BALL GAME: CONTROLLING AND INFLUENCING COMMUNICATION

Goals

- To explore the dynamics of assuming leadership in a group.
- To increase awareness of the power held by the member of a group who is speaking at any given time.
- To diagnose communication patterns in a group.

Group Size

Six to twelve participants. Several subgroups may be directed simultaneously.

Time Required

Approximately thirty minutes.

Materials

A ball or other convenient object for each group.

Process

1. The facilitator explains that in the following discussion session, the manner in which the participants will interact will be limited. He or she tells them that possession of the ball (or other object) that he or she is holding will determine who may speak. The facilitator further explains that the participant with the ball must keep it until someone signals verbally that they wish to have it. The individual holding the ball may refuse to give it to a member who requests it.

2. If process observers are to be used, they are selected and briefed.

3. The facilitator announces a topic for the group to discuss, based upon the goals and experiences of the group. It is important to ensure that significant interaction will be generated. (Examples: silent members, expressing negative feedback, barriers to doing one’s job, reactions to the training session so far.)

4. The facilitator hands the ball to a participant, indicating that the discussion period is to begin.

5. After fifteen minutes have passed, the facilitator indicates that the discussion is over.
6. The group processes the experience in terms of the power phenomena that emerge in reference to the holder of the ball, frustrations involved in attempting to gain or hold this power, and the patterns of communication that emerge during this experience.

7. If process observers have been used, the facilitator asks them to provide feedback for the group.

**Variations**

- The facilitator may wish to introduce a power play (or illustrate the lack of it) in the beginning by placing the ball in the center of the group rather than with an individual.

- Participants can be given pencils and paper and be instructed to make notes to themselves on the announced topic prior to the discussion period. (This affords them the opportunity to crystallize their points of view and heightens participation.) The facilitator may direct that each participant must get the ball often enough to get all of his or her points into the discussion.

- Two balls can be used, so that paired interaction is possible. Alternatively, the facilitator may invite participants to toss the ball back and forth in confronting each other. (This process can result in more effective listening.)

- A ball of string is passed around and unwound as the experience progresses, resulting in a physical sociogram or interactiongram.

Submitted by Ronald D. Jorgenson.
HELPING RELATIONSHIPS: VERBAL AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Goals
- To demonstrate the effects of posturing and eye contact on helping relationships.
- To focus group members’ attention on the impact of their nonverbal behaviors on other individuals.
- To teach basic nonverbal listening and attending skills.

Group Size
No more than twenty participants.

Time Required
Approximately thirty minutes.

Physical Setting
Movable chairs and open space.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the experience by discussing the verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication, pointing out that although individuals seem to rely primarily on verbal cues in their interactions, nonverbal cues (gestures, posture, tone of voice, etc.) are also important in communication. To reinforce this point, the facilitator demonstrates how nonverbal cues can either contradict or confirm a verbal message. To demonstrate contradiction, he or she approaches a group member and says, “I like you,” with his voice raised in anger and his hands clenched into fists. To demonstrate confirmation, he approaches the group member and says, “I like you,” in a warm manner, followed by a hug.

2. The facilitator announces that the activity will consist of forming pairs and exploring the effects of different seating arrangements. The members of each pair are told to sit in different positions; as they assume each position they are to remain silent and be aware of the effect of that seating arrangement.

3. Participants form pairs, and the facilitator directs them to sit back to back without talking. After the pairs have been sitting in this position for about a minute, the facilitator directs them to sit side by side. After another minute, the pairs are instructed to sit face to face.
4. After another minute, each pair discusses its reactions to the activity. The facilitator elicits observations about the experience from the entire group.

5. The pairs are seated face to face and silently assume three body postures (one minute each): slouched, straight, and leaning forward.

6. Each pair then discusses its reactions to the preceding round. The facilitator elicits observations about the experience from the entire group.

7. One partner assumes the role of helpee; the other partner assumes the role of helper.

8. While seated face to face, the pairs silently experience three different eye-contact situations (one minute each):
   - The helper attempts to look the helpee in the eye while the helpee looks down or away.
   - The helpee attempts to look the helper in the eye while the helper looks down or away.
   - The helper and the helpee have direct eye-to-eye contact.

9. Step 6 is repeated.

10. After processing the eye-contact experience, the facilitator leads a discussion of the participants’ overall reactions to the sequence of activities. The discussion is focused on the integration and application of this learning.

**Variations**

- Participants can be permitted to talk at any time during the experience. The talking may include counseling on “real” problems.
- In the face-to-face situation participants can be directed to move their chairs to a distance that is most comfortable for them.
- The process can be combined with a “group-on-group” design. One pair is seated in the center of the group and goes through the activity sequence. The other group members are instructed to observe the impact of the different positionings and to report their observations.
- Different pairs can be formed for each round of the activity.

**REFERENCES**


ONE-WAY, TWO-WAY: A COMMUNICATION EXPERIMENT

Goals
- To conceptualize the superior functioning of two-way communication through participatory demonstration.
- To examine the application of communication in family, social, and occupational settings.

Group Size
Unlimited.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- Newsprint and felt-tipped marker.
- Two sheets of paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A reproduction of Diagram I and Diagram II for the demonstrator.

Physical Setting
Participants should be seated facing the demonstrator, but in such a way that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to see one another’s drawings.

Process
1. The facilitator may wish to begin with a discussion about ways of looking at communication in terms of content, direction, networks, or interference.
2. The facilitator explains that the group will experiment with the directional aspects of communication by participating in the following activity:
   - The facilitator selects a demonstrator and one or two observers. The remaining participants each are supplied with a pencil and two sheets of paper. They are instructed to label one sheet Diagram I and the other Diagram II.
   - The facilitator tells the group that the demonstrator will give them directions for drawing a series of squares. Participants are instructed to draw the
squares exactly as the demonstrator tells them, on the paper labeled Diagram I. Participants may neither ask questions nor give audible responses.

- The demonstrator is asked to study the arrangement of the squares in Diagram I for two minutes.
- The facilitator instructs the observers to take notes on the behavior and reactions of the demonstrator and/or the participants.
- The facilitator prepares the following three tables on newsprint.

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<th>Estimate</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Diagram II</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Elapsed</td>
<td>Estimated Median</td>
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<td>Actual Median</td>
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- The facilitator asks the demonstrator to turn his or her back to the group or to stand behind a screen. The facilitator then asks the demonstrator to proceed and to tell the group what to draw as quickly and as accurately as possible. The facilitator again cautions the group not to ask questions.
The time it takes the demonstrator to complete the instructions is recorded in the summary Table 3 under Diagram I.

Each participant is asked to estimate the number of squares he or she has drawn correctly in relation to the other squares. The facilitator then tabulates the participants’ estimates in Table I.

The first phase of the experience is repeated with the following modifications: The demonstrator uses Diagram II, faces the group, and is allowed to respond to questions from the group. The participants should use the papers labeled Diagram II.

The facilitator has each of the participants estimate the number of squares he or she has drawn correctly in the second phase of the activity and tabulates the estimates on Table 2. The facilitator then uses Tables 1 and 2 to calculate the median (or average) estimated accuracy for both Diagram I and Diagram II. These medians are posted in Table 3.

The group is then shown the actual diagrams for the two sets of squares. Each participant counts the number of squares he or she has drawn correctly on each diagram.

In the last columns of Tables 1 and 2, the facilitator tabulates the number of squares the participants have drawn correctly for each diagram. From the data, the facilitator determines the medians for Diagrams I and II and enters these in Table 3.

3. The facilitator leads a discussion of the results in terms of time, accuracy, and level of confidence, calling upon “back-home” experience and application.

4. The observers report their process observations. The group discusses these in relation to the data generated during the first phase of the discussion.

**Variations**

- Instead of medians, means (arithmetic averages) may be computed.
- Additional phases such as the following can be included:
  - Two-way, with demonstrator facing participants, who are permitted to react nonverbally.
  - Two-way, with demonstrator not facing participants.
  - Two or more participants can be selected to work together as a demonstration team.
  - Teams of participants can be formed to draw the diagrams on newsprint cooperatively.
- The content can be changed to include data relevant to the objectives of the training and/or a more complex type of problem.
- Physical models, such as those made of dominoes or blocks, can be described by the demonstrator.

Instructions: Study the series of squares below. With your back to the group, you are to direct the participants in how they are to draw the figures. Begin with the top square and describe each in succession, taking particular note of the relationship of each to the preceding one. No questions are allowed.
**DIAGRAM II: TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION**

*Instructions:* Study the series of squares below. Facing the group, you are to direct the participants in how they are to draw the figures. Begin with the top square and describe each in succession, taking particular note of the relation of each to the preceding one. Answer all questions from participants and repeat if necessary.
THINK-FEEL: A VERBAL PROGRESSION

Goals

- To make distinctions between thoughts and feelings.
- To learn to link feeling feedback to observable behavior.
- To practice empathizing.

Group Size

Unlimited number of groups of three to five members each.

Time Required

Forty-five minutes.

Materials

Newsprint and felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

A room large enough to permit each subgroup to interact verbally without disturbing other subgroups.

Process

1. The facilitator discusses goals. Subgroups are then formed. (Count the number of participants and divide by 3, 4, or 5 to determine the number of subgroups. Have participants count off by this number to form relatively heterogeneous subgroups.)

2. The facilitator explains that there will be four rounds of communication and that each round will be interrupted as necessary. A few minutes of processing within the subgroup follow each round.

3. Round 1. The facilitator writes on newsprint the phrase “Now I see.” Participants are told to describe the nonverbal behavior of the other members of their subgroups by statements that begin with the phrase “Now I see.” The facilitator illustrates briefly by describing the movements of some nearby participants. Round 1 takes five minutes. The facilitator may have to interrupt if participants begin to move away from behavior description toward discussion. The round should be followed by about two minutes for processing.
4. **Round 2.** The facilitator writes the phrase “Now I think” and instructs participants to continue their conversation by beginning each sentence with the phrase “Now I think.” An example may be helpful. Round 2 takes five minutes, followed by two minutes for processing.

5. **Round 3.** The third phrase is “Now I feel.” After about two minutes of interaction, the facilitator interrupts to explain that groups that focus on feeling data commonly confuse thoughts and feelings. He or she suggests that members avoid the following two phrases in the remainder of this round:
   - I feel that . . .
   - I feel like . . .

   Instead, members are to use the phrase “Now I feel” followed by an adjective. They should be mindful of the tendency to center their attention on the other person rather than to express their own feelings. Round 3 takes about ten minutes, followed by about three minutes for processing.

6. **Round 4.** The facilitator posts the fourth phrase, “Now I think you feel,” which participants are to use to begin each of their communications to other members. Because this round focuses on emphatic understanding, conversations should be two way, to determine the accuracy of the members’ perceptions of each other’s feelings. Round 4 takes ten minutes, followed by three minutes of processing.

7. **Total Group Processing.** The facilitator leads a discussion of the results of the experience, focusing on the learning goals specified.

**Variations**

- The activity can be carried out in pairs.
- The timing of each round can be varied from that described.
- The activity can be “staged” in front of the group as a demonstration.

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Submitted by John E. Jones.
MIXED MESSAGES: A COMMUNICATION EXPERIMENT

Goals

- To explore the dynamics of receiving verbal and nonverbal communication cues that are in conflict with one another.
- To examine how nonverbal cues can convey listener attitudes that can affect the communication process.
- To develop an understanding of the importance and impact of being direct and congruent in all forms of interpersonal communication.

Group Size

A minimum of four trios is most effective. (One or two extra members can join trios to serve as additional process observers.)

Time Required

Approximately forty-five minutes to one hour.

Materials

- A copy of the Mixed Messages Communicator Instruction Sheet for one member of each trio.
- A copy of the Mixed Messages Observer Instruction Sheet and a pencil for the second member in each trio.
- One of four different Mixed Messages Listener Instruction Sheets (“Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better,” “Who Gives a Damn?,” “How Sweet It Is,” or “This Is How It Ought To Be”) for the third member in each trio. If there are more than four trios, one or more listener roles can be duplicated.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker (optional).

Physical Setting

Enough room for the trios to work without disturbing one another. The observer in each trio should be seated slightly away from the communicator and listener.
Process

1. The facilitator divides the group into trios, disperses them about the room, and tells them to talk about whatever they wish.

2. After five minutes, the facilitator gives a copy of the Mixed Messages Communicator Instruction Sheet to one member of each trio, a copy of the Mixed Messages Observer Instruction Sheet and a pencil to another member of each trio, and a copy of one of the four Mixed Messages Listener Instruction Sheets to the remaining member of each trio. Members are told only that one person in each trio is a communicator, one a listener, and one an observer.

3. Participants are then told to read their instruction sheets, but not to discuss the information on them with other members. When all members have read their instruction sheets, the facilitator tells them to begin the activity.

4. After ten minutes, the facilitator stops the communicator/listener phase and instructs the members to share their role instructions. Observers are told to report their observations (to give feedback) to communicators and listeners.

5. After ten minutes of observer reports, the large group reassembles for a discussion of the effects the different listener roles had on the feelings and perceptions of the communicators. The facilitator briefly explains each listener role, and members discuss:

- How it felt to play the different listener roles;
- How it felt to try to communicate with the different types of listeners (including frustrations and satisfactions);
- The level of communication achieved by each trio and each type of listener.

The facilitator may list or chart major points on newsprint.

6. The facilitator examines and develops the importance of congruence, clarity, and openness in communication, at both verbal and nonverbal levels. He or she then solicits comments from participants on how these learnings can best be applied in their various back-home situations.

Variations

- The facilitator can direct the members of each trio to exchange cards with another trio after the observer report in order to give members an opportunity to try out new roles.
- Observers can become communicators, communicators listeners, and listeners observers in the second round.
- There can be four rounds, with all trios simultaneously using the same listener role and a different role being used during each round.
- If there is only one round, each listener role can be demonstrated to the total group before the discussion phase.

Submitted by Branton K. Holmberg and Daniel W. Mullene.
MIXED MESSAGES COMMUNICATOR INSTRUCTION SHEET

You and your listener are simply to carry on the conversation that your trio has already started. Try your best to communicate your message to your partner. It is your responsibility to keep the conversation going. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.

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MIXED MESSAGES OBSERVER INSTRUCTION SHEET

Your task is simply to collect data on what the communicator and listener are doing during their conversation. Do not concern yourself with the content of the conversation, but write down your observations about the processes they are using to communicate. Pay attention to what the listener and communicator do (eye contact, gestures, body positions, and other nonverbal behavior).

Describe what you observe as accurately as possible without judging it. You will be asked later to give feedback to the communicator and listener. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.
MIXED MESSAGES LISTENER INSTRUCTION SHEET

“Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better”

You and your communicator are to continue the conversation that your trio started a few minutes ago. You are to appear attentive and to listen carefully to your partner, but you are to challenge everything your partner says. You may interrupt while he or she is talking, anticipate what would have been said next, and disagree or present your own point of view. You may point your finger, lean forward as if about to pounce, and engage in other nonverbal behaviors that accent your verbal behavior. You are the critic.

After you have made your criticism or statement, wait and allow your partner to begin the conversation again. Your task is not to take over the conversation but merely to interrupt, disagree, or challenge whatever is said. If your partner hesitates, remain silent until he or she begins to talk again and then resume your role. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.

MIXED MESSAGES LISTENER INSTRUCTION SHEET

“Who Gives a Damn?”

You and your communicator are to continue the conversation that your trio started a few minutes ago. You are to listen carefully to what your partner is saying, but are to send your partner nonverbal signals that indicate your boredom (i.e., look away, doodle, slump in your chair or sprawl on the floor, twist and fidget, clean your fingernails, fiddle with your clothing, or such). If your partner accuses you of being uninterested, insist that you are interested—you may even review what has been said—but continue to send nonverbal signs of boredom. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.
MIXED MESSAGES LISTENER INSTRUCTION SHEET

“How Sweet It Is”

You and your communicator are to continue the conversation that your trio started a few minutes ago. You are to appear attentive, listen carefully, and agree with everything your partner says, regardless of your own opinions on the subject. When your real opinion is opposite of what your partner is saying, smile as you indicate agreement. You may make comments such as “That’s a good (great) way of putting that,” “That’s very insightful of you,” “Oh, wow,” and so on. Resist any invitation from your partner to share your ideas (“Oh, I agree with you”) or to criticize or evaluate the ideas being communicated. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.

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MIXED MESSAGES LISTENER INSTRUCTION SHEET

“This Is How It Ought To Be”

You and your communicator are to continue the conversation that your trio started a few minutes ago. You are to listen carefully to your partner and actively pursue the ideas your partner is sharing with you. Indicate that you understand his or her ideas by paraphrasing (restating) them. If you disagree, simply state your ideas calmly and logically. Ask for clarification or examples if these would be helpful. You also can indicate that you are interested in the conversation by the use of nonverbal cues such as establishing eye contact and leaning toward the speaker. Do not attempt to lead the conversation or change its direction. Although your partner is the “communicator,” you are to play an active part in making the communication process as clear and mutual as possible. Do not discuss or share these instructions at this time.
BLINDFOLDS: A PARTNERS EXPERIENCE

Goals
- To demonstrate and experience the need for visual cues in perception and communication.
- To demonstrate the need for visual cues in the definition of personal space.

Group Size
Unlimited.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Materials
- A blindfold for each participant.
- A set of paired Blindfolds Word Cards, one for each participant. (See Directions for Making Blindfolds Word Cards.)
- A copy of the Blindfolds Discussion Sheet for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for participants to move about without obstructions.

Process
1. The facilitator briefly discusses the importance of nonverbal cues in typical interactions and the importance of touch when visual contact is not possible.
2. The facilitator forms two equal-sized subgroups—Subgroup A and Subgroup B. Each participant is then given a Blindfolds Word Card for Subgroup A or Subgroup B respectively. After participants have seen their words, they blindfold themselves.
3. The facilitator explains that each participant’s task is to locate the other participant whose word is associated with the one he or she is holding. By milling around, participants are to come into contact with other individuals by touch and then hold the other person’s hand and say their words. If the words do not form a pair, the participants are to keep searching. If the words form a pair,
the participants, without removing their blindfolds, are to do the following, in turn:

- Spend a few moments focusing on their feelings of “personal space” in relation to their partner; exploring an optimal physical distance for communicating with their partner; and making a conscious choice about where they want to be with regard to “personal space.”
- Find out as much as they can about each other through conversation.

4. The facilitator circulates on the perimeter of the group, keeping disoriented participants from running into obstacles and steering them back toward the nucleus of the activity. He or she also observes behaviors related to the use and defense of personal space, conversational groupings and orientations, and touching behaviors.

5. After all pairs have been formed, the facilitator allows some time for blindfolded conversation. Then the participants are directed to form a mental image of what their pair partners look like, how they are dressed, and where they are located in the room.

6. The facilitator instructs participants to remove their blindfolds. Copies of the Blindfolds Discussion Sheet are distributed to guide the processing. (Ten minutes.)

7. The facilitator leads a general discussion of the experience, relating its outcomes to the goals.

**Variations**

- Each word may be given to more than one person so long as the pairing word is given to an equal number of participants. This permits a variety of possible pairings and, especially for large groups, shortens the time needed to locate partners.
- If participants know each other, it is helpful to forbid them to identify themselves to each other while blindfolded. This prevents past perceptions from heavily influencing present ones.
DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING BLINDFOLDS WORD CARDS

One 3” x 5” card is needed for each participant. On the Subgroup A cards are typed general words (nouns), such as “automobile.” On the Subgroup B cards are typed specific words that will pair up with the Subgroup A cards, e.g., “Toyota.” Some examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup A</th>
<th>Subgroup B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
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<td>chair</td>
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<td>automobile</td>
<td>Toyota</td>
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</tbody>
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BLINDFOLDS DISCUSSION SHEET

Personal Space

1. How did you behaviorally manifest the boundaries of your “personal space” to your partner?
2. If your space was transgressed, how did you respond to your partner, verbally or nonverbally?
3. Define the physical manifestations of how you expressed your space to your partner.

Communications

1. What behaviors did you use as substitutes for visual components of communication?
2. What made it easy or difficult to sustain a conversation while blindfolded?
3. What forms of reinforcement did you use to encourage or to discourage your partner to make contact with you?
4. What implications can you draw from this experience concerning those parts of you that “see” nonvisually?
LETTER EXCHANGE: FOCUS ON FEELINGS

Goals

- To provide a practical, low-threat, repeatable framework for sharing feelings as a step toward building a paired relationship.
- To promote self-disclosure and interpersonal risk taking.

Group Size

Any number of pairs.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Materials

- A copy of the Letter Exchange Instruction Sheet for each participant.
- Paper and a pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room (or separate rooms) in which pairs can meet without overhearing or disturbing other pairs. A chair and a writing surface should be provided for each participant.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the activity. He or she divides the participants into pairs and distributes the Letter Exchange Instruction Sheet, a pencil, and paper to each participant.

