

British  
Columbia

# Tourism Resiliency Network

## The Art of Communication in Challenging Times



Presented in partnership with Okanagan College  
Facilitated by John Singleton CEC

## Learning Topics

1. How you communicate
2. Listening
3. Ways you communicate
4. Overcoming challenges in communication

This information will be presented in 2 sessions:

1. One will be live via Zoom
2. The second one will be a pre-recorded Zoom presentation for you to follow-up with as your schedule allows.

## To get the most benefit from this program, we suggest you:

- Have an open mind ... 'it' could be better
- Be curious and ask questions
- Don't worry about trying to do it all
- Look for that which you can change
- Commit to trying to make those changes happen
- Ask for help if you need it
- Journal about the changes

## The Process

As participants, you will be able to:

- Create your own work-plans to build two-way communication skills
- Journal regarding your learnings and experiences and test via field studies
- Have an accountability partner to support you in your growth

## My Accountability Partner

Name:

Why I chose this person ...

How much permission do I give them?

How they may hold me accountable ...



## **Communication...**

In order to achieve goals through the activities of others, it makes sense that there is a greater need to be a better communicator.

Exploring the barriers, our listening skills, assuming responsibility, and giving feedback are key areas for this communication focus.

### **What are we doing when we communicate?**

- Sharing information
- Providing feedback
- Learning
- Influencing
- Motivating
- Establishing & maintaining relationships
- Listening
- 

### **What does “good” communication look like?**

- Capitalize on every interaction
- Minimize conflict
- Enhance the experience
- Build people up
- Build better relationships ... longer term
- Educate others on changes, shifts
- 

### **How do you like to be communicated with?**

- To be understood
- To be heard
- To be valued
- 

### **What barriers are there to you to communicate effectively?**

- Not being heard
- Not being understood
- Outside influences
- 

### **What methods do you use to communicate?**

- Email/Messaging
- Telephone
- Face to face

### **How we receive information**

<b>Visual</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Vocal</b>	_____	_____	_____
<b>Verbal</b>	_____	_____	_____
	<b>In person</b>	<b>via telephone</b>	<b>email/text</b>

### The thought-speech speed ratio

Studies have demonstrated that we have approximately \_\_\_\_\_ thoughts per day.

***Of that number only 10% are new.***

*The Mind processes words at \_\_\_\_\_ words per minute*

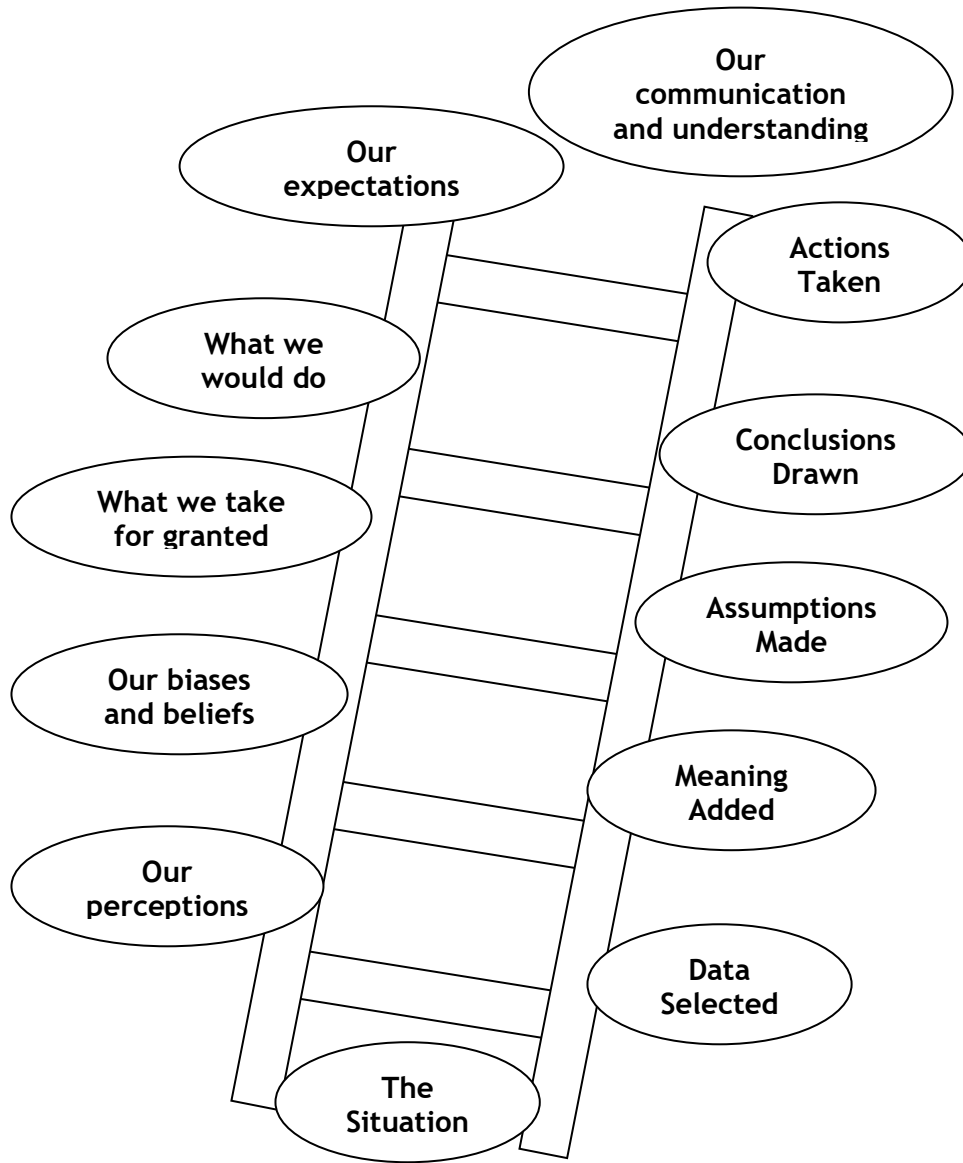
*The Mouth puts them out at \_\_\_\_\_ words per minute*

We can think infinitely faster than we talk.

