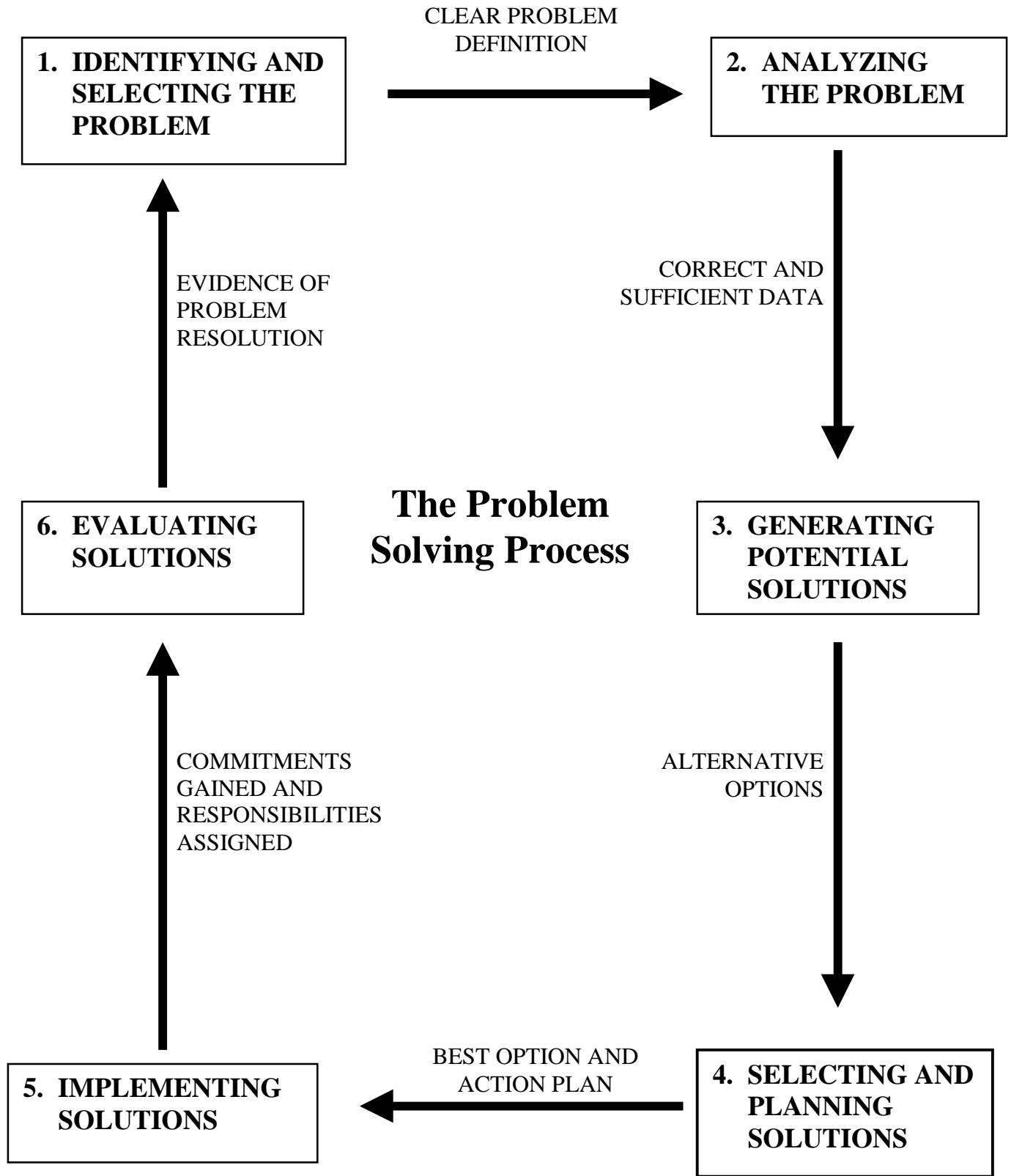


Perhaps one of the most important issues to think of when working with a problem, is to SEPARATE PEOPLE/PERSONALITY ISSUES FROM THE REAL PROBLEM. If personal attitudes, issues, and viewpoints are allowed to cloud matters, a true problem resolution cannot be reached.