2. The facilitator instructs the paired partners to select a topic of mutual interest and concern—one that they think would be of value to explore together. Each person is then directed to write a letter to his or her partner saying how he or she feels about the selected topic. The facilitator goes over the Letter Exchange Instruction Sheet with the group and answers questions. The following instructions are given to participants:

3. Focus on how you feel about the topic.

   - Be specific and direct. Describe your feelings but do not analyze, defend, argue about, explain, apologize for, or justify those feelings.
- Write continuously for ten minutes.
- Keep writing. Avoid censoring your letter or trying to make it perfect or going back over what you have written to correct or edit it. Even if you write nonsense, keep writing. If what you write does not sound like what you want to say, write another sentence rather than change what you have already written.

3. After ten minutes the facilitator calls time and instructs the pairs to exchange letters. Each person reads his or her partner’s letter carefully twice. The first reading is to concentrate on content, meaning, sense—on understanding what the partner is saying. The second reading is to focus on the feelings expressed in the letter. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator directs the partners to share verbally the feelings they had while reading each other’s letters or writing their own. They are instructed to identify only the feelings they had, as many as they can and as exactly as they can, without exploring them. They are not to discuss the contents of the letters or to use the sharing time to solve problems, make decisions, etc. (Ten minutes.)

5. Each partner is directed to select the one most intense feeling that he or she had. The partners are then directed to convey to each other just what is involved in feeling the way they do. (Ten minutes.)

**Variations**

- Subgroups larger than pairs can participate in the activity. Four or five is a practical limit.
- More time can be allowed for letter writing and sharing feelings.
- The facilitator can provide a sequence of topics that pairs could explore progressively during a workshop.
- Pairs can be formed on a variety of dimensions, e.g., married couples, members of different groups, coworkers, etc.
LETTER EXCHANGE INSTRUCTION SHEET

Take ten minutes to write a letter to your partner describing what you feel about the topic you have mutually selected. In conveying your feelings, be specific, vivid, descriptive. Inasmuch as your partner is a different person and may experience things differently from the way you do, it is important to be as definitive as possible in describing your feelings. Avoid analyzing, explaining, justifying, defending, arguing about, or apologizing for your feelings.

- Indicating what you feel about something helps you to be more specific, e.g., “I feel sad about (what happened) but glad that I know about it.” Indicating why you feel the way you do (“I feel sad because . . .”) leads into analyzing, explaining, justifying, defending your feeling, and away from describing it. Focus on how you feel about the topic, not why you feel the way you do.

Apologizing for a feeling dilutes its expression: “This may not be important, but . . .,” or “I don’t mean to offend, but . . .”

“I think” statements do not express feelings. “I feel that” usually means the same thing as “I think.” These statements usually introduce fact, opinion, position, argument, etc. “I am” and “I feel” statements more often introduce expressions of feeling.

- Metaphors, similes, analogies, and comparisons are often helpful in expressing feelings. For example, “I feel as if I had just been hit,” “I feel as if I had been through a wringer,” “I feel like the sun breaking through the clouds on a stormy day: fresh, bright, and colorful.”

- Specific images and senses may also help to express feelings:
  - Sound: “My feeling sounds like . . .”
  - Smell: “My feeling smells like . . .”
  - Taste: “My feeling tastes like . . .”
  - Touch: “My feeling has the texture of . . .”
  - Sight: “The color of my feeling is . . .” “My feeling looks like . . .”
  - Place: “I feel as if I were on (over, under, beside, behind, in front of, between, outside, by, with, etc.) . . .”
  - Movement: “I feel as if I were going fast (slow, toward, away from, up, down, into, out of, straight, in circles, back and forth, etc.) . . .”

The way in which you express something can indicate a greater or lesser willingness to assume responsibility for or ownership of your feelings.

- Low ownership: “You make me mad!” (projecting on or blaming others).
- High ownership: “I am really angry about what you just did” (taking responsibility).

If you are taking responsibility for your feelings, you tend to be more direct and open.

If you are trying to understand what your partner is feeling, listen carefully, patiently, and with an open mind. Try not to have preconceptions of what it feels like to experience what your partner is experiencing. Your partner may react to things or feel things differently than you would in the same situation. Every so often, check with your partner to see if you are hearing the same thing that he or she is saying. You may do this by restating, in your own words, what your partner has said, or by comparing your own feelings in a similar situation and asking your partner if you are on target.

Avoid asking your partner why he or she feels the way he or she does; avoid trying to talk your partner out of the feeling (“You shouldn’t feel that way”).

If your partner’s feelings are directed toward you, try to remember that they are feelings, not judgments of your person. Similarly, when you are responding to your partner, remember that feelings are more directly expressed when they are described simply, without judgment. Judgments tend to focus on something other than the feeling and to threaten the listener.

Judgment: “I think you are the most arrogant person I have ever met!”
Description: “When you said that, I became angry.”
RE-OWNING: INCREASING BEHAVIORAL ALTERNATIVES

Goals

- To assist participants in exploring aspects of themselves that they might not be presently aware of or may be underutilizing.
- To extend the range of behavioral alternatives open for effective communication.

Group Size

An unlimited number of trios.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Materials

- Newsprint and felt-tipped marker.
- Paper and pencils for all participants.

Physical Setting

A large enough area for trios to have relative privacy.

Process

1. The facilitator begins with a brief lecturette on Wallen’s Triangle, pointing out that the human personality can be viewed as some combination of Tough Battler, Logical Thinker, and/or Friendly Helper. This concept is illustrated on the chart pad.

   ![Wallen’s Triangle Diagram]

2. Each participant is then instructed to draw the triangle on his or her paper and to label the points, as illustrated. Each is then directed to place an “X” somewhere
within or on the triangle that best represents himself or herself. (First impressions are usually the best.)

3. The facilitator then tells the participants to draw a smaller triangle within the larger one, having the same centerpoint as the larger. (He or she illustrates on newsprint.)

4. The facilitator then suggests that if a participant’s “X” does not fall within the smaller triangle, the participant may be underutilizing or disowning a relevant aspect of himself or herself. The facilitator may want to develop this concept here, e.g., by pointing out that a Tough Battler who is in the process of disowning his or her Logical Thinker may be well on the way to overdependence on the other two behavioral modes.

5. The facilitator forms trios for a multiple role-play.

6. He or she gives the following instructions:

   - Each trio is a “family” comprised of a father, an older daughter, and a younger son. (This can vary depending on the male-female ratio of the participants.)
   - The trio’s task is to plan a joint vacation for its “family.”
   - Each member of the trio is to remain in role throughout the role play. However, every ten minutes the trio will rotate through the different personality types until each member of the trio has been Tough Battler, Logical Thinker, and Friendly Helper. (Note: It may help avoid confusion during the role play by starting with the “father” as Tough Battler, “older daughter” as Logical Thinker, and “younger son” as Friendly Helper and have the trio rotate clockwise through the personality types.)
   - Each personality type is to be played to its fullest extreme.

7. When the trios have completed the role play, the participants discuss the experience and give one another feedback.

8. The total group reassembles, and the facilitator leads a general discussion processing the reactions. He or she may wish to focus on “Which role was the most difficult?”; “What was it like when you were in your ‘disowned’ role?”; etc.
Variations

- If the participants are a work group, the roles might switch to Worker, Supervisor, and Executive. The task might be created to represent more closely an organizational problem, e.g., a committee to plan a company recreational activity.

In this mode the facilitator could also introduce probe questions in the general discussion such as: “Was there one style predominately more disowned than the others?” “If so, does this say something about this organization’s norms?” “What was it like rotating through the personality roles being in the superior/middle/subordinate position?”

- Members of trios can have “alter-ego” observers to coach them during the role play.

- Observers may be briefed (privately) to listen for statements that include the words “just” and “only,” which indicate disowning and discounting.

Submitted by H.B. Karp.
SYNONYMS:
SHARING PERCEPTIONS BETWEEN GROUPS

Goals
- To offer management and nonmanagement groups an opportunity to compare the ways in which they perceive and talk about their worlds.
- To illustrate that people’s language both expands and limits their perceptions.
- To improve understanding between the two groups.

Group Size
A subgroup of management personnel and a subgroup of nonmanagement personnel. Each subgroup should consist of no more than twelve members.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Materials
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker for each subgroup.
- Masking tape.

Physical Setting
A room large enough so that the two subgroups can work separately without being overheard by each other.

Process
1. The facilitator asks the participants to form two subgroups according to their job functions: management and nonmanagement.
2. Each subgroup is given a newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker and is asked to select a recorder. It is explained that each recorder is to maintain a newsprint list while the subgroup generates as many synonyms as possible for the nouns manager and subordinate. (Fifteen minutes.)
3. The total group is reconvened, and the recorders are asked to post their lists side by side so that the synonyms can be viewed by all of the participants.
4. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:

- Which synonyms elicit positive feelings? Which elicit negative feelings?
- Which synonyms seem to limit the original terms? Which expand the terms?
- Which synonyms indicate similarities in perception between the two subgroups? Which indicate differences? How might these similarities and differences affect the relationship between management and nonmanagement?
- Which synonyms imply perceptions that you were not aware existed? How might your new awareness be used productively?
- Did you or your subgroup experience any difficulty in generating synonyms? If so, what was the nature of this difficulty? What does it indicate about your perceptions of the subgroups?
- What have you learned about yourself as a manager or a subordinate?
- How can you apply what you have learned to your work environment?

Variations

- Instead of using the words *manager* and *subordinate* as the basis for generating synonyms, the participants may be asked to work with any of the following terms:
  - compromise, production, conflict
  - decision-making, time management, top management
  - participator management, coworkers, performance appraisal
  - feedback, authority, priorities
  - deadline, organization development, meetings
  - goals, leadership, transfer
  - collaboration, team building

- The activity may be continued after step 4 by having the participants form subgroups of mixed composition and asking them to generate synonyms for terms that imply working together, such as *collaboration, integration, cooperation*, and so forth. Then the task should be processed in terms of similarities and differences in both product and process.

- The activity may be used with groups that represent other types of differences in composition, such as opposite sexes, different races, or different ethnic groups. In such a case, the terms used to generate synonyms should be changed accordingly.

Submitted by Phil Leamon.
WORDS APART:
BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP

Goals

- To help the participants to become aware of gender influences on conversational style.
- To provide the participants with the opportunity to experience artificial restrictions on their conversational styles.
- To help the participants to become aware of conversational patterns and styles.

Group Size

Three to four subgroups of four to six participants each.

Time Required

One hour.

Materials

- A copy of the Words Apart Theory Sheet for the facilitator.
- Fifty poker chips per subgroup, prepackaged as fifteen blue chips, nine red chips, and twenty-six white chips per package.
- A newsprint sheet prepared in advance with the following questions:
  - How many of the “telling” chips and “asking” chips did you collect? How did your individual totals compare with those of other subgroup members?
  - How did you feel about collecting the two kinds of chips?
  - Each subgroup was given six more blue chips than red chips. How did it feel to be a “red” person? A “blue” person?
  - What differences were there in the amounts of time that people spoke per chip? How do you account for these differences?
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.
Physical Setting

A room with adequate space so that subgroups can work without disturbing one another. A table and chairs should be provided for each subgroup.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the goals and presents a lecturette on communication styles based on the Words Apart Theory Sheet. (Ten minutes.)

2. The participants are assembled into three or four subgroups of four to six members each. Each subgroup is seated at a separate table. Subgroup members are alternately designated as “blue” or “red.” Each subgroup is given fifty poker chips, distributed as fifteen blue, nine red, and twenty-six white chips. (Five minutes.)

3. The participants are instructed to discuss the lecturette within their subgroups. The facilitator provides the following guidelines for the discussion:

   “Put all fifty poker chips in the center of the table. Your subgroup’s discussion will be governed by these chips. Each subgroup has been allotted fifteen blue chips, nine red chips, and twenty-six white chips. White chips are ‘asking’ chips. Any time any member of your subgroup asks a question or solicits information from other members of your subgroup, he or she takes a white chip from the center of the table. When the supply of white chips is exhausted, there can be no more ‘asking.’

   Red and blue chips, on the other hand, are ‘telling’ chips, which are to be taken each time you offer an opinion or make a statement. If you are a red-designated participant, you can take only red chips; blue-designated participants can take only blue chips. When, for example, all of the blue chips have been taken, the blue participants cannot do any more ‘telling.’ The discussion must be terminated if all of the chips are taken.”

   After clarifying these instructions as necessary, the facilitator tells the participants to begin their discussions. (Ten to fifteen minutes).

4. The facilitator calls time, posts the prepared newsprint sheet of questions, and instructs the participants to address these questions within their subgroups. (Ten minutes.)

5. After ten minutes, the facilitator reconvenes the total group and leads a concluding discussion, introducing the discussion with the following ideas:

   “In real life, some people act as if they have an unlimited supply of telling chips and very few asking chips. These people are often those with power over us. Although this characteristic is not gender specific, people like this behave in ways that can be described as masculine or verbally aggressive. Other people in real life behave as if all they have are asking chips; they speak only when...
spoken to and hold back in conversation, even if they have important things to say. This behavior can be described as feminine or verbally submissive. Being brought up as a woman or as a man has profound effects on how people communicate with one another. For example, women often complain that men don’t really listen; men often complain that women don’t speak their minds. This activity offers the opportunity to experience restraints on conversational style.”

Then the facilitator leads a discussion based on these questions:

- How did it feel to have your ability to talk restricted artificially by the chips? Was it difficult to stay focused on the conversation once you had exhausted your chips? How did the chips affect the group process?
- What did you learn about yourself? About communication styles of others? About how communication styles affect group process?
- What do you notice about gender-specific conversational style? What implications might there be for women managers? For men managers?
- In what ways did this activity reflect your own experience? What parts of it were most realistic or unrealistic?
- What have you learned about your own communication style that you might apply later?

(Fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- Observers may be assigned to subgroups and asked to note differences in conversational style.
- Coins, colored paper, or other such props may be substituted for poker chips.
- In a group with equal numbers of men and women, white chips may be designated for men and red and blue chips designated for women.

Submitted by Mark Maier.
Despite increasing evidence to the contrary, many managers continue to maintain inaccurate stereotypes about women as managers. According to a recent study, females who are managers are more similar to their male colleagues than they are to females in general (“Female management style: Myth and reality,” 1986). However, this study has done little to dispel the notion of a “feminine” style of management unique to women. A major report in *The Wall Street Journal* noted that “more than a decade after large numbers of women joined American corporations as first-level managers, few have climbed as far or as fast as their male colleagues . . . most are stuck in jobs with little authority and relatively low pay” (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986, p. 1).

The authors of that report suggest that there is a “glass ceiling,” an “invisible barrier,” that blocks women from the upper echelons of management. In truth, the block is neither intangible nor invisible. The critical factor is men who do not accept women in management positions. Whether it be as corporate colleagues or as spouses to the married executive women struggling to juggle the demands of home and workplace, men, as Hymowitz and Schellhardt and others (see also *The Wall Street Journal*, 1984; *Newsweek*, 1981) point out, pose the biggest obstacle facing managerial women.

Much work is ahead in preparing men to make an effective transition from “adversary to bystander to ally” (Maier, 1985). Most male managers today seem to have overcome much of their earlier resistance to females, but relatively few take the risk of being active allies. This, however, ignores the active role that informal male colleague networks have played in advancing men’s careers. Articles in the professional literature (Lorber, 1983; Sargent, 1983; Schwartz & Rago, 1984) underscore this need. Nor should we assume that the current generation of men who are managers will be more likely to act as allies of women.

Men and women managers continue to have markedly different perceptions of the prospects for change. In a twenty-year follow-up survey of executive attitudes, the *Harvard Business Review* found that male endorsement of the statement, “The business community will never wholly accept women executives,” dropped to only 20 percent in 1985 (down from 61 percent in 1965). However, fully twice the proportion of the 438 female executives responding (40 percent) endorsed the statement. This represented almost no change from the 47-percent finding in 1965. Women can be seen as twice as pessimistic as men (Sutton & Moore, 1985).

As long as males continue to relate to their female counterparts as women first and executives second, the weight of traditional sex-role expectations will suppress opportunities for women to share equally in organizational life. Although there are numerous subtle ways in which the devaluation of female colleagues expresses itself, one of the more obvious ways in which the inequality shows is in male-female interaction during face-to-face conversations.
Many organizations may not be prepared to “cope with the behavioral effects of men and women working together as professional peers” (Schwartz & Rago, 1984, p. 421). This statement is true to the extent that the men running the organization are not personally prepared for such a transition. As Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986, p. 1) note, “Men at the top feel uncomfortable with women beside them.”

Equality in male-female communication is critical to men as well as to women. Indeed, one of the keys in opening the doors to change is demonstrating that it is in men’s own self-interest as managers in an increasingly diverse work force to examine traditional ways of communicating. As Booth-Butterfield (1984) observes, effective communication involves conscious efforts to listen and speak effectively.

For too long, male-female relationships have been patterned on a model of dominance and submission, rather than mutuality, reciprocity, and respect. A specific strategy to facilitate that transition involves recognizing “masculine” and “feminine” ways of communicating (not “male” or “female,” though socialization typically prepares each sex accordingly). Assimilating women into a “masculine” way of communicating is not the answer; rather, both sexes will benefit from the broader range of communication styles that gender diversity can help to facilitate.

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E-PRIME: DISTINGUISHING FACTS FROM OPINIONS

Goals

- To foster the participants’ awareness of how they speak about others and how they interpret comments about others.
- To assist the participants in distinguishing definitive from associative attributes (facts from opinions) used in conversation.

Group Size

Up to ten pairs.

Time Required

Approximately one hour and five minutes.

Materials

- A copy of the E-Prime Theory Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the E-Prime Discussion Sheet for each participant.
- Blank paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.

Physical Setting

A large room in which the participants can work in pairs as well as in subgroups of three or four without disturbing one another.

Process

1. The facilitator announces that the participants are to engage in an activity that focuses on communication.
2. The participants are assembled into pairs and are given blank paper, pencils, and clipboards or other portable writing surfaces.
3. The facilitator explains that within each pair each member is to spend a few minutes describing someone that he or she knows. During the description the member who is listening is to take notes about particular phrases that are used in the description.
4. The facilitator tells the pairs to begin. After a couple of minutes or so the members of each pair are instructed to exchange roles and to repeat the description process. After a couple of minutes more, the pairs are instructed to stop the process. (Five minutes.)

5. Each participant is given a copy of the E-Prime Theory Sheet and is asked to read this handout. (Five minutes.)

6. The facilitator leads a brief discussion of the handout contents, clarifying as necessary. (Five minutes.)

7. The same pairs are instructed to repeat the description process followed in step 4, again describing the same people, but this time trying to be aware of whether they are using definitive or associative attributes. The listening partners are instructed to make notes of both associative and definitive attributes that are used by the speaking partners, that is to say, how many times the word “is” is used in conjunction with an adjective (associative) versus how many times an observable characteristic or behavior is described (definitive). (Five minutes.)

8. The facilitator asks the participants to form subgroups of three or four members each. Each participant is given a copy of the E-Prime Discussion Sheet. Each subgroup is asked to select one member to serve as a recorder and to make notes while the subgroup discusses answers to the questions on the sheet. The facilitator explains that later the recorders will be asked to share the results of the subgroup discussions. (Fifteen minutes.)

9. The facilitator reassembles the total group and asks the recorders to take turns sharing the results of the discussions. (Ten minutes.)

10. The facilitator summarizes the subgroup conclusions, elicits and answers questions, and leads a final discussion of the activity.

Variations

- The participants may be asked to describe themselves instead of others.
- Each participant may be instructed to describe the type of person who would fit into or succeed in his or her organization.
- Step 8 may be eliminated, and the facilitator may lead the group through the discussion questions.

Submitted by Gilles L. Talbot.
The words we use evoke images. Although we cannot control how those images are perceived, to an extent we can shape them by choosing our words carefully. One word that warrants especially careful use is the verb to be (“is,” “are,” and so forth) because it reflects a state of existence or a fact.

For example, someone might say, “He is unfriendly” or “She is dependable.” Qualities such as unfriendliness and dependability are called associative attributes and represent statements of opinion rather than statements of fact. Definitive attributes, on the other hand, are those that describe observable characteristics—facts rather than opinions. Examples are “He ignores me when I say hello” or “She consistently completes her work on time.”

The problem is that people tend to use and to interpret associative attributes as definitive attributes. Often a listener hears a comment such as “He is unfriendly” and assumes that the person is, in fact, unfriendly. If such a statement were challenged, the speaker would be required to substantiate it by providing a factual description.

Conversation that omits the forms of the verb to be is known as “E-prime English.” Although extremely difficult, trying to think in E-prime English can help us to become aware of the ways in which we are likely to describe others. In turn, thinking about the way in which meanings are likely to be interpreted can help us to choose our words wisely and to listen with discrimination. We need to become conscious of the difference between definitive and associative attributes so that as speakers and as listeners we are able to distinguish one from the other and to communicate more effectively.
E-PRIME DISCUSSION SHEET

1. What differences were there between the first and the second descriptions?

2. Which description helped you more in forming a picture of the person being described? In what ways was it more helpful?

3. How did you feel about the person being described when listening to the first description? How did you feel when listening to the second?

4. How might it be useful to distinguish between definitive and associative attributes (between facts and opinions) that are used in conversations? How might distinguishing between them be useful in the work environment (in interviews, in reference letters, or in performance evaluations, for example)?

