

Resources

- Nathaniel Branden. How To Raise Your Self-Esteem.
- Marcus Buckingham & Curt Coffman. First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently.
- Clark A. Campbell. The One-Page Project Manager: Communicate and Manage Any Project With a Single Sheet of Paper
- Gavin De Becker. The Gift of Fear.
- Roger Fisher and William Ury. Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In. (and anything else they wrote)
- John Gastil. Democracy in Small Groups: Participation, Decision Making & Communication. (And anything else he wrote)
- Robert Greenleaf. Servant Leadership. (And anything else he wrote)
- Dick Grote. Discipline Without Punishment: The Proven Strategy That Turns Problem Employees into Superior Performers.
- Elliott Jaques. Executive Leadership: A Practical Guide to Managing Complexity.
- Tom Kendrick. Results Without Authority: Controlling a Project When the Team Doesn't Report to You.
- Joan Magretta and Nan Stone. What Management Is: How It Works and Why It's Everyone's Business.
- Patrick J. McKenna and David H. Maister. First Among Equals: How to Manage a Group of Professionals.
- Roger K. Mosvick and Robert B. Nelson. We've Got to Start Meeting Like This: A Guide to Successful Meeting Management.
- Stanley Portney. Project Management for Dummies.
- Project Management Institute. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge.
- Karen Pryor. Don't Shoot the Dog: The New Art of Teaching and Training.
- Claire Raines and The Art of Connecting: How to Overcome Differences, Build Rapport, and Communicate Effectively with Anyone.
- Virginia Satir. The New Peoplemaking.
- Martin Seligman. Learned Optimism. (And anything else he wrote)
- Eric Verzuh. The Fast Forward MBA in Project Management: Quick Tips, Speedy Solutions, and Cutting-Edge Ideas.

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A Toolbox for More Effective Communication In Person and Online

Hortonville Public Library–Friday, May 29, 2015 - 9:00am to 3:00pm

Pat Wagner–sieralearn.com–pat@sieralearn.com

Communication Mistakes Only Really Really Smart or Busy People Make

These mistakes can prevent effective communication in the workplace. The reasons that really smart people make these mistakes include: How we were rewarded as kids for being smart. What we choose as rewards as adults; what we choose to value. Habit. Smugness. What we do best.

1. We think we are not human. We pretend we are not affected by grief, anger, fear, lack of sleep, illness, drugs, and alcohol.
2. We focus on the incompetence of others, rather than take responsibility for our own lack of supervisory and coaching skills.
3. We feel the need to control other people and excuse this impulse with the smartness rule. We think the way we do things are the way all smart people do things and the way the rest of the world should do things.
4. We equate all rank, authority, influence, and privilege with smartness. We don't recognize other people's equality or superiority, outside of our narrow definition of smartness.
5. We excuse our flaws in the name of smartness and expect other people to accommodate us. In fact, we claim our flaws are virtues.
6. We are clueless; no awareness of our behaviors' effects on others.
7. We think we have nothing to learn, outside of the smartness stuff.

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How to Influence Behavior: Three Steps

First step: Rapport - Understanding Your World

1. Like or similar: part of the tribe, a peer.
2. One or more facets of each person connect.
3. Pace the other person's speed; use the same language.
4. Recognize the other person's story; see, hear, and understand the world from his or her point of view, whether or not you agree with it: Empathy.
5. The other person feels visible and validated.

Second step: Information - Understanding the Big Picture

1. Explicit: No mind reading.
2. In the person's learning preference: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.
3. Timely: Information exchange is give and seek, not give and take.
4. In appropriately sized chunks.
5. Measurable and observable data.

Third step: Action - Understanding My Choices

1. Take responsibility: Be accountable.
2. Respect the behavioral impact of Cause and Effect.
3. Something changes. Something moves.
4. Alternatives are created; choices are made.
5. Risks are evaluated and taken: the cost of doing business.
6. Consequences can be positive or negative. Positive works best!

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Motivation

What helps people feel committed and inspired?

Short version:

1. Catch them doing something right.
2. Tell them what they are doing right.
3. Reward them immediately.

Long version:

1. Listen for their stories. What is important to them, on their terms? What gives their lives meaning and purpose?
2. See all the facets of your employees, colleagues, customers, students, faculty, administrators, support staff, supervisors, taxpayers, and leaders, not just the good or the bad?
3. Use the values that are significant to the person, in the language or words he or she uses, from his or her perspective.
4. Learn from them. Ask questions before you tell someone what to do; maybe you don't have to micromanage after all!
5. Stay in the present moment and talk about a compelling future. Use the past for information, not for punishment. Tell them what you want, not what you don't want. Be concise.

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6. Pay attention to the details of your behavior, so that you use the same sets of behavior with the people you like AND the people you don't like. Keep track so you don't forget anyone.
7. Less than five praises to one criticism can cause feelings of depression and inadequacy even in healthy people. Do you only recognize people when they are wrong?
8. Beware of cheapening praise by "gushing".
9. Say thank you with your whole body: eyes, voice, inflection, smile, and posture.
10. Stay conscious about praise, so it does not sound empty, rote, and insignificant.
11. Model the behavior you want to elicit from others. For example, accept criticism gracefully, invite specific feedback, praise publicly, thank people for their help, let others manage and lead, delegate significantly, share the rewards, keep in touch, do not choose to whom to be polite based on status, position, tenure, or title, treat everyone with the same courtesy.
12. Help colleagues to save face: criticize only in private.
13. Take responsibility for the mistakes you have made with employees in the past. Be aware that these will come back to haunt you when you change your behavior.

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Communication Cheat Sheet

1. Focus only on external evidence, not hearsay, interpretations, and feelings. Use neutral language.
2. Take positive action despite what other people are doing.
3. Move towards your own better behavior - instead!
4. Communication is not give and take, it is give and seek!
5. Don't get angry; get interested.
6. Stay unconditionally constructive.
7. Ask for preferences.
8. Mistakes are information.
9. Seek feedback from everyone: What should I be doing differently?
10. 8. Decide how to handle mistakes before they happen.
11. Use all three strategies: Rapport, information, and action.
12. Renegotiate your social contracts, so you are not compensating emotionally in the workplace for chronic home problems.
13. Create your own compelling workplace future; keep looking for your next customer/adventure. Actively job-hunt all the time!
14. Stay level: relaxed, alert, good-humored. No sarcasm.
15. Speak only for yourself; respond directly to what other people say.
16. Participate instead of lurking.
17. Discuss an event only with the person with whom it happened.
18. Assume you are part of the problem and part of the solution.
19. Stay in the present; work for the future.
20. If you don't know what to do, stay civil.
21. Find joy every day in your life.
22. Set other people up for success; start small.
23. Find the good in others.

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Negative Obsessions

1. Generalizations: always, never, all, every.
2. Repeating the same negative stories or information more than once in the same conversation.
3. Repeating the same stories in response to new information.
4. Assuming the worst of the people you don't like.
5. Ignoring or not being able to see and hear positive change.
6. Your first response is to criticize or say something negative.
7. Feeling as if feeling good means you have lost the battle.
8. Equating telling the truth as telling other people off, instead of apologizing for your own mistakes first.
9. Saying negative things if someone says something good about someone you don't like.
10. Telling new people only the negative things about the workplace and other people.
11. Spending your time at work thinking and talking about other people's past mistakes.
12. Spending encounters with other people watching for mistakes.
13. Rejecting offers of help with "Yes, but."
14. Rejecting people who are positive and constructive.
15. Saying that your own mistakes in communication and behavior are justified, because other people did something to you first.
16. Exaggerating bad news and minimizing or discounting the good news.
17. Using punishment words. Sarcasm. Hurtful humor.
18. Trying to convince other people how bad things are.
19. Distorting meaning through negative filters.

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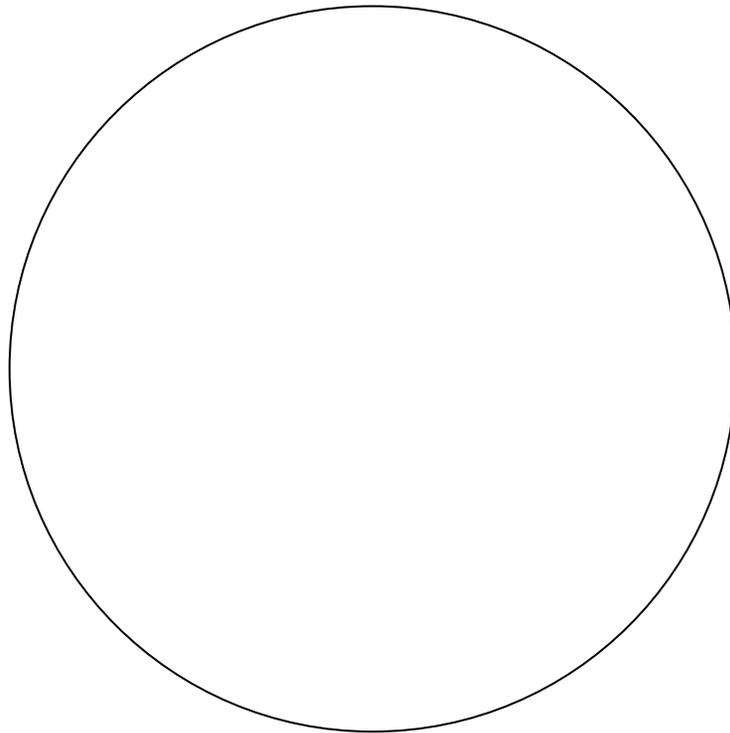
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Treating People as Peers

1. What does it mean to hold someone else in esteem? How we treat other people is a reflection of how we feel about ourselves.

The circle exercise reminds us to treat other people as equals. We do not talk down or put down another person. We do not placate or lie to please. We manage the situation instead of trying to control other people and treat everyone with the same consistent courtesy. How would your behavior change if you really thought the other person was at the same level with you?



2. What did your best bosses do for you? Make a list of the best "bosses" you have had - could be your parents, siblings, teachers, ministers, relatives, friends, coaches, supervisors, or managers. Why are you a better person because of them? What do you admire most about them? Why will you always remember them? If you have never had a great boss, what do you WISH a boss had done for you?

3. If your first task was to do a better job of earning the trust and respect of the people you work with and for, and eliciting the best from other people at your workplace, what would you be doing differently?

4. What are three reasonable next steps you personally could take to change or otherwise improve your workplace, in addition to the ideas in question #3?

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Words That Work

Turn a NO, which slams the door shut, into a possibility, which provides information and moves customers closer to solving their own problems.

1. Use “Yes” as a placeholder word.
2. Replace “Yes, but...” with “Yes, and...”
3. Replace “I don’t know” with “Let me find out.”
4. Replace “I can’t” with “What I can do is...”
5. Replace “We can’t do that” with “What I can do is...”
6. Replace “We can’t do that” with “Here is the address and phone number of the organization that has that service, book, web site, computer, or information.”
7. Replace “You make me feel” with “I feel...”
8. Replace “You must...” with “Would you please...”
9. Replace “I will help you in a minute” with “I will be finished with this taxpayer in ten minutes. Would you like to wait, come back, find help at another desk, or have me call you after a specific length of time?”
10. Replace “I will try” with the smaller, specific thing you will actually do.
11. Replace “You are wrong” with, “This is the information I have, and here is the document I am using as my source of information. Please tell me more about what you know, so I can better understand your perspective on the situation and where you received your information.”
12. Use power words:
 - a. Next: Next time, please tell me first when the computer is down.
 - b. Instead: What supplies do you want instead of the ones we ordered?
 - c. Despite: Despite the confusion about the hours, what are you going to do?
 - d. Satisfy: What will satisfy your concerns about the new policy?
13. Focus on the other person:
 - a. Focus on the other person’s desired outcome (the future), not just your own resources (present) or the other person’s problem (the past).
 - b. Be specific; avoid generalities.
 - c. Say what can be done, instead of what can’t be done.
 - d. Your nonverbal communication—your smile, tone of voice, and posture—will build rapport and thus, better outcomes.
14. Bad news is the best information; learn from mistakes.

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The Importance of Precision

Respect, and other words that have no meaning

One skill required to ensure effective communication is the ability to talk about specific behavior in a precise manner. For example, many people who are unhappy about how they are being treated by their supervisors will say they want “respect”. By using the word “respect,” they are not giving the other party specific information. Here are some specific requests for “respectful” behavior.

1. “I want you to address me by my name, instead of ‘Hey you!’”
2. “I want to be introduced to visitors to the department.”
3. “I want to be invited to budget meetings at least once a month.”
4. “I want to have your attention without your interrupting our conversations in your office to take phone calls.”
5. “I want you to let me finish my sentences.”
6. “I want to see some of my ideas implemented or know the reasons why they not being used.”
7. “I want to be included in decision-making that affects my job.”
8. “I want to be asked to stay late, not told.”
9. “I want the rules to apply to everyone in the office equally.”
10. “I want you to be quiet and look at me when I am giving presentations in team meetings.”
11. “I want a turn running staff meetings.”
12. “I want you to give me criticism about my work in private, not in front of my team members.”
13. “I want you to say hello to me every day.”
14. “I want to be given more difficult projects.”

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21st Communication Cheat Sheet

For the Times When We Aren't Standing in the Same Physical Space, Looking At Each Other

1. All technology sucks.
2. E-mail, IM, etc., are terrible at conveying emotional nuances; audio is better than text only. Audio and video are better than text only. If it is really important, do it face-to-face.
3. If it is really important, give the human being on the other side of the interaction your full attention.
4. Write, save, and edit, before you copy, paste, and send.
5. Pushing information doesn't work; less is more.
6. Phone tips:
 - a. Talk slowly and a little louder than usual.
 - b. Make it a dialog, not a monolog.
 - c. Ask questions.
 - d. Listen and match speed.
 - e. Listen and match verbs.
 - f. Check in frequently during the conversation.
7. E-mail tips:
 - a. Less is more.
 - b. Summarize in the subject heading.
 - c. Summarize in the message.
 - d. No fancy formatting.
 - e. Stick to facts.
 - f. Number lists.
 - g. Acknowledge.

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