

How much time and attention do we pay to how, and what, we say? When time is running short and there is no end to the work, mindful, compassionate communication usually suffers.

Mindful Communication is a chance to explore tools, structures, and strategies for effectively and empathetically communication, even in high-pressure situations. We'll discuss mindful communication through the lens of:

- Needs-Based Communication (based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg and The Center for Nonviolent Communication)
- Equity (exploring microaggressions and high/low context culture)
- Active Listening Skills (listening based on connection, not correction)
- Writing (clear asks, clear offers)

Presenter: Steven Joiner, Career Development Program Specialist at Multnomah County

You can't walk a mile in someone else's shoes until you take off your own shoes.

*I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. **Maya Angelou***

*When you really listen to another person from their point of view, and reflect back to them that understanding, it's like giving them emotional oxygen. **Stephen Covey***

*Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk. **Doug Larson***

*Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. **Stephen R. Covey***

*Most conversations are monologues in the presence of witnesses. **Mark Twain***

*Before you criticize a man, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, when you do criticize him, you'll be a mile away and have his shoes. **Steve Martin***

Needs-Based Communication

Two Modes of Communication	
Speaking: honestly expressing how I am without blaming or criticizing	Listening: Empathetically receiving how you are without hearing blame or criticism
Observation: When I see/hear...	Observation: When you see/hear
Feeling: I feel...	Feeling: Are you feeling...?
Need: Because I need...	Need: Because you need... ?
Request: Would you be willing... ?	Request: Would you like... ?

Ways We Stay Connected to Feelings & Needs¹

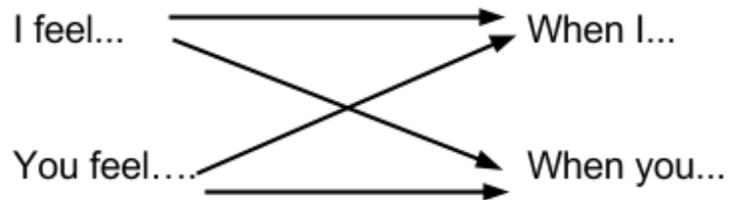
- Notice a disconnecting response when it arises.
- Notice your feelings & needs before responding to someone else.
- Be willing to honestly express your feelings & needs or set them aside for the moment.
- Guess the feelings & needs of the other person whether out loud or silently. Embrace an attitude of curiosity.

Ways We Disconnect with Feelings & Needs

- SYMPATHY: Bring attention back to yourself. "Oh, I am so sorry, I feel terrible for you."
- ADVICE: We assume the person needs information. "Well, what you could do is..."
- EXPLAIN / ANALYZE: We believe we know why someone feels the way we do and think knowing why will change a feeling state. "You just feel bad because ..."
- CORRECT: We try to point out someone's mistake in interpreting. "He didn't do that to hurt you, he was just in a hurry."
- CONSOLE: "It will be okay. You're okay, everything will work out."
- TELL A STORY: "The same thing happened to me. This one time..."
- PUSH AWAY FEELINGS: We might be uncomfortable so we tell others not to feel what they feel. "Come on, smile, don't be sad." "Just calm down and take a deep breath."
- INVESTIGATE / INTEROGATE: "Why did you do that? What made you feel that way?"
- EVALUATE: We decide if another's emotional response is appropriate or not. "You are over reacting. This is no big deal. "
- EDUCATE: "What I see about the situation is..." "The reason you feel like that is..."

¹ From "Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life" by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D.

- ONE-UP: "That's awful, but something even worse happened to me and I was devastated"
- DIAGNOSE: "Sounds like you had a panic attack. I know some good herbs for anxiety."
- DEMAND: "If you don't get control of your emotions, I'm leaving!"
- DENIAL OF CHOICE: "It's a hard thing, but we all have to do it."



Differentiations

Observations vs. Evaluations

Feelings vs. Thoughts

Needs vs. Strategies

Requests vs. Demands

Equity & Inclusion



DIVERSITY	INCLUSION	EQUITY
WHO we are... our differences and similarities.	HOW we manage and maximize... the challenges and benefits of our diversity.	WHAT we are trying to achieve... equitable outcomes within our organization and we serve.
Diversity is the feature of a mixed workforce that provides a wide range of abilities and experience due to its heterogeneity in age background, ethnicity, physical abilities, etc.	Inclusion is the valuing of all people within an organization, enabling it to benefit from the richness of contributions. It is about process and culture.	Equity is when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential.