Let's look at the steps of a common problem-solving model . . .

I. The Problem-Solving Process

This model emphasizes clear identification of the problem you are facing as well as identifying a broad range of possible solutions before deciding on a specific course of action. Let's look at each of the steps in the model in more detail.



Steps in the Problem-Solving Process

1. Clear Problem identification:

The first step in any problem-solving process is to clearly identify and select the proper problem. Sometimes, what we think is a problem is really a mask for a more basic difficulty.

Example: Sarah was often aggressive and inattentive when staff tried to work with her. At first, the problem seemed to be of a behavioral nature but after a thorough physical, it was discovered that Sarah had severe ear infections that cause her great pain. After the infections were cleared up, Sarah's attitude and responsiveness improved dramatically.

2. Correct and sufficient data:

The problem area should be analyzed thoroughly before you can really understand what is happening. Jumping to hasty conclusions without previous thorough investigation of the problem area can lead to incorrect solutions.

Example: Mary seemed to be lethargic during the day even though she appeared to sleep well at night. However, when staff began to collect data on her sleep habits they found that she was waking for three or four minutes out of every thirty. This was a side-effect of her medication and once it was changed, she was able to sleep much more soundly.

3. Alternative Options:

In this step, potential solutions to the problem are generated. All ideas are accepted without criticism, no matter how far-fetched or seemingly inappropriate.

Example: Leslie's team was trying to come up with a way to help him recognize the hot and cold water handles on the bathroom sink. Some of the ideas generated ranged from marking the handles with tape, putting a large "H" and "C" on pictures of fire and ice above the handles, and painting red and blue dots with nail polish on the handles themselves.

4. Selecting the Best Option and Developing an Action Plan:

This is the step where the best option among those generated is decided upon. Once the solution has been decided upon, then a process for accomplishing it is outlined.

Example: Geneva's team decided that the best solutions to helping her learn to shop for groceries were to let her accompany the house supervisor to the grocery store each time she went and to incorporate functional teaching by letting her help select items from the shelves.

5. Commitments Gained and Responsibilities Assigned:

Implementing the solution is the core of the problem-solving process. But, in order to be successful people have to have very clear ideas what their roles are in implementing that solution.

Example: Jim's team decided that the best way to help him with his goal of living independently was for each one of them to assume responsibility for a different area: one person became responsible for helping him learn to cook simple meals, one was responsible for helping him use the bus system to get to work, another person helped him familiarize himself with his neighborhood, etc.

6. Evidence of Problem Resolution:

This last step is probably one of the most important. A solution must be evaluated to see if it has really solved the problem or if it has masked the difficulty or completely missed the mark.

Example: The solution to Willie's problem of not getting along with her supported employment coach was to change coaches. However, when she had problems with the second coach, the team realized that the real problem was in the work itself, not the coaches' personality. Once Willie changed jobs, she was perfectly content and worked happily with the job coach.

Problem-Solving Situations

Scenario #1

John has a job three miles from the nearest public bus service. How would you get him to his work if there is no closer public transportation?

Scenario #2

Sandy doesn't like to get up in the morning for work. She sleeps in and then has only a few minutes to get ready. She has been late three times this week. How would you get her up on time?

Scenario #3

Barry wants to go on vacation but only has \$50.00 in his savings account. He has worked hard and really deserves a break. What would you do to help him?

Scenario #4

Rick consistently lies about taking things from his roommate's room. His roommate is very frustrated and you are afraid that things will "blow up" soon. What would you do to work out this situation?

PROBLEM

Positional Bargaining: Which Game Should You Plan?

