

Communicating for Success

Young Professionals Session

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global **environmental** and **advisory** solutions



Outline

- I. Concepts and Psychology of Communication
- II. What Do We Mean by Communication?
- III. What Do We Mean By Success?
- IV. Be Sure to Define Your Goal
- V. Communicating in Writing
- VI. Communicating Verbally
- VII. Persuasive Communication
- VIII. Discussion

Concepts and Psychology of Communication

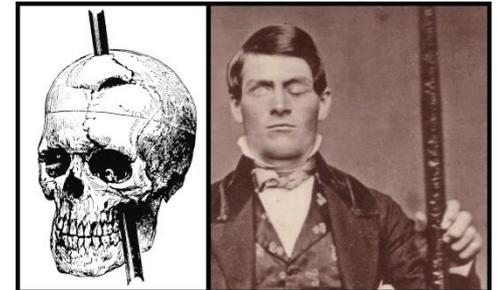
- When was the last time you “thought” about anything without using the same language you would communicate with to others?
- Your whole emotional state and sense of self-worth can be determined by your own “self-talk”
 - Studies have found that simply finding the correct word to describe our problems can reduce our feelings of anxiety, worry or discontent
- There is more than just words to communication, your meaning is altered by:
 - Tone and inflection (punctuation)
 - Word emphasis
 - Body language and posture
 - Gaze and intensity



“Whether you think you can, or you think you can't....you're right.” – Henry Ford

Concepts and Psychology of Communication

- I've been doing this since I was 1 (okay...2), why do I need to learn more about communication?
 - Communication gets taken for granted, and we can fall into some bad habits
- Words define how we view the world, and how we feel about people, places, concepts and things, and our relationship with each of them
 - Every time we hear a word, our brain makes a decision on how we relate to it
 - Every word elicits an emotional response, big or small
- The curious tale of Phineas Gage
 - After surviving a work accident which damaged his brain, Phineas' lost connection between his cognitive ability and his emotions. Later in life he was often unable to make decisions, form preferences, or understand the emotional response his words would cause in others (prodigious swearing).
 - As much as many of us want to stick with logic, we are incapable of making decisions without an emotional context



“You can't have thought without emotion, and one emotion is fear, and making an important decision on the basis of fear is not a good idea. So develop your courage.” – Ursula Goodenough

What Do We Mean By Communication?

- Trying to touch the mind of another person or group
- Seek to Inform
 - Technical papers
 - Research / reconnaissance
 - Status reports / objective news
- Seek Agreement / Input / Consensus
 - Collaborative team meetings
 - Conflict resolution
 - Coalition building
- Seek to Persuade
 - Sales and selling



Communication can be either written or verbal (or both!)

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” – George Bernard Shaw

What Do We Mean by Success?

“Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.” — Winston S. Churchill

“Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.” — Maya Angelou

“Success is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.” — Jim Rohn

“Success means having the courage, the determination, and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be.” — George Sheehan

“Success is getting what you want, happiness is wanting what you get.” — W. P. Kinsella

“Success in life could be defined as the continued expansion of happiness and the progressive realization of worthy goals.” — Deepka Chopra

“Success means doing the best we can with what we have. Success is the doing, not the getting; in the trying, not the triumph. Success is a personal standard, reaching for the highest that is in us, becoming all that we can be.” — Zig Ziglar

“Success is focusing the full power of all you are on what you have a burning desire to achieve.” — Wilfred Peterson

Be Sure to Define Your Goal

- Any time we communicate with others, we should have a clear concept of our **goals** for that interaction
- Goals may be informal concepts, or tightly defined and written plans
- Good goals are **S.M.A.R.T.**
 - Specific
 - Measureable or Motivating
 - Attainable or Assignable
 - Realistic
 - Time-Dependent
- Examples of communication goals:
 - Organize and motivate the project team to deliver a technically-complete permit application to LDEQ no later than next Friday.
 - Call Grandma this weekend and make sure she feels appreciated.

“Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal or ideal.” —Earl Nightingale

Communicating in Writing

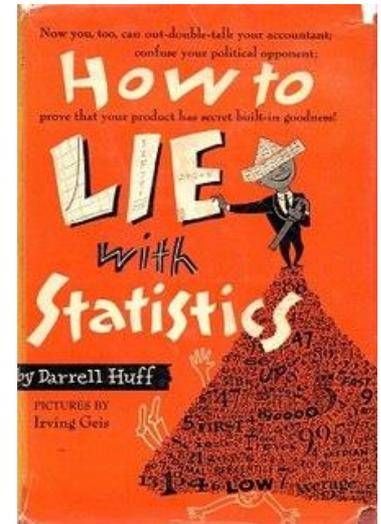
- Written communication is best for seeking to inform
 - Technical documents to record lots of detail
 - Big benefit: Use visual elements to convey meaning that can't be said well verbally
 - Charts, graphs, pictures and symbols
 - Easily reproduced to reach large groups
- Problems with using written communication
 - Loses almost all aspects of non-verbal communication
 - Tone of voice, word emphasis, body language
 - Often you get no feedback on how, or even if, the message was received
 - Very impersonal, not good for persuading or establishing trust



“Write to be understood, speak to be heard, read to grow.” — Lawrence Clark Powell

Communicating in Writing

- Tips for using written communication:
 - Never send important messages by text!!
 - Always write your emails like a formal letter to avoid miscommunication
 - Use pictures and charts to when your goal is to persuade, just be sure to be honest
 - Never send a one-person email when you can call or catch them in person



Effectiveness Hierarchy for Written Communication

1. Published document
2. Formal letter / email
3. Hand-written note / quick email
4. Text message / post-it note



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“Poor people have a big TV. Rich people have a big library.” – Jim Rohn

Communicating Verbally

- Two distinct conversational cultures:
 - Relational:
 - What is our history of doing things together? Can I trust you based on past experience? Do you know/understand me?
 - Expects rapport-building almost every time
 - Transactional:
 - What is the issue at hand now? What can we do for each other now? Are there safeguards in place for me to trust you on this issue? Do you know/understand the issue?
 - Expects to separate business and rapport after a relationship is already established
- Build rapport
 - USE. THEIR. NAME.
 - Identify a common interest or background (kids, sports, location, hobby, the weather)
 - Give a *deserved* compliment
 - Always remember to be authentic



“Words are the voice of the heart.” – Confucius

Communicating Verbally

- In most conversations, people are just waiting for you to finish so they can say what's on their own mind!
- Tips for increasing engagement and trust
 - Gladstone, Disraeli, and Jennie Jerome
 - “Seek first to understand, and then to be understood.” – Stephen Covey
 - Use probing questions to understand the other person's point of view
 - Use rhetorical questions to guide the conversation and “set the stage” for your the points you wish to make
 - Use echoing to keep someone speaking about a topic you want to learn more about
 - Basic echoing: Repeat the main point just said
 - Active echoing: Rephrase the main point just said as a question, looking for a “yes”?
 - So Tim, what I think you just said was.....is that right?



“Talk to people about themselves and they will listen for four hours.” – Benjamin Disraeli

Persuasive Communication

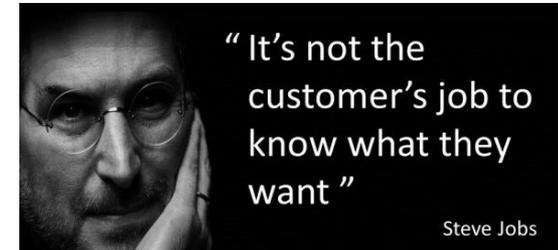
- What is persuasive communication? **SELLING**
- You may not think of yourself as someone who sells, but you try to sell someone on something every day (even if it's just yourself)!
- What components go into making a sale?
 - **Something to sell** (vacation in Orange Beach)
 - Identify an **explicit need** (~~you~~ we need a vacation!)
 - Explain **specific features**:
 - Hotel is on the beach, and it has a pool (ego feature)
 - We can get it for \$49/night (economic feature)
 - That provide **specific benefits**:
 - You can tan without the sand (ego benefit)
 - We don't have to blow our savings (economic benefit)
- Important to recognize that a sale isn't made without a specific economic or ego benefit for the person needing a solution.



“We are all in the business of sales. Teachers sell students on learning, parents sell their children on making good grades, and salespeople sell their products or services.” — Dave Ramsey

Persuasive Communication

- What is a need? A need is a problem....and you're the solution!
 - Implicit Need: You believe the prospect has a problem, but...
 - They don't (yet) believe they have a problem; or
 - They haven't even thought of the problem you've identified
 - Explicit Need: You believe the prospect has a problem, and...
 - They agree they have a problem; and
 - They agree on how you define the problem
- Identifying Needs
 - Use open ended, probing questions to guide them to identifying the need
 - Use echoing to keep them exploring the problem
 - Use closed questions to verify and prove your understanding of the need
- Make the sale
 - Describe the features of your solution, and the specific economic and ego benefits
 - Use echoing to build understanding and agreement
 - Always treat objections as sincere: handle with tact, smile them away, or ignore and keep moving towards agreement



“The triumph of persuasion over force is the sign of a civilized society.” — Mark Skousen

Questions and Discussion



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