After each change of thought, we find it harder and harder to return our attention to the speaker.

It usually takes 10 to 15 minutes to regain our thought process

## The Ladder of Inference



*If we are not aware of our thoughts and understanding, the ladder may take out of reach of another person's understanding or perception and leave us out of the picture.*

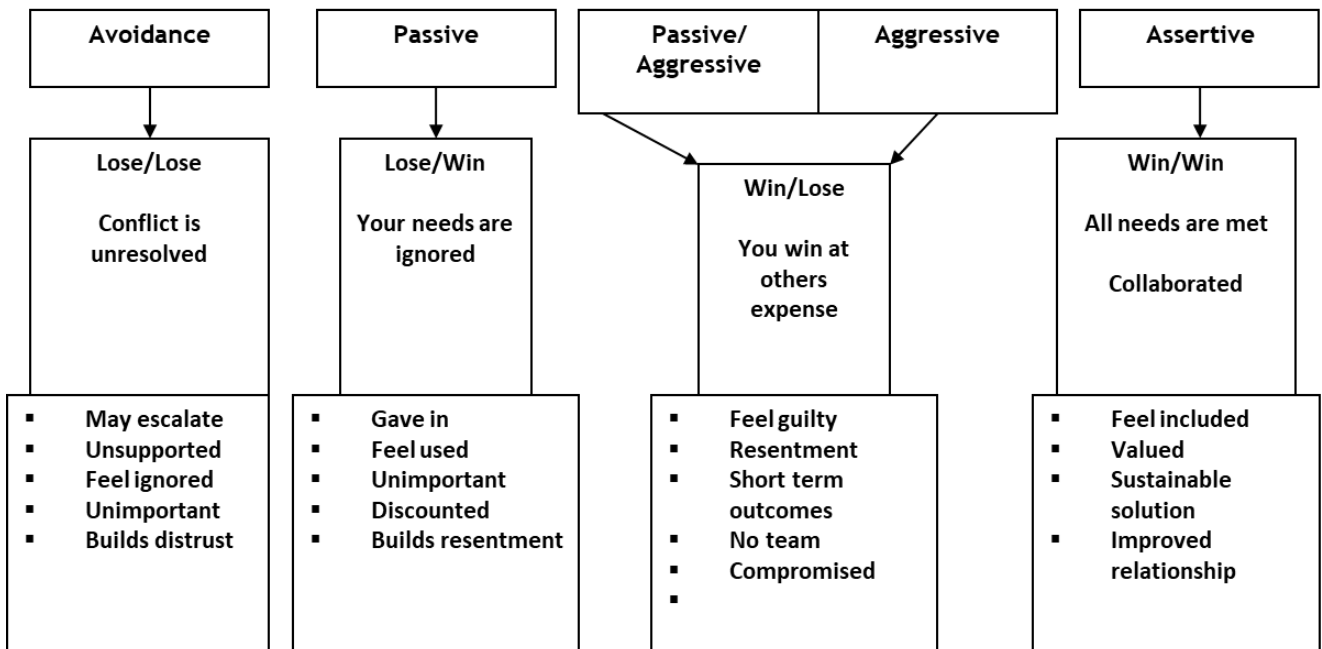
## Understanding other’s perspectives

***“The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.”***

Rules to follow in taking the other’s perspective:

1. Do not deduce the other person’s intentions from your fears. People often tend to assume that whatever they fear, the other side intends to do.
2. Do not blame the other person for your problem. Blaming is an easy habit to fall into. Even if blaming is justified, it is counterproductive. It will make the other person defensive and closed-minded.
3. Discuss each other’s perceptions.
4. Look for opportunities to act inconsistently with the other person’s negative perceptions.
5. Give the other person a stake in the outcome by making sure they participate in the process. Agreement becomes much easier if both people feel ownership of the ideas.
6. Make your proposals consistent with the other person’s goals and values and, thereby, help them save face.

## How we communicate



### **Workable collaboration**

In using your verbal assertive skills, it is practical, whenever you feel that your self-respect is not in question, to offer a workable compromise to the other person.

You can always bargain for your material goals unless the solution affects your personal feelings of self-respect.

If the end goal involves a matter of your self-worth, there can be no compromise.

*Reference: When I Say No, I Feel Guilty, Manual J. Smith*

### **What does “good” communication look like?**

- Capitalize on every interaction
- Minimize conflict
- Enhance the experience
- Build people up
- Build better relationships ... longer term
- Educate others on changes, shifts
- 

***Which process do you use the most?***

***How could you shift to a Win/Win process?***

## The art of listening

Studies show that we spend 40% of our waking day in some form of verbal communication.