SOLUTION

Change the Game --
Negotiate on the Merits

SOFT

Participants are friends

The goal is agreement

Make concessions to cultivate the relationship.

Be soft on the people and the problem.

Trust others.

Change your position easily.

Make offers.

Disclose your bottom line.

Accept one-sided losses to reach agreement.

Search for the single answer: the one they will accept.

Insist on agreement.

Try to avoid a contest of will.

Yield to pressure.

HARD

Participants are adversaries.

The goal is victory.

Demand concessions as a condition of the relationship.

Be hard on the problem and the people.

Distrust others.

Dig into your position.

Make threats.

Mislead as to your bottom line.

Demand one-sided gains as the price of agreement.

Search for the single answer: the one you will accept.

Insist on your position.

Try to win a contest of will.

Apply pressure.

PRINCIPLED

Participants are problem solvers.

The goal is a wise outcome reached efficiently and amicably.

Separate the people from the problem.

Be soft on the people, hard on the problem.

Proceed independent of trust.

Focus on interest, not positions.

Explore interests.

Avoid having a bottom line.

Invent options for mutual gains.

Develop multiple options to choose from; decide later.

Insist on using objective criteria.

Try to reach a result based on standards independent of will.

Reason and be open to reason; yield to principle not pressure.

Fisher, Roger, and Ury, William, Getting to Yes, Houghton Mifflin (Boston) 1983.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: FIVE STAGES OF MEDIATION

Mediation is a process in which a third party neutral assists and facilitates two or more parties (disputants) to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to their dispute (problem). Mediation is a 50-50 proposition. The mediator acts as a catalyst, facilitator, translator, and communicator. The mediator has half of the responsibility; the parties share the other half of the responsibility.

Mediation is a process, not an end result. The mediator's share of responsibility for the success (hearing) revolved around procedure. Firm understanding and fair use of this procedure demonstrates to the parties that the mediator has integrity and objectivity. Use of the five-step procedure listed gives both the parties a framework for problem solving. It also lends the mediator control when unanticipated events or behavior occur.

Mediators need to be concerned about procedure; the content will take care of itself. The five-step procedure described seems to be a reasonable analysis of the mediation process. During a typical mediation the steps will not be distinguishable; instead, the mediation will flow from one step to the next. One of the keys to a success mediation session is its degree of flexibility and creativity.

STAGE I INTRODUCTION

- Greet the parties assigning them specific seats

- Identify yourself and the parties, clarifying names and refer to parties comparably and in the names they desire.

- Establish an informal relaxed atmosphere by offering water, pencil and paper, and time.

- Explain the purpose of mediation and ascertain their willingness to participate.

- Clarify ground rules and explain the reason for them:
 1. Only one party speaks at a time.
 2. Speak directly to the mediator.

- Assess the parties. Are they ready to begin? Is either overly anxious, nervous, or upset? Are any severe emotional, drinking, drug, health problems apparent? Is any preliminary calming necessary?

STAGE II - PROBLEM DETERMINATION

- Ask each party to assist in identifying the presenting problem.

- Request one party begins. Usually the one who contacted the program first is asked to begin. Explain the reason for one party to begin.

- Note this is the story development phase. This may be the first time the parties have discussed in a problem solving conducive atmosphere the situation.
- Actively listen to the speaker. Use listening techniques such as restatement, echo, and non-verbal responses.
- Pay close attention to the behavior and body movements of both parties.
- If necessary, stop the party's narration and calm both parties or assure the other speaker of his / her opportunity to speak.
- Clarify party's narration by asking questions or restating.
- Maintain information flow by focusing the party's narration. Keep the medication progressing.
- Inquire into underlying, fundamental, issues, which affect the presenting problem; be at the root of the complaints.
- Define problem by restating summarizing party's statements. In summarizing, the mediator may defuse tensions by restating story eliminating disparaging comments or descriptions.
- Check with party to see if you have understood the story. This aids all three of you to understand.
- Thank the first party for his / her contribution. Remind him / her of ground rules, noting second party's patience, if appropriate.
- Repeat the process with the second party always paying close attention to the behavior of both.
- Ask questions in a neutral fashion. Make use of open and close-ended questions when appropriate.
- After both party's stories and your individual summaries, check with both. Are they okay? Any calming or explaining necessary?
- Summarize areas of agreement and disagreement.

