

Effective Communication at Workplace

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What is Communication?

Communication is an exchange of feelings, ideas, and information, whether by speaking, writing, signals, or behaviors.



What is Communication?

Definition of Communication from *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*

- to convey knowledge of or information
- to reveal by clear signs
- to transmit information, thought, or feeling so that it is satisfactorily received or understood
- to open into each other



When does it happen?

- **When a person sends or receives information, ideas and feelings with others not only using spoken or written communication but also nonverbal communication.**



What is Communication?

Communication is more than information!

Communication is more than merely keeping the employees updated as to what may be going on in your organization or in the company at large. To do that, all you need is an e-mail message and a computer.



Real communication is far more than a few words strung together and delivered to your employees.



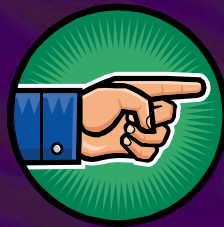
What level of communication?

The concept that communication is the effective exchange of meaning or understanding applies to both **formal** and **informal** communication. It applies to communication **up, down** and **across** the organization.



Who's accountable?

Everyone in the organization is **accountable** for the effectiveness of their own communication. This especially applies to those who **manage** others.



What is Communication?

Communication is not one way

it is important to remember that communication with an employee is not a matter of one sender and one receiver, but rather an **exchange** in which you and your employee are both sender and receiver.

*This means that for real communication to take place, there must be **interaction**, with each player participating.*



What is Communication?

Is it possible to **NOT**
communicate???

NO

That's because communication does not involve just words, but it also is related to behavior, and unless one is dead, one always "behaves". Even staying still is a behavior. Silence communicates. Our bodies communicate non-verbally. So, so long as there is life there is communication, even if the person is intentionally trying to cease all communication.

"No Communication" is Communication

Importance of Effective Communication

- *People in organizations typically spend over 75% of their time communicating.*



- *Effective communication is an essential component of organizational success at all levels.*
- *Numerous employee surveys have found that many problems in any organization can be traced back to one primary cause: poor communication.*



Poor communication results in poor performance



When there is poor communication in an organization, there can be any number of negative outcomes, including errors, productivity declines, distrust, lower morale, confusion, absenteeism, and general dissatisfaction.



Important skill for bosses

As a boss, you are constantly advising, informing, explaining, discussing, reviewing, counseling, guiding, suggesting, persuading, convincing, coaching, humoring, and responding.