5. How might you use what you have learned at home? at work?
SUPPORTIVE VERSUS DEFENSIVE CLIMATES: HOW WOULD YOU SAY . . .?

**Goals**

- To acquaint participants with six supportive and six defensive communication dimensions.
- To develop participants’ abilities to recognize both supportive and defensive communication.
- To provide participants with an opportunity to create messages that foster supportive and defensive climates.

**Group Size**

Two to six subgroups of three or five participants. (Each subgroup should consist of an odd number of participants. Therefore, if the total group contains exactly seven participants, do not divide into subgroups.)

**Time Required**

One hour and twenty minutes.

**Materials**

- A copy of the Supportive Versus Defensive Climates Crib Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Supportive Versus Defensive Climates Workbook for each participant, consisting of an instructions page and six scenario pages.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

**Physical Setting**

A room with movable chairs. The room must be large enough to allow small groups to work without disturbing one another.
Process

1. The facilitator provides participants with a rationale for the activity. The facilitator may want to refer to Gibb’s (1961) article for background information, but the following rationale is sufficient:

   “People interpret messages in different ways. Sometimes others are unintentionally offended by the way we say something. The other person feels defensive and the result is conflict. It is important to take other people’s views into account when we interact with them.

   “Certain types of communication can contribute toward creating supportive and defensive climates in small groups. These climates can be built; in other words, the same core message can be said in ways that foster supportiveness or defensiveness.

   “In this activity, you will be presented with six scenarios and will have the opportunity to practice creating messages that promote supportiveness and defensiveness.”

   (Five minutes.)

2. The facilitator distributes the Supportive Versus Defensive Climates Crib Sheet and reviews the content with the participants. (Ten minutes.)

3. The participants are asked to form subgroups of three or five members each. Each participant is given a copy of the Supportive Versus Defensive Climates Workbook, a portable writing surface, and a pencil. The facilitator explains that there are six scenarios in the workbook, one for each of Gibb’s climate dimensions. The facilitator reviews the instructions with the participants and directs them to begin the activity. (Forty-five minutes.)

4. While the subgroups are working on step 3, the facilitator moves from subgroup to subgroup, observing the interactions to be sure that participants understand the process. After forty-five minutes, the facilitator calls time and reconvenes the total group.

5. The facilitator invites participants to share representative messages for each of the six climate dimensions, recording the responses on the flip chart. The facilitator then leads a concluding discussion, based on the following questions:

   ▪ How did you feel when you gave messages that promoted a defensive climate? When you received them?

   ▪ How did you feel when you gave messages that promoted a supportive climate? When you received them?

   ▪ How might it be useful to distinguish among these climate dimensions in your interactions with others? What might you be able to predict about the consequences of supportive behavior? Defensive behavior?
What new ideas can you incorporate into your interactions with others to build your communication skills further?

How can you use these skills in back-home or back-on-the-job situations?

(Twenty minutes.)

Variations

After the first member of a subgroup responds to a given scenario, the next member can be instructed to transform that message into one representing the opposite climate dimension.

Each subgroup can role play one of the scenarios for the total group.

Scenarios can be adapted to fit specific audiences.

Subgroups can be given the scenarios without prior explanation of the dimensions and given the instructions to develop several responses to each scenario. The facilitator then presents an overview of the six dimensions and the total group works together to categorize the responses according to the dimensions.

REFERENCE

SUPPORTIVE VERSUS DEFENSIVE CLIMATES CRIB SHEET

The descriptions on this sheet are based on categories advocated by J.R. Gibb (1961). Each description labeled “A” relates to messages that foster a supportive climate. The “B” descriptions relate to messages that foster a defensive climate.

1. Descriptive Versus Evaluative Communication
   A. *Description* discloses the sender’s thoughts and feelings about a given issue via a nonjudgmental message; it fosters a supportive climate.
   B. *Evaluation* judges the actions of others; it promotes a defensive climate.

2. Problem-Oriented Versus Controlling Communication
   A. *Problem Orientation* indicates that the sender is willing to engage in collaborative problem solving and to seek solutions suitable to all parties; it advances a supportive climate.
   B. *Control* is aimed in some way at constraining or directing the behavior of other individuals; it furthers a defensive climate.

3. Spontaneous Versus Strategic Communication
   A. *Spontaneity* is perceived as direct and truthful; it encourages a supportive climate.
   B. *Strategy* is perceived as contrived, that which hides one’s real intentions or goals. Strategy prompts a defensive climate.

4. Empathic Versus Neutral Communication
   A. *Empathy* expresses a concern for other people; it inspires a supportive climate.
   B. *Neutrality* reveals disregard or disinterest for others; it invites a defensive climate.

5. Equal Versus Superior Communication
   A. *Equality* expresses mutual trust and respect, indicating that a person views the other as an equal. Equality engenders a supportive climate.
   B. *Superiority* is implied when one person claims to possess more knowledge, power, status, experience, or wealth than other people. Superiority stimulates a defensive climate.
6. Provisional Versus Certain Communication

A. *Provisionalism* indicates that the sender is flexible and open to multiple alternatives; provisionalism favors a supportive climate.

B. *Certainty* is highly dogmatic; the sender professes to possess the ultimate truth. Certainty produces a defensive climate.

**REFERENCE**

Instructions:

1. Read Scenario 1 silently and jot down a response in the space that follows “You respond:”.

2. Choose a member of your subgroup to speak first. That person should respond to Jon’s remark with an evaluative comment, addressed to the person on his or her left.

3. Next, the person to the right of the first speaker should respond to Jon’s remark with a descriptive message, addressed to the person on his or her left.

4. The person to the right of the second speaker then responds to Jon’s remark with another evaluative message, addressed to the person on his or her left.

5. Continue alternating responses until each member has had the opportunity to give and to receive messages in both formats. This will require two rounds of responses.

6. Work with the other members of your subgroup to create a message that is representative of an evaluative response and one that is representative of a descriptive remark. Write these in the spaces provided.

7. In your subgroup discuss how each of you would feel about each of these comments if they were directed at you.

8. Proceed on to Scenario 2 and repeat steps 1 through 7 of the instructions with the next set of defensive and supportive categories.

9. Go on to each of the next four scenarios in turn, following the same procedures.
**Scenario 1: Evaluation Versus Description**

At the weekly marketing task force meeting, Jon enthusiastically proposes: “Why don’t we get some people from the Sales Department to promote this new product?” You don’t think this is a very good idea. The rest of the group may be divided on the issue.

You respond:

Representative Evaluation Comment:

Representative Description Comment:
Scenario 2: Control Versus Problem Orientation

You are at your organization’s yearly budgeting meeting. Your department (Human Resource Management) wishes to request funds to hire an interpersonal-conflict consultant to train first-level supervisors. It soon becomes obvious that there are not enough funds to go around.

You respond:

Representative Control Remark:

Representative Problem-Orientation Remark:
Scenario 3: Strategy Versus Spontaneity

At the end of the quality-control meeting, you are informally asked for your report. You have been dreading this moment all morning. Two of your colleagues on the team desperately need the report, but it is not ready.

You respond:

Representative Strategy Statement:

Representative Spontaneity Statement:
Scenario 4: Neutrality Versus Empathy

You head your organization’s finance-projections committee. At your monthly meeting, you discover that Joe is late with his figures for the department’s finance newsletter. You happen to know that Joe’s mother died recently.

You say to Joe:

Representative Neutrality Reply:

Representative Empathy Reply:
**Scenario 5: Superiority Versus Equality**

At a fund-raising committee meeting, your manager introduces you to the group’s newcomers. She divides the committee’s tasks for the month and asks if you will take on the tough job of contacting the university’s alumni. You accept the challenge. At that moment an eager and excited newcomer asks to be on the project too. Your manager defers to you.

You say:

Representative Superiority Response:

Representative Equality Response:
**Scenario 6: Certainty Versus Provisionalism**

At Grump, Inc., you have designed a prototype of a brake for a fighter plane. Another engineer has developed another prototype that appears to work just as well. At the final design meeting, an argument develops over which design should be adopted. For the sake of prestige, you would like your design to go through.

You voice your opinion:

Representative Certainty Message:

Representative Provisionalism Message:
FEELINGS: VERBAL AND NONVERBAL CONGRUENCE

Goals

- To provide an opportunity to compare verbal and nonverbal components of feelings.
- To develop awareness of the congruence or lack of congruence between verbal and nonverbal components of feelings.
- To increase sensitivity to the feelings of others.

Group Size

Three to five subgroups of three to six members each.

Time Required

One to one and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Feelings Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room with space for the subgroups to meet or one room for the general sessions and a separate room for each subgroup.

Process

1. The facilitator gives a lecturette on verbal and nonverbal communication, emphasizing the need for both aspects of communication to be congruent. The facilitator points out that confusion and mixed messages often result when people say one thing (verbally) and do another thing (nonverbally). (Ten minutes.)
2. The facilitator separates the large group into subgroups of three to six participants each and assigns space within the room to each subgroup. (Three minutes.)
3. The facilitator gives each participant a copy of the Feelings Work Sheet and a pencil. The facilitator goes over the instructions and tells the participants that
they have approximately twenty minutes in which to complete the Feelings Work Sheet. (Two minutes.)

4. The participants begin to work on the Feelings Work Sheet. After fifteen minutes, the facilitator reminds the participants that they have five more minutes in which to work. (Twenty minutes.)

5. At the end of twenty minutes, the facilitator calls time and then directs the participants to share their responses within their subgroups. (Fifteen to thirty minutes.)

6. The facilitator calls the entire group together to process the experience. Possible processing questions include:
   - In what types of situations is congruence most likely to occur?
   - In what situations is incongruence most likely to occur?
   - What causes these differences?
   - What types of emotions seem to lead to mixed messages?
   - In what situations might a mixed message be appropriate?
   - How can we give more congruent messages when we want to?
   - How can we deal with others who are giving mixed messages?
   (Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- The Feelings Work Sheet can contain specific situations that are appropriate to the participant subgroup.
- Subgroup members can give one another feedback on their experiences of one another in terms of verbal and nonverbal congruence.
- The participants can develop role plays to practice verbal and nonverbal congruence in difficult situations.

Submitted by Stella Lybrand Norman.
FEELINGS WORK SHEET

Instructions: Listed below are situations that you probably have experienced. For each situation, write out the verbal and nonverbal components of your feelings.

1. When I am bored with what is going on in a group, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying
      
      to whom?

   b. nonverbally by doing
      
      when?

2. When I am annoyed with someone with whom I want to build a better relationship, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying
      
      when?

   b. nonverbally by doing
      
      when?
3. When someone says or does something that hurts me deeply, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying

   when?

   b. nonverbally by doing

   when?

4. When my boss asks me to do something that I am afraid I cannot do well, and I want to hide that fact, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying

   b. nonverbally by doing

5. When a close friend is moving away and I am feeling lonely, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying

   b. nonverbally by doing
6. When I feel affection and fondness for someone but am not sure that the other person feels the same way, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying

   b. nonverbally by doing

7. When someone destroys my personal property, I usually express my feelings
   a. verbally by saying

   when?

   b. nonverbally by doing

   when?
BLIVET: A COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE

Goals
- To demonstrate and experience one-way and two-way verbal communication.
- To demonstrate and experience barriers and aids to verbal communication.
- To explore how different status positions affect interpersonal communication.

Group Size
Nine to thirty participants, in numbers divisible by three.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Blivet Manager Briefing Sheet for each manager.
- A copy of the Blivet Assistant Manager Briefing Sheet and a copy of the Blivet Assembly Sheet for each assistant manager.
- A copy of the Blivet Manager Briefing Sheet, a copy of the Blivet Assistant Manager Briefing Sheet, a copy of the Blivet Observer Guide, and a pencil for each observer.
- One unassembled Blivet for each manager.
- One assembled Blivet (See Directions for Manufacturing Blivets) for each assistant manager.
- One table blind for each trio (see Directions for Assembling a Blivet Table Blind).
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough to accommodate one table and two chairs for each trio, with space between the groupings. Additional rooms for initial briefings are desirable. The physical arrangement may be laid out in a variety of ways as room availability, size, and general convenience dictate. Four criteria are important:
- Some minimal separation of participating trios is necessary.
- Spatial relationships of trios must be such that participants with unassembled Blivets cannot see the finished solutions on adjacent tables.
- There must be room for observers to stand adjoining the participant pairs they are to observe.

- There must be room for the facilitator to move among the trios to observe the process.

An example of a workable physical arrangement is as follows:

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--- = Table blind
O = Observer
M = Participants (managers) with unassembled Blivets
A = Participants (assistant managers) with assembled Blivets

**Process**

1. The facilitator prepares the tables prior to the experience: Each table contains two Blivets, separated by a blind (see Directions for Assembling a Blivet Table Blind). One Blivet is assembled and is *hidden* under a Blivet Assembly Sheet, which is placed upside down; the Blivet across the table is unassembled.

2. The facilitator briefly introduces the activity by explaining its goals.

3. The participants are divided into three equal subgroups, subgroup one being “managers,” subgroup two being “assistant managers,” and subgroup three being “observers.”

4. The facilitator gives each manager a copy of the Blivet Manager Briefing Sheet and each assistant manager a copy of the Blivet Assistant Manager Briefing Sheet. The manager and assistant manager subgroups are then sent to separate locations. The facilitator briefs the observers in the activity area and gives them each a pencil, a copy of the Blivet Manager Briefing Sheet, a copy of the Blivet Assistant Manager Briefing Sheet, and a copy of the Blivet Observer Guide. He
or she stresses that they are not to participate in the assembly process, that they may speak to participants only to caution them about rule observation, that they are to observe and record events, and that they will report later on their observations.

5. The facilitator reviews the task with the manager and assistant manager subgroups separately. He or she reminds the managers that they will have unassembled Blivets and reminds the assistant managers that they will have assembled Blivets, all Blivets being of the same size and shape. (He or she makes no mention of color.) The facilitator tells both subgroups that they are not to touch anything on the tables until they have been instructed to begin the activity.

6. All participants are assembled in the large room and are directed to their appropriate locations. The facilitator announces that he or she will play the role of the company president during the twenty minutes they have to complete the task. He or she then tells them that the operator has just announced trouble on the line and that they are to begin the activity from that point.

7. During the course of the activity, the facilitator rotates between the subgroups, playing the role of the president by “intimidating the managers,” obviously impatient, and consistently reminding them of the time remaining. (This adds realistic noise, distraction, frustration, and even anger to the task.)

8. After five minutes or so, when frustration has obviously set in, the facilitator announces that the operator has opened up two-way communication. After a few more minutes, if the manager and assistant manager are still assuming that their Blivet pieces are the same color, the facilitator mentions that nothing was said about colors being the same. He or she continues periodically to remind participants of the time deadline.

9. If a substantial number of Blivets remain unassembled within two minutes of the activity completion deadline, the facilitator removes the blinds from the tables, announcing that the phone company has installed “videophones.”

10. The facilitator calls a halt to the activity. He or she assembles the participants and briefly goes over the goals of the experience. Each observer then reports on the communication processes of the pair he or she observed and on the elements that affected or hindered one-way and two-way communication between the manager and the assistant manager.

11. The participants comment on their feelings during and reactions to the experience. The focus is particularly on frustration in communicating, the differences between effective and ineffective communication processes, and how effectiveness is influenced by one-way or two-way communication. The facilitator also may direct the discussion to the effects of the different status positions on the communication within the pairs. The facilitator lists the major discussion
points on newsprint. He or she keeps the discussion focused on personal reactions and on communication issues, rather than on the task or whether some pairs completed it “successfully.”

12. The facilitator gives a lecturette on helping and hindering behaviors that affect interpersonal communication. Participants are then encouraged to equate these learnings to real-life situations.

**Variations**

- The facilitator can devise briefing sheets appropriate to the subgroup’s setting and circumstances; i.e., titles or positions need not necessarily be “supervisor-subordinate”; the Blivet could be a shredded report, a piece of machinery, a surgical instrument, etc.; the separation of the participants could represent different cities or sites such as the bridge and the engine room. The initial communication breakdown requiring one-way communication can be portrayed as being over any nonvisual communication device that offers the opportunity for resumption of normal communication.

- The goals and learnings can focus on helping behavior, interpersonal perceptions, leadership style, or problem solving.

- The lecturette can precede the activity.

- The videophone can be introduced as a structured portion of the activity.

Submitted by Ken Myers, Rajesh Tandon, and Howard Bowens, Jr.
BLIVET MANAGER BRIEFING SHEET

You are a sales manager. You were in the office of the president of your company demonstrating a new automated wastebasket opener (called a Blivet) when it fell apart in your hands. The only other assembled Blivet is with your assistant sales manager in Chicago at a trade show. You are now on the phone with your assistant and have said that you think you can get your disassembled Blivet together again if the assistant will describe the assembled one. You have just mentioned that the president is angry and wants the demonstration to resume immediately when the operator cuts in and says that there is trouble on the line. You can continue to hear your assistant, but you cannot talk back because the other person cannot hear you.

The problem: You must get the Blivet assembled to continue the demonstration to the president. You must utilize such communication opportunities as are available to you, given the present situation.

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BLIVET ASSISTANT MANAGER BRIEFING SHEET

You are an assistant sales manager. You are in Chicago at a trade show where you are displaying a new automated wastebasket opener (called a Blivet). You have just received an urgent page to call your supervisor, the sales manager, back in Cleveland. You return the call, and your supervisor explains the problem. He was demonstrating the only other assembled Blivet to the company president when it fell completely apart. The president is angry and is intimidating your supervisor to get the Blivet assembled and continue the demonstration. Your supervisor thinks it may be possible to reassemble the broken Blivet if you will explain how to do it, based on your assembled one. At this point, the operator cuts in to say that there is trouble on the line. You can continue to talk to the sales manager, who can hear you, but you cannot hear anything on your end of the line.

The problem: You must explain how to get the Blivet together so that your supervisor’s demonstration to the company president can be completed. You must communicate with your supervisor, using such communication opportunities as are available to you in this situation.
BLIVET OBSERVER GUIDE

Your task is to observe and record the interaction between the participants as they try to construct a second Blivet identical to the first (in size and shape but not in color). The Blivets are in the form of a large block “T.” Try to remain inconspicuous. Do not interfere as the participants go about their task or respond to any of their questions. However, do not let the person with the unassembled Blivet talk during the one-way-communication portion of the activity. At the conclusion of the activity, be prepared to comment briefly on what you saw taking place.

Here are some things to look for:

1. Communication aids or blocks that occurred between the two participants:
   - Assumptions of varying color, perceptions of the Blivet, etc.
   - Use of technical or geometric terms.
   - Actions that are independent of instructions or preconceived notions about how the Blivet is to go together.

2. Awareness and sharing of the overall picture:
   - Did one communicate that the Blivet is in the shape of a capital “T”?
   - Did either participant question whether the two Blivets were made of the same colors?

3. Did the participants take time, when two-way communication was opened up, to appraise where they were and to plan or talk about where to go from there or what help might be needed?

4. To what extent did emotions (such as frustration or anger) become involved? Was it a rational step-by-step process? What was each member’s response to pressure? How did the roles affect these responses?

5. Did either participant abdicate the situation and stop trying?

Use the other side of this sheet for additional comments. Do not be limited by these suggestions. Rather, try to think of other things that are aiding or blocking communication. Make some notes as the activity proceeds, because it is difficult to recall key events and issues later.
DIRECTIONS FOR MANUFACTURING BLIVETS

Blivets should be made from heavy colored construction paper or similar material. The manager and assistant manager each receive a Blivet with pieces of the same size and shape, but not of the same color. The easiest way to handle this is to choose as many different colors of construction paper as there are trios (or at least five), cut an entire Blivet from each color, and then assemble a packet for each trio containing the following:

1. one complete Blivet, with each piece of a different color;
2. a second Blivet with each piece of a different color, these colors to be different from piece “1” above;
3. one Blivet Assembly Sheet.

Cut each Blivet along solid and dotted lines. Each Blivet has five parts.

BLIVET ASSEMBLY SHEET
DIRECTIONS FOR ASSEMBLING A BLIVET TABLE BLIND

1. Manufacture one blind for each trio’s table.
2. Use heavy cardboard and cut as follows:

```
Piece “A”

30"

Cut 3"

24"
```

```
Piece “B” (two for each blind)

6"

3” Cut

12"
```

3. Assembly:
DOMINOES: A COMMUNICATION EXPERIMENT

Goals
- To enhance awareness of factors that help or hinder effective interpersonal communication.
- To explore the effect on task-oriented behavior of shared versus unshared responsibility.

Group Size
An unlimited number of subgroups of four members each.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- Two matching sets of three dominoes each for each four-person subgroup. The number of boxes of dominoes needed can be computed from the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boxes of Dominoes</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Groups</th>
<th>Unused Dominoes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Two lapboards.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for the subgroups to work without disturbing one another. There should be chairs available for all participants and lapboards for half the members of each subgroup.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity. He or she divides the participants into subgroups of four members each and instructs the members of each subgroup to name themselves A, B, C, and D.
2. The facilitator directs the members of each subgroup to seat themselves so that A and B are sitting back to back and C and D are sitting where they can watch A and B.