Inclusion Framework

	Low Belongingness	High Belongingness
Low Value in Uniqueness	Exclusion Individual is not treated as an organizational insider with unique value in the work group but there are other employees or groups who are insiders.	Assimilation Individual is treated as an insider in the work group when they conform to organizational/dominant culture norms and downplay uniqueness.
High Value in Uniqueness	Differentiation Individual is not treated as an organizational insider in the work group but their unique characteristics are seen as valuable and required for group/ organization success.	Inclusion Individual is treated as an insider and also allowed/encouraged to retain uniqueness within the work group.

Cultural Humility: A Way of Being in the World (Guskin, 1991)

- Recognize that different, even conflicting, cultural perspectives can be equally legitimate.
- Assume good intent and suspend judgment.
- Question your own perspective.
- Assume we may not know what is really going on.
- Clarify what is expected from those around you.
- Allow others to direct us in appropriate behavior.
- Accept the creative tension of holding two or more different perspectives.
- Seek the “third culture” common ground for effective interactions.

Equity & Empowerment: 5 P's

What is the **Purpose**?

People

- Who is positively and negatively affected and how?
- How are people differently situated in terms of the barriers they experience?
- Are people traumatized/retraumatized by this issue/decision area?
- ***Consider physical, spiritual, emotional, and contextual effects***

Place

- How is this issue/decision accounting for people's emotional and physical safety, and their need to be productive and feel valued?
- How are you considering environmental impacts as well as environmental justice?
- How are public resources and investments distributed geographically?

Power

- What are the barriers to doing equity and racial justice work?
- What are the benefits and burdens that communities experience with this issue?
- Who is accountable?
- What is the decision-making structure?
- How is this issue shifting power dynamics to better integrate voices and priorities of communities of color?

Process

- How are we meaningful including or excluding people who are affected?
- What policies, processes, and social relationships contribute to the exclusion of communities most affected by inequities?
- Are there empowering processes at every human touchpoint?
- What processes are traumatizing and how do we improve them?

The SCARF Model

“The threat response is often triggered in social situations, and it tends to be more intense and last longer than the reward response... The threat response is both mentally taxing and deadly to the productivity of a person—or an organization... Research into the social nature of the brain suggests another piece of the puzzle. Five particular qualities enable employees and leaders alike to minimize the threat response and instead enable the reward response.”

From “Managing with the Brain in Mind” by David Rock



Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being RECOGNIZED, but not just about promotion. • Feeling VALUED. • Being ALIGNED with the larger mission.
Certainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRANSPARENCY of rules and decisions. • CLARITY of expectations. • HONEST ANSWERS to questions, even if unknowns.
Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SELF-CHOICE built into systems. • WORKFLOW organized to fit own style—not micromanaged. • BALANCE of work and life.
Relatedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHARED goals, values identified—find commonalities. • Build TRUST so so there isn't undo competitiveness. • EMPATHY to accept one another—suspend judgment.
Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRANSPARENCY of own and others' work—avoid silos. • ASK for clarity—assume good intent. • EXPLAIN the what and why—avoid defensiveness.

DARING GREATLY

ENGAGED FEEDBACK CHECKLIST

I KNOW I'M READY TO GIVE FEEDBACK WHEN:

- 1** I'M READY TO SIT NEXT TO YOU RATHER THAN ACROSS FROM YOU
- I'M WILLING TO PUT THE PROBLEM IN FRONT OF US RATHER THAN BETWEEN US (OR SLIDING IT TOWARD YOU)
- 3** I'M READY TO LISTEN, ASK QUESTIONS, AND ACCEPT THAT I MAY NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE
- I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT YOU DO WELL INSTEAD OF PICKING APART YOUR MISTAKES
- 5** I RECOGNIZE YOUR STRENGTHS AND HOW YOU CAN USE THEM TO ADDRESS YOUR CHALLENGES
- I CAN HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE WITHOUT SHAMING OR BLAMING YOU
- 7** I'M WILLING TO OWN MY PART
- I CAN GENUINELY THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS RATHER THAN CRITICIZE YOU FOR YOUR FAILINGS
- 9** I CAN TALK ABOUT HOW RESOLVING THESE CHALLENGES WILL LEAD TO YOUR GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY
- I CAN MODEL THE VULNERABILITY AND OPENNESS THAT I EXPECT TO SEE FROM YOU
- 10**

- from *Daring Greatly* by Brené Brown -

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Active Listening: Seek to Connect, Not Correct