**By far the greatest time is spent in listening.**

- 9% writing
- 16% reading
- 30% talking
- 45% listening

Typically we spend almost six hours a day listening to some form of communication.

It could be argued that since we spend so much time listening, it is more important to learn good listening skills than reading.

While listening well may not always be a matter of life or death, it can reduce confusion and misunderstanding.

### Why do we listen?

- **To Learn:** to gain knowledge about others, the world and even yourself (refer to raising self-awareness from last session)
- **To Relate:** when others know you are listening to them, they are more likely to want to relate and get to know you.
- **To Influence:** to impact and influence the thoughts, opinions and attitudes of others. Once they know you are listening to them, they are more likely to listen to what you have to say.
- **To Play:** to share pleasurable times with others, to laugh, to listen to their fun life experiences, to balance the work/play life balance.
- **To Help:** to know how others need your help you need to listen to what their concerns are.

### How do we listen?

#### Empathetic & Objective:

- There are times when you need to be objective in your listening and even somewhat detached. Try to see the situation from the speaker's point of view.
- Endeavour to gain an understanding of both thoughts and feelings. You have finished listening only when you understand where they are coming from.

#### Nonjudgmental & Critical

- Listen first for understanding **and then** listen to enable you to make an evaluation or judgment.
- Realize and recognize you have your own biases.
- Keep an open mind – don't prejudge, don't begin with a positive or negative evaluation.
- Avoid filtering – you may not want to hear what is being said, especially if you disagree or it's unpleasant to hear.



### **Listen critically**

- Realize that terms or concepts may be used to sway what and how you hear; don't allow a speaker to use manipulation to influence the true message.

### **Surface & depth listening:**

- This is all about listening both to the literal message and listening for the meaning behind the words spoken.
- If you just listen to the complaints about work and respond to them only, you miss the call for understanding and affirmation of how valuable they are.
- Focus on verbal and non-verbal messages.
- Ask questions for clarity; listen for what is not said.
- Listen for both content and relational messages.
- Take note of statements that refer back to themselves; is it giving you an idea of what they feel and are trying to communicate.
- Be sensitive but not obsessive – check that they really mean.
- What they say—no hidden message at all.

### **Poor Listening**

Failure to comprehend what we hear can be compounded by failure to retain what we do take in.

- Painstaking research has established that within 24 hours we will have forgotten 50% of what we heard the previous day.
- In two weeks we will have forgotten 25% more.

That goes not only for specific details, but also for broad general conclusions.

We don't hear everything we should; we don't understand everything we hear; and we don't remember everything we understood.

However, there is something we can do about the problem.

The first thing to do is to analyze our listening habits. If we find that we have bad listening habits, we can substitute good ones for them.

### **Bad habits of listening**

Dr. Ralph Nichols, Professor of Speech at the University of Minnesota

1. Failure to Pay attention
2. Missing the Point
3. Allowing Emotion to creep in
4. Inefficient Practices

#### **1. Failure to pay attention**

Shunning new experiences

Faking attention to the speaker

Avoiding difficult material

Tolerating or creating distractions

## 2. Missing the Point

Reacting chiefly to externals

Listening only for details is another way of missing the point

## 3. Allowing Emotion to creep in

Getting over-stimulated by some point within the speech

Letting bias or prejudice interfere

## 4. Inefficient Practices

Note-taking faults

## Improving listening skills

### Attention

The first requirement for good listening is receptivity.

To listen well, we must be open-eared and open-minded.

### Substance

Never mind the details - within reason; what is it all about?

We should **not** concentrate on isolated facts, or on the speaker's appearance and delivery.

### Objectivity

Attaining it is not easy. By nature we are emotional and subjective.

Our tendency, when we dislike a speaker, is to disbelieve him.

Bias and comprehension make poor working partners.