![Diagram](image-url)

The facilitator announces that members A and B will engage in a task while members C and D will observe them.

3. A and B from each subgroup are each given one of the matched sets of three dominoes, which they may compare. They also receive lapboards.

4. The facilitator conducts round 1 (unshared responsibility):
   - A is instructed to make a design with his or her dominoes on his or her lapboard. Once it is made, it is not to be changed.
   - A instructs B on how to make a design identical to A’s.
   - C and D are to observe A and B, paying special attention to what helps and what hinders effective communication.
   - B, C, and D may not talk or communicate in any way with one another or with A.
   - After A has given what A thinks are adequate instructions to B, A may turn and compare his or her design with that of B.
   - C and D give brief feedback to A and B.
   - All participants rotate, repeating the activity until each has had a turn giving directions.

5. The facilitator leads a brief discussion of what has happened during round 1, listing on newsprint those observed behaviors that helped or hindered communication. He or she also leads a discussion on the effects of unshared responsibility on task accomplishment.

6. The facilitator conducts round 2 (unshared responsibility):
   - A is instructed to make a design, as before.
   - C and D are observers, as before.
After A indicates that he or she is ready with a design, B asks A questions in order to replicate A’s design.

■ The facilitator directs A to answer B with only a “yes” or “no” response.

■ The facilitator adds that C and D may not talk or communicate with either A or B.

■ When B decides that he or she has completed the task, he or she may compare his design with A’s.

■ C and D give brief feedback, as before.

■ All participants rotate to each position, as before.

7. The facilitator leads a brief discussion, as before; he or she adds to the list begun at the end of round 1 and elicits comments from the participants on the effects of unshared responsibility, as they experienced it during round 2.

8. The facilitator conducts round 3 (shared responsibility):

■ A makes a design, as in rounds 1 and 2.

■ C and D observe, as in rounds 1 and 2.

■ A and B are instructed that they may talk freely as B attempts to duplicate A’s design.

■ C and D observe, but do not communicate with A or B.

■ When A and B think that they have completed the task, they may each check the other’s design.

■ C and D give feedback, as before.

■ All participants rotate to each position, as before.

9. The facilitator adds to the list of behaviors that helped or hindered communication, as in step 7. The group discusses the effects of shared responsibility on task accomplishment and contrasts round 3 with rounds 1 and 2.

10. The facilitator then leads the total group in a discussion of the experience, pointing out or eliciting similarities to real-life situations. (It is often helpful to give a lecturette here on task and maintenance functions in a problem-solving setting, using as examples behaviors listed during the three rounds.)

Note: The subgroups will finish their tasks at different speeds. The facilitator can suggest that members who care to “practice” for the next round may do so until all have finished.
Variations

- Tinkertoys®, children’s blocks, etc., can be used instead of dominoes, or the participants can draw designs.
- The activity can be carried out by trios, with only one person observing.
- The rotation process can be eliminated to shorten the time.
- The quartets can write one or two generalizations about each round after its completion. These can be in the form of open-ended sentences, such as:
  
  One-way communication . . .
  Unshared responsibility . . .
  Communication rules . . .
  Two-way communication . . .

GESTURES: PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSES

Goals

- To provide an opportunity for participants to examine the perceptual biases operating in their interpretations of gestures.
- To increase awareness of the ambiguity inherent in various forms of nonverbal communication.
- To demonstrate how one gesture can elicit different feeling responses among different persons.
- To examine the principle that verbal and nonverbal communication must be congruent to be effective.

Group Size

An unlimited number of subgroups of six participants each.

Time Required

Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Gestures Response Sheet for each participant.
- For each subgroup, a set of six Gestures Pictures (the pictures are to be cut apart).
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for each subgroup to converse freely in a circle, or a separate room for each subgroup.

Process

1. The facilitator gives a brief introduction, stating the goals of the activity. (Five minutes.)
2. The large group is divided into subgroups of six participants each, and the members of each subgroup are instructed to sit in a circle, facing outward so that they will be able to concentrate more fully on their writing task. A copy of the Gestures Response Sheet and a pencil are given to each participant. A set of six
Gestures Pictures is given to each subgroup, one to each member in numerical sequence around the circle.

3. The facilitator states that each member is to study his or her picture for a few seconds and then write the responses to the picture as called for on the Gestures Response Sheet. The participants are reminded that the pictures are numbered and that the responses should be entered in the appropriate numbered spaces corresponding to the picture they are viewing.

4. After two minutes the facilitator calls time and directs each member to pass the picture to the subgroup member on the left. Participants are then directed to complete the appropriate responses for their second pictures.

5. After each two minutes the facilitator calls time. The pictures are rotated until each member has seen and responded to each of the six pictures.

6. Subgroup members turn inward to form their circles. To debrief the activity, members share their perceptions of and their reactions to each of the pictures within their subgroups. The members then cite cues in the pictures that guided their perceptions. Similarities or differences in perceptions of and reactions to the six pictures and to gestures are discussed. (Fifteen minutes.)

7. The total group reassembles to discuss communication in terms of the importance of congruence between intentions and the nonverbal cues and gestures used. (Fifteen minutes.)

8. The participants are then asked to consider the various interpretations that may result from their own nonverbal behavior. Examples are elicited from group members. Participants are instructed to develop generalizations from the experience that could be stated as principles of good interpersonal communication. (Fifteen minutes.)

9. The subgroups reconvene to formulate specific applications of these principles by suggesting ways in which each member’s nonverbal communication can be made more congruent with his or her intent, feelings, or accompanying verbal communication. (Ten minutes.)

**Variations**

- The individual writing aspect of the activity can be eliminated. Subgroup members then respond to each picture in turn, identifying the cues they perceive and their assumptions about the intent of the gestures. The discussion focuses on identifying gestures with high impact as an aid to congruent communication.

- Smaller groups and more or fewer pictures can be used.

- A variety of pictures cut from magazines can be used, providing that all members of a subgroup view the same set of pictures so that they can compare interpretations.
Facilitators can use this activity to help prepare participants for role playing or other communication activities.
## GESTURES RESPONSE SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Reactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is happening in this picture?</td>
<td>How are you feeling as you view this picture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the individuals feel?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. 1.  
2. 2.  
3. 3.  
4. 4.  
5. 5.  
6. 6.  
IN OTHER WORDS:
BUILDING ORAL-COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Goals

- To acquaint the participants with some useful tips regarding effective oral communication.
- To allow the participants to practice translating long, written messages into short but accurate and effective oral ones.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to give and receive feedback about the effectiveness of their translations and their delivery.

Group Size

A maximum of ten trios.

Time Required

Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials

- One copy of the In Other Words Communication Handout for each participant.
- One copy each of the In Other Words Translation Sheets A, B, and C for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room in which the trios can work without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided for the participants.

Process

1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity.
2. Each participant is given a copy of the In Other Words Communication Handout and is asked to read it. The facilitator leads a discussion of each of the tips presented in this handout, clarifying any points as necessary for the participants. (Twenty minutes.)
3. The facilitator instructs the participants to assemble into trios. Each participant is given one copy each of In Other Words Translation Sheets A, B, and C; a pencil; and a clipboard or other portable writing surface. The facilitator explains that one member of each trio is to concentrate on sheet A, another member is to concentrate on sheet B, and the third member is to concentrate on sheet C. Each participant is to work independently to translate the paragraph on his or her sheet into a message that is approximately half as long as the original message. This translation is to be written below the original paragraph on the sheet. (Ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator explains that within each trio all three members are to read the paragraph on sheet A silently; the member who translated this paragraph is to review his or her translation at the same time. Then the member who translated the paragraph is to turn his or her sheet face down and to deliver the translation orally. The facilitator stipulates that the oral translation need not be a word-for-word reproduction of the one that was written, but that the member delivering it should make a conscious effort to use the tips presented in the communication handout. The other two members are to listen carefully to the translation; to evaluate it for accuracy, brevity, effectiveness of statement, and use of the tips presented in the communication handout; and to provide the first member with this feedback. Then all three members are to discuss other ways in which the paragraph could have been translated. This procedure is to be followed until all three members have translated their paragraphs, received feedback about their translations, and participated in a discussion of alternative translations. After ensuring that the participants understand the task, the facilitator asks them to begin. (Forty-five minutes.)

5. The facilitator reassembles the total group for a concluding discussion. The following questions are asked:

- What was easy or difficult about writing the translation? What was easy or difficult about delivering the translation orally?
- What common steps did each member of your trio take in translating?
- How did the translations differ with regard to member input? What might account for these differences?
- Which affected the presentations more: the writing of the translation or its delivery? How did the writing and the delivery combine in total effect?
- What are some rules for translating written messages into oral form? What other generalizations can be made about oral communication?
- What new ideas can you incorporate into your interactions with others to build your oral-communication skills further?
Variations

- The participants may be instructed to translate the paragraphs orally without writing their translations beforehand.
- The participants may be asked to translate and deliver messages that are already concise.
- If the participants share a common profession, the facilitator may replace the translation sheets with paragraphs whose content reflects issues of concern to members of that profession.
- The activity may be altered to focus on improving the participants’ written-communication skills. In this case the facilitator should replace the existing communication handout with one that presents tips for effective writing.

IN OTHER WORDS COMMUNICATION HANDOUT

Here are some tips to help you to communicate orally with greater effectiveness.

1. Avoid sexist language, regardless of whether your audience includes members of both sexes.
2. Use correct grammar. Never talk down to any audience.
3. Avoid slang and jargon. Clear, precise, simple language is better.
4. Avoid saying “er,” “ah,” and “umm.”
5. Speak up. Vary your pitch, but always speak distinctly and enunciate carefully.
6. Monitor your pace as you speak. Avoid speaking too rapidly or too slowly.
7. Establish eye contact with your listeners so that they will listen and respond to what you are saying and so that you can see whether they are understanding you.
8. If you use gestures while you are speaking, make sure that they are appropriate to what you are saying.

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1 Adapted from T. W. Goad, Delivering Effective Training. Pfeiffer & Company, 1982.
IN OTHER WORDS TRANSLATION SHEET A

Misunderstandings between persons can occur because of faulty assumptions people make about communication. Two such faulty assumptions are (1) “you” always know what “I” mean and (2) “I” should always know what “you” mean. The premise seems to be that because people live or work together, they are or should be able to read each other’s minds. Some people believe that because they are transparent to themselves, they are transparent to others as well. “Because I exist, you should understand me,” they seem to be saying. Persons who make this assumption often presume that they communicate clearly if they simply say what they please. In fact, they often leave the persons listening to them confused and guessing about the message being communicated. Misunderstanding is common because clarity of communication does not happen.

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IN OTHER WORDS TRANSLATION SHEET B

Clarity of communication is influenced by the extent to which those listening and those sending are aware of their communication skills. It is possible to evaluate the assumptions one holds about his or her ability to communicate messages. Persons with careless speech-communication habits are often convinced that they are successful communicators because they are able to open their mouths and utter a stream of words. Actual skills in interpersonal communication, however, are quite different. An accurate assessment of one’s own communication weaknesses and strengths is important. Often, strengths can be maximized and weaknesses improved. One person may have a charismatic personality that aids him or her in communication. Another may be very eloquent. Yet another may be able to communicate in such a way that others believe he or she understands them.

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IN OTHER WORDS TRANSLATION SHEET C

The context of communication is important in determining the amount of accuracy needed or possible between persons in a given situation. How much clarity can be achieved is some what determined by the person’s communication skills, the number of communication channels available to the person sending, how much repetition he or she can incorporate into the message, and the nature of the relationship between the persons communicating. Attempting to communicate with a person in another room presents more difficulties for the clarification process than does speaking face-to-face. In short, the speaker needs to develop a realistic expectation for the degree of clarity obtainable in a given context.

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MAZE: ONE-WAY AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Goals
- To experience the effects of free versus restricted communication in accomplishing a task.
- To explore the impact of communication processes on the development of trust between a leader and a follower.

Group Size
Three to ten pairs and one additional person to serve as scorekeeper.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half to two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Maze Rules Sheet for the scorekeeper and for each leader.
- A copy of the Maze Score Sheet for the scorekeeper.
- A blindfold (a large, dark handkerchief or scarf can be used) for each leader.
- A watch with a second hand or a stopwatch for the scorekeeper.
- A pencil for the scorekeeper.

Physical Setting
A room in which the activity can be introduced and processed and a large, adjacent room with twenty-eight movable chairs arranged to form a maze, as follows:
Process

1. The facilitator presents a lecturette on the importance of active involvement and communication in developing trust. (Five minutes.)

2. One member of the group is selected to serve as scorekeeper. The scorekeeper receives a copy of the Maze Rules Sheet, a copy of the Maze Score Sheet, a watch with which to time the activity, and a pencil.

3. The facilitator divides the remaining participants into pairs, preferably composed of members who are unfamiliar with each other, and instructs the partners to designate one member of each pair to be the leader and the other to be the follower.

4. Each leader receives a blindfold. The leaders are instructed to take the followers to the entrance of the room in which the maze is set up and to blindfold the followers just prior to entering the room.

5. After the followers have been blindfolded, each leader receives a copy of the Maze Rules Sheet and is instructed to read it silently. While this is being done, the scorekeeper is positioned in the center of the maze. (Five minutes.)

6. The pairs line up at one end of the maze to begin round 1. Each follower enters the maze and is directed through by his or her leader before the next pair attempts the task. As each pair begins, the scorekeeper records the leader’s name and the time. During each trial, the scorekeeper keeps a record of the number of “hits” (times the follower touches a chair or a wall) and records the time at which the follower leaves the maze. (Approximately two minutes for each pair.)

7. When all trials have been completed, round 2 begins, with the followers going in the opposite direction through the maze.

8. At the conclusion of round 2, the entire group is assembled. The scorekeeper reports on the ranges and averages for times and hits for rounds 1 and 2.

9. The facilitator leads a general discussion of reactions to the experience. Followers are then asked to comment on their reactions as they heard directions being given to other followers during the task and on factors that helped or hindered the development of trust in the leader. Leaders are asked to comment on differences in their feelings during rounds 1 and 2 and on differences in their sense of responsibility for the outcomes of rounds 1 and 2. (Ten minutes.)

10. The facilitator helps to summarize the reported differences between rounds 1 and 2. (Five minutes.)

11. The participants are divided into subgroups and instructed to generate a list of factors that help or hinder communication flow and the development of trust. (Five to ten minutes.)
12. One member from each subgroup reports the subgroup’s list to the large group. (Five to ten minutes.)

13. The subgroups are reformed, and members discuss applications of their learnings. (Ten minutes.)

Variations

- More than one scorekeeper can be designated and the scorekeeping tasks distributed when working with even-numbered participant subgroups.

- Several pairs of volunteers can be assigned to do the task as presented while the rest of the participants observe the interactions. The facilitator then includes the observers’ comments in the debriefing session. The focus of the processing remains on identifying factors that influence the development of trust between a leader and a follower working on a joint task.

- Roles can be reversed for round 2.

- If meeting space is limited, a “maze” can be prepared on a sheet of paper and the task revised so that the blindfolded partner draws a continuous line from start to finish, avoiding obstacles on the paper, by following verbal directions supplied by the leader.
**MAZE RULES SHEET**

*Instructions:* When you are directed to do so, take your blindfolded follower into the room where the maze is set up. Explain to the follower that chairs are arranged to form a maze and that you will provide verbal directions for getting through it. (The follower’s objective is to walk through the maze without touching the walls or running into the chairs in the maze. The follower is to obey your instructions once the maze has been entered.)

Wait until it is your turn before leading your follower to the beginning of the maze. At that time, you are to remain at the beginning of the maze and direct your follower through only with your voice. The following rules apply to each round:

1. **Round 1:** You may say anything you like to the follower, but the follower may not speak to you. Tell your follower this rule at the beginning of round 1.

2. **Round 2:** You and the follower may converse freely while the follower is in the maze, i.e., the follower may ask questions or ask for clarification of your directions. Tell your follower this rule at the beginning of round 2. Direct your follower through the maze from the opposite direction (i.e., enter at the exit for round 1) during round 2.

The scorekeeper will record your starting time, the number of times your follower “hits” (touches a wall or a chair in the maze), and the time at which your follower leaves the maze.
# MAZE SCORE SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Leader</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hits</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals: \( h_1 \) \( t_1 \) \( h_2 \) \( t_2 \)

Divide by the number of pairs:

Averages:

**RESULTS:** Average of \( h_1 \) is greater than \( h_2 \) \( t_1 \) is greater than \( t_2 \)
PASS IT ON: SIMULATING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Goals

- To enhance the participants’ understanding of the complexity of oral communication patterns within an organization.
- To illustrate what happens to messages that are transmitted orally through several different channels within an organization.
- To explore ways to improve oral communication within an organization.

Group Size

Twenty to thirty-two participants.

Time Required

One hour and forty-five minutes.

Materials

- One copy of the Pass It On Instruction Sheet for each participant.
- One copy of the Pass It On Observer Sheet for each observer.
- A pencil for each observer.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each observer.
- One copy of the Pass It On Messages (to be used only by the facilitator).
- A name tag for each participant. Prior to conducting the activity, the facilitator labels these tags as follows:
  - One tag labeled “President”;
  - Three to five tags labeled “Executive Vice President”;
  - Three to five tags labeled “Vice President”;
  - Three to five tags labeled “Manager”;
  - Three to five tags labeled “Production Worker”;
  - Three to five tags labeled “Operations Worker”;

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1 A different version of this structured experience appeared in L. C. Lederman and L. P. Stewart, “One Day in an Organization,” in SIMCORP Participants’ Manual, Total Research Corporation, 1983. Adapted with the permission of the authors.
Two to four tags labeled “Observer”; and

Two tags labeled “Recorder.”

Six newsprint signs designating the areas of the room assigned to the various subgroups. Prior to conducting the activity, the facilitator prepares these signs with the following labels (one label per sign): “President,” “Executive Vice Presidents,” “Vice Presidents,” “Managers,” “Production Workers,” and “Operations Workers.”

A newsprint reproduction of the organizational hierarchy illustrated on the instruction sheet. The facilitator prepares this reproduction prior to conducting the activity.

Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Two newsprint flip charts and two felt-tipped markers (one chart and marker placed at the president’s station and another chart and marker placed at the operations workers’ station).

**Physical Setting**

A large room that will allow the participants to move back and forth freely. The signs designating the stations for the organizational subgroups should be taped to the wall in different areas of the room. One flip chart and felt-tipped marker should be placed at the president’s station, and the other flip chart and marker should be placed at the operations workers’ station. The newsprint reproduction of the organizational hierarchy should be taped to the wall in such a way that it can be viewed by all participants.

**Process**

1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity.

2. The participants are assigned roles for the simulation: one president, three to five executive vice presidents, three to five vice presidents, three to five managers, three to five production workers, three to five operations workers, two to four observers, and two recorders. Name tags are distributed. The subgroups that comprise the organizational hierarchy are stationed at different areas within the room; one recorder is stationed near the president, and one is stationed near the operations workers; and the observers are stationed in different places so that they can observe the activity from different vantage points.

3. Each participant is given a copy of the Pass It On Instruction Sheet and is asked to read this sheet. Each observer is also given a copy of the observer sheet, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface and is asked to read the
observer sheet. The facilitator elicits and answers questions about the activity. (Fifteen minutes.)

4. The facilitator gives the organizational subgroups their assigned messages one by one, each time reciting the subgroup’s message carefully but so that the other subgroups cannot hear the content; no participant is allowed to see his or her subgroup’s written message or to write the recited message. In addition, each recorder is instructed to receive messages from the appropriate participant(s) and to record these messages on newsprint; the facilitator emphasizes to each recorder that the received messages must not be translated into the recorder’s own words.

5. The participants are instructed to begin the simulation. The facilitator monitors their actions to ensure that the flow of communication is as described on the instruction sheet.

6. The facilitator stops the simulation when all messages have been recorded on newsprint. (The recorder stationed near the president will have recorded three messages, and the recorder stationed near the operations workers will have recorded four messages.)

7. The total group is reassembled, and the observers are asked to share the content of their observer sheets.

8. The facilitator leads a discussion of the activity. The following questions are asked:

   - What reactions did you have to the conveying and receiving of messages? What difficulties did you experience? How did you compensate for these difficulties? What surprises did you experience?
   - What are some words you would use to describe the oral communication within the organization portrayed in this simulation? How does your description compare with the way in which oral communication occurs in your own organization?
   - What can you generalize about oral communication among hierarchies within an organization?
   - How might oral communication within an organization be improved? What would have to happen in order to generate this improvement?
   - What could you personally do to simplify the oral-communication process in your own organization? How might you increase clarity and reduce distortion in communication?
Variations

- After step 8 the participants may be asked to use the improvements they have suggested to convey different messages.

- If the participants share a common profession, the facilitator may devise different messages that reflect that profession.

- To shorten the activity, the number of organizational levels may be reduced.

Submitted by Linda Costigan Lederman and Lea P. Stewart.
Pass It On Instruction Sheet

Instructions: During the upcoming activity, you and your fellow participants will take part in a simulation of the flow of organizational communication. If you have been assigned a role within the organizational hierarchy, you will be conveying and receiving certain messages. To begin the activity, the facilitator will instruct each subgroup separately about the message that it is to convey, and one of the members of this subgroup will deliver the message orally to one of the members of the subgroup that is to receive the message. Consult the organizational hierarchy illustrated below and the copy that follows to determine the flow of messages.