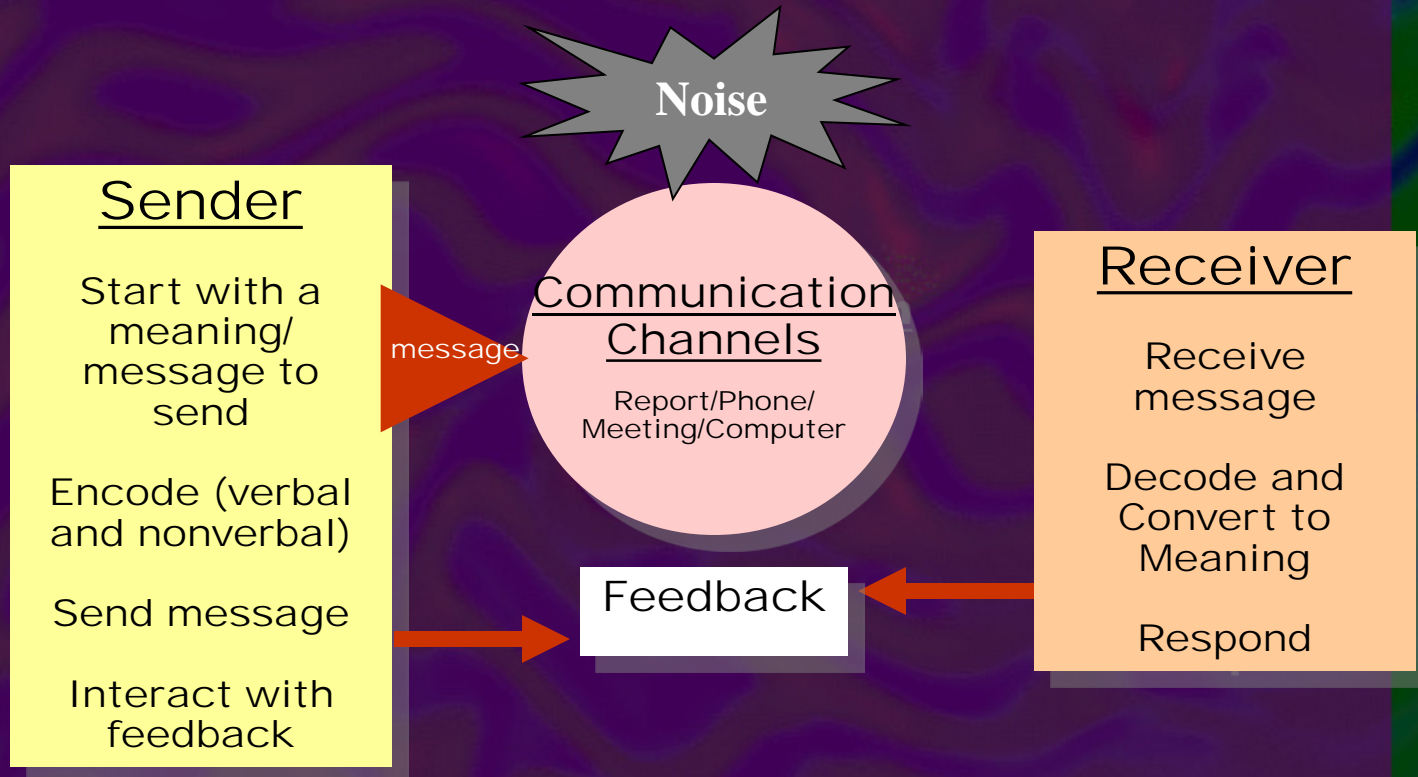


Employees seek and deserve a boss who is open, accessible, and responsive

By having frequent direct contact with your employees, listening to what they say, and having honest two-way communication with them, you are far more likely to be the boss they deserve, respect, and trust. And you are far more likely to identify issues before they become problems, and solve problems before they become crises.



Communication Process



Communication Channels (Media)



- Written/paper-based (books, newspapers, letters....)
- Verbal/spoken (radio, satellite, ...)
- Electronic (e-mail,...)
- Image/visual (TV, Cinema,...)

Communication Types

- **Intrapersonal Communication:** It is the thinking that precedes the communication or the communication with self. It includes the internal voice, retrieval and storage of information, and problem solving.
- **Interpersonal Communication:** It happens when two people or more communicate in an informal way to exchange information or build relationships.
- **Public Communication:** In group communication, the message is sent from one person (speaker) to a group of people (listeners). This type is called lectures.
- **Mass Media Communication:** It happens through electronic means such as radio, TV, Internet and books. (little or no feedback or interaction)
- **Intercultural Communication:** Culture is the collection of values, habits and verbal & nonverbal coding that a group of people have in common. This communication happens when one person or more communicates with another from different culture.



Communication Misconceptions

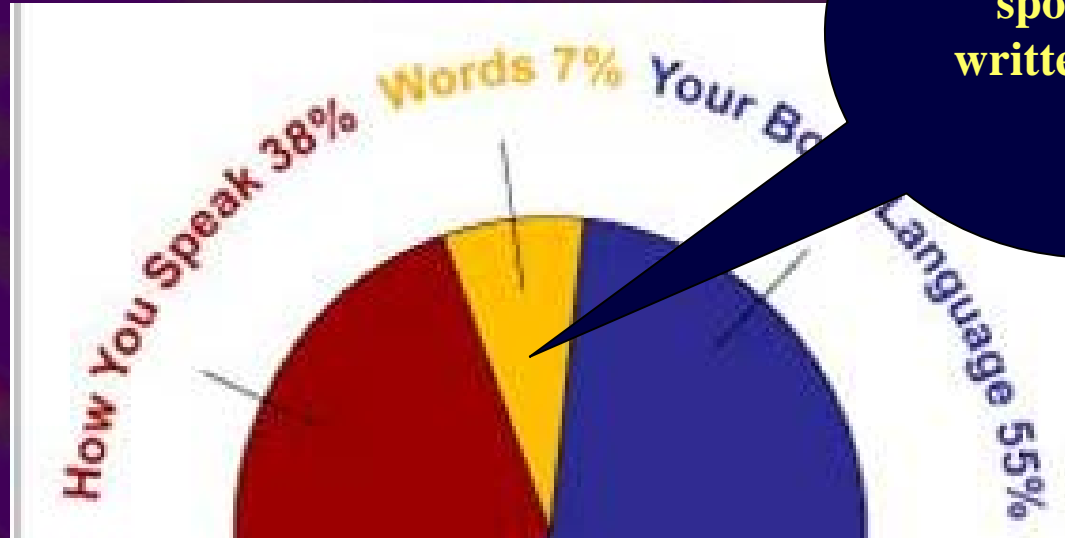
- **Communication will solve all problems:** It may result in creating new problems.
- **More communication is better:** more negative communication will result in more negative results. Quality is more important than quantity.
- **Communication is always positive:** It may be positive or negative.
- **Words carry meanings:** nonverbal communication will carry most of the meanings.
- **Communication is natural ability:** You can develop and sharpen communication skills.