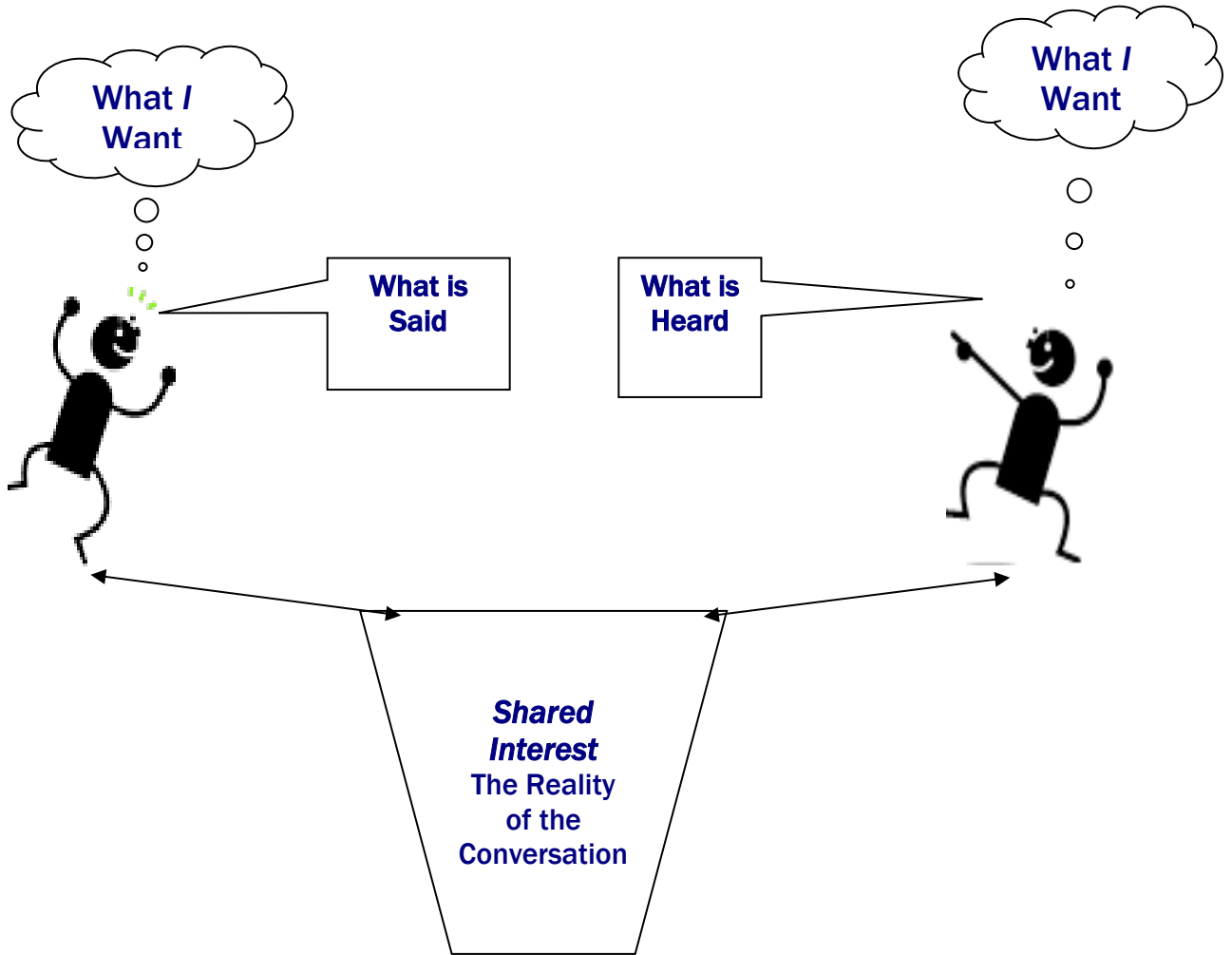
### Creativity

To be good listeners, we must contribute something. We must work as hard to extract ideas and information as the speaker does to present them.

Here the thought-speech speed ratio works in our favour.

1. First, we should summarize what has been said, drawing conclusions, attempting to distinguish the forest from the trees.
2. Second, we should think ahead, speculating on what is coming next, attempting to determine in what direction the speech, interview or conversation is heading.
3. Third, we should test the validity of what the speaker is saying; we should note whether what he is offering seems to come mainly off the top of his head.
4. Finally, we should judge the manner in which conclusions are reached. Is the reasoning logical and consistent? Does it square with reality as we know it?

**POINTS OF VIEW**



## Communication pitfalls

When we communicate or interact with others, our communication is hindered if we engage in any of the following:

**Snap Judgments:** the tendency to form a first impression of others without adequate information. We should try to keep an open mind about people and situations and not make final conclusions before we have all the facts. Nobody can avoid making judgments but we all can avoid acting on a judgment that is premature.

**Prejudice:** A bias caused by teachings, experience or background based on inadequate information or insufficient knowledge.

Evaluate situations and people on the basis of solid, specific information and avoid generalized assumptions.

**Projection:** A tendency to attribute to others some of our own faults and motives.

When communicating, avoid clouding your perceptions by projecting your own values into someone else's situation.

*Remember -- "When Peter talks about Paul, we often learn more about Peter than we do about Paul."*

*(Spinoza)*

**Preoccupation:** When our minds are so cluttered with concerns, problems and issues not related to the conversation, it is difficult to communicate properly.

Being sensitive to other person's feelings and striving to 'actively' listen are two of the keystones of good communication.

**Sloppy observation:** Sometimes we hear but we do not listen, we see but we do not observe. When talking with someone, try to be totally aware of the other person's world or even try to live in it if possible.

Expand your awareness of others by accurate observation and active, not passive listening.

**Predisposition:** A tendency to draw conclusions before we have the facts. Often we see only what we want to see and hear only what we want to hear. Predispositions cause us to ignore facts that do not support our beliefs and 'bend' other facts so they do.

Suspend your judgments so that the information you receive will not be tainted by your predispositions.

**Failure to fully recognize another:** All people have their own concerns, values, hopes, aspirations, problems and dreams. If we do not fully recognize this when we interact with people, it will be impossible to adequately understand or be fully aware of the other person's perspective. Communication will suffer, agreement will not be reached and mutual understanding will not result.

## Celeste Headlee

### 10 ways to have a better conversation

[https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste\\_headlee\\_10\\_ways\\_to\\_have\\_a\\_better\\_conversation](https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation)

When your job hinges on how well you talk to people, you learn a lot about how to have conversations -- and that most of us don't converse very well.

Celeste Headlee has worked as a radio host for decades, and she knows the ingredients of a great conversation:

- Honesty,
- brevity,
- clarity and a
- healthy amount of listening.

In this insightful talk, she shares 10 useful rules for having better conversations.

*"Go out, talk to people, listen to people," she says. "And, most importantly, be prepared to be amazed."*

1. Don't multi-task.
2. Don't pontificate.
3. Use open ended questions.
4. Go with the flow.
5. If you don't know, say you don't know.
6. Don't equate your experience with theirs.
7. Don't repeat yourself.
8. Stay out of the weeds.
9. Listen.
10. Be brief.

### Field Study for Session 1

- Primarily, what do you communicate?
- What are your largest communication gaps?
- What could you do differently to minimize the gaps?
- How are you able to discover the differing points of views in conversations?
- What pitfalls in communication are you subject to?
- What can you change in your ladder of inference process?

### Preparation For Session Two

Complete the exercises prior to watching Session 2 (pages 14 through 28)

1. Communication Style indicator
2. The Listening Assessments

and make your notes

Then, watch Session Two via the Zoom Link to review the following pages and make notes on your plans to communicate more effectively.

## Session Two: Your Self-Discovery

### Communication Styles

Each of us has a set of general behaviour patterns. These patterns express themselves in our personality and in the way we communicate with others. If we can identify how we communicated with others, it makes us aware of how we are perceived. We can then avoid unproductive behaviour and learn how to control our communication.

Mark the response to each of the following situations which you think would describe your behaviour. Remember to pick the one that “best fits” you most of the time.

Be honest with yourself and answer how you actually behave, not how you think you should behave.

<b>COMMUNICATION STYLE SCORE SHEET</b>				
<b>DIRECTIONS:</b> Circle your answers and total the number in each column				
<b><u>COLUMN &gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b>1.</b>	A	B	C	D
<b>2.</b>	A	D	C	B
<b>3.</b>	D	A	C	B
<b>4.</b>	B	D	A	C
<b>5.</b>	C	D	B	A
<b>6.</b>	C	A	D	B
<b>7.</b>	A	B	C	D
<b>8.</b>	C	A	B	D
<b>9.</b>	C	D	A	B
<b>10.</b>	B	D	C	A
<b>11.</b>	C	A	D	B
<b>12.</b>	D	C	A	B
<b>13.</b>	B	C	A	D
<b>14.</b>	A	D	B	C
<b>15.</b>	A	B	D	C
<b>16.</b>	A	D	C	B
<b>17.</b>	B	A	C	D
<b>18.</b>	C	B	D	A
<b>TOTAL Circles in each column</b>				
<b>The total will add up to 18</b>				

### B.E.S.T. Communication Styles

Mark the response to each of the following situations which you think would describe your behaviour. Remember to pick the one that “best fits” you most of the time. Be honest with yourself and answer how you actually behave, not how you think you should behave.

c:\cmr\mss\part1\day1\communic.tbl

<p><b>1. When I talk to others, I like to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. get to the point.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. talk.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. tell only what I want others to know.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. go into great detail.</li> </ul>	<p><b>10. My greatest weakness in communication with others is my</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. demand for details.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. reacting too quickly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. desire for personal attention.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. speaking without adequate preparation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. At times I may be</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. blunt.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. slow to give information.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. overly strict in my interpretations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. very subjective in my description of things.</li> </ul>	<p><b>11. Most of the people I work with think of me as</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. neighbourly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. cautious.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. open to change.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. sincere.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Most of my communication is directed toward</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. being friendly with others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. precision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. getting results.</li> </ul>	<p><b>12. My greatest need is to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. be with people.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. be given time to adjust to changes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. be encouraged.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. be given frank direction and evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. I am sometimes accused of</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. being tentative.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. not listening.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. procrastinating.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. talking too much.</li> </ul>	<p><b>13. The basic idea of communication is to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. cooperate with others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. gain power over others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. persuade others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. bring things under control.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. When I am in a discussion with people, they</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. know I desire the facts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. know I don't like surprises.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. know where I stand.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. know I am enthusiastic.</li> </ul>	<p><b>14. When I use written communications, I tend to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. be too brief or not write at all.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. oversell an idea.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. go by the book.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. over-document or write long messages.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. I like communication which is</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. positive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. logical.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. straightforward.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. calm.</li> </ul>	<p><b>15. I function best in an environment which</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. is free.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. includes other people.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. is organized.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. is pleasant.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. I like conversations which are</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. stimulating.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. optimistic.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. sincere.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. controlled.</li> </ul>	<p><b>16. Conversation which motivates me the most gives me</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. a challenge.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. comfort.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. friendly relationships.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. recognition.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. I don't like conversations which</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. create stress.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. are not cooperative.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. don't accept my view.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. I cannot control.</li> </ul>	<p><b>17. When those around me are under stress, I tell them</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. about the positive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. what to do.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. to adjust to the situation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. to stay calm.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. I feel best when I am</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. listening to others.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. following an agenda.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. telling others what to do.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. smooth and poised.</li> </ul>	<p><b>18. My greatest strength in talking to others is that I am</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a. conscientious.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> b. outgoing.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> c. decisive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> d. willing to listen.</li> </ul>



## **Communication style interpretation**

You have been asked to select words and terms which “best fit” how you communicate with others.

Identifying how you perceive your communications can help you understand how you come across to others and help your communications be more productive.

When you have identified the column which has the most responses, you can determine your “best communication style.”

### **COLUMN 1 – BOLD**

The BOLD type uses a style of communication that is most often direct. The BOLD type likes the bottom line and works at making things practical.

Consequently, the BOLD type’s conversation is short, to the point and sometimes can be blunt. In addition the BOLD type sometimes likes to be combative because he/she likes challenges. In other words, the BOLD is stimulated by the adventure of a “heated” discussion. This discussion can end up with the BOLD intimidating others into silence.