Organizational Hierarchy

- President
- Executive Vice Presidents
- Vice Presidents
- Managers
- Production Workers
- Operations Workers

President

The president conveys his or her assigned message to and receives messages from the executive vice presidents. Each time the president receives a message, he or she recites this message to the recorder standing nearby, who then records the message word for word on newsprint.

Executive Vice Presidents

The executive vice presidents convey their assigned message to the vice presidents. They receive a message from the president and convey it to the vice presidents, and they receive messages from the vice presidents and convey these to the president.
**Vice Presidents**

The vice presidents convey their assigned message to the managers. They receive messages from the executive vice presidents and convey them to the managers, and they receive messages from the managers and convey them to the executive vice presidents.

**Managers**

The managers convey their assigned message to the vice presidents and the production workers. They receive messages from the vice presidents and convey them to the production workers, and they receive messages from the production workers and convey them to the vice presidents.

**Production Workers**

The production workers convey their assigned message to the managers. They receive messages from the managers and convey them to the operations workers, and they receive a message from the operations workers and convey it to the managers.

**Operations Workers**

The operations workers convey their assigned message to and receive messages from the production workers. Each time a message is received, the operations worker who received it recites the message to the recorder standing nearby, who then records the message *word for word* on newsprint.
PASS IT ON OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: During the upcoming activity, you are to observe the participants’ interactions carefully and write answers to the following questions. Later you will be asked to share these questions and your answers with the total group. If you need clarification of this assignment, consult the facilitator in private; do not share the content of this sheet with the participants who are involved in the simulation.

1. How are the participants choosing to convey and receive messages?

2. What types of feelings and reactions are the participants displaying?

3. What distortions of messages are occurring in the exchange? What are the participants doing to reduce distortion and/or increase clarity?

4. What similarities and differences are becoming apparent among subgroups as the participants convey and receive messages? What patterns are developing within and among subgroups? What significance do these patterns have?
PASS IT ON MESSAGES

President’s Message
This year’s company picnic will be held on Saturday, May 1. All employees and their families are cordially invited.

Executive Vice Presidents’ Message
Because extra cash is available at present, it has been decided to make some improvements to the company’s building. The exterior of the building will be painted in April, and the interior will be painted in June.

Vice Presidents’ Message
The company is instituting a system to reward employees whose performance is exceptional. Each month one employee will be chosen as the recipient, and this individual will be given $250 during a special award ceremony.

Managers’ Message
All production and operations workers are being asked to work an extra two hours per shift for the next two weeks so that the company can fill a large customer order.

Production Workers’ Message
The production workers would like a company-paid policy of disability insurance to be added to the employee-benefits package.

Operations Workers’ Message
The operations workers would like to have four more vending machines installed: two machines that dispense soft drinks and two that dispense snacks.
BABEL: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Goals

- To examine the language barriers that can contribute to breakdowns in communication.
- To demonstrate some of the anxieties and frustrations that may be felt when communicating under difficult circumstances.
- To illustrate the impact of nonverbal communication where verbal communication is ineffective and/or restricted.

Group Size

An unlimited number of equal-sized subgroups of four, six, or eight members each.

Time Required

Approximately two hours.

Materials

- A pencil and paper for each participant.
- A blindfold for each group member.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for the subgroups to meet comfortably.

Process

1. The facilitator divides the large group into subgroups.
2. When the groups have assembled, the facilitator announces that each subgroup is to create a language of its own. This language must be significantly different from the members’ own language and must include the following:
   - A greeting,
   - A description of some object, person or event,
   - An evaluative statement about an object or a person
   - A farewell.
Members must be able to “speak” their subgroup’s language at the end of this step.

(Forty-five minutes.)

3. Within each language group, members number themselves sequentially (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.). The facilitator announces the location of a new subgroup to be composed of all participants numbered 1. Likewise, new subgroups are formed of participants numbered 2, 3, 4, and so on.

4. The facilitator directs members in the new subgroups to form pairs. Each member must teach his or her new language to his or her partner without using any recognized language. (Twenty minutes.)

5. The facilitator distributes a blindfold to each numbered subgroup. A blindfolded volunteer from each subgroup teaches his or her language to the rest of the subgroup. A second volunteer repeats this task. (Twenty minutes.)

6. The facilitator distributes blindfolds to all remaining participants. Participants are told to stand in their second, numbered subgroups, and all chairs are moved aside. Participants blindfold themselves and are instructed to find their original subgroups without the use of any conventional language or people’s names.

7. When the original subgroups have been re-formed, the facilitator instructs them to discuss the activity and to answer the following questions:
   - What did this experience illustrate about communication?
   - How did you feel during the experience?
   - What did you learn about yourself from it?

8. The facilitator leads a general discussion on the problems faced by people who do not understand a language and on the difficulties that blind people may have in communicating.

**Variations**

- The requirements for the new vocabulary can be changed to make the task more difficult or less difficult.
- All participants can be blindfolded for step 5.
- Real languages can be used. The phrases can be preset.

Submitted by Philip M. Ericson.
**TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: PRACTICE IN COMMUNICATING ASSUMPTIONS**

**Goals**
- To develop the participants’ understanding of the effects of assumptions on oral communication.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to practice devising comments that demonstrate their willingness to assume responsibility for their pronouncing assumptions.

**Group Size**
Any number of trios.

**Time Required**
Two hours.

**Materials**
- A copy of the Taking Responsibility Theory Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Taking Responsibility Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

**Physical Setting**
A room that is large enough to allow the trios to work without disturbing one another. Chairs and writing surfaces should be provided for the participants.

**Process**
1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity.
2. Each participant is given a copy of the Taking Responsibility Theory Sheet and is asked to read this handout. (Ten minutes.)
3. The facilitator leads a discussion about the contents of the theory sheet, eliciting and answering questions as necessary. (Fifteen minutes.)
4. Each participant is given a copy of the Taking Responsibility Work Sheet and a pencil and is asked to complete the sheet. (Thirty minutes.)
5. The participants are assembled into trios. The members of each trio are asked to share their completed sheets with one another and to discuss the underlying
assumptions as well as the merits of each member’s rewritten comment for each item. (Forty-five minutes.)

6. The total group is reassembled for a concluding discussion. The facilitator asks the following questions:

■ Which comments on the work sheet were easy to rewrite? Which were difficult? How do you account for the difference in difficulty?

■ What common assumptions did you discover on the work sheet? On what points did you and your fellow trio members agree and disagree during your discussion? What part did your own assumptions play in these agreements and disagreements?

■ What might be the consequences of failing to state assumptions specifically when conversing with others? What might be the consequences of stating assumptions specifically?

■ What seem to be the major assumptions that are left unspoken in your home or work environment? How might these assumptions be communicated openly? What might happen if this open communication were to take place?

Variations

■ After step 6 the participants may be asked to return to their trios to work on ways to state assumptions clearly in their home and/or work environments.

■ If the participants share a particular line of work, the comments on the work sheet may be rewritten to reflect assumptions that are common to that line of work.

■ The participants may be asked to role play situations involving some of the comments on their work sheet before and after these comments are rewritten. Subsequently, reactions are compared.

Submitted by Gilles L. Talbot.
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY THEORY SHEET

It is a characteristic of human nature to try to assess or understand human behavior. However, the assumptions we make about the behavior of others are not necessarily what others are; instead, our assumptions are reflections of our own values and beliefs. When conversing with another person, it is important to remember this fact, to clarify assumptions, and to be willing to accept at least some of the responsibility for any ambiguity in the communication.

Here are some suggestions about ways to take responsibility and to clarify assumptions when communicating with another person:

1. Specify the behavior(s) on which the assumption is based: “Your facial expression suggests to me that you’re confused” rather than “Are you following what I’m saying?”

2. If your assumption compares the listener’s behavior with that of other members of a reference group, state what the group is and exactly how the behavior compares: “The other members of the department always submit their weekly production reports on Monday, and each of your last four reports wasn’t submitted until Thursday” rather than “You don’t submit your weekly production reports promptly.”

3. If your assumption is based on your own expectation of the listener’s behavior, state that expectation specifically; do not assume that the listener knows the details of your expectation: “I’m expecting that report next Monday at 4:00. Can we agree on that?” rather than “Is that report going to be done on time?”

4. Elicit feedback about your assumption; ask the listener to tell you whether the assumption is accurate: “Am I correct in assuming that you’ve already begun writing the report that’s due next Monday?”
TAKEING RESPONSIBILITY WORK SHEET

Instructions: For each of the following comments, (1) write the underlying assumption, and (2) employ one or more of the four suggestions on the Taking Responsibility Theory Sheet to rewrite the comment so that it reflects an effort to take responsibility and to communicate assumptions clearly.

1. “Can’t you work under pressure?”

2. “You’re not listening to me.”

3. “Will you work overtime Friday?”

4. “Joyce, what have you done with the production figures?”

5. “Get me the copyright file! And hurry up!”
6. “Don’t you like the boss?”

7. “How are you going to get us out of this mess?”

8. “Are you getting all of this down in writing?”

9. “Why are you mad at me?”

10. “You’ve never appreciated my work.”
SHADES OF DIFFERENCE: EXPLORING
METAVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Goals
- To demonstrate the impact that metaverbal aspects of communication have on the perception and interpretation of meaning.
- To allow the participants to practice using metaverbal aspects of communication.

Group Size
Two to seven subgroups of four members each.

Time Required
Approximately two and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Shades of Difference Lecturette for each participant. (Optional: the lecturette may be delivered orally by the facilitator.)
- A copy of the Shades of Difference Instruction Sheet A-C for two of the members (A and C) in each subgroup.
- A copy of the Shades of Difference Instruction Sheet B-D for the other two members (B and D) in each subgroup.
- A copy of the Shades of Difference Opinion Sheet 1 for two of the members (A and B) in each subgroup.
- A copy of the Shades of Difference Opinion Sheet 2 for the other two members (C and D) in each subgroup.
- Three copies of the Shades of Difference Observer Sheet for each participant.
- Blank paper, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface for the recorder from each subgroup.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.
**Physical Setting**

A room in which all subgroups can work without distracting one another and a breakout area (a corner of the meeting room, a hallway, or a small, adjacent room) in which a small group can meet without being overheard by the rest of the participants.

**Process**

1. The facilitator announces the goals of the activity, gives each participant a copy of the Shades of Difference Lecturette, and allows a few minutes for the participants to read the lecturette. (Optional: the facilitator may deliver the lecturette orally.) (Five minutes.)

2. The facilitator divides the participants into subgroups of four by any appropriate method and directs the members of each subgroup to designate themselves as member A, member B, member C, and member D.

3. The facilitator calls all members A into the breakout area and gives each of them a copy of the Shades of Difference Instruction Sheet A-C and a copy of the Shades of Difference Opinion Sheet 1. The facilitator instructs the members A to read their sheets and prepare for their presentations. While they are reading, the facilitator tells the remaining members of the subgroups that they will be hearing a presentation of an opinion and are to listen carefully and to watch for verbal and nonverbal indications by the speaker that back up or conflict with his or her statement of opinion. (Five minutes.)

4. The members A return to their subgroups and read their opinion sheets aloud, as instructed. (Five minutes.)

5. Members B, C, and D in each subgroup give member A feedback on what metaverbal cues seemed to reinforce or detract from member A’s presentation of the opinion. (Five to ten minutes.)

6. The facilitator calls the members B into the breakout area, gives each of them a copy of the Instruction Sheet B-D and a copy of the Opinion Sheet 1, and tells them to read their sheets and prepare for their presentations. The facilitator tells the remaining members that during each succeeding presentation, they are again to listen and watch for metaverbal cues. (Five minutes.)

7. The members B return to their subgroups and read their opinion sheets aloud, as instructed. (Five minutes.)

8. Members A, C, and D in each subgroup give member B feedback on what metaverbal cues he or she used that reinforced or detracted from his or her presentation. (Five to ten minutes.)

9. The facilitator calls all members C into the breakout area, gives each of them a copy of the Instruction Sheet A-C and a copy of the Opinion Sheet 2, and directs them to read their sheets. (Five minutes.)
10. The members C return to their subgroups, present their opinions, and receive feedback from the other members. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

11. The preparation, presentation, and feedback process is repeated with the members D, who receive the Instruction Sheet B-D and the Opinion Sheet 2. (Fifteen to twenty-five minutes.)

12. The members of each subgroup are asked to discuss how they felt while trying to present their “opinions” and whether they were unusually aware of using metaverbal aspects of communication in their presentations. (Ten minutes.)

13. The facilitator asks each subgroup to select a recorder, gives blank paper and a pencil to each recorder, and asks the subgroups to identify the metaverbal cues that aided the presenters who were “for” the statements and those that aided the presenters who were “against” the statements while the recorder lists them. (Ten minutes.)

14. The total group is assembled, and the recorder from each subgroup, in turn, reports the subgroup’s list of metaverbal cues that reinforced the “for” presentations. The facilitator writes these on newsprint. Then each recorder reports his or her subgroup’s list of metaverbal cues that reinforced the “against” presentations, while the facilitator records them on a separate sheet of newsprint. (Fifteen minutes.)

15. The facilitator asks the participants to suggest other metaverbal cues that they may have used or seen someone use that could reinforce or negate what the speaker was saying or that carry a specific message of their own. These also are listed on newsprint. (Ten minutes.)

16. The subgroups of four are reformed, and the members are directed to discuss the answers to the following questions among themselves (these questions are listed on newsprint and posted where all participants can see them):

- What questions do you have about some metaverbal behaviors of your own that you think might confuse other people?
- How might you improve your use of metaverbal communication to clarify or enhance your own communications with others?
- What specific plans can you make right now to improve your use of metaverbal communication in your interaction with one other (specific) person?

(Fifteen to twenty minutes.)

**Variations**

- After step 16, subgroup members can form pairs and contract with their partners to report on their progress in, confusion with, or issues around attempting to improve their metaverbal communication skills.
- Trios can be used instead of subgroups of four. Only one of the opinion sheets would be read, with the third member of the trio reading it humorously.

- Opinion sheets can be assigned in such a way that each participant is instructed to read an opinion with which he or she does not agree (with no other instructions). The listeners would be instructed to determine whether the presenter agreed with the statement, based on a discussion of the presenter’s metaverbal cues.

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SHADES OF DIFFERENCE LECTURE

People communicate in more than one way. What we say to another person is only one of the messages that we send. My tone of voice, pitch, and use of pauses can tell you that I am joking, that I am very serious, that I am angry or sad, and so on. My gestures, my bodily stance, the tilt of my head, and the way I use my eyes or eyebrows also can convey a message or reinforce or negate the verbal message that I am sending. Even the words or sounds that I use between pauses can indicate whether I am feeling sure or unsure, honest or dishonest, or a number of other conditions. These various messages are known as metaverbal (“along with” or “beyond” verbal) communication.

Your interpretation of my communication is based on several things: your needs and feelings, the words I use, the way I use my voice in saying those words, the way I stand or sit, the way I look at you, my gestures, and so on. If my “body language” and my voice are not congruent with my words, you may become confused or you may distrust my intentions. In fact, if my metaverbal communication is incongruous with my stated message, it may indicate that I am feeling ambiguous or unclear about what I am trying to communicate. (In some cases, I may be trying to confuse you.)

If I want my communication with you to be as clear and unambiguous as possible, I need to pay attention to all the messages that I send at one time. If I am frowning, I can tell you whether I am angry, perplexed, or just thinking. If I am joking, I can smile or raise my eyebrows to let you know that I am joking. If I am trying to extend sympathy but fear that my awkward words will sound gruff, I can speak softly and perhaps touch your shoulder.

By paying attention to how we communicate—on many levels—we can do a great deal to improve the clarity and effectiveness of what we are attempting to communicate.
SHADES OF DIFFERENCE INSTRUCTION SHEET A-C

In a few minutes, you will be asked to read a statement of opinion to the other members of your subgroup. Read the opinion as though you wholeheartedly agree with it and endorse it. Look now at the opinion that you have been given and think about how you might read it to the members of your subgroup in a way that convinces them that you believe it and would like to convince them to believe it.

SHADES OF DIFFERENCE INSTRUCTION SHEET B-D

In a few minutes, you will be asked to read a statement of opinion to the other members of your subgroup. Read this statement as though you are seriously opposed to the subject matter discussed. You may want to try reading the statement with sarcasm, pointing out its obviously ludicrous points with your voice. You may want to emphasize certain sentences that speak negatively against the subject themselves. Look now at the opinion that you have been given and think about how you might read it to the members of your subgroup in a way that convinces them that you are opposed to the subject under discussion and that you would like them to oppose it also.
SHADES OF DIFFERENCE OPINION SHEET 1

Billboards are an important aspect of modern business. Let’s face it; in today’s competitive environment, businesses need all the advertising they can get. What better way to send a message to Mr. and Mrs. Consumer than to catch them while they are driving down the road without other things to distract them. The kids aren’t in the bathtub; there’s no one at the front door; there’s nothing in the oven—just the scenery and the billboards. In fact, billboards are the scenery in some places. They brighten up lonely stretches of road; they provide art in a barren landscape. More importantly, they tell people about products and services that they might not hear about in other media such as television, newspaper, magazines, and radio. Billboards help the consumer to choose between products and services (why this cigarette is better than that cigarette; why this bank is more trustworthy than that bank, etc.). People have come to expect to see billboards; they’ve become part of the modern way of life.

SHADES OF DIFFERENCE OPINION SHEET 2

Soap operas and their prime-time counterparts have become part of modern life. People watch them to find out how other people live, to gain insight into the personalities of people who make things happen, and to bring a glimpse of the real world into their ordinary lives. In soap operas, the men usually are doctors or lawyers or have inherited money, and the women don’t work and don’t need to. This vision of how the other half lives is made more realistic by the situations and crises that the characters face. People watch the problems and conflicts of the characters in a soap opera or family saga and compare them to help them put their own lives and problems into perspective. The “soaps” tell people that there are many different kinds of families with many different kinds of problems but also that, in many ways, we are all alike. These dramatic portrayals help people to distinguish between right and wrong, between what is really important and what is not. They help us to consider the moral implications of things that could happen to you or me.
SHADES OF DIFFERENCE OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: The following sections list some of the types of metaverbal communication that can occur. Use the space provided to make notes of your observations of the speaker in each of these areas.

Words:

Tone of voice:

Posture:

Eye contact:

Gestures:

Other:
MEANINGS ARE IN PEOPLE:
PERCEPTION CHECKING

Goals
- To demonstrate that meanings are not in words but in the people who use them and hear them.
- To illustrate that our perceptions of words attribute positive, neutral, and negative meanings to them.

Group Size
Up to five subgroups of four to six members each.

Time Required
One to three hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Meanings Are in People Work Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Meanings Are in People Group Summary Sheet for each subgroup.
- A pencil for each participant.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker for each subgroup.
- A copy of the Meanings Are in People Target Words for the facilitator.

Physical Setting
A table for each subgroup or other writing surfaces for participants.

Process
1. The facilitator forms subgroups of four to six members each and distributes a copy of the Meanings Are in People Work Sheet and a pencil to each participant and a copy of the Meanings Are in People Group Summary Sheet to each subgroup.
2. The facilitator assigns each subgroup a different word from one set of the Meanings Are in People Target Words and directs members to write their subgroup’s word on their copies of the Meanings Are in People Work Sheet.
3. The facilitator directs that each person independently is to list on the Meanings Are in People Work Sheet all the words that come to his or her mind when he or she thinks about the assigned target word.

4. After five minutes, the facilitator directs participants to assign a positive (+), neutral (0), or negative (-) value to each word they listed.

5. Steps 2, 3, and 4 are repeated up to five times, each time with different target words assigned to each subgroup.

6. Each member of each subgroup totals the number of positive, negative, or neutral values for each of the assigned subgroup words in the space provided on the Meanings Are in People Work Sheet.

7. Subgroup members then identify associated words that were listed more than once by members of the subgroup for each assigned word and list them on the Meanings Are in People Group Summary Sheet. They indicate how many positive, negative, and neutral values were assigned to each common word. Each subgroup then copies its summary on newsprint. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigned Target Word</th>
<th>Common Words Associated with Target Word</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Liberation</td>
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<td>1. Equality</td>
<td>4 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Social Movement</td>
<td>3 2 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Radical</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. The facilitator collects the subgroups’ newsprint summaries, posts them, and reassembles the total group. He or she then discusses the number of positive, negative, or neutral words associated with each assigned target word and notes the words identified more than once.

9. The facilitator leads a discussion of the experience, including:
   - How the different values associated with words illustrate that their meanings are in the people who use them, not in the words;
   - How our perceptions of words affect our communication effectiveness (including examples of this principle);
   - What individual participants learned from the experience about themselves and their own use of words;
   - How members plan to apply these learnings in the future.
Variations

- Locally controversial topic words can be chosen as target words.
- More group interaction can be stimulated by discussing all the associated words in the total group rather than reporting only repeated ones.
- All subgroups can be assigned the same target word in each round.
- A combination of “objective” and “loaded” target words can be given and the different reactions compared and contrasted.
- Members can be instructed to assign positive, neutral, or negative values to the assigned target words first, before they develop and label the associated words.