Nonverbal Communication



How Meaning is Conveyed



7%
spoken or
written words

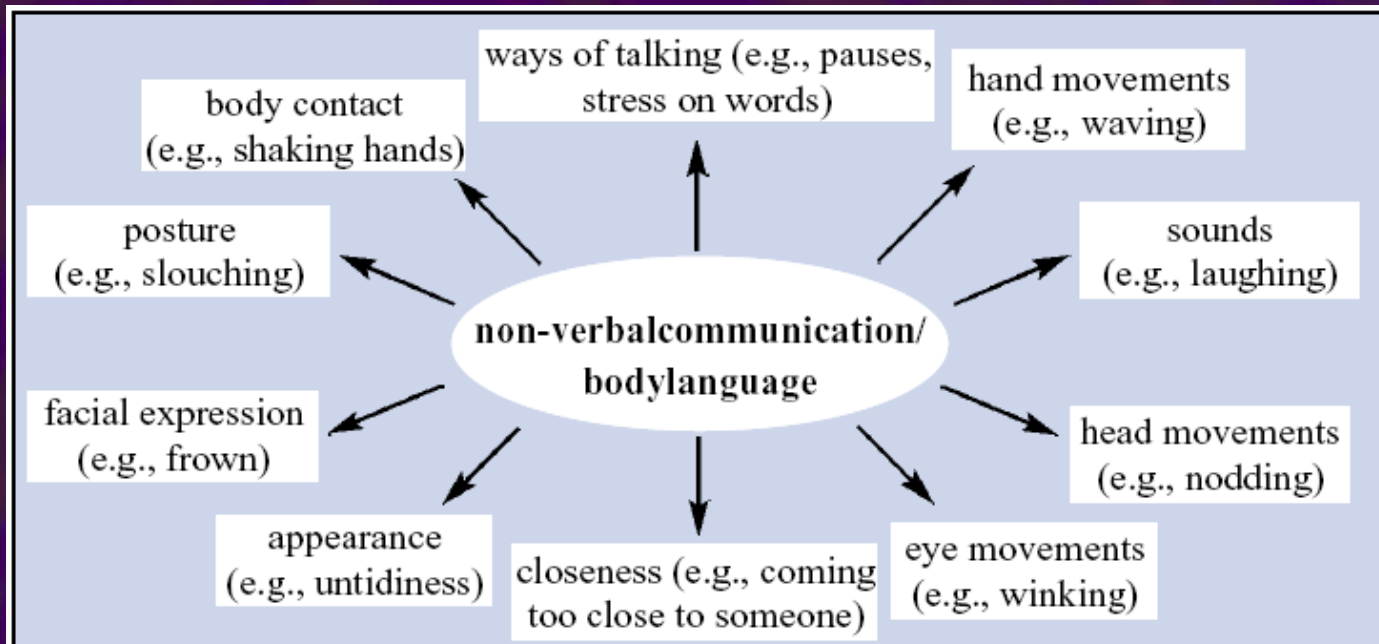
38%

voice dynamics:
tone + inflection +
volume + accent +
non-word sounds;
and...

55%

Face and body:
non-verbal
communication or
face and body
language.

Non-verbal communication or face and body language constitutes **93%** of message



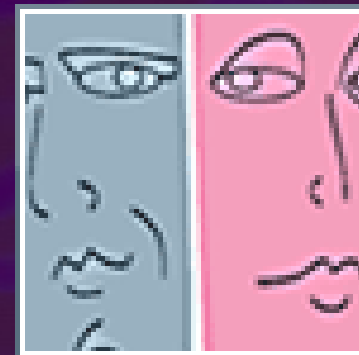
Reading Nonverbal Communication Cues

A large percentage of the meaning we derive from the non-verbal cues that the other person gives. Often a person says one thing but communicates something totally different through vocal intonation and body language.



Reading Nonverbal Communication Cues

- These mixed signals force the receiver to choose between the verbal and nonverbal parts of the message. Most often, the receiver chooses the nonverbal aspects.
- Mixed messages create tension and distrust because the receiver senses that the communicator is hiding something or is being less than candid.



Nonverbal communication is made up of the following parts:

- **Visual**
- **Vocal**
- **Tactile (Physical)**
- **Use of space and image**



Visual

- This often called body language and includes facial expression, eye movement, posture, and gestures. The face is the biggest part of this. All of us "read" people's faces for ways to interpret what they say and feel.



Visual

- Of course we can easily misread these cues especially when communicating across cultures where gestures can mean something very different in another culture. For example, in American culture agreement might be indicated by the head going up and down whereas in India, a side-to-side head movement might mean the same thing.



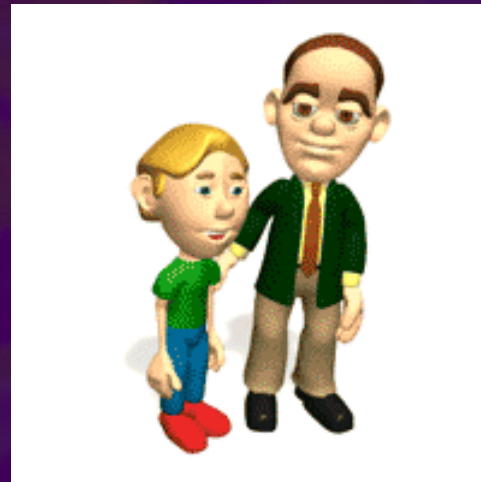
Visual

- We also look to posture to provide cues about the communicator; posture can indicate self-confidence, aggressiveness, fear, guilt, or anxiety. Similarly, we look at gestures such as how we hold our hands, or a handshake. Many gestures are culture bound and susceptible to misinterpretation



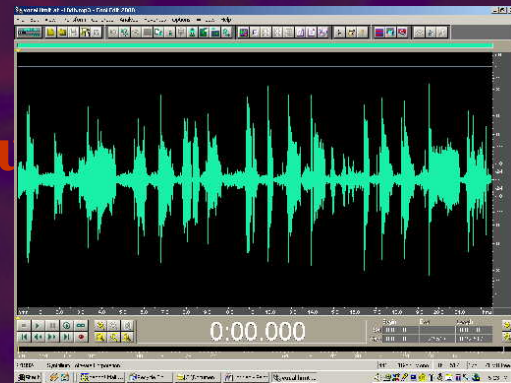
Tactile (Physical)

- This involves the use of touch to impart meaning as in a handshake, a pat on the back or an arm around the shoulder.



Vocal

- The meaning of words can be altered significantly by changing the intonation of one's voice.
- **Think of how many ways you can say "no"**
- you could express mild doubt, terror, amazement, anger among other emotions. Vocal meanings vary across cultures.



Example

“You are doing a good job”

*say stynitiw ayv hgttkbtairlyidncdscatthstthst the
employqdlo syekw ingloingthegreat rjoge job.*

Have you noticed the difference?



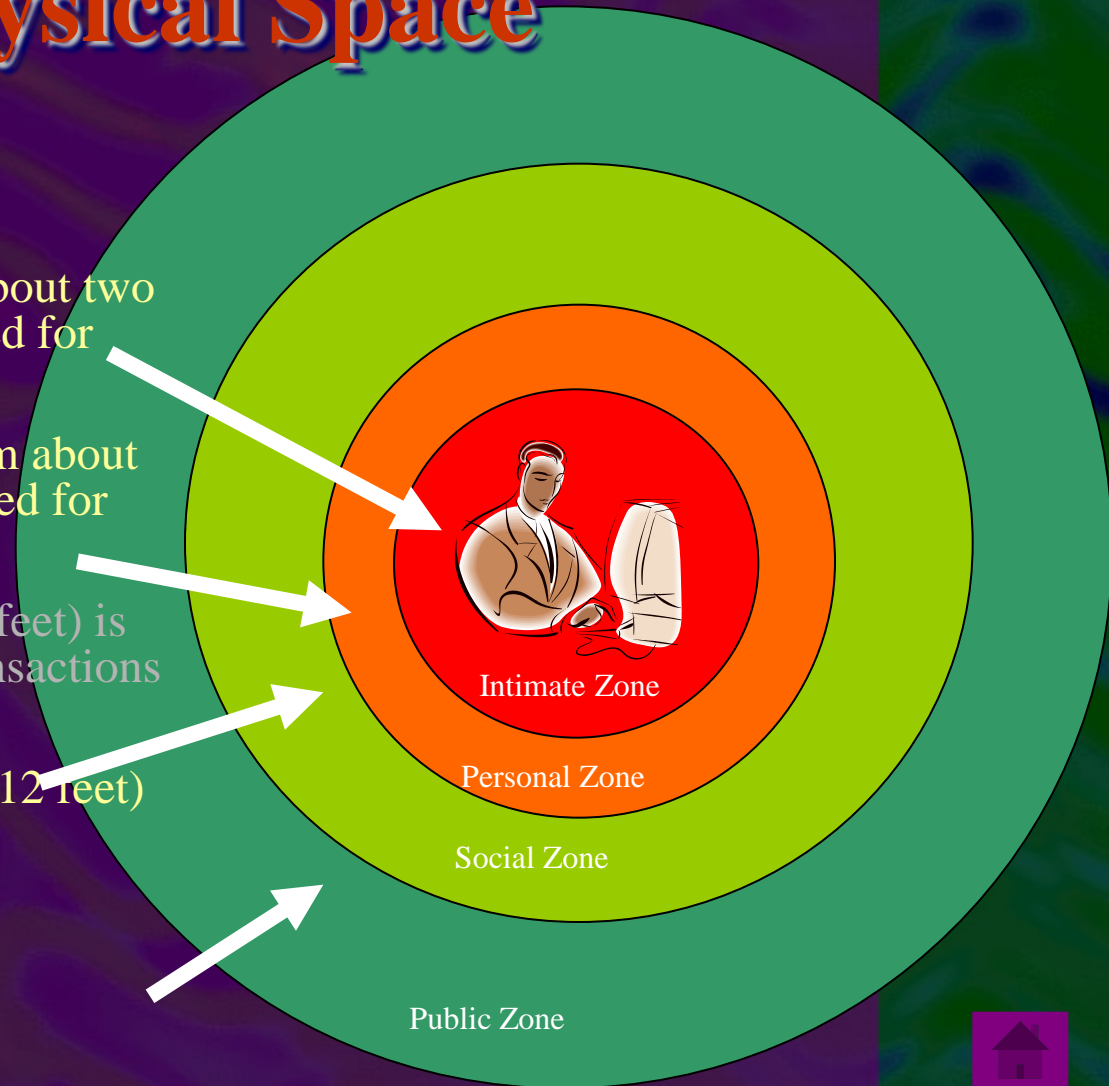
Physical Space

- For most of us, someone standing very close to us makes us uncomfortable. We feel our "space" has been invaded. People seek to extend their territory in many ways to attain power and intimacy. We tend to mark our territory either with permanent walls, or in a classroom with our coat, pen, paper, etc. We like to protect and control our territory.



Physical Space

- The "intimate zone" is about two feet. This zone is reserved for our closest friends.
- The "personal zone" from about 2-4 feet usually is reserved for family and friends.
- The "social zone" (4-12 feet) is where most business transactions take place.
- The "public zone" (over 12 feet) is used for lectures.



Physical Space

- At the risk of stereotyping, we will generalize and state that Americans and Northern Europeans typify the non-contact group with small amounts of touching and relatively large spaces between them during transactions. Arabs and Latin normally stand closer together and do a lot of touching during communication.



Image

- We use "things" to communicate. This can involve expensive things, neat or messy things, photographs, plants, etc. We use clothing and other dimensions of physical appearance to communicate our values and expectations.



The use of gestures, movements, material things and space can clarify or confuse the meaning of verbal communication.

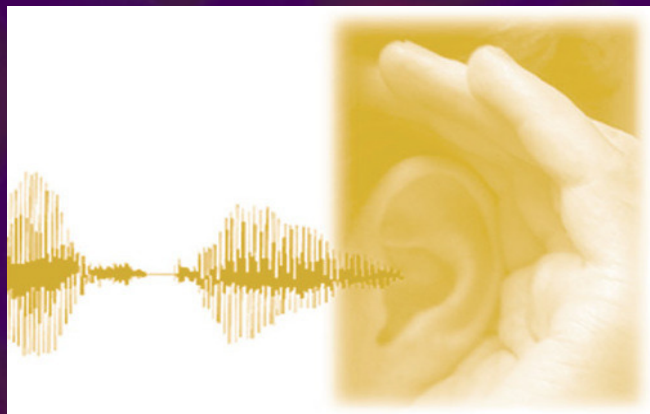


Skillful communicators understand the importance of nonverbal communication and use it to increase their effectiveness, as well as use it to understand more clearly what someone else is really saying.

A word of warning: Nonverbal cues can differ dramatically from culture to culture.



Active Listening



What is Active Listening?

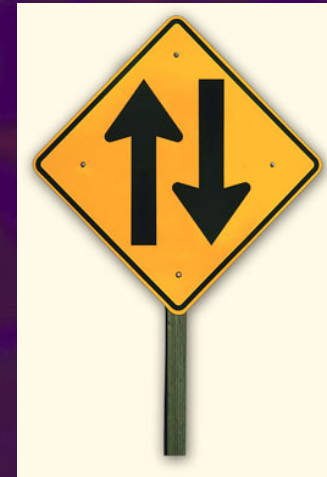
By definition, listening to your employees means that you are truly paying attention to what they are saying.

It is not a passive process in which you nod and raise an occasional eyebrow. Rather, listening is an active and involved process in which you use several specific strategies to be absolutely certain that the message you are receiving is the one your employees are sending.



What is Active Listening?

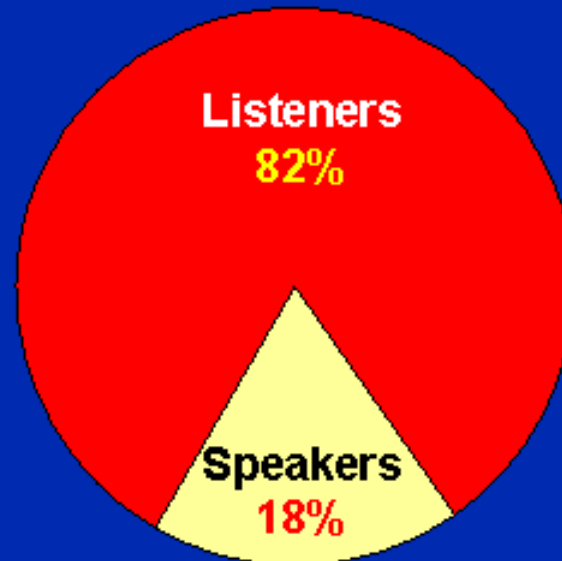
- **Good communication is a two-way street, a process of give and take between individuals.**



Statistics support Active Listening

I prefer to talk to people who are great:

82% of people prefer to talk to great listeners, not great speakers



Developing Active Listening Skills

- **There are a number of situations when you need to solicit good information from others; these situations include:**
 - interviewing candidates
 - solving work problems
 - seeking to help an employee on work performance
 - finding out reasons for performance discrepancies.



Developing Active Listening Skills

- When you initiate conversations with employees, greet them personally and listen sincerely.
- Ask friendly questions, such as "How's the family?" and "What's going on with you?" Listen for hidden messages in words and actions.
- The speaker may not want to say certain things out of fear of a negative reaction. Be aware of the other person's body language and tone of voice. Attend to non-verbal cues, body language, not just words; listen between the lines



Miscommunication happens!

In any communication at least some of the "meaning" lost in simple transmission of a message from the sender to the receiver.

In many situations a lot of the true message is lost and the message that is heard is often far different than the one intended.



Types of Barriers

- *Interpersonal Barriers*
- *Organizational Barriers*



Interpersonal barriers

- Perception and perceptual selection processes
- Semantics (language)
- Channel selection
- Inconsistent verbal and nonverbal communication.



Organizational Barriers

- **Physical distractions**
- **Information overload**
- **Time pressure**
- **Technical and in-group language**
- **Status differences**
- **Task and organization structure requirements**
- **Absence of formal communication channels**



A Fact

Communication skills and effectiveness can be improved

The following Slides show some recommendations on

How to Improve Communication



Have a Clear Message

- your message should be clear in your own mind before you ever send it. If your thinking is a little vague, or if your objectives are rather sketchy, that is exactly how your message will be communicated and received.