The BOLD type is a divergent thinker and because of this, is sometimes accused of not listening. That is, the BOLD is thinking of a rebuttal while you are talking. However, this same quality makes the BOLD type a good problem-solver.

The BOLD type’s communication style reflects a need to be independent, free, practical and domineering.

While the BOLD is good at visualizing the big picture, details of how to make it happen is sometimes a problem.

### **COLUMN 2 -- EXPRESSIVE**

The EXPRESSIVE type personality uses a style of communication that reflects a need to be involved with people. In other words, the EXPRESSIVE type likes to talk and is good at it. To the EXPRESSIVE type persuading others is stimulating.

Consequently, the EXPRESSIVE type is a good presenter by nature because of his/her ability to relate to people. In fact, research indicated that EXPRESSIVE types have a natural ability of understanding the emotional state of others and researchers think this ability is actually a kind of human intelligence.

Another characteristic of the EXPRESSIVE type is that they often talk with word pictures and in emotional terms. They like to communicate a positive and optimistic message.

The EXPRESSIVE type is driven by a need to influence others, be popular, and to obtain public recognition. Their communication abilities make them good salespeople, teachers, presenters, politicians and actors.

The EXPRESSIVE type of all the personality types, is the natural communicator.

### **COLUMN 3 – SYMPATHETIC**

The SYMPATHETIC type is a quiet and calm communicator. In fact, they like to listen more than talk. They make good counselors because of the ability to be a good listener. They present a very sincere image when they communicate and are like the EXPRESSIVE type, people oriented.

However, their low key approach displays less enthusiasm in conversation. The SYMPATHETIC type is a team player and loyal. Consequently, their conversation reflects a need to be part of the group. They like relationships to be friendly and cordial and are actually turned off by aggressive communicators. Because SYMPATHETIC types like routine, their conversation often gives support to little or no change in the organization. They need to feel appreciated and be given time to adjust before being asked to make changes in their work habits.

### **COLUMN 4 – TECHNICAL**

The TECHNICAL type of personality has a style of communicating which is characterized by order, detail and logic. They function best in organizations that follow procedures and will communicate their displeasure if things are not orderly. The TECHNICAL type focuses on the details of a task because they are convergent thinkers. They must see the big picture in small parts or steps before moving on.

TECHNICAL types are sometimes accused of being perfectionists and may overlook the human aspect of accomplishing a task. They like to follow procedures because it takes risk out of the environment for them. Their communication style is structured and has definite points. Note takers by nature, the TECHNICAL type strive to work and live in an orderly environment.

**My dominant personal style(s) is:**

**To better communicate I will:**

## Removing blockages with your colleagues and guests:

### understanding them and working with them collaboratively.

Getting along with different types of people can be a challenge.

We all know that everyone has their own style of communicating.

The key is to figure out what style you're dealing with and then tailor your message -- and the way you deliver it -- to that style.

It all boils down to giving them information in the way that's most familiar and comfortable for them to understand.

To help you do that, here are descriptions of the four most common communicator types and some advice on how to communicate with them.

#### **THE BOLD**

Bolds have short attention spans: they process information quickly and are most interested in the bottom line. Bolds tend to excel in marketing or sales functions.

*How they work:* Their jobs demand self-confidence and an ability to think and act quickly.

*How to Approach them:* Bolds tend to guard their time, so prepare thoroughly before you begin speaking with them - and expect interruptions. Plan to start precisely on time and possibly end early.

*How to work with them:* Because they process data so fast, it's best to come to Bolds with a bulleted list of conclusions. You'll quickly lose them if you burden them with unnecessary background information. For example, if you present them with a written report, they'll respond best to a succinct, action-oriented executive summary; including support documentation is fine but more is almost never better for them.

*Beware of:* Bolds often "need" to be right and to have all the answers.

*How to cope:* Don't ever criticize a Bold's proposal or answer. Instead, acknowledge it as one alternative, and then ask permission to present another viewpoint. Be sure to present your solution concisely with a well-conceived action plan. Focus on communicating the benefits and value of your plan.

#### **Concern/Action**

## THE EXPRESSIVE

Expressives are typically creative, “big picture” kinds of people who thrive on options but aren’t always strong on follow-through. They populate the worlds of advertising, sales, promotion and creative services.

*How they work:* Expressives usually have a visual orientation and don’t necessarily perceive things in a linear or methodical manner. They need to consider lots of alternatives before making a decision. Their attitude toward time limitations or structure is relaxed, so you should be prepared for lots of changes in direction.

*How to approach them:* Give them plenty of time to assimilate what you say. Plan to start late and end late.

*How to work with them:* Respect their need to consider alternatives. Use hard data -- timetables, budgets and deadlines -- to ground their work in reality. Because they can be scattered, you should also be prepared to discuss lots of topics at once without necessarily finishing one thoroughly before going on to the next.

*Beware of:* They’re unreliable at meeting deadlines.

*How to cope:* Set two deadlines: the “real” one that you control and the “looser” one that gives them enough independence to try different approaches before committing to your deadline. Generate their enthusiasm for projects by using lively, upbeat language.

## Concern/Action

## THE SYMPATHETIC

For Sympathetics to be happy, everyone else has to be happy too. As you might expect, you'll find Sympathetics in human resources, training and "helping" industries.