Submitted by Jack N. Wismer.
MEANINGS ARE IN PEOPLE TARGET WORDS

*Instructions to the facilitator:* These words are arranged in sets *horizontally*. Select a set and assign a different target word from it to each subgroup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>milk</th>
<th>coffee</th>
<th>tea</th>
<th>alcohol</th>
<th>water</th>
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<tr>
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<td>socialist</td>
<td>democracy</td>
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<td>town</td>
<td>country</td>
<td>home</td>
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<td>instructions</td>
<td>procedures</td>
<td>regulations</td>
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<td>weed</td>
<td>flower</td>
<td>leaf</td>
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<tr>
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<td>salad</td>
<td>sugar</td>
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<td>child</td>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>affair</td>
<td>relatives</td>
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<td>independent</td>
<td>assertive</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<td>hard</td>
<td>hot</td>
<td>cold</td>
<td>soft</td>
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<td>boss</td>
<td>manager</td>
<td>employee</td>
<td>supervisor</td>
<td>subordinate</td>
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<td>lake</td>
<td>river</td>
<td>desert</td>
<td>stream</td>
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<td>animal</td>
<td>chick</td>
<td>seagull</td>
<td>bird</td>
<td>dogs</td>
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<td>woman</td>
<td>chauvinist</td>
<td>nurse</td>
<td>girls</td>
<td>housewife</td>
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<td>fireman</td>
<td>army</td>
<td>policeman</td>
<td>cop</td>
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<td>politician</td>
<td>bureaucracy</td>
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<td>profession</td>
<td>task</td>
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<td>involvement</td>
<td>complication</td>
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<td>puzzle</td>
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<td>study</td>
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<td>calculation</td>
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<td>foreign</td>
<td>adventure</td>
<td>sophisticated</td>
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# MEANINGS ARE IN PEOPLE WORK SHEET

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<th>Assigned Target Word</th>
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Total
# MEANINGS ARE IN PEOPLE GROUP SUMMARY SHEET

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LET ME: INTRODUCING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Goals

- To acquaint the participants with the concept of experiential learning.
- To demonstrate the positive effects of learning by doing.

Group Size

As many as fifteen participants of a newly formed training group.

Time Required

Thirty to thirty-five minutes, plus prework for the facilitator (learning the American Sign Language on the Let Me Illustration Sheet).

Materials

- One copy of the Let Me Instruction Sheet (for the facilitator’s use).
- One copy of the Let Me Illustration Sheet (for the facilitator’s use).
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

A room with chairs positioned so that the participants can see one another, the facilitator, and the newsprint flip chart. Plenty of space should be left between chairs so that the participants can practice American Sign Language without interfering with one another’s movement.

Process

1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity and makes comments such as the following:

   “Many different methods are used to teach. All of us are familiar with the lecture method, in which the instructor conveys information while the students passively absorb. In another method the instructor demonstrates a particular skill or concept, and again the students passively absorb. Still another method—one that has been used successfully with adult learners for many years now—is known as experiential learning, or learning by doing. An old saying, attributed to Confucius,
illustrates the impact of experiential learning as opposed to learning by other methods: ‘Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. But let me and I understand.’ ”

As the facilitator quotes the Confucius saying, he or she writes it on newsprint and then continues:

“Obviously, experiential learning is dependent on some previous input in the form of information or instructions; for example, the student may read a book, listen to a lecture, or watch an instructor’s demonstration. But the critical part of the learning occurs after the input has taken place, once the student tries to complete a related task—to learn by doing.”

2. The facilitator informs the participants that they are going to be offered proof of the Confucius saying by learning that saying in American Sign Language: First they will learn by being told, then by being shown, then by doing.

3. The participants are told that they may only listen for the first phase of the activity; they may not practice using the American Sign Language on their own. Then the facilitator reads the Let Me Instruction Sheet to the participants.

4. The facilitator chooses a volunteer or recruits a participant to demonstrate how well he or she has learned by attempting to sign the saying.

5. The participants are informed that now they will see the signs, but again they will not be allowed to practice. Then, using the content of the Let Me Illustration Sheet, the facilitator signs the entire saying before the total group, saying the words while signing them.

6. The facilitator chooses a new volunteer or recruit to demonstrate how well he or she has learned by attempting to sign the saying. (This participant probably will do better than the first.)

7. The participants are told that now they will be shown the correct signs and will be permitted to practice while the facilitator demonstrates. The facilitator demonstrates each sign in the sequence and assists the participants in producing each sign correctly. The participants continue practicing, with the facilitator leading, until the entire group is able to perform each sign correctly in sequence.

8. The facilitator chooses a new volunteer or recruit to demonstrate how well he or she has learned by attempting to sign the saying. (It is likely that this participant will do the signing perfectly.)

9. The facilitator leads a discussion by asking questions such as the following:

- What was your reaction to having the signs read to you and trying to learn them? What was your reaction to having them demonstrated for you and trying to learn them?
- How many wanted to try to produce the signs when you were instructed not to do so in the first two steps?
What was your reaction to trying the signing for yourself?

What does this activity suggest about the efficacy of learning by hearing? By seeing? By doing? What similar experiences in these types of learning come to mind?

How will you apply what you have learned to your work or home life?

**Variations**

- After step 7 subgroups may be formed. Each subgroup is then given the task of practicing until it can do the signing correctly as a team.

- This activity may be used as an introduction to a communication-skills experience to demonstrate how words can be misinterpreted.

- Instead of the facilitator’s lecturing and demonstrating, the participants may be given copies of the instruction sheet and the illustration sheet to review for five minutes each. A participant volunteer or recruit is still chosen to perform at the end of each step.

- The facilitator may form two subgroups. One subgroup is given the instruction sheet and the illustration sheet and is not allowed to practice. The other subgroup is given both sheets and is allowed to practice. Subsequently, results in performance are compared. This variation would be good for a focus on self-directed learning in addition to experiential learning.

- The facilitator may make copies of the instruction sheet and the illustration sheet and distribute them at the conclusion of the activity.
LET ME INSTRUCTION SHEET

1. TELL: Put your right index finger to your chin. Then move your finger away from your chin, leaving your finger pointed upward.

2. ME: Use your right index finger to point to your chest.

3. AND: Place your right hand, with the fingers open and the palm facing you, in front of the left side of your chest. Draw that hand from the left side of your chest to the right, bringing your fingertips and thumb together.

4. I: With your right hand, make a fist and extend your little finger. Tap your chest with that fist, keeping the side with the little finger away from your body.

5. FORGET: Using your open right palm, wipe your forehead from left to right. End with a hitchhiker’s sign close to your right temple.

6. SHOW: Extend your left hand with the palm facing outward. Point to the palm with your right index finger and push both hands a few inches away from your body.

7. ME: Use your right index finger to point to your chest.

8. AND: Place your right hand, with the fingers open and the palm facing you, in front of the left side of your chest. Draw that hand from the left side of your chest to the right, bringing your fingertips and thumb together.

9. I: With your right hand, make a fist and extend your little finger. Tap your chest with that fist, keeping the side with the little finger away from your body.

10. REMEMBER: Make two fists with the thumbs exposed. Touch your right thumb to your forehead and hold your left fist at chest height. Bring the two fists together in front of you and touch your right thumb to your left thumbnail.

11. BUT: Make two fists but extend your index fingers. Quickly cross your index fingers; then move them apart a few inches.

12. LET: Extend both of your hands, held flat, with the palms facing each other. Then raise your hands together, keeping your elbows tight to your body, until your hands are at chest height with your fingers pointed slightly outward.

13. ME: Use your right index finger to point to your chest.

14. AND: Place your right hand, with the fingers open and the palm facing you, in front of the left side of your chest. Draw that hand from the left side of your chest to the right, bringing your fingertips and thumb together.

15. I: With your right hand, make a fist and extend your little finger. Tap your chest with that fist, keeping the side with the little finger away from your body.

16. UNDERSTAND: Make a fist with your right hand. Then bring your fist in front of your forehead and flick your index finger upward.
BUGS: IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Goals

- To help the participants to identify universal problems in customer service.
- To enhance the participants’ awareness of their own responses to customer service issues.
- To offer the participants the opportunity to share ideas about dealing with customer service problems.

Group Size

Twelve to twenty participants in subgroups of four or five members each.

Time Required

One hour and one-half hours to two hours.

Materials

- One pad of Post-it™ Notes for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- Several sheets of newsprint and a felt-tipped marker for each subgroup.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker for the facilitator’s use.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting

Any room in which the group can work comfortably and which has ample space for posting newsprint. Movable chairs should be provided.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the goals of the activity and distributes a pad of Post-it™ Notes and a pencil to each participant. He or she gives the following instructions:
   “Think about times in the past when you have been annoyed by poor customer service. These can be very specific instances, or general annoyances, such as unfriendly clerks. Write each customer service ‘bug’ or annoyance on a separate
Post-it™ Note sheet. You will have five minutes to complete this portion of the activity.”

(Five minutes.)

2. After five minutes, the facilitator calls time and reconvenes the total group. He or she goes around the group, asking each person in turn to come to the flip chart, name annoyances that they have experienced, and attach their Post-it™ Notes to the flip chart page. If more than one participant has written the same annoyance, their Post-it™ Notes can be pasted on top of each other. The facilitator provides new flip chart pages as needed, posting the filled sheets around the room. (Twenty to thirty minutes.)

3. When all of the Post-it™ Notes have been collected, the facilitator leads the participants in clustering and naming the clusters. He or she posts clean flip chart pages for the clusters (e.g., the ones that deal with waiting, the ones about product knowledge, etc.) and moves the Post-it™ Notes to the appropriate page. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

4. When all of the annoyances have been grouped, the participants are asked to form subgroups of four or five members each. Each subgroup chooses to work with one of the clusters of annoyances. (Five minutes.)

5. Each subgroup is given the appropriate cluster of Post-it™ Notes, several sheets of newsprint, and a felt-tipped marker. The facilitator instructs the subgroups to accomplish two goals:

- Draw a service “bug,” an animal that represents that particular annoyance. This service “bug” should be given a name (e.g., Slowmotionitis or Idunno bug) and a description of its characteristics should be listed on the newsprint. If desired, the Post-it™ Notes may be used as part of the composition of the drawing.

- Brainstorm solutions to combat this type of service “bug” in your organizations and list these on another sheet of newsprint.

(Twenty minutes.)

6. The facilitator reconvenes the total group. Each subgroup posts its “bug” creation, describes its characteristics, and presents ideas for how to prevent it. (Fifteen to twenty minutes.)

7. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on the following questions:

- What similarities did you identify in these “bugs?” What differences did you notice? How do you account for the differences?

- Which of the approaches to satisfying customers appeal to you as a customer? Which do not? What are some reasons for the differences in your reactions?

- What is the most important thing you have learned about customer service?
What new thoughts do you want to adopt? What new behaviors do you want to try in dealing with customers?

(Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- Subgroups could name the bugs without drawing them.
- Participants could name and post their annoyances one at a time, with those already posted not being repeated.
- If extra time is allotted, subgroups could decide on the solution they think best from the brainstorming and develop a plan to implement the solution.

Submitted by James W. Kinneer.
NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: A COLLECTION OF ACTIVITIES

Following are several nonverbal activities that can be used in interpersonal training activities. It is important to note that, like guided imagery, these activities sometimes generate potent data, and the facilitator needs to be aware of this potential.

**Paired Experiences**

1. **Trust Fall.** One partner stands with his or her back turned to the other. With arms extended sideways, the first partner falls backward and is caught by the second partner. The partners reverse roles and repeat the activity.

2. **Trust Walk.** One partner closes his or her eyes and is led around blind—through and over things. The partners reverse roles and repeat the activity.

3. **Trust Run.** Outside, one partner closes his or her eyes and is led by the other in a vigorous run. They reverse roles and repeat the activity.

4. **Pushing and Shoving.** Partners lock fingers, with arms extended over their heads. They push against each other, trying to drive each other to the wall.

5. **Feeling Faces.** With eyes closed, partners stand face-to-face, exploring each other’s faces very gently with their hands.

6. **Progression.** Partners sit facing each other, sharing their feelings about each other verbally. After two or three minutes, they sit back-to-back and continue sharing verbally. After an additional two or three minutes they sit face-to-face again and communicate without using words.

7. **Tug-of-War.** Partners imagine a line between them on the floor and have a tugofwar with an imaginary rope. One partner is to be pulled across the line.

8. **Patting.** Partners stand facing each other. One stands, eyes closed, with hands at his or her sides. The other partner very gently pats both sides of the other partner’s body, starting with the head and going all the way down to the feet and back up to the head. They reverse roles and repeat the activity.

9. **Mirroring.** Partners stand facing each other. One becomes the mirror image of the other’s bodily movements. With hands in front, palms toward partner, they move expressively. Then one closes his or her eyes and attempts to mirror the slow hand movements of the other (hands almost touching). They reverse roles and repeat the activity.
10. *Finding a Distance.* Partners locate themselves at a distance from each other and encounter each other nonverbally. They experiment until they find the most comfortable distance.

**Group Experiences**

11. *Roll.* Group participants stand in a tight circle. A volunteer, or a participant who wants to develop additional trust in the group, is rolled around inside the circle. The individual may be thrown from side to side. It is important that the person in the center keep his or her feet together, knees locked, and eyes closed.

12. *Cradle.* The group picks up a participant who is lying on his or her back on the floor with eyes closed. (Members of the group support the individual’s head.) The person is lifted high in the air and gently rocked back and forth, then slowly lowered to the floor. Group members’ hands are removed from the person very expressively.

**Multi-Group Experiences**

13. *Eye-Contact Chain.* Participants form two lines, facing one another about a yard apart. They hold hands, and the persons at the two ends hold hands. This forms a chain similar to a bicycle chain. Without talking, each participant establishes eye contact with the person opposite. When the group is ready, everyone takes one step to the right. Eye contact is established with the next person. The group continues until members return to their original positions.

14. *Circles.* All participants hold hands in a large circle. They make the circle as large as possible, stretching until it almost breaks. Then they make the circle as small as possible, crowding in very close.

15. *Newspaper Hitting.* Each participant is given a rolled-up newspaper. Participants go about the room encountering one another by hitting with the newspapers.

16. *Milling.* Participants mill about the room aimlessly, eyes closed, encountering one another without using words. Variations: Open eyes (do not shake hands); or, close eyes and locate partner.

17. *Group Grope.* Participants lie on their stomachs in a circle on the floor as far from the center of the room as possible, heads toward the center. With their eyes closed, they slowly crawl into the center, forming a pile.

18. *Feeling Music.* Contrasting styles of music are played (romantic, rock, folk, etc.). Participants act out their feelings in dance.
DISCLOSING AND PREDICTING: A PERCEPTION-CHECKING ACTIVITY

Goals
- To aid participants in developing social perception skills.
- To familiarize participants with the concept of accurate empathy.
- To demonstrate the effects that first impressions can have on perception.

Group Size
An unlimited number of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately thirty minutes.

Materials
- A copy of the Disclosing and Predicting Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for pairs to meet separately.

Process
1. The facilitator briefly introduces the activity and instructs participants to form pairs—preferably with persons whom they do not already know well.
2. The facilitator distributes a copy of the Disclosing and Predicting Work Sheet and a pencil to each participant. He or she goes over the instructions, topics, and method of scoring. The facilitator stresses that the goals of the activity do not include “winning” or “losing.”
3. Participant pairs sit face to face. Round one begins. Without prior discussion, each partner rates his or her agreement with the statement and prediction of his or her partner’s rating. The partners then compare the numbers, record the differences, and briefly discuss the topic. (Two to three minutes.)
4. The facilitator answers questions of clarification on procedure. Rounds two through twenty are carried out in the same manner, without any interruptions from the facilitator.
5. Partners total their “difference” scores on their work sheets.
6. The facilitator processes the activity with the total group. He or she points out that the better the partners know each other, the lower their difference scores will be. The facilitator leads a discussion of perception and empathy, focusing on the accuracy of participants’ predictions, factors (first impressions, stereotyping) that might have influenced predictions, and learnings or insights gained from the activity.

**Variations**

- Playing cards may be used to indicate rankings. Each member receives a set of ten playing cards (ace and numbered cards) all in one suit (hearts, spades, diamonds, or clubs) and in a suit different from that of the member’s partner. In each round, each member selects a card with a number corresponding to his or her ranking of the statement and lays it face down. Each member then selects a card with a value corresponding to his or her prediction of his or her partner’s ranking of the same statement. The cards are then turned face up and the differences are noted on a score sheet.

- Prior to round one, participants may tell their partners a pertinent fact about themselves (where they are from, what political party they belong to, etc.) that could form the basis of a stereotype.

- The activity can be carried out in trios or quartets.

- Statements can be written especially for a particular training group.

---

Based on material submitted by Jacques Lalanne.
### DISCLOSING AND PREDICTING WORK SHEET

**Instructions:** You are to indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement on this worksheet, according to the following scale:

- **Total Disagreement** 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  **Total Agreement**

Your partner will simultaneously indicate his or her rating of the statement on his or her worksheet. Then each of you will independently indicate the rating that you predict your partner gave to the statement. You will then compare your ratings and compute the differences between your predictions of each other’s ratings and the actual ratings. The numerical differences are your scores for the round. Each “round” should take approximately two to three minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Your Own Rating</th>
<th>Your Prediction of Your Partner’s Rating</th>
<th>Difference Between Your Prediction and Your Partner’s Actual Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. History will vindicate Adolf Hitler.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Sports teach democrating values.</td>
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<td>3. I like my job.</td>
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<td>4. I try to maintain a balanced diet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Children should obey their parents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I vote regularly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I am careful in handling my money.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I had a happy childhood.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I like to be the “star.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I usually hold my anger inside.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I have a hard time confronting my friends.</td>
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<td>12. I am easily embarrassed in front of groups.</td>
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<td>13. I believe in life after death.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Abortion on demand is the right of every woman.</td>
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<td>15. I consider myself to be very intelligent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I often share my sexual fantasies.</td>
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<td>17. I am not afraid of dying.</td>
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<td>18. Religion has done more harm than good.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Extramarital sex is natural.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I like my physical appearance.</td>
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</table>

**Total “Difference” Score**
■ DIMENSIONS OF TRUST: A SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION

Goals
- To explore the various dimensions and meanings of trust.
- To promote the creative expression of trust.

Group Size
Any number of subgroups of five or six participants each.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Materials
- Multiple sets of Tinkertoys®, LEGO® Blocks, or similar building toys.
- Sheets of 8 1/2" x 11" paper.
- Felt-tipped markers.
- Background instrumental music (optional).

Physical Setting
A room large enough to provide each subgroup with an area in which to work without being disturbed by other subgroups.

Process
1. The facilitator may begin with a lecturette on the concept of trust. He or she focuses on the idea that, although individuals acknowledge the need for trust in relationships, it is often difficult to relate the term to the feelings involved in the expression of trust.
2. The facilitator forms small subgroups of five or six participants each. This experience is most effective if the participants in the subgroups have a previous history together, such as ongoing work groups. If this is not the case, the facilitator should attempt to place individuals into subgroups in which they know at least some of the members.
3. The facilitator then instructs the subgroups to concentrate on what elements and feelings are involved in trust and to explore these ideas thoroughly with one
another. The subgroup members are told that they are to use their materials to build a model that symbolically represents these concepts as they have perceived them. In addition, members are asked to prepare some statement about their model, using the felt-tipped marker and a sheet of newsprint. The facilitator encourages the subgroups to be expressive and creative in their statements so that what they indicate will aid other groups in understanding the dimensions of trust on which they are focusing.

4. When all the subgroups have finished, the facilitator asks each subgroup to make a presentation.

5. The facilitator asks the participants to examine the models of other subgroups and to note their own reactions to the various concepts that are displayed.

6. When the participants have finished examining the structures, the facilitator asks them to return to their original subgroups and to select the one subgroup other than their own that they feel best communicated the concept of trust.

7. The facilitator assists in the processing of the experience by asking subgroups to explain why they found the efforts of certain subgroups to be appealing.

Variations

- Newsprint can be substituted for the blocks, and subgroups may be instructed to draw a symbolic representation of trust.
- The activity can be preceded by nonverbal trust experiences.
- Key words or phrases from each of the subgroups may be brought together for a poster that summarizes the major trust concepts that emerged.
- Subgroups can be assigned the task of discussing what behaviors each member can attempt in the remainder of the training event that might enhance interpersonal trust.

Submitted by James Costigan.
RISK TAKING: A PERCEPTION CHECK FOR PARTNERS

Goals

- To experience the feelings associated with mild risk-taking behavior.
- To experiment with controlling the level of risk one is willing to take.
- To experience specific feedback on the degree to which another perceives one’s risk.

Group Size

Any number of pairs.

Time Required

Approximately one hour.

Materials

- A Risk Taking Score Sheet and a pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room that can be divided into working areas in which the pairs can confer in relative privacy; a chair for each member.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the concept of self-disclosure as a form of risk behavior and invites the participants to explore their own risk boundaries by exchanging disclosure statements. (The Johari Window concept is useful for explaining disclosure and feedback.)