Assist parties in prioritizing issues and demands.

STAGE III – GENERATION AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

- Inquire of each party a list of possible alternatives or options in helping to resolve the situation.

-
- Restate and summarize each alternative.
 - Check and re-check with each party the workability of each alternative.
 - Note the un-workability of an alternative if that is the case.
 - Suggest other possible alternatives in general terms if an impasse is reached.
 - Encourage the parties of the probability of success.
 - Suggest a break or a second mediation if an impasse is reached.
 - Ask parties to “try-out” possible solutions.

STAGE IV – SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

- Encourage parties to select the alternative, which appears to be workable by both.
- Check its workability. Assist parties in planning a course of action to implement alternative.
- Note the amount of progress parties have made.
- Rephrase alternatives selected for increased understanding.

STAGE V – AGREEMENT (CONCLUSION)

- Summarize agreement terms.
- Check viability and reality with each party. Secure their assent to what has transpired.
- Ask each if there are any other issues, which need to be discussed.
- Assist parties in specifying terms of the resolution. Where? When? How? And Who?
- Explain the process follow-up.
- Emphasize the agreement is theirs, not yours.
- Congratulate the parties on their reasonableness. Encourage parties on the workability of their resolution.
- Make referrals, if necessary.

- **Use the problem-solving process when:**

- **There is a gap between what currently is happening and what you want to happen.**
- **You want to move from a vague dissatisfaction to a solvable, clearly-defined problem.**
- **You are not sure how to approach an issue**

II. Conflict Management

A common difficulty confronting people involved in conflict is a breakdown in communications. Conflict can exist when there is a difference (actual or perceived) between two or more parties and when that difference is characterized by tension, mistrust, poor communication, and/or emotionalism.

If the conflict is allowed to escalate until people are very sure they are right and everyone else is wrong it reduces chances for successful resolution. People no longer have an opportunity to clarify the issues that led to the initial conflict and its escalation. In short, **conflict breaks down communication.**

Conflict is a normal occurrence -- and can be healthy -- up to a point. If a person has strong convictions about something -- that's healthy. But it is important to keep the conflict face-to-face and don't let it "go underground" in the form of rumors and other ineffective behaviors.

Conflict can occur the following situations:

1. When an individual encounters numerous internal psychological forces that are in opposition to one another (**intrapersonal conflict**).
2. When two or more individuals come into conflict through their opposing emotions or behaviors (**interpersonal conflict**).
3. When competing values clash, either within or between agencies (**intra and inter-agency conflict**).

● Mediation

You should be aware of the techniques used to deal with conflict. One very powerful tool is mediation. Mediation is an intervention strategy that is goal-directed and oriented toward problem-solving. It clarifies the problem, develops options, and works toward a final agreement. Most importantly, it emphasizes each participant's responsibility for making decisions that affect his or her own life, thereby empowering them and making for a win-win resolution to the conflict. Someone who can remain neutral concerning the situation is the most appropriate individual to mediate a situation. Whether that is you as a supervisor or someone outside the group is a decision that you should make with care.

The five steps used in the mediation process are as follows:

1. Introduction and ground rules -- trust established
2. Problem identification and clarification
3. Generation and evaluation of alternatives
4. Selection of appropriate alternative
5. Conclusion and summary of agreement

The five step used in the mediation process are:

1. Introduction and ground rules – trust established
2. Problem identification and clarification
3. Generation and evaluation of alternatives
4. Selections of appropriate alternative
5. Conclusion and summary of agreement

During mediation, an outside **mediator** allows both parties involved in the conflict to discuss the problem rationally. Each is allotted a few minutes to present his/her side without any interruptions by the other party. The mediator then asks the parties to generate a broad selection of possible solutions and alternatives to the problem. This is a brainstorming process where energy is concentrated on the problem, not on the person(s) involved. Both parties, with the aid of the mediator, select the most appropriate alternative from the list of possible solutions and set down **in writing** the agreement and the date by which it will be accomplished if appropriate.