Understand Your Employees

- The fact is that your employees have a vast array of motivations, expectations, values, and styles that need to be recognized if you want to communicate effectively with them. By understanding as much as possible about your employees, you can then select the best style, channel, vocabulary, volume, sentence structure, content, format, and timing to communicate successfully with them.



Getting out of the e-mail box

Some bosses tend to rely excessively on e-mail, with some believing that once they have sent a particular message, the communication process is complete.



This is merely one-way communication of the most limited form, because matters of intonation, volume, pace, and inflection are missing.



Getting out of the e-mail box

When your employees ask you to intervene electronically to resolve a misunderstanding, do not do it.

Rather, pick up the phone to discuss the situation, or, preferably, set up a face-to-face meeting. It's rather amazing that many of these meetings actually involve people who work just down the hall from each other.



Don't Be Defensive

- A major source of problem in communication is defensiveness. Effective communicators are aware that defensiveness is a typical response in a work situation especially when negative information or criticism is involved. Be aware that defensiveness is common, particularly with subordinates when you are dealing with a problem. Try to make adjustments to compensate for the likely defensiveness.



Learn When It's Better to Keep Quiet

- Some subjects should not be matters of public discussion in the workplace. These include an employee's work performance, your feelings about company policy and difficulties you have with your boss.
- It's also important to keep confidential any personal problems employees bring to you and anything anyone tells you in confidence. The only exception to this practice would be when keeping quiet involves breaking the law or company policy.



Increase Face-to-Face Communication

- Print, both hard copy and electronic, remains the primary means of communication in most medium to large organizations even though this is popular with only about 10 percent of frontline employees. Employees say they want face-to-face communication.
- E-mail is very popular as a source of timely news. But employees typically think that this is "information not communication".
- Only when communication is largely face-to-face with the immediate supervisor will it stand any real chance of being effective. Forget print. Communicate directly from senior executives to supervisors face-to-face (with printed support materials if appropriate) and get supervisors to communicate with their people.

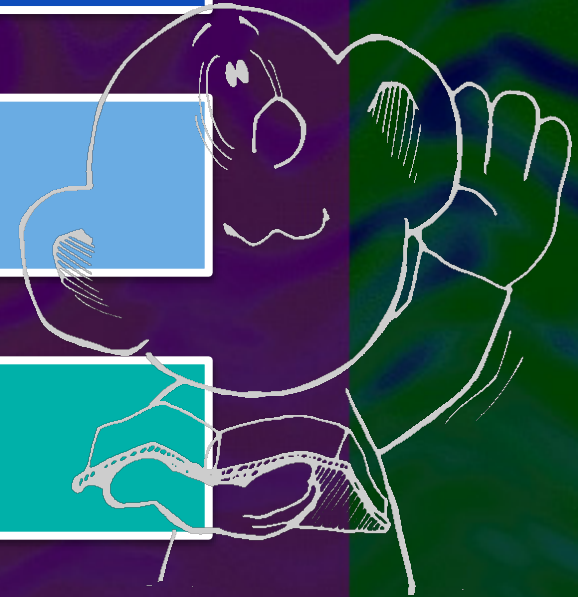


Activity

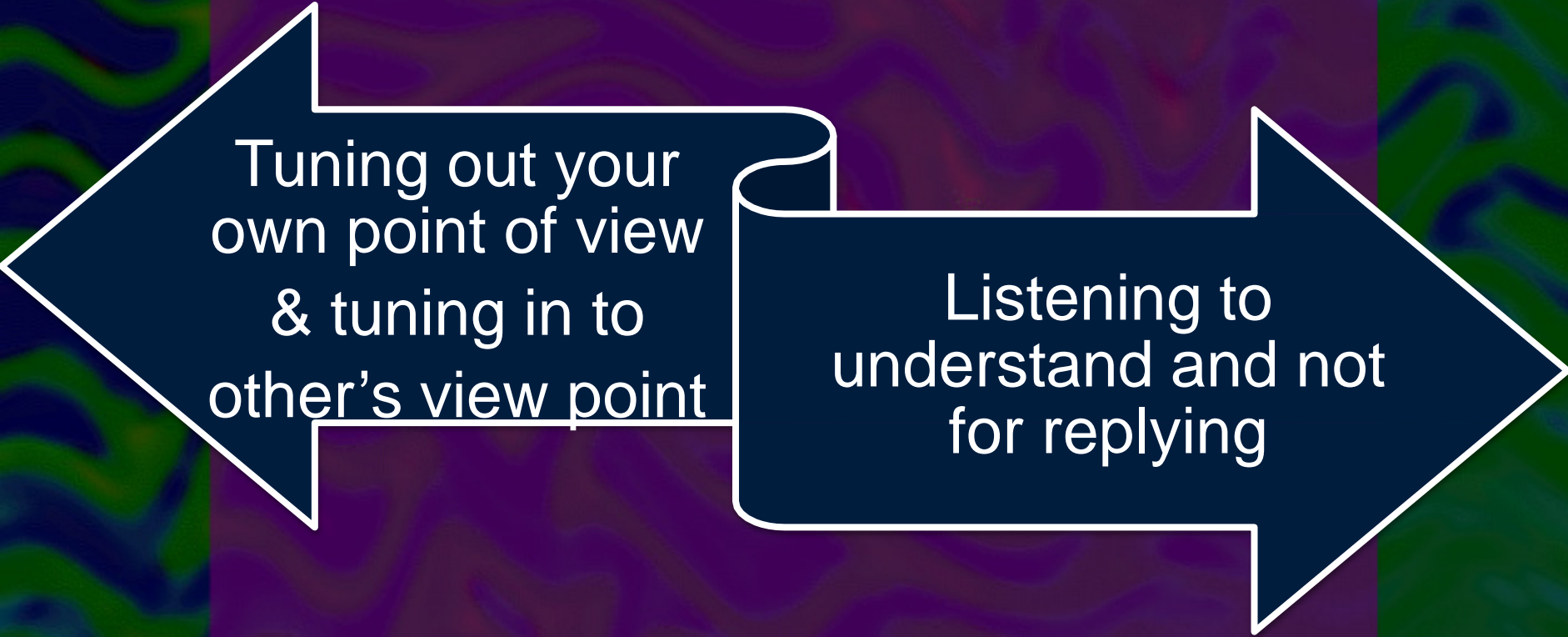
Where do u listen attentively, mostly?

