

# The Learning Company

## Communications & Ethics

### INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication is the sharing of feelings and ideas with other people. Most interpersonal messages are informal exchanges between two people in close contact. The objective of sending, receiving and evaluating messages is shared between the two. The purpose of their communication usually focuses on the sharing of meaning as well. Communication then is the exchange of messages between people for the purposes of achieving common meanings.

### NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Body posture often says as much as the spoken word
- “body language” provides important messages that need to be heard accurately
- Importance is seen and felt with nonverbal gestures eg. Smile when saying Hello, hugging to show affection, scratching our head to show confusion
- Expressions, gestures, eye contact can send strong messages
- Our physical presentation through dress, the way we walk, posture
- Non-verbal expression of feelings and thoughts can be easily misinterpreted
- Is ongoing throughout client-therapist interaction
- Communication is done primarily through
  - i. Words
  - ii. Tones(conveys emotional state)
  - iii. Gestures
  - iv. Posture
  - v. Facial expressions
- To help the message be understood clearly the speaker (MT) needs to be aware of coordinating gestures, expressions and muscular movements to the message
- When receiving information from the client the MT hears the communication but recognizes more complete information is revealed through body language on how the client is feeling/their internal state
- 4/5 of the communication methods are nonverbal
- as a competent, caring professional MT’s look for congruency between verbal and nonverbal communication
- document both the subjective and objective information revealed during the treatment/interview
- in caring tone give personal reflection to the body language noted to be the defined or confirmed by the client
- professional MT is aware of his/her body language and its important role in a therapeutic relationship

### EXAMPLES:

- facial expressions i.e. grimaces, frowns, puckers, rapid blinking, eye contact
- gestures i.e. making fists, clawing or gripping the massage table, fidgeting, nodding
- sudden movements i.e. toes coming up off the massage table, buttocks tightening, change in breathing patterns, lifting of the head, looking down

- sounds i.e. sighs, grunts, groans, hummmmm, uh-huh
- postures in relation to others; usually the higher person is more important or more power is implied

This style of communication accounts for about 65 - 93 percent of what is communicated. It can be divided into four subgroups.

#### Kinesthetic behavior

- Commonly known as body language
- It includes body movements, such as gestures, facial expressions, eye movements and posture
- In assessing people's feelings about an issue, we often draw conclusions not only from their words but also from their nonverbal behavior, such as their facial expressions
- Studies have shown that eye contact between close couples is much greater than that between casually dating couples
- Eye contact can also express hostility or the desire for dominance. (The aggressive stare of the athlete.)

#### Proxemic

- The influence of proximity and space on communication
- For example, some managers arrange their offices so that they have an informal area where people can sit without experiencing the spatial distance and formality created by a big desk
- Another example of proxemics which you have probably experienced is that you are more likely to get to know students whom you happen to sit near in class than students who are sitting in other parts of the room.

#### Paralanguage

- This includes something is said rather than to what is said: for example, voice quality, tone of voice, laughing, and yawning.

#### Object language

- The communicative use of material things, including clothing, cosmetics, furniture and architecture
- If you prepared a job resume lately, you probably gave some thought to its layout and the type of paper you wanted it printed on
- Give the same thought to how you "present" yourself.

## **VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

- Verbal communication is the written or oral use of words to communicate.
- Both written and oral communications are pervasive in organizations.
- In a business environment, written communication generally has several advantages over oral communication.
- It provides a record of the message, can be disseminated widely with a minimum of effort, and allows the sender to think through the intended message carefully.
- The disadvantages are the expense of preparation, a relatively impersonal nature, possible misunderstanding by the receiver, and the delay of feedback regarding the effectiveness of the message.
- Oral communication has the advantages of being faster, being generally more personal than written communication, and providing immediate feedback.

- The disadvantages are that it can be time-consuming, it can be more difficult to terminate, and additional effort is required to document what is said if a record is necessary
- Non-verbal communication requires a verbal “reality check” to confirm the correct message is being relayed
- Verbal communication is planned during the treatment time and is appropriate at any time during the scheduled appointment and treatment – “right of refusal”, “right to change and/or stop treatment”, feedback - pain

## **COMMUNICATION STYLES**

- An important step in achieving proper communication is the recognition that there are not one but many communication styles.
- Interpersonal communication styles are habits, manners and methods by which we exchange ideas and messages with others, either individually or in small groups.