Approaching a problem through the problem-solving process and mediation allows the parties involved to achieve ownership of the solutions they agree upon. They are therefore more likely to fulfill the requirements of that agreement.



III. Communication Alternatives

*Secondary Objective:
Identify common forms of
communication alternatives.*

Communication efforts made by persons with disabilities sometimes may not be effective in communicating their needs and desires. When communication is not clear, it often places others in the position of guessing what is being communicated. This is a tricky situation and often results in needs and wants going unrecognized and unmet. In these situations, you may have to use alternative methods of communication rather than the common ones of speech, body language and touch.

As we have said earlier, all people need to communicate and have the right to the most effective communication methods available. We should always try to make sure that communication equipment, methods, and settings are appropriate and up-to-date.

• **Communication difficulties can take many forms.**

You may work with people who have difficulty communicating with others but remember that communication problems are not limited to people with disabilities. How many of you know what your mechanic means when he says "The fuel intake of your injectors is comparable to your engine's rpm.?" Or, have you ever tried to talk to someone who speaks a different language? These are both examples of common communication difficulties.

An important part of your job will be to learn and understand the variety of ways the people you work with may communicate, as well as to communicate as clearly as possible with them. In addition, part of your job may include helping them learn to be more effective communicators.

• **Augmentative and Alternative Communication**

As a service provider, your skills are needed to help develop, strengthen, or increase the abilities of the individuals you serve. Throughout this section on communication, various techniques are presented to make communication as easy and as successful as possible.

At some time or another, most of us have probably used some kind of alternative method besides speech to communicate. Our hand gestures, facial expressions or little pictures we might need to draw when explaining something, are all used to increase communication.

To augment is "to increase or strengthen." This is the exact talent and skill you provide to the people you serve. Another name you may hear for a device that augments communication is Alternative Communication. The earliest of these augmentative/alternative devices were communication boards and books. These are still regularly used today.

Symbols on boards and books might include small objects, tactile surfaces, (such as cloth, sandpaper, plastic, etc.), photographs, line drawings (called pictographic symbols), letters, words, and phrases. A speech-language pathologist or "therapist" may be on a team to assist the individual, family, and all other support staff in deciding what kind of symbols are needed and the best way to arrange these symbols.

During the early 1980's, electronic systems that could talk were developed to help or augment communication. These earliest talking devices often sounded like robots. Soon, devices were able to produce recorded voices. With

technology, the type of sound or voice quality improved. The amount of symbols, pictures, words and sentences that can be produced has also increased.

Individuals you serve may augment their communication using methods as simple as a picture book, or as advanced as using a computer to access symbols. This access might include a switch, a keyboard, or a movement. A combination of the individual's skills, capabilities, assistance from support staff and the variety of materials and technological advances all work together to create opportunities for communication.

- *Is it easy to maintain? Can you easily change batteries? Is there a support system for technical difficulties?*
- *Have you been taught the proper way to use the device? Have you been taught the proper way to support the person in using the device?*

• Guidelines for Communication Partners

(using augmentative or alternative communication techniques)

It is important to remember that, even if the user of a device is very good or has the best possible system, augmented communication is different from and more difficult than normal spoken communication.

Augmentative communication is slower, it breaks up the flow of conversation, and it is more easily misunderstood. Yet for many people, augmentative communication is the only way they can express their thoughts and ideas to family and friends. Remember, communication is important in maintaining meaningful and rewarding relationships. Here are some ideas to help make augmented communication work. Family members and other team members are a valuable source of information when trying to learn more about the communication skills of the individuals you serve.