Where we don't listen?

WHY??



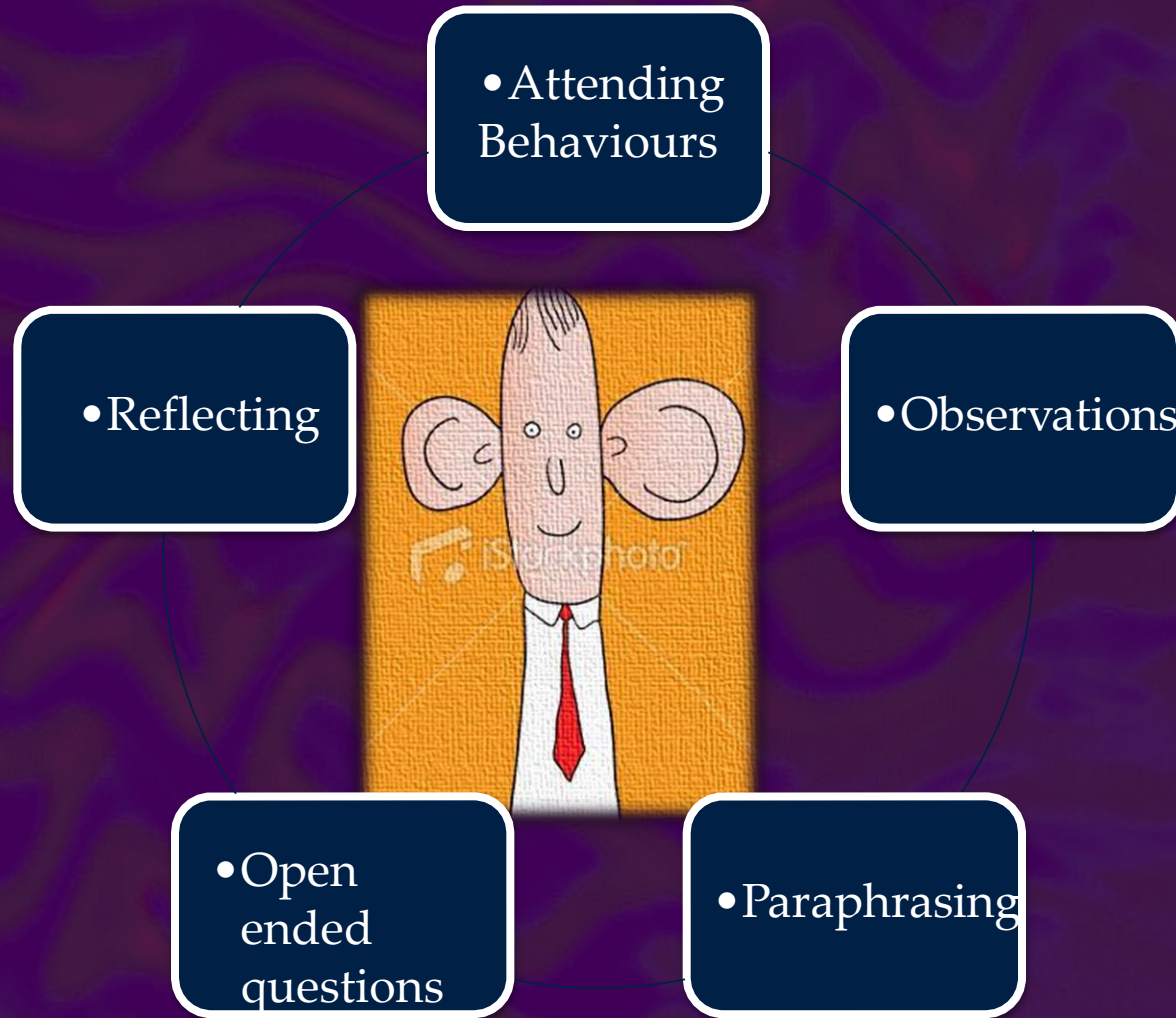
What is Active/Empathic listening?



Tuning out your
own point of view
& tuning in to
other's view point

Listening to
understand and not
for replying

Active Listening- Involves



• Communication happens when 2 heads share the same picture

Paraphrasing

- Reflecting back what the speaker has said but in your own words.

This has the effect of confirming your

- intention to understand what the other is saying and
-

- can be a powerful and affirming experience for the speaker
-

• “As I understand
• it.....?”

• “I just need to
check that I’ve
got this
right.....?”

• “So what
you’re
• saying is.....?”

• “Can I stop you
there and check
some points?”

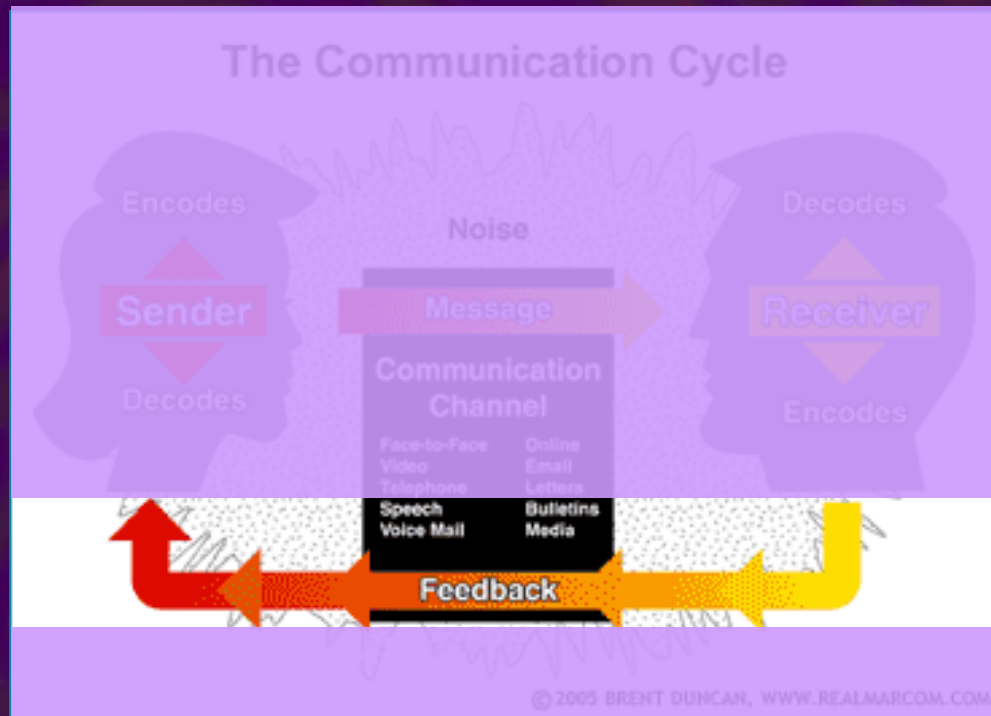
Exploring and Clarifying:

It involves use of open ended or closed ended questions to- Further explore what the speaker is trying to express.

- Qualities of Clarifying questions

- Which put aside assumptions
- are posed in an interested and curious manner
- Encourage to expand on the info
- help him/her to think about the situation in a new or different way

Positive Feedback



Lack of constructive feedback is like sending people out on a dangerous hike without a compass.

This is especially true in today's fast changing and demanding workplace



How to do it?

- Maintain a high degree of feedback throughout the communication process. Feedback is a constant barometer to let you know if the message you are sending is the same one that your employees are receiving.
- To get feedback, It is far more effective to ask open-ended questions, such as, “How would you approach this?” or “What questions do you have?”



How to do it?

positive question-and-answer approach



helps create an atmosphere in which asking questions is entirely acceptable. In addition, your behavior demonstrates some productive feedback techniques, and this can help your employees learn and apply them.



Develop your skills in constructive feedback

- Feedback taps basic human needs-to improve, to compete, to be accurate; people want to be competent.
- Feedback can be reinforcing; if given properly, feedback is almost always appreciated and motivates people to improve.



Develop your skills in constructive feedback

- Be aware of the many reasons why people are hesitant to give feedback.
- It is crucial that we realize how critical feedback can be and overcome our difficulties; it is very important and can be very rewarding but it requires skill, understanding, courage, and respect for yourself and others.



Characteristics of effective feedback

- **Specific:** "You wrote a thorough analysis on the Anderson project," rather than "You've been doing a good job lately."
- **Timely:** Give feedback as soon as possible. Excellent feedback presented at an inappropriate time may do more harm than good.
- **Descriptive:** Give facts. Talk about your observations, rather than what you'd concluded from your observations. Focus on the behavior not the person.
- **Sensitive:** When emotions run high, allow a cooling-off period before talking.
- **Helpful:** When feedback is negative, explore alternatives for improvement so the employee has goals to aim for. Use the "sandwich technique" by saying one positive statement followed by the negative feedback and then another compliment.



Feedback is crucial for effective communication

- **Effective communication will only come if communicators at all organizational levels seek out feedback and take appropriate action to ensure that the intended meaning is passed on to the relevant audience.**