*How they work:* Sympathetics take great pains to ensure that the needs of others are thoroughly met, so be prepared to have anything you present to them to be passed around the entire department for full consensus. They love tests, pilots and samples as ways of gaining enough valid results before making larger business decisions and commitments.

*How to approach them:* Talk slowly and always speak respectfully of others.

*How to work with them:* Working with Sympathetics has its benefits, in that they genuinely care about fellow worker's welfare. At the same time, they set a very high standard regarding respectful behaviour.

*Beware of:* They're uncomfortable with change and slow to alter past ways of doing things. Working with them on a project demands patience and an even pace. Communicating with them requires patience and tact. Plan to spend more than your allotted time discussing issues.

*How to cope:* Because they're often tentative and unsure of themselves, you need to ask lots of open-ended questions to probe for their needs. Divide project tasks into a series of smaller, defined steps that they can complete comfortably.

### Concern/Action

## THE TECHNICAL

Technicals thrive on detail and react best to structure and precision. They respect people who always provide them with thorough analyses and background information. People involved in numerical detail -- accountants, auditors and analysts -- are often Technicals.

*How they work:* Technicals tend to process information in a linear and methodical way and don't like to jump from subject to subject. They tend to micro-manage, focusing on details and processes more than ideas or concepts.

*How to approach them:* Plan to arrive on time.

*How to work with them:* Discuss things in an orderly and step-by-step fashion. Because they're analytical, they need to know the "whole story".

*Beware of:* Technicals expect to receive meeting agendas, and recommendations must be fully supported with real, hard data.

*How to cope:* If you don't know the answer to their questions, admit it and agree on a time when you'll get back to them with the answer. Don't try to fake it -- that will only trash your credibility.

## Concern/Action

## Listening Self-Assessment

*On a scale of 1 - 5 (5 being best) rate your listening skills*

- I listen for the actual message, not just to the words.
- I distinguish between facts and judgments, opinions, assumptions or perceptions.
- I listen for the feelings expressed as well as to the message itself.
- I pay attention to the tone of voice to better understand the message.
- I am aware of body language (position, tenseness, facial expression, movements) to better understand the sender's message.
- I try to "get into their shoes" to ensure that I understand the frame of reference, value or belief system.
- I try to minimize the impact of my own expectations about the message; I try to avoid hearing what I expect, need or want to hear.
- I try to listen with my "third ear" - for example, to what is not said as well as to what is said.
- When I am in doubt about the significance of a message, I restate or summarize it to check my understanding of it.
- I try to keep in mind that words may have more than one meaning and check with the sender to ensure that I understood what was meant.
- When I listen, I may ask relevant questions to better understand and/or to show my interest.
- When I listen to someone in a location that has distractions (noise, movement of people or objects, low or high temperature), I try all the harder to concentrate on the speaker's message.
- I am an active listener, using eye contact, head nods, smiles, "uh-huhs", relevant comments or restatements, and positive body posture such as leaning forward.
- I recognize that time pressures may limit my listening capability and I act appropriately to prevent listening distractions.
- I listen patiently and empathetically to an angry or frustrated person to permit ventilation of feelings and recognize the need to treat the emotion before I can work effectively on the problem.
- I recognize that my own values, beliefs, perceptions and feelings may cloud the message I am trying to receive.
- I avoid making judgments about the speaker, particularly when they may be presenting ideas I may not favour.
- I avoid listening traps such as letting myself be turned off by the speaker's delivery, voice quality, dress, physical appearance, pace or energy level, name, affiliation, position, skin color or sex.
- I recognize that my receiving rate as listener may be three or four times greater than the rate at which the message is sent and work at overcoming possible tune-out practices such as daydreaming, unrelated thinking, or preparing a response to what is said.

- When I listen to someone at my desk, I avoid doodling, signing, reviewing or shuffling papers, making notes on unrelated matters, etc.
- I avoid interrupting a speaker at all costs.
- I avoid faking interest in or understanding of the other person's message.
- I am conscious of and try to minimize the impact of my own emotional state (expectations, needs, attitudes, values, preferences, prejudices, motivations) when I receive messages, for it may influence what I hear.
- I recognize that by fully listening to people, I help them meet certain basic needs: to feel important and to feel good about themselves.
- I am aware that my own body language may be communicating messages to the message sender (interest/disinterest, agreement/disagreement or like/dislike of the other person).

*\*Adapted from Julius E. Eittington The Winning Trainer, Third Edition*

**Pick the five areas of your listening skills you wish to focus on and note what you will do differently in the future.**



### Listening Skills Self- Assessment

To help you start to be more aware of your listening habits, complete the following listening self evaluation. It will give you an idea of which listening habits you can be happy about and which ones you might want to reshape. Answer each question thoughtfully.

Put an X in the appropriate column.		Most of the time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost never
1.	Tune out people who say something you don't agree with or don't want to hear?				
2.	Concentration on what is being said even if you are not really interested?				
3.	Assume you know what the talker is going to say and stop listening?				
4.	Repeat in your own words what the talker has just said?				
5.	Listen to the other person's viewpoint even if it differs from yours?				
6.	Learn something from each person you meet, even if it is ever so slight?				
7.	Find out what words mean when they are used in ways not familiar to you?				
8.	Form a rebuttal in your head while the speaker is talking?				
9.	Give the appearance of listening when you aren't?				
10.	Daydream while the speaker is talking?				
11.	Listen to the whole message - what the talker is saying verbally and nonverbally?				
12.	Recognize that words don't mean exactly the same thing to different people?				
13.	Listen to only what you want to hear, blotting out the talker's whole message?				
14.	Look at the person who is talking?				
15.	Concentrate on the talker's meaning rather than how he or she looks?				
16.	Know which words and phrases you respond to emotionally?				
17.	Think about what you want to accomplish with your communication?				
18.	Plan the best time to say what you want to say?				
19.	Think about how the other person might react to what you say?				
20.	Consider the best way to make your communication (written, spoken, phone, bulletin board, memo, etc.) work?				
21.	Think about what kind of person you're talking to (worried, hostile, disinterested, rushed, shy, stubborn, impatient, etc.)?				

		Most of the time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost never
	<b>Put an X in the appropriate column.</b>				
22.	Interrupt the talker while he or she is still talking?				
23.	Think, "I assumed he or she would know that"?				
24.	Allow the talker to vent negative feelings toward you without becoming defensive?				
25.	Practice regularly to increase your listening efficiency?				
26.	Take notes when necessary to help you to remember?				
27.	Hear noises without being distracted by them?				
28.	Listen to the talker without judging or criticizing?				
29.	Restate instructions and messages to be sure you understand correctly?				
30.	Paraphrase what you believe the talker is feeling?				

### Scoring Index: Listening Skills Self-Assessment

Circle the number that matches the time frame (most of the time, frequently, etc.) you check on each of the 30 items on the self- evaluation.

Example: If you put an X under "frequently" for number 1, you would circle 2 in the "frequently" column. Then, add the circled scores in each of the columns. Now, write the scores of each column in the lines under each time frame category.

	Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never		Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never
1	1	2	3	4	16	4	3	2	1
2	4	3	2	1	17	4	3	2	1
3	1	2	3	4	18	4	3	2	1
4	4	3	2	1	19	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	20	4	3	2	1
6	4	3	2	1	21	4	3	2	1
7	4	3	2	1	22	1	2	3	4
8	1	2	3	4	23	1	2	3	4
9	1	2	3	4	24	4	3	2	1
10	1	2	3	4	25	4	3	2	1
11	4	3	2	1	26	4	3	2	1
12	4	3	2	1	27	4	3	2	1
13	1	2	3	4	28	4	3	2	1
14	4	3	2	1	29	4	3	2	1
15	4	3	2	1	30	4	3	2	1
<b>Totals</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	<b>Totals</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____

Total of items circled in each column:

	Most of the Time	Frequently	Occasionally	Almost Never	Total
<b>Grand Totals</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Scoring**

110-120	Superior	_____
99-109	Above Average	_____
88-98	Average	_____
77-87	Fair	_____

**Figure 2 Assessment of Listening Qualities – Action Plan Sample**

<b>Listening Qualities I Have</b> I am expert at observing body language.	<b>How I Know</b> I focus on maintaining eye contact when people speak to me and recognize when their words do not match their tone of voice and facial expressions
<b>Listening Qualities I Want to Develop</b> I want to get better at listening completely without planning what I'm going to say while waiting for the speaker to finish	

**Figure 3 Assessment of Listening Qualities – Action Plan**

<b>Listening Qualities I Have</b>	<b>How I Know</b>
<b>Listening Qualities I Want to Develop</b>	

Madelyn Burley-Allen, in Coaching Conversations: Transforming Your School One Conversation at a Time; Cheliotas and Reilly, 2010.

**How well do you listen?**

**Listening Self-assessments**

Respond to each question using the following scale:

**1 = always, 2 = frequently, 3 = sometimes, 4 = seldom, and 5 = never**

- I listen to what the speaker is saying and feeling: I try to feel what the speaker feels.
- I listen objectively; I focus on the logic of the ideas rather than on the emotional meaning of the message.
- I listen without judging the speaker.
- I listen critically, evaluating the speaker and what the speaker is saying.
- I listen to the literal meanings that a speaker communicates; I don't look too deeply into hidden meanings.
- I look for the hidden meanings, the meanings that are revealed by subtle verbal or nonverbal cues.
- I listen actively, communicate acceptance of the speaker, and prompt the speaker to further explore his or her thoughts.
- I listen without active involvement; I generally remain silent and take in what the other person is saying.

Indicate with a check (✓) how you feel you are presently doing in each skill area.			
Skill Areas:	Having difficulty	Doing right but need developing	Skill I'm good at
Listening for facts			
Listening for my own feelings			
Listening for other person's feelings			
Paraphrasing			
Expressing my feelings			
Asking open-ended questions			
Being non-judgmental (open-minded)			
Not interrupting			
Willing to confront conflict			
Remembering information			
Not completing other's sentences			
Not giving advice			
Helping other person solve their own problems			
Making eye contact			
Observing body language			
Comfortable with silence			
Other-person focused			
Taking notes for retention			
Not getting defensive			
Establishing trust			
Encouraging feedback			
Not evaluating			
Not thinking of what I'm going to say next			

## Field Study for Session 2

- What is your main communication style/ your default style of communicating?
- How does your style play any part in the communication gaps that you have?
- How will you approach people differently knowing their style of communication?
- What are the five areas of your listening skills that you want to focus on?
- What are your bad habits in listening?
- What can you do to remedy these concerns?
- During these sessions, my 'ah-ha' learning(s) were/was:
- What I will stop doing...
- What I will continue to do...
- What I will start to do...