## **COMMUNICATING WITH EXTROVERTS**

### **A. The Sunny side**

- extroverts draw energy externally; striking up conversation should be easy
- extrovert is enthusiastic to participate in group
- they prefer face to face over distant
- they enjoy sharing experience- need contact
- typically they -say what they mean and state what is on their minds

### **B. The Shadow Side**

- when two extroverts communicate both may say what is on their minds-difficulty in getting a word in!
- there is tendency to speak first and think later-> hurt feelings
- introvert can view extrovert as superficial or insincere
- extrovert can impose themselves on quiet introvert

## **COMMUNICATING WITH INTROVERTS**

### **A. The Sunny side**

- introvert is in minority and may be misunderstood
- introvert energy is from within; they avoid the crowd and like independent activity
- do not conclude that there is something wrong if they want to be alone
- nonverbal communications can tell more
- schedule appointment with introvert rather than dropping in
- they are more difficult to get to know -reserved and share with a few
- they have a small group of friends
- some of most social communicators can be closet introverts

## **COMMUNICATING WITH INTROVERTS**

### **A. The Shadow Side**

- introversion can be viewed as weakness by dominant group
- introvert can be viewed as antisocial-lone wolf who needs to be fixed
- introvert can be viewed as arrogant, condescending, unfriendly
- others can project their fears onto quiet one

## **COMMUNICATING WITH CONCEPTUALIZER**

### **A. The Sunny Side**

- intuitive has less of need to communicate facts--more global
- intuitive will begin with concept, idea, insight, possibilities
- intuitive relies on hunch, imagination

- they love novel approach-conceptual level-abstract
- will deviate from agenda
- intuitives language is colourful, metaphoric

B. The Shadow Side

- intuitive can appear vague-irritating to practical type
- others may see communication with intuitive a waste of time
- metaphor can get in way of clarity

**COMMUNICATING WITH ANALYZER**

A. The Sunny Side

- thinker enjoys theoretical issues-debate-discussion
- they are objective-downplay personal
- they are critical and objective
- they are fair, rational, precise
- they are goal oriented-don't like to waste time

B. The Shadow Side

- thinker can be cold and impersonal
- they can be tedious to others
- their ideas can be impractical or useless
- they may be too critical
- their logical side can be limiting- some beliefs not based on logic

**COMMUNICATING WITH AFFILIATOR**

A. The Sunny Side

- feeler interaction is personal and subjective
- they are friendly
- they consider values and effect on other
- they are emphatic and emotionally persuasive
- they are receptive to others and inviting

B. The Shadow Side

- feelers can be time wasters and may lack objectivity
- they can be overwhelmed by enthusiasm or emotion
- they can have difficulty expressing negative emotion

**COMMUNICATING WITH ACTIVATOR**

A. The Sunny Side

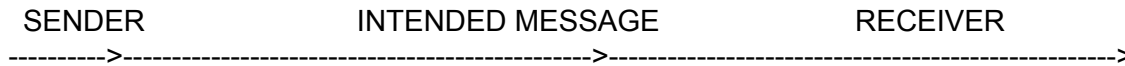
- judges are prepared in advance
- they are oriented to schedules, timetables, plans
- they are structured and organized
- their mind set in based on closure
- they are purposeful and task oriented
- they limit digressions

B. The Shadow Side

- judge can be rigid, inflexible, constricting, lacking in spontaneity
- they may have less fun- no room for surprise
- can be too serious and businesslike
- can make premature decisions

**RECOGNIZING BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

The differences in transactional states can lead to problems in communication both personal and professional. Other problems can also arise and we must learn to recognize and to counteract them in order to be effective communicators. Ordinary communication usually consists of three components



Breakdown of communication can occur anywhere along the line and in any of these components. Most basic communication problems occur when the message is unclear, such that the message received is not the message intended. Because the sender and receiver are two distinct individuals each perceiving the message from his own unique perspective, the message can easily become garbled or distorted.

### **EXTERNAL BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION**

The meaning of the message is often affected by the relationship that exists between the sender and the receiver. Messages flow more freely and accurately between individuals who are comfortable with and trust each other. Acceptance of the message by the receiver is enhanced when he trusts the motives and judgment of the sender. The term “halo effect” refers to the automatic acceptance of the message transmitted by an individual or organization if the receiver perceives the sender as “good and honorable”. Obviously then, it is important for co-workers and managers to build trust as part of the team-building and communication activities.

The mood or emotional state of the receiver is important to successful communications. If apprehensive or depressed, the receiver often reads false, underlying meanings into messages, which are not actually there, or “tunes-out” the message altogether. Conversely a receiver in a “high” mood may not hear intended criticism or recognize problems. Some assessment of the emotional state of the receiver by the sender may be necessary to assure that important messages are accurately received. Asking the receiver to “put the message in their own words” in order to elicit the receiver’s concept of the intended message, can aid in dealing with this problem. When in doubt, clarify that the message has been received properly. When the receiver is repeating the message (in their own words) actively listen to what they are saying, without putting your interpretation on their message.