- Communication is 60% listening
 - But we retain 25%
- Recalibrating
 - **Silence, The Mixer, Savoring, Positions, RASA** (receive, appreciate, summarize, ask)



Julian Treasure "5 Ways to Listen Better" TED Talk

Blocks to Listening

- ❖ Comparing
- ❖ Mind Reading
- ❖ Rehearsing
- ❖ Filtering
- ❖ Judging
- ❖ Dreaming
- ❖ Identifying
- ❖ Advising
- ❖ Sparring
- ❖ Being Right
- ❖ Derailing
- ❖ Placating

Blocks to (and reasons for) Having Difficult Conversations

- ❖ Triangulating
- ❖ Not recognizing difference
- ❖ Poor Timing
- ❖ A Sense (of lack thereof) of Hierarchy
- ❖ Different Roles and Responsibilities
- ❖ "Just Venting"
- ❖ Focus on Difference, Need to Correct

Paths to Understanding

- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Perspective
- ❖ Connect, Don't Correct
- ❖ Explore Needs
- ❖ Start with Commonalities
- ❖ Appreciate Difference
- ❖ Think, Speak, Think

QUESTIONING strategies and skills

- "Can you say more about what you mean?"
- "How did you arrive at that conclusion?"
- "Why do you believe that to be true?"
- "How do you think members of that group are impacted by _____?"
- "How are you impacted by _____?"
- "What kind of impact do you think _____ might have on _____?"
- "It sounds like you think/believe _____. Is that accurate?"
- "Help me understand what you mean by _____."
- "How are you feeling about that?" "What was that experience like for you?"
- "Where did that come from?" "Where did you learn that?"
- "What does that mean to you?"
- "How does that (stereotype/belief) impact your relationships with _____?"
- "Can you tell (another trusted person) how you feel about that?"
- "Are you willing to dialogue about this with _____?" (now or later?)
- Be honest about your experience and show empathy:
 - "As a man I have not experienced concern for my safety while jogging after dark, but I can imagine you must have felt afraid, nervous, panicky, alone, threatened...."
 - You said, "You know what it's like when a Muslim goes in to rent an apartment." I realize that I am not Muslim, can you tell me more about what that means to you?

Situation

- Describe the situation - when and where the behavior occurred.
- Be specific. The goal is for the receiver to be clear about the time, place, and circumstance.

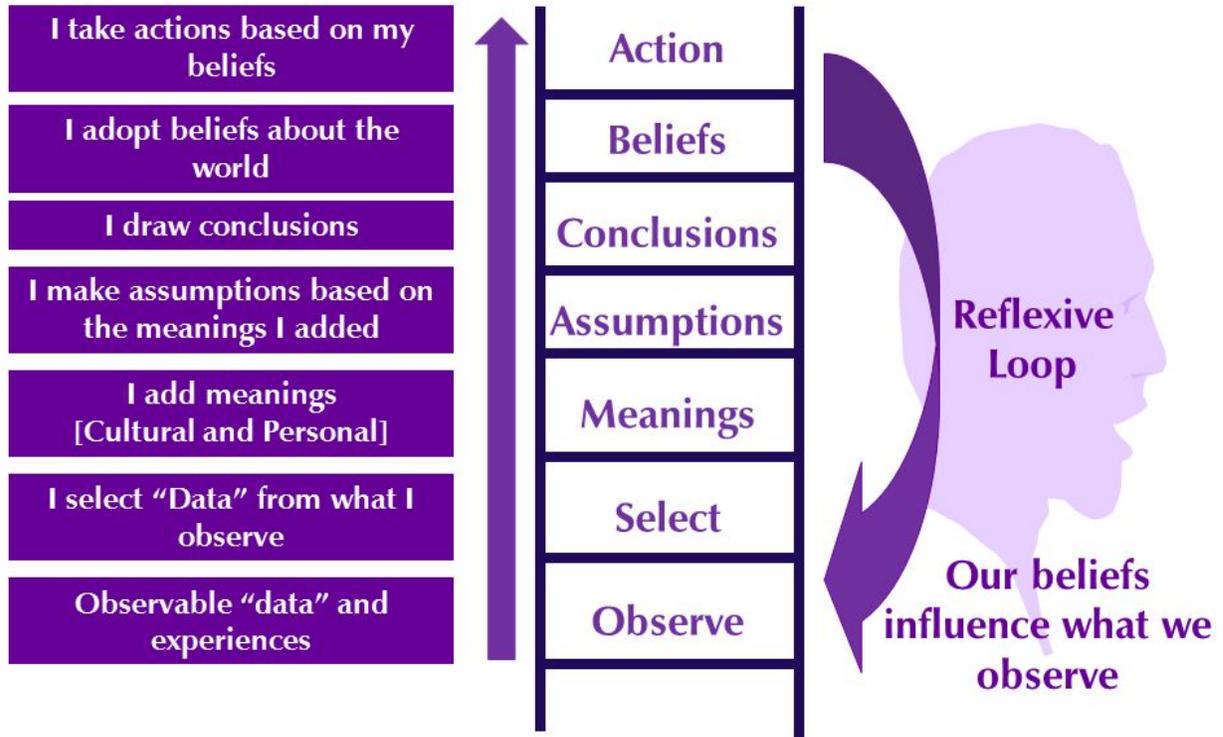
Behavior

- Describe the observable behavior. Keep it simple and descriptive.
- "Here's what I saw and heard."
- Do not talk about what you assume the other person was thinking, or his or her motivation for the behavior. No "thought police."

Impact

- Impact is what you thought or felt, and /or how others reacted to the behavior. You can accurately describe only those thoughts and feelings that are your own; but you may describe the outward reaction of others who were present.
- Impact reveals something about you the observer, whereas Situation and Behavior are about the other person.

The Ladder of Inference



Writing: Clear Asks, Clear Answers

“I would have written a shorter letter, but I did not have the time.”

—Blaise Pascal

“Email is familiar. It’s comfortable. It’s easy to use. But it might just be the biggest killer of time and productivity in the office today.”

—Ryan Holmes, Founder and CEO of HootSuite

When can you follow “The **OHIO** Rule” (**O**nly **H**andle **I**t **O**nce)???

When can you give that gift to others?

Can you say it in fewer words? (Hint: YES!)

Prepositions, Passive Voice, Repetition, “Softener” Language

Tell them what you’re going to tell them

Tell them

Tell them what you told them

What’s the **issue**?

Why does it **matter**?

What do you **want me to do** about it?

Business Emails Template

1. I’m writing you to (**verb**) (number of items) and to (specific action then need to take upon completion of reading your email).”
2. Each **point** (as outlined above)
3. Conclude with your **requested action** (and timeline)... **bolded**

When someone receives written correspondence from you, they can now assume **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE. Before you write, know**

Purpose	Why are you writing?
R elationship	<i>What is your relationship?</i>
I nquiry	<i>What is your ask?</i>
O ffer	<i>What are you offering to do?</i>
R esponse	<i>What kind of response do you need?</i>

Get **SASSSY**

Simple writing – make it easy, readers are busy.

Active voice

Short words

Short sentences – (15-17 words)

Short paragraphs – several sentences or single sentence paragraphs

You Rock!

Wordiness is a major problem in business writing today. Documents that are longer than they need to be tax the reader's time and patience. Wordiness is a bad habit that many of us have picked up over the years. You can unlearn these bad habits by applying the following ideas. They will make your writing more concise and help you help your readers move along quickly.

HOW DOES YOUR WRITING MEASURE UP?

Use this tool to assess your writing by checking the most appropriate box for each characteristic. For even better results, ask someone else to read and assess it independently.

OUT = Outstanding

ACC = Acceptable

MID = Much improvement desired

EXC = Excellent

SID = Some improvement desired

N/A = Not applicable

"READER FRIENDLY" WRITING CHARACTERISTICS	OUT	EXC	ACC	SID	MID	N/A
Is it easy to read? Is it short? Is it clear?						
Was it read? Was it understood? Did it achieve the desired results?						
Is it "SASSy": <u>S</u> imple writing, <u>A</u> ctive voice, <u>S</u> hort words, <u>S</u> hort sentences, and <u>S</u> hort paragraphs?						
Is it written for your audience?						
Is the purpose clear?						
Is the language concrete and specific?						
Does each sentence hold just one idea or concept?						
Does each paragraph develop just one idea?						
Is it organized in a way that makes sense and is easy to follow?						
Does it appropriately use a direct or indirect approach?						
Does it use short words, sentences and paragraphs?						
Does it contain only necessary words (i.e., did you edit it ruthlessly)?						
Does it contain lots of verbs?						
Does it contain more active verbs than passive verbs?						
Is the tone appropriate?						
Is the language non-sexist? Is there jargon?						
Is it visually appealing?						
Does it follow rules of style, usage, grammar, punctuation, & spelling?						
Does it have good readability statistics?						
Does it show respect for your receiver's time by being as simple, clear and concise as possible?						