2. The facilitator explains the experience fully to the participants; he or she emphasizes that each participant can make “zero-risk” statements if he or she so chooses. The facilitator also makes it clear that this is not a “competition,” but rather an opportunity to explore one’s own risk boundaries.

3. The facilitator distributes Risk Taking Score Sheets and pencils to the participants.

4. The participants are paired off and they are instructed to go to their working areas.
5. The pairs sit side by side, facing in opposite directions, i.e., shoulder to shoulder. This position enables them to regulate eye contact and nonverbal involvement as they see fit.

6. The participants take turns within each pair making disclosure statements, according to instructions on the Risk Taking Score Sheet. Each statement is a statement about the speaker himself or herself and represents an attempt to disclose significant “risky” information about himself or herself. As the participant makes a disclosure statement, his or her partner makes a guess as to the relative risk level of the statement—*for the speaker*—and records it in numerical form. The participants take turns through ten independent statements each, total the scores, and exchange them.

7. Participants are allowed to continue in post-experience discussion as pairs until all pairs are finished. The facilitator then forms subgroups of six to eight members each for sharing the experience.

**Variations**

- The pairs may be composed of strangers or of people who share significant ongoing relationships such as close friends or partners.

- In step 7 the facilitator can direct the participants to express their reactions to the experience through body movements or other nonverbal means.

- Each participant might try to guess his or her “score” before it is divulged by his or her partner; the partners can then discuss any significant differences between the guess and the actual score.

Submitted by Karl G. Albrecht and Walton C. Boshear.
RISK TAKING SCORE SHEET

Instructions: This activity enables you to experiment with risk-taking behavior in a supportive environment.

You and your partner are to take turns making statements. Each statement should be a statement about the speaker (not about his or her personal “statistics,” hobbies, past experiences, relationships with other people, etc.). The statement should represent an attempt to disclose feelings, emotions, attitudes, ideas, etc., that represent a risk to the speaker.

You are to keep a “point score” for each statement your partner makes. You may also want to record some key words or nonverbal cues from each statement to help you remember what your partner communicated. Do not reply to your partner’s statement—simply make one of your own. Do not show your partner his or her score until after each of you has made a total of ten statements.

Award points for each of the ten statements according to the following:

Scoring Criteria

3 points: I believe my partner is taking a genuine risk in telling me this.
2 points: I believe my partner is taking a mild risk in telling me this.
1 point: I believe my partner is not taking a risk in telling me this.
0 points: I believe my partner is avoiding risk in telling me this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Key Words</th>
<th>Nonverbal Cues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1._________</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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CURRENT STATUS:
A FEEDBACK ACTIVITY ON TRUST

Goals

- To examine unexpressed feelings of trust or distrust within an ongoing group and to clarify the reasons for these feelings.
- To increase feelings of trust within the group.
- To promote self-disclosure and risk taking.
- To provide a basis for subsequent assessment of group trust.

Group Size

Eight to twelve members.

Time Required

Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials

- A Current Status Inventory and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for participants to work privately.

Process

1. After approximately one-half hour of group interaction, the facilitator introduces the activity. He or she distributes copies of the Current Status Inventory and pencils and explains that the inventory allows participants to examine their current feelings toward other group members.
2. The facilitator leads the group in establishing a working definition of the word “trust.”
3. The participants are told that they will have ten minutes to complete the inventory.
4. After all members have completed their inventories, the facilitator records the average trust score from each member (question 12). The range of scores is examined and discussed.

5. Each member is encouraged to share at least one answer with the other group members. Participants are free to share as many answers as they wish, and others may comment on the answers.

6. The facilitator builds an experiential lecture from the comments of the group members. He or she may list ways to increase feelings of trust in the group or encourage the group members to revise their working definition of trust or to create a theory showing the relationship between trust, risk taking, and self-disclosure. Each member should specify at least one behavior he or she will attempt to change in subsequent sessions.

7. The facilitator tells members that they will complete the inventory again at a later date to review changes in their feelings.

**Variation**

- Group members may begin by answering questions 3, 4, 8, and 9 to identify behaviors that contribute to feelings of trust. Questions 5, 6, 10, 11, and 13 may be examined subsequently to identify behaviors associated with distrust.

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Submitted by Robert N. Glenn.
CURRENT STATUS INVENTORY

Name ________________________________ Date ________________

Directions: Complete all the following questions. Your answers are confidential; however, you are free to share any of your answers after completing this inventory.

1. How did you feel as the group began?

2. How do you feel right now?

3. Which person in this group do you feel the most positive about right now?

4. Describe what makes you feel good about that person.

5. Toward whom in this group do you react most negatively right now?

6. Describe what that person does that produces this negative feeling.

7. What prevents you from being more open and honest in this group?

8. Which person in this group do you perceive as feeling the most positive toward you right now?

9. Why do you feel that this person feels positive about you?
10. Which person in this group do you perceive as feeling the most negative about you right now?

11. Why do you feel that this person experiences negative feelings toward you?

12. Rate each of the group members on a 5-point scale according to how much trust you feel toward him or her. Use “1” to indicate “very little” and “5” to indicate “very much.”

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Score _____________________

Average Score (Total Score ÷ N) _____

13. For those individuals to whom you have given low trust ratings, list several ways in which:

- You can change your behavior to increase your feelings of trust toward them.

- They might behave to allow you to feel more trust toward them.
INTIMACY PROGRAM: DEVELOPING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Goals
- To accelerate the getting-acquainted process in groups.
- To study the experience of self-disclosure.
- To develop authenticity in groups.

Group Size
Unlimited.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- Copies of the Intimacy Program Guidelines for all participants.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for pairs to talk privately without disturbing each other.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the program with a brief lecture on self-disclosure and the building of trust and explains the goals of the program.
2. Group members pair off, preferably with people whom they know least well.
3. The Intimacy Program is described, the ground rules are explained, and the Guidelines are distributed.
4. Pairs meet for approximately one hour.
5. Groups of three or four pairs are formed to process the experience.
6. The total group hears reports from each of the small groups.

Variations
- Larger groups than pairs can be used.
- The guidelines can be augmented by questions suggested by participants.
- Participants can develop their own guidelines. Each person can be instructed to write down a question; the questions are then collected, collated, and reproduced for all of the participants.
- The program can be carried out between people who already know each other.

The guidelines were adapted from S.M. Jourard, *Disclosing Man to Himself* (Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand, 1968), pp. 92-93.
INTIMACY PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Instructions: During the time allotted for this experience you are to ask questions from this list. The questions vary in their degree of intimacy, and you may want to begin with less intimate ones. Take turns initiating the questions. Follow the rules below.

1. Your communication with your partner will be held in confidence.
2. You must be willing to answer any question that you ask your partner.
3. You may decline to answer any question initiated by your partner.

How important is religion in your life?
What is your favorite hobby or leisure interest?
Have you deliberately lied about a serious matter to either parent?
What is the most serious lie you have told?
How do you feel about couples living together without being married?
Have you ever had a mystical experience?
What do you regard as your chief personality fault?
What turns you on the most?
How do you feel about interracial dating or marriage?
Do you consider yourself a political liberal or conservative?
What turns you off the fastest?
What do you regard as your least attractive features?
How important is money to you?
What person would you most like to take a trip with right now?
How do you feel about swearing?
Do you enjoy manipulating or directing people?
Would you participate in a public demonstration?
What emotions do you find most difficult to control?
What foods do you most dislike?
What are you most reluctant to discuss now?
To what person are you responding the most and how?
Is there any feature of your personality that you are proud of? What is it?
What was your worst failure, your biggest disappointment to yourself or family?

What is your favorite TV program(s)?

What is the subject of your most frequent daydreams?

How are you feeling about me?

What are your career goals?

With what do you feel the greatest need for help?

What were you most punished or criticized for when you were a child?

How do you feel about crying in the presence of others?

Do you have any misgivings about the group so far?

What is your main complaint about the group?

Do you like your name?

If you could be anything or anyone—besides yourself—what or who would you like to be?

Whom in your group don’t you like?
**DIALOGUE: A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING WORK RELATIONSHIPS**

**Goals**
- To increase openness in work relationships.
- To generate higher trust in interpersonal relations in work settings.
- To clarify assumptions that persons who work together make about one another and one another’s jobs.

**Group Size**
Any number of paired participants.

**Time Required**
A minimum of two hours. (May be scheduled at two different times.)

**Materials**
- One reusable Dialogue booklet for each participant. The booklet should be prepared in such a way that participants are presented statements one at a time. The format that follows illustrates how each page should look.

**Physical Setting**
Pairs of participants are instructed to find a private place somewhere in the immediate vicinity, such as in other rooms or outdoors.

**Process**
1. The facilitator introduces the activity by discussing how work relationships are enhanced by self-disclosure and feedback.

2. Participants are paired by any appropriate method. (Sample criteria: boss-subordinate, new-old employees, natural work pairs, persons who do not know each other very well, etc.)

3. A copy of the Dialogue booklet is given to each participant, and the pairs are instructed to find a private place to work through the activity. An announcement is made concerning when the total group is to reassemble.

4. After the paired activity, the total group reassembles. The facilitator assists in the processing of the event by encouraging participants to share what they
learned about themselves through the activity. (Remember that a ground rule of confidentiality is established by the directions.)

**Variations**

- The event can be divided into two periods by stopping the discussion at the end of page 24. Two one-hour sessions can be scheduled at different times.

- Participants can be given paper and pencils and be instructed to write out their responses to the “mirroring” items: pages 7, 11, 16, 23, 28, 33, 34, 38, 39, and 42. These pages have the letter “M” printed after the page number.

- A “third party” can be used as a process facilitator to the pair who are going through the Dialogue booklet. The extra person assists the two in listening, expressing themselves, and responding to each other. He or she also facilitates the intermittent processing of the activity. (This design is somewhat analogous to marriage counseling, and this is one application of the Dialogue materials.)

- The activity can be used in interviewing prospective employees, orienting new employees, establishing temporary work relationships, building ongoing work teams, and building workshop staff.

- Items from the Dialogue booklet may be posted on newsprint to stimulate group discussion. Subgroups may be formed to exchange responses to selected items as an icebreaking activity in a workshop.

- The facilitator can experiment with various subgroup sizes in using this activity. Trios, quartets, etc., can be established, but this option may require more time.

Submitted by John E. Jones and Johanna J. Jones.
DIALOGUE

Prepare a booklet for each participant with pages numbered as follows:

1

A Program for Developing Work Relationships

2

Read silently. Do not look ahead in this booklet: Do not skip items; respond to each item in order.

The conversation that you are about to begin is intended to point toward more effective human relations in a work setting. Tasks are accomplished more effectively if persons who work together have the capacity to exchange ideas, points of view, feelings, attitudes, and opinions freely. It is also important that you be able to clarify assumptions that you make about one another in relation to the work to be done.

3

These ground rules should be followed:

1. Take turns initiating discussion. The open-ended statements should be completed orally. (Do not write in the booklet.)

2. All of this discussion is confidential.

When each of you has finished reading, turn the page and begin.
Basically my job is . . .

Usually I am the kind of person who . . .

When things aren’t going well I . . .

When I think about your responsibilities I think that . . .
I want to become the kind of person who . . .

I like such things as . . .

The most important skill in developing relationships is listening. To begin improving your ability to hear each other, complete the following item in two or three sentences. The listener then repeats in *his or her own words* what you said; then the listener completes the item, and you paraphrase what you heard.

Ten years from now I . . .
When each of you has had a turn, share what you may have learned about listening.

My first impression of you was . . .
On the job I’m best at . . .

My greatest weakness on the job is . . .

In conflict situations between people I usually . . .
Briefly discuss how this exchange is developing.

When I am supervising someone, I prefer . . .
Your job seems to be . . .

The best boss I ever had . . .

The best supervisee (or colleague) I ever had . . .
Listening check: “What I hear you saying is . . .”

The worst boss I ever had . . .
The worst supervisee (or colleague) I ever had . . .

Have a brief discussion of what your responses to the last four items say about what you believe to be valuable in work relationships. Draw generalizations about each other.

I usually react to negative criticism by . . .

When I am approaching a deadline, I . . .

What I like about you is . . .
This conversation...

I joined this organization because...

During the past few months I’ve been...

Listening check: “What I hear you saying is...”

The next thing I’m going to try to accomplish is...
My general image of you is . . .

I prefer to get feedback . . .

As a member of a team I . . .

I prefer to work with people who . . .
Right now I’m feeling . . .

What puzzles me about you is . . .

I am imagining that you . . .

The next step in my career development seems to be . . .
The person I’m having the most trouble with . . .

Have a brief discussion of how this conversation is going so far. How open are you being? How do you feel about your participation up to this point?

I need to . . .

Faced with a choice between the goals of the organization and your own welfare, I would predict that you would . . .

Here’s an actual situation in which I was involved. (Explain.) What do you think I did? How do you think I felt?
I’d like to get you involved in . . .

I’m hoping that . . .
Listening check: “What I hear you saying is . . .”

I think you see me as . . .

If I could just . . .
My position in this organization . . .

My own personal goals are to . . .

You and I can . . .
Have a brief discussion of your reactions to this conversation.

This discussion was intended to open up a dialogue that should be carried on continually in your relationship. You may wish to make plans to continue this exchange in the future. Some activities that you may consider are the following:

- Go through this Dialogue booklet again after about six months.
- Make your relationship an agenda item in each meeting.
- Contract with each other for support in changing your behavior at work.
- Work through this exchange with other people with whom you work.
PARTNERS ENCOUNTER: A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

Goal
- To explore knowing and trusting another person through mutual self-disclosure and risk taking.

Group Size
Any number of paired participants.

Time Required
A minimum of two hours. (May be scheduled in two sessions of one hour each.)

Materials
- One Partners Encounter “booklet” for each participant. The booklet should be prepared in such a way that participants are presented statements one at a time. The format that follows illustrates how each page should look.

Physical Setting
Pairs are instructed to find a private place somewhere in the immediate vicinity, such as in other rooms or outdoors.

Process
1. The facilitator discusses how work relationships are enhanced by self-disclosure and feedback.
2. Participants are paired by any appropriate method. (Sample criteria: boss-subordinate, new-old employees, persons who do not know each other very well.)
3. A copy of the Partners Encounter booklet is given to each participant, and the pairs are instructed to find a private place to work. An announcement is made concerning when the total group is to reassemble.
4. After the paired activity, the total group reassembles. The facilitator assists in processing the event by encouraging participants to share what each learned about himself or herself through the experience. (Remember that a ground rule of confidentiality is established by the directions.)
Variations

- The Partners Encounter activity can be used in conjunction with the activity “Dialogue: A Program for Developing Work Relationships” (p.157 of this volume). The two activities can be incorporated into the same workshop design to build on each other.

- The event can be divided into two sessions of one hour each by stopping the discussion at number 28. The two sessions can be scheduled at different times.

- The session can be planned to take place as the last event of the training day. Participants are instructed to spend at least one hour on the activity.

- Groups of various sizes (trios, quartets, etc.) can utilize the Dyadic Encounter booklet. This variation takes more time.

- A family can utilize the Partners Encounter in a series of sessions, going through several items at a time.

- The Partners Encounter can be used to establish helping pairs that will meet several times during the training event. These persons may be paired initially on the basis of “presumed incompatibility.”

- Items from the Partners Encounter booklet may be posted on newsprint to stimulate group discussion. Subgroups may be formed to exchange responses to selected items like an icebreaking activity in a laboratory or workshop.

Submitted by John E. Jones and Johanna J. Jones.
PARTNERS ENCOUNTER “BOOKLET” PAGES

Prepare a booklet for each participant with pages numbered as follows:

---

PARTNERS ENCOUNTER: A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

---

Read silently. Do not look ahead in this booklet.

A frequent theme when people are brought together for the first time is “I’d like to get to know you, but I don’t know how.” Getting to know another person involves a learnable set of skills and attitudes, self-disclosure, self-awareness, nonpossessive caring, risk taking, trust, acceptance, and feedback. This Partners Encounter experience is designed to facilitate getting to know another person on a fairly intimate level. The discussion items are open-ended statements that can be completed at whatever level of self-disclosure one wishes.

---

The following ground rules should govern this experience:

1. All of the data discussed should be kept strictly confidential.
2. Do not look ahead in the booklet.
3. One partner should initiate the encounter on even-numbered pages while the other partner initiates on odd-numbered pages, so that the same individual is not always the initiator.
4. Each partner responds to each statement before continuing. Complete statements in the order they appear. Do not skip items.
5. You may decline to answer any question asked by your partner.
6. Stop the exercise if either partner becomes uncomfortable or anxious. Either partner can stop the exchange.

*Look up. If your partner has finished reading, turn the page and begin.*

My name is . . .

My titles are . . .

My marital status is . . .
My hometown is . . .

The reason I’m here is . . .

Right now I’m feeling . . .

One of the most important skills in getting to know another person is listening. Complete the following item in two or three sentences: When I think about the future, I see myself . . .; the listener then reports in his or her own words what you said. When you are satisfied that you have been heard accurately, the listener completes the item, and you paraphrase what you heard.
Share what you may have learned about yourself as a listener. To check the accuracy of your listening and understanding, the two of you may find yourself later saying to each other, “What I hear you saying is . . .”

When I’m in a new group, I . . .

When I enter a room full of people, I usually feel . . .

When I’m feeling anxious in a new situation, I usually . . .
In groups I feel most comfortable when the leader . . .

Social norms make me feel . . .

In ambiguous, unstructured situations, I . . .

*Listening Check:* “What I hear you saying is . . .”

I’m happiest when . . .
The thing that turns me on the most is . . .

Look your partner in the eyes while you respond to this item.
Right now I’m feeling . . .

The thing that concerns me the most about joining groups is . . .

When I’m rejected, I usually . . .
To me, belonging is . . .

A forceful leader makes me feel . . .

Breaking rules that seem arbitrary makes me feel . . .

I like to be just a follower when . . .
The thing that turns me off the most is . . .

I feel most affectionate when . . .

Establish eye contact and hold your partner’s hand while completing this item. Toward you right now, I feel . . .

When I’m alone, I usually . . .
In crowds I . . .

In a group I usually get most involved when . . .

*Listening Check:* “What I hear you saying is . . .”

To me, taking orders from another person . . .

I’m rebellious when . . .
In a working meeting, having an agenda . . .

---

Checkup: Have a two or three-minute discussion about this experience so far. Keep eye contact as much as you can, and try to cover the following points:

- How well are you listening?
- How open and honest have you been?
- How eager are you to continue this interchange?
- How well do you feel that you are getting to know each other?

---

The emotion I find most difficult to control is . . .

---

My most frequent daydreams are about . . .
My weakest point is . . .

I love . . .

I feel jealous about . . .

Right now I’m feeling . . .
I’m afraid of . . .

I believe in . . .

Right now I’m most reluctant to discuss . . .

Interracial dating and/or marriage makes me feel . . .
Premarital or extramarital sex . . .

Right now this experience is making me feel . . .

Express how you are feeling toward your partner without using words. You may want to touch. Afterward, tell what you intended to communicate. Also, explore how this form of communication feels.

The thing I like best about you is . . .
You are . . .

What I think you need to know is . . .

Right now I’m responding to . . .

I want you to . . .

Time permitting, you might wish to continue this encounter through topics of your own choosing. Several possibilities are: money, religion, politics, race, marriage, the future, and the two of you.
PARTNERS RENEWAL: A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS

Goal
To periodically explore various aspects of a relationship through mutual self-disclosure and risk taking.

Group Size
Any number of pairs of participants who are interested in enriching the relationship that they have with each other.

Time Required
A minimum of two hours. (May be scheduled in several sessions.)

Materials
One Partners Renewal Booklet for each participant. The booklet should be prepared in such a way that participants are presented statements one at a time.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for the Partners to meet privately.

Process
1. The facilitator discusses how relationships are enhanced by periodic self-disclosure and feedback.
2. Participants pair up with another person with whom they have some history of interaction on a personal level. Each pair sits together, away from other pairs.
3. Two copies of the Partners Renewal Booklet are given to each pair. The total group is told how much time is allotted for the activity.
4. Following the activity, the total group reassembles. The facilitator assists in processing the event by encouraging each participant to share what he or she learned about himself or herself from the experience. (It is important to remember that an expectation of confidentiality is established by the directions.)
Variations

- Groups of various sizes (trios, quartets, etc.) can utilize the Partners Renewal Booklet. (This variation tends to take more time.)

- Items can be posted on newsprint to stimulate group discussion. Subgroups of people who have an interpersonal relationship with one another can be formed to exchange responses to selected items.

Submitted by Colleen A. Kelley and J. Stephen Colladay.
PARTNERS RENEWAL BOOKLET

The facilitator should prepare a booklet for each participant, with the pages numbered as follows:

---------------------------------------------
1

PARTNERS RENEWAL: A PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS

---------------------------------------------
2

Read silently. Do not look ahead or thumb through this booklet.

Partners Renewal is a series of open-ended statements intended to help you examine your relationship with another person and practice new modes of interacting. This discussion is intended to be confidential.