No matter what keep communicating!

- **Augmented communication does take extra time.**
Pause after each of your messages to give the user of a device a chance to say something. This may mean waiting for them to locate a picture, to turn a page in their communication book, to touch a switch, press a key on a board, or raise an eyebrow to activate a switch.
- **Let the user know that you think what he or she has to say is worth waiting for.**
- **Try not to use a lot of Yes-No or short answer questions.**
These questions tend to put you in control of choosing the topic and makes the user just a responder. You will work with other team members, including therapists, to decide the best way to use any device.
- **Help prevent and correct misunderstandings in conversation.**
Whenever possible, make sure you let each other know whether or not you understand each other, before one of you gets really lost. Talk about how to do that – for example, by nodding your head or by saying what you think the user means.
- **Know what to do when a message is not understood.**
It may be helpful to follow the same steps in communicating every time. For example, it could be decided to do something like this – if the user says something that you don't understand, you signal by shaking your head that you don't understand. The user repeats the message once. If you still don't understand, you may try to guess what the user meant. If you guess wrong, he or she shakes their head and then tries to restate the message in a new way.

TIPS FOR ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

- Augmented communication does take extra time.
- Let the user know that you think what he or she has to say is worth waiting for.
- Try not to use a lot of Yes-No short answer questions.
- Help prevent and correct misunderstandings in conversation.
- Know what to do when a message is not understood.
- Communication equipment should always be available to the individual.

- **Communication equipment should always be available to the individual**

If electronic, equipment should have power and be in good working order. Communication devices, whether books, boards, or electronic systems should have need, current vocabulary.

- ◆ A team will usually identify one person, a “communication advocate” who will coordinate needed information for augmentative / alternative devices. Initial ideas for the type, development, construction, or ordering of a device system may come from a speech-language pathologist or therapist. He or she will have talked to a variety of people including the individual served, family members, vocational staff, home support staff, and other team members, about the individual’s communication needs.
- ◆ The communication advocate may program new words or sentences into the machine, help maintain the device(s), and deal with any problems that may arise. Or they can identify someone to do this. A timer may be suggested so that an electronic device is charged regularly for the correct amount of time. They can also know how the system works and be knowledgeable about what to do if it stops working – including the possibilities of backup systems.

Most people know little about augmentative communication and may have difficult time carrying on a conversation with such devices. Some ideas that may help include:

- A message can be programmed in the device to explain how it works. This often catches the public attention and opens opportunities for communication.
- You can demonstrate how communication takes place using a device. Provide patient, successful examples. With your assistance, you will set the mood for communicative interactions.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION CHECKLIST

To simplify the decision-making process, The Arc has compiled the following checklist to be used by people with mental retardation and their families when making decisions about assistive technology. While the checklist cannot provide all the questions you need to address, technology-user and their advocates who address all of the questions on this list will have taken the basic steps needed to evaluate and assess an assistive device. The previous narrative can provide more details about the process covered by each question.

Look at the question below as you evaluate and select devices. Questions are worded to that the optimal response is always “yes.” In some circumstances, the question is not applicable (NA). However, if after completing the checklist there are too many “no” responses, you might want to reconsider any decision about the device, at least until you can fill in your information gaps.

<u>Before you evaluate a device (user question)</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>NA</u>
Have you identified your specific need(s) to be addressed by an assistive device?	___	___	___
Are you familiar with the environment where you will use the device?	___	___	___
Have you written your goals and objectives and developed a way of tracking your progress?	___	___	___

Before you evaluate a device (vendor questions)?

Does the vendor have a good reputation?	___	___	___
Does the vendor provide demonstration or trial periods?	___	___	___
Is delivery available, and if so, is it prompt and reasonably priced?	___	___	___
Does the vendor provide, or can the vendor direct you to required training for the device use?	___	___	___
Can the vendor modify the device, if necessary, and will the vendor provide ongoing support?	___	___	___

After you identify a device

1. Device Performance Evaluation

Have you seen data to backup performance claims?	___	___	___
Was the device testing done by an independent evaluator?	___	___	___
Was testing conducted under circumstances similar to those in which you will be using the device?	___	___	___
Are device space, electronics, and wiring requirements compatible with your use of the device? With other devices?	___	___	___

2. Device Convenience Evaluation

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>N/A</u>
Have you tried out the device and found it to be comfortable and convenient to use?	___	___	___
Is the device easily or reasonably transported, stored, and secured?	___	___	___
Can you operate all components of the device without training, or, if not is training available?	___	___	___
Are installation and assembly requirements reasonable?	___	___	___
Will the device adapt to changes in your disability?	___	___	___

3. Device Reliability and Safety Evaluations

Did performance testing include reliability and durability assessment?	___	___	___
Are annual and lifetime maintenance and repair costs reasonable?	___	___	___
Is there a warranty available for the device?	___	___	___
If there is regular maintenance, is someone available to do this work?	___	___	___
Does the device meet federal standards for wiring and construction?	___	___	___
Was safety testing performed in situations similar to those in which you will be using the device?	___	___	___

4. Device Practicality Evaluation

Is the device within your price range?	___	___	___
Does the device meet requirements identified by your funding source?	___	___	___
Does the device address the needs you identified earlier?	___	___	___
Is the device available within a reasonable time?	___	___	___
Is the device consistent with your life-style, age, personality, and values?	___	___	___
Do you like the way the device looks, and will you feel comfortable using the device around others?	___	___	___

BRIDGET'S OBJECT / GESTURE / SIGN DICTIONARY

WHAT BRIDGET DOES	WHAT BRIDGET MEANS	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

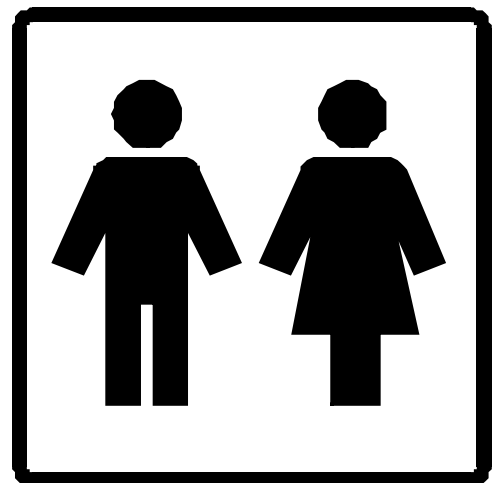
BRIDGET'S OBJECT / GESTURE / SIGN DICTIONARY

WHAT BRIDGET DOES	WHAT BRIDGET MEANS	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
Bring her hairbrush to you.	She wants you to take her for a ride (she thinks she should brush her hair before she goes out).	Take her or if you can't sign "no, later"
Brings her lunch pail you.	She thinks it's time to go to work.	Take her or if it's not time or not a work day sign "no, later" or "no work today"
Hands you the bubble bath.	She wants a bubble bath.	Help her run the bath or if for some reason she can't sign "later"

● Universal Signs and Symbols

You may work with people who do not or cannot read. In this situation, recognition of universal signs and symbols can be very valuable. Such symbols can be used to in communication books and boards and since many of them are also commonly seen in daily life, i.e., a circle with a slash across it identifies something that denotes danger. It is equally valuable to be able to understand these symbols.

Remember – All of us need the power of communication!



SUMMARY

Communication is much like a tennis game. We hit a conversational ball across the net, the person on the other side sees it coming, they respond by either hitting it back to us or by missing it. If the ball is missed, the exchange has failed and has to begin again. A good player misses a few balls, even if the court is bad and there are barriers present. The game becomes an exciting exchange between two players.

Our goal is to become the kind of communicator that misses a few balls. In doing so, we will be able to respond effectively to the communication efforts of other people.