Constant interruptions during interactions or lack of attention to the conversation by either party can suppress any chance of true communication, especially if one party appears to the other to lack interest in the message by allowing the interruptions. Specific time should be set aside for important conversations and no distractions should be allowed.

Words in different cultures and situations have different meanings. The word “up” has 46 different uses listed. The word “play” has 38. To make matters worse we can also “play up”. (To emphasize the importance of) the significance of the meanings of words. It is essential then, that the correct phrase be used, and that the message be worded in a suitable fashion.

## INTERNAL BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Unfortunately we all carry with us certain internal barriers (attitudes) which may hinder communication. They can be distilled into an acronym of FAILURE

F	-	fear
A	-	assumption
I	-	insensitivity
L	-	labeling
U	-	uncertainty
R	-	resentment
E	-	egotism

- F- FEAR We allow fear of what others may think to control our ability to communicate. Rather than be misinterpreted or possibly ridiculed, some of us say nothing and repress our feelings and needs.
- A – ASSUMPTION We often assume we are being heard and understood. This may not be the case and it is necessary to get feedback in order to determine which message was actually received.
- I - INSENSITIVITY If we are insensitive to the state of the receiver our communication may not be effective.
- L – LABELING This refers to the phenomenon of treating those around us in accordance with a label they may have been given, rather than as the unique individuals they are. People may be labeled as “management” or “just techs”. In each case the knowledge that these people have (or don’t have) something is only assumed and not ascertained. Communication suffers when this occurs.
- U - UNCERTAINTY Some speech habits are hindrances to our communication and indicate that the person is unsure or ignorant of the facts they are presenting. (Other speech patterns are - like you know - like - just - like - plain annoying - you know). If there are a lot of um’s, ah’s, etc., in the communication then the confidence in the message and messenger is undermined.
- R – RESENTMENT Refers to the attitude of always looking for the worst in the people around us. A hostile or antagonistic out look will certainly block communication efforts.
- E – EGOTISM This carries with it a lack of respect for others and an exaggerated sense of one’s own importance. Anything anyone else says to this individual cannot possibly be as important as what they have to say. The message receiver quickly recognizes this selfish trait and either discounts the message or ends the communication transaction.

*Think of an example in your experience when one or more of these concepts have been received by you. What was your response? What could have been done to avoid this? When did you send one?*

## IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

Just as the acronym FAILURE can alert us to the potential problems of communication, so then the acronym SUCCESS can impress us with the correct mental stance for effective communication.

S	-	self awareness
U	-	understanding
C	-	care for others
C	-	control of emotions
E	-	esteem of one's self
S	-	self-confidence
S	-	sharing of one's self

- S - SELF AWARENESS - Questioning yourself and your views and beliefs will lead to increased openness to new information. This increased self-awareness will make you more comfortable with yourself and open to communication with others.
- U - UNDERSTANDING - is increased by asking for clarification and feedback about intended messages. It is often helpful to explain that the feedback you are about to give is simply to ascertain that you have received the correct message.
- C - CARE FOR OTHERS - check your tone of voice, facial expressions and body position to make sure that you are sending the message of concern for your "receiver".
- C - CONTROL OF EMOTIONS - refers to the conscious choice we make to be ruled by anger, frustration, jealousy, resentment etc. These emotions are neither right nor wrong - it is how we express and control them that is at issue. Anger may be perfectly justified, violence is not.
- E - ESTEEM OF ONE'S SELF - is important because it shows strength of ego (healthy self-esteem). This is not the ego-centered individual discussed earlier but someone with enough sense of self worth that they do not become defensive. It allows him to forget himself and to concentrate on others.
- S- SELF-CONFIDENCE - allows one to risk communicating with others.
- S - SHARING OF ONE'S SELF - is the ultimate communication. Those individuals who can comfortably risk sharing their inner thoughts and feelings are usually successful communicators.

### **GUIDELINES FOR BEING A GOOD LISTENER**

#### **DO:**

- Pay attention to what the person is saying
- Look at the person who is talking to you.
- Let the person know you're paying attention.
- Ask questions if you don't understand.
- Repeat what the person says to be sure you really understand.
- Think about how the person feels.
- Ask how the person feels.

## **DON'T**

- Interrupt the person
- Make up your mind before the person finishes speaking.
- Just wait until it's your turn to talk.

## **GUIDELINES FOR EXPRESSING YOURSELF**

- I feel...(state your feeling)  
*I feel frustrated...*
- When you...(describe the behavior)  
*When you play your stereo so loud.*
- I need...(state what you want to happen)  
*I need you to turn it down so I can study.*
- Expressing your feelings doesn't have to be negative. It's important to express yourself about things that make you feel good, too.  
*I'm really glad that you came to my soccer games. It feels good to have a friend there no matter how I do.*
- Also, be sure you don't confuse expressing your feelings with putting someone down.  
*I feel you're such a snob. Every time you borrow my clothes you mess them up. I need you just to stay away from my closet.*

## **Body Language**

There is no specific advice on how to use your body language. What you do might be interpreted in several ways, depending on the setting and who you are talking to. You'll probably want to use your body language differently when talking to your boss compared to when you talk to a girl/guy you're interested in. These are some common interpretations of body language and often more effective ways to communicate with your body.

- Don't cross your arms or legs
  - You have probably already heard you shouldn't cross your arms as it might make you seem defensive or guarded.
  - This goes for your legs too. Keep your arms and legs open.
- Have eye contact, but don't stare
  - If there are several people you are talking to, give them all some eye contact to create a better connection and see if they are listening.
  - Keeping too much eye-contact might creep people out.
  - Giving no eye-contact might make you seem insecure.
  - If you are not used to keeping eye-contact it might feel a little hard or scary in the beginning but keep working on it and you'll get used to it.
- Don't be afraid to take up some space
  - Taking up space by for example sitting or standing with your legs apart a bit signals self-confidence and that you are comfortable in your own skin.
- Relax your shoulders
  - When you feel tense it's easily winds up as tension in your shoulders.
  - They might move up and forward a bit.
  - Try to relax.
  - Try to loosen up by shaking the shoulders a bit and move them back slightly.
- Nod when they are talking



- o Nod once in a while to signal that you are listening.
  - o Don't overdo it and peck like Woody Woodpecker.
- Don't slouch, sit up straight
  - o In a relaxed way, not in a too tense manner.
- Lean, but not too much
  - o If you want to show that you are interested in what someone is saying, lean toward the person talking.
  - o If you want to show that you're confident in yourself and relaxed lean back a bit.
  - o Don't lean in too much or you might seem needy and desperate for some approval. Or lean back too much or you might seem arrogant and distant.
- Smile and laugh
  - o Lighten up, don't take yourself too seriously.
  - o Relax a bit, smile and laugh when someone says something funny.
  - o People will be a lot more inclined to listen to you if you seem to be a positive person.
  - o Don't be the first to laugh at your own jokes, it makes you seem nervous and needy.
  - o Smile when you are introduced to someone but don't keep a smile plastered on your face, you'll seem insincere.
- Don't touch your face
  - o It might make you seem nervous and can be distracting for the listeners or the people in the conversation.
- Keep you head up
  - o Don't keep your eyes on the ground, it might make you seem insecure and a bit lost.
  - o Keep your head up straight and your eyes towards the horizon.
- Slow down a bit
  - o This goes for many things, walking slower not only makes you seem more calm and confident, it will also make you feel less stressed.
  - o If someone addresses you, don't snap you're neck in their direction, turn it a bit more slowly instead.
- Don't fidget
  - o Try to avoid, phase out or transform fidgety movement and nervous ticks such as shaking your leg or tapping your fingers against the table rapidly.
  - o You'll seem nervous and fidgeting can be a distracting when you try to get something across.
  - o Declutter your movements if you are all over the place.
  - o Try to relax, slow down and focus your movements.
- Use your hands more confidently
  - o Instead of fidgeting with your hands and scratching your face use them to communicate what you are trying to say.
  - o Use your hands to describe something or to add weight to a point you are trying to make.
  - o But don't use them to much or it might become distracting, don't let your hands flail around, use them with some control.
- Lower your drink
  - o Don't hold anything in front of your heart as it will make you seem guarded and distant.
  - o Lower it and hold it beside your leg instead.

- Realise where you spine ends
  - Many people might sit or stand with a straight back in a good posture.
  - However, they might think that the spine ends where the neck begins and therefore crane the neck forward in a Montgomery Burns-pose.
  - Your spine ends in the back of your head. Keep you whole spine straight and aligned for better posture.
- Don't stand too close
  - One of the things we learned is that everybody gets weirded out by a close-talker
  - Let people have their personal space, don't invade it.
- Keep a good attitude –
  - Keep a positive, open and relaxed attitude.
  - How you feel will come through in your body language and can make a major difference.