One of the underlying assumptions of this booklet is that all relationships periodically need renewal. This program provides an easy and nonthreatening structure to help you take time out from everyday living to look at yourselves, who you are, and where you are going.

---------------------------------------------
3

One important element in relationships is good communication. In order to facilitate this, listening checks have been placed at appropriate intervals. A listening check involves repeating your partner’s statement in your own words, in order to assure that you have heard it correctly.

Opportunities have also been provided for you to talk about your feelings and to express yourself nonverbally as you go through the booklet.
It is important that you:
1. Be open and accepting of your partner’s responses.
2. Talk about your own feelings. Use “I” rather than “you” statements.
3. Feel free to skip any item.
4. Use this activity to share information rather than to solve problems.
5. Be willing to take risks.

Do not look ahead because the program is based on the assumption that spontaneous answers are best. Thinking ahead will block your hearing your partner’s response.

Directions: Both persons are to complete each statement. One person should respond initially to items on even-numbered pages. The other person responds initially to items on odd-numbered pages. (Do not write in the booklet.) If your partner has finished reading, go on to the next page and begin.

The first time we met was . . .

The amount of time we have known each other is . . .
The kind of relationship we have is . . .

One adjective to describe our relationship would be . . .

One way in which we are alike is . . .

One way in which we are different is . . .
If our relationship were a film, it would be called . . .

A peak experience in our relationship was . . .

A place I would like to share with you is . . .

I find your friends to be . . .
When we meet new people, I . . .

When I am with you in a social situation I feel . . .

One of the most “fun” things we ever did was . . .

The needs you satisfy in me are . . .
Some of my needs that are not being completely satisfied are . . .

Right now I feel . . .

A song that reminds me of you is . . .

The amount of time I spend alone is . . .

*Listening check:* “Are you saying that . . .?”
One of your greatest assets is . . .

I am proud of you when . . .

Something you have helped me to learn about myself is . . .

One of the feelings with which I have the most trouble is . . .
The way I deal with troublesome feelings now is . . .

*Listening check:* “What I hear you saying is . . .”

I feel indecisive when . . .

I am most “suspicious” of you when . . .

I assume you know that . . .
If I could make you over, I would never change . . .

You are most helpful when . . .

Express to your partner how you are feeling right now without using words.

I am afraid . . .

I like it when you . . .
You annoy me when . . .

One thing I regret having done is . . .

A habit of mine that bothers me most is . . .

Your greatest strength is . . .
I do not like it when you . . .

Something I dislike about you that we seldom talk about is . . .

I have the most fun with you when . . .

If I had all the money in the world, I would . . .
A frequent image I have about you is . . .

When we have an intellectual discussion . . .

You tend to talk a lot about . . .

When I don’t want to answer questions, I . . .
When I can’t express something to you, I . . .

This experience . . .
(This is a convenient place to interrupt the activity.)

A thing that is helping us to grow closer is . . .

The things I most like to do with you are . . .
I tend not to tell you about . . .

Something I am usually reluctant to discuss is . . .

Something I have always wondered about is . . .

I think you avoid me when . . .
An area in which I would like to feel more equal to you is . . .

I feel inferior to you when . . .

I feel rebellious when . . .
*Try to make your partner laugh without using words.*

I need you most when . . .
To keep from being hurt, I . . .

It hurts me when . . .

When I hurt you, I . . .

I get discouraged or frustrated when . . .
I think you are unfair when you . . .

When you are pouting, I feel . . .

*Listening check:* “It sounds to me as if you are saying that . . .”

The things that hold us together are . . .

The habit you have that bothers me most is . . .
I become most defensive when you . . .

I was most angry with you when . . .

When we fight . . .

When I feel as if I have lost, I . . .
Right now I am feeling . . .

I think that you do not give me a chance to . . .

An important thing or issue between us right now is . . .
*Listening check: “What I think you are saying is . . .”*

I find that being open with you is . . .
One thing I have always wanted to talk more about is . . .

I wish you would let me know when I . . .

I think it would be fun to . . .

If I wanted to make you laugh, I would . . .
A pattern I see in our relationship is . . .

Try to tell your partner how you are feeling without using words.

The part of my body that I like most is . . .

The part of my body that I like least is . . .
Right now I am feeling . . .

My attitudes about premarital and extramarital sex are . . .

I feel jealous when . . .

I feel most caring toward you when . . .

*Listening check:* “I think I hear you saying that . . .”
One of the times that bothered me most in our relationship was . . .

What I like best about our relationship is . . .

In the future, I would like our relationship to become more . . .

The type of relationship I do not want to develop with you is . . .
The thing I value most in life is . . .

I believe in and am committed to . . .

In five years, I see us . . .

You may wish to continue this discussion by generating a list of topics of your own choosing and responding to those that interest you most, e.g., careers, money, family, sex.

You may also wish to set a date to use Partners Renewal again with your partner. Relationships periodically need renewal.
WORK DIALOGUE: BUILDING TEAM RELATIONSHIPS

Goals

- To explore the sequence of building from interpersonal to team relationships.
- To provide an opportunity to enhance work relationships through mutual openness and disclosure.
- To allow the participants to practice interpersonal skills related to sharing personal information, taking risks, listening, and giving and receiving feedback.

Group Size

Up to ten pairs of participants. Participants should know one another and have worked together, either as members of an ongoing team or from having worked together in cross-functional teams.

Time Required

Approximately two and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Work Dialogue Instructions for each participant.
- A copy of Work Dialogue Booklet for each participant. (Note to the facilitator: Prepare each Work Dialogue Booklet by cutting along the dashed lines. Assemble the pages in order and staple them along the left side to form a booklet.)
- Newsprint flip-chart paper and felt-tipped markers for each subgroup.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting

- A room, series of rooms, or outdoor area in which the pairs can communicate in relative privacy. Also, a space in which all participants can work in groups of three to five members each, with wall space for posting flip-chart “products.”
**Process**

1. The facilitator introduces the activity by discussing the following points:
   - Today’s organizations have shifted (or are shifting) to work relationships based on employee empowerment and participation, teams and groups, interdependence, process orientation, continuous learning, and quality.
   - For example, work relationships occur in self-managed work teams, temporary (or project) teams, total quality management teams, etc.
   - Such relationships require that people be able to deal productively with others in face-to-face situations. Whether working in short- or long-term work groups, individuals need interpersonal skills, understanding of group dynamics, the ability to work creatively with others for extended periods, and the ability to handle ambiguity in both relationships and tasks.
   - To meet the demands of team and group work, people need to have experience and confidence in the skills of relationship building, including being open, taking risks, giving and receiving feedback, listening, and clarifying expectations.

   (Five minutes.)

2. The facilitator has the participants form pairs by any convenient method, asking them to pair up with persons whom they do not know as well as others. (Five minutes.)

3. One copy of the Work Dialogue Instructions and one Work Dialogue Booklet are distributed to each participant. The facilitator reviews the instructions with the participants. (Five minutes.)

4. Each pair is directed to proceed to a private area and to follow the instructions. The participants are told what time to return to the common meeting room. (One and one-half hours.)

5. When the total group has reassembled, the facilitator helps the participants to process the experience by encouraging them to share what they have learned about themselves. [Note: One of the guidelines is confidentiality. It is imperative to ensure that this norm is maintained by permitting each person to talk only about himself or herself, not about his or her partner.] The processing questions may include the following:
   - What was this experience like for you? How did it change as the time progressed?
   - What did you discover about yourself by engaging in this dialogue? What did you discover about the relationship with your partner?
What did you learn from this process about building work relationships? What skills are important in building relationships?

(Ten to fifteen minutes.)

6. After the experience has been processed for individual learnings, the facilitator shifts the focus to implications of the experience for group and team work. The participants are instructed to form groups of three to five members each, depending on the size of the total group (threes if the total group is small and fives if it is large). Dialogue partners should not be in the same group. Each group is given two sheets of flip-chart paper and felt-tipped markers. The discussion groups are asked to extract and list implications for teams resulting from the dialogue experience. The facilitator encourages the participants to focus on the process of the dialogue experience. [Once again, participants are reminded not to discuss their dialogue partners’ reactions or comments.] (Twenty minutes.)

7. Masking tape is distributed. Each group, in turn, is asked to post its list of implications and briefly to describe the highlights of its discussion. (Ten to twenty minutes.)

8. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on the following questions:

- What are some ways to build team relationships? What things would inhibit building team relationships?
- What can you apply immediately to a team in which you are a member?

Variations

- If this activity is being used as a team-building activity or with an ongoing work group, the group can then establish norms or expectations for itself for the future based on its members’ learnings. The norms can be posted and used periodically as a process check for the group’s progress. It is important to emphasize here that relationships are dynamic and that norms and expectations are likely to change over time to accommodate new conditions.

- The participants might want to develop a matrix listing various types of teams and the group-relationship factors that they perceive as particularly salient for those teams. This would help facilitators, leaders, and group members to focus future relationship and team-building activities.

- Pertinent lecturettes (e.g., on group development, the Johari Window, the concept of a “psychological contract,” or group norms) can provide team members with a greater understanding of the potential of groups that recognize interpersonal competence in group development and group work.

- Dialogue partners can maintain their relationship throughout a workshop or back on the job as “helping pairs.” Periodically, they can get together to explore
experiences or concerns relevant to their earlier discussions. It is important to clarify that group-based issues should be brought back to the group for resolution. However, the pair discussions can provide support or insight to members prior to their taking personal observations to the group.

- Self- and/or group-assessment tools can be used as a follow-up to the dialogue. These can help to strengthen each person’s self-learning and/or the group’s functioning.

- The dialogue can be utilized in team settings. Two options are possible. First, if members have minimal interpersonal or group skills, it is suggested that dialogue partners complete the booklet first. After Step 5, each dialogue pair selects two sentence stems that they think are essential for the team to discuss. Each pair describes why it selected the items. Once the team has had an opportunity to discuss at least one item from each pair, it can return to Step 6 and continue.

A second option for utilizing the dialogue as a team activity requires that group members have good interpersonal skills, especially in terms of openness and trust. Steps 2, 3, and 4 can be replaced by a team dialogue (a group of sixteen is the maximum size). First, the group discusses the introductory comments for clarity and implications. Then each member starts the discussion of an item by completing the stem. Others follow if they want to. Once discussion slows down for that item, another group member starts discussion of the next item by completing the stem; again other members participate if they choose to. This process continues through all the items or until the allocated time has expired. All members should have an opportunity to initiate an item and to participate in the open discussion. If this is not happening, the facilitator may want to break the group into smaller groups or even pairs, so that each person can participate and learn from the process.

- The activity can be ended after Step 5, after adding a concluding discussion question such as “What have you learned from this experience that you can apply to the team as a whole?”

WORK DIALOGUE INSTRUCTIONS

About This Dialogue

The conversation that you are about to begin is intended to help you develop more effective work relationships. Tasks are accomplished more effectively if people who work together have the ability to exchange expertise, ideas, points of view, feelings, and attitudes.

It is also important that you be able to clarify expectations and assumptions that you make about one another in relation to the work to be done. Furthermore, the system’s (team, group, division, or organization) culture emerges from interactions that members have with one another.

One purpose of this discussion is to foster greater understanding of others at work. By telling about yourself and by sharing perceptions with another person, you will be working toward a higher level of trust. Trust is the foundation for effective group work, especially in settings that demand coordination, teamwork, creativity, and quality.

Guidelines for This Dialogue

1. The booklet consists of a series of open-ended statements. You and your partner will take turns, each completing the next statement orally. Focus your discussion around work-related issues.
2. All of this discussion is confidential. Do not repeat later what your partner has said during the dialogue.
3. Do not look ahead in the booklet.
4. Do not skip items. Consider each statement in the order in which it is presented.
5. You may decline to respond to any statement.

When you and your partner have finished reading this introduction, turn the page and begin.

Following Up

The items are intended to open a dialogue that can be carried on in your work relationship. You may wish to make definite plans to continue this exchange in the future. Some activities that you may consider follow:

- Go through this dialogue booklet again after about six months.
- Schedule meetings to discuss items and your relationship.
- Contract with each other for support in changing your behavior at work.
WORK DIALOGUE BOOKLET
Work Dialogue: Building Team Relationships

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Usually, I am the kind of person who . . . 1

---

I want to become the kind of person who . . . 2

---

When I am feeling anxious in a new work situation, I usually . . . 3

---

I am happiest at work when . . . 4

---

My greatest area of growth at work is . . . 5

---
I am resistant when . . .

I usually react to negative criticism by . . .

I usually react to supportive remarks by . . .

To me, belonging to a team means . . .

When I am in a new work group, I . . .

Briefly discuss how the dialogue is going.
When things aren’t going well at work, I . . .

Basiclly, the way I feel about my work is . . .

When I think about your responsibilities, I think that . . .

The most important skill in developing work relationships is listening. To improve your ability to hear each other, follow these steps: the person whose turn it is completes the following item in two or three sentences; the listener then paraphrases in his or her own words what the speaker has said; then the listener completes the same item, and the other partner paraphrases what he or she has heard.

As a member of a team, I expect . . .

When each of you has had a turn, share what you may have learned about listening. During this dialogue, you may wish to continue the development of your listening capabilities by paraphrasing what your partner has said.
At work, I’m best at . . . 18

In conflict situations between people at work, I usually . . . 19

The thing I like best about you is . . . 20

I prefer to receive feedback about myself and my work . . . 21

The ways I prefer to receive information are . . . 22

The kinds of task information I value are . . . 23
I prefer to work with people who . . .

My first impression of you was . . .

I think you see me as . . .

What I think you need to know about working with me is . . .

Ten years from now, I . . .

I joined this organization because . . .
The next thing I’m going to try to accomplish at work is . . .

The next step in my career development seems to be . . .

Faced with a conflict between the goals of the organization (division) and your own welfare, I predict that you would . . .

My own personal goals are to . . .

The worst coworker I ever had . . .

When I ask for help at work, I . . .
When someone helps me at work, I . . .

Have a brief discussion of how this dialogue is going so far. How open are you being? How do you feel about your participation up to this point?

The emotion I find most difficult to control at work is . . .

When I offer help at work, I . . .

Your work seems to be . . .

The best colleague I ever had . . .
Listening Check: Paraphrase your partner.

The worst boss I ever had . . .

When I am approaching a deadline, I . . .

What team work means to me is . . .

I think my goals and your goals can be achieved if . . .

I think you could help me to . . .
Have a brief discussion of what your responses to the last few items say about what you believe to be valuable in work relationships and teams.

I think our personal goals and our organization’s goals can be mutually achieved if . . .

I think of terms such as “boss,” “supervisor,” and “manager” as . . .

The best leader I ever worked with . . .

When I see you work with others, I . . .

In a work group, I am most comfortable when my colleagues . . .
In a work group, I feel most comfortable when leadership . . . 54

My impression of you now is . . . 55

In a work group, I usually get most involved when . . . 56

Listening check: Paraphrase your partner. 57

In ambiguous, unstructured situations, I . . . 58

I like to be a follower when . . . 59
When I have to work with others to accomplish goals, I . . .

My position in this organization . . .

I would like my role in the organization/team to . . .

Together we can . . .

Have a brief discussion of your participation in and reactions to this conversation.
COAL TO DIAMONDS: LEARNING THE GOOD FROM THE BAD

Goal

- To offer participants an opportunity to share what they have learned from unsuccessful work experiences.
- To build norms of openness in a group.
- To help the participants to transform mistakes into opportunities for learning.

Group Size

Up to thirty participants, divided into subgroups of four to five people each.

Time Required

Approximately fifty minutes.

Materials

- A copy of the Coal to Diamonds Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil and a clipboard or other writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and several felt-tipped markers for each subgroup.
- A newsprint flip chart and several felt-tipped markers for the facilitator’s use.

Physical Setting

A room in which subgroups can meet without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the goals of the activity with words similar to the following:
   “We think of coal as a dirty, unpleasant substance; we also think of intense pressure as undesirable. Yet you may remember comic book stories in which Superman would use intense pressure to squeeze a lump of coal and turn it into a diamond. So too, we can transform experiences that we’ve thought of as
unpleasant or undesirable into gems of wisdom for others and learnings for ourselves.”

2. The facilitator distributes copies of the Coal to Diamonds Work Sheet to all participants and reviews the instructions. (Five minutes.)

3. The participants form subgroups of four or five participants each. Each subgroup is given a newsprint flip chart and several felt-tipped markers to use in recording the results of its brainstorming session. The facilitator informs them that they will have about fifteen minutes to complete the three questions. (Fifteen minutes.)

4. The entire group is reassembled. Spokespersons from each subgroup in turn report their conclusions to the group as a whole. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

5. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on the following questions:
   - How did you feel when you first shared your story in your subgroup?
   - How did you feel about the other subgroup members’ reactions to your story?
   - How did sharing your story affect the lesson you learned from the experience? How did hearing stories from others contribute to your learning?
   - What can we conclude about the consequences of sharing stories about mistakes that we turned into lessons? How might the sharing affect relationships with others? How might it affect our own learning?
   - Who in your back-home environment would profit from hearing your story? From whom would you like to hear a “coal” story? With whom can you share your story to facilitate openness in a group setting?

(Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- The activity could be followed by sharing successes and discussing which type of experience (coal or diamond) resulted in the most useful learnings.
- The activity could be done in progressive rounds (for example, events prior to high school, at a first job, in personal or relationship situations, or something that still seems to be “coal”).
- This activity could also be used as an icebreaker for a career transition workshop.
- Participants could be asked to create an action plan for how they would act differently (based on the lesson learned) at either the present job or a future job.

Submitted by Marian K. Prokop and Daryl Anne Kline.
COAL TO DIAMONDS WORK SHEET

Instructions: Complete the first two items by yourself. Then discuss your responses to the first item with the other members of your subgroup. After all subgroup members have shared, go on to discuss your responses to the second item. Finally, brainstorm ways to transform the unpleasant experience (the coal) into a learning experience (a diamond). Choose a spokesperson to report the conclusions of your brainstorming to the total group.

1. Think of an experience you’ve had in your work career in which you learned something from someone else’s mistake. Make a few notes in the space that follows; then share the experience with the other members of your subgroup.

2. Think of an experience you’ve had in your work career in which you were unhappy with the results. Perhaps a decision that you made was less effective than you’d hoped or you made an error that you hope no one else will have to make. Make a few notes in the space that follows; then share the experience with the other members of your subgroup.

3. Brainstorm with the other members of your subgroup about what good has come—or could come—from these experiences. Draw some conclusions from the brainstorming to report back to the entire group.
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A SELF-EXAMINATION

Goals
- To facilitate awareness of strategies for dealing with conflict situations.
- To examine methods of responding to conflict.
- To introduce the strategy of negotiation and to present the skills required for successful negotiation.

Group Size
Eight to forty participants.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- A copy of the following Continuum of Responses, prepared in advance on newsprint:

  A Continuum of Responses to Conflict Situations

  - Avoidance
  - Defusion
  - Confrontation
  - Power
  - Negotiation

- Pencils and paper for all participants.
- A copy of the Conflict Resolution Theory Sheet for the facilitator.
- Newsprint and felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A quiet room protected from intrusions during the private portions of the activity.
**Process**

1. The participants are asked to join the facilitator in a guided imagery designed to help them examine their individual conflict-resolution strategies. For approximately ten minutes, the facilitator leads the group through the following guided imagery. (The facilitator should feel free to embellish and to change the setting to fit the particular group.)

2. The facilitator asks participants to get comfortable, close their eyes, get in touch with themselves at the present moment (the sounds around them, the feel of their bodies, etc.), and relax.

3. The facilitator says, “You are walking down a street (or a hallway or a trail) and begin to see in the distance a familiar person. Suddenly you recognize that it is the person you are most in conflict with at present. You realize that you must decide quickly how to deal with this person. As he or she comes closer, a number of alternatives flash through your mind. Decide right now what you will do and then imagine what will happen.” (The facilitator pauses to let the participants’ images develop.) “It’s over now. The person is gone. How do you feel? What is your level of satisfaction with the way things went?”

4. The facilitator asks participants to begin to return to the present, gradually to become aware of the pressures on their bodies, of the chair, of the floor, then to attend to the sounds in the room, and finally to open their eyes when they feel ready.

5. After participants emerge from the imagery, the facilitator asks them to spend five minutes writing (a) the alternative ways of acting they had considered, (b) the one they chose to act on, and (c) the level of satisfaction they felt as to the imagined outcome.

6. Each participant is asked to share with two others the alternatives considered, the one chosen, and the level of satisfaction attained. (It is not necessary that the particulars of the personal situations be shared.) A volunteer in each trio keeps a list of all types of alternatives mentioned during the discussion.

7. The whole group is reconvened to share all the alternatives generated. These are listed on newsprint.

8. The facilitator displays on newsprint A Continuum of Responses to Conflict Situations and explains it with a lecturette on conflict resolution, based on the theory sheet. Then the facilitator asks participants to sort the alternatives listed into the appropriate strategy categories.

9. The facilitator leads a discussion of the levels of satisfaction of persons choosing various strategies on the continuum. Beginning with avoidance strategies and ending with the negotiation type of confrontation strategy is useful. Volunteers are asked to give very brief accounts of their guided imagery experiences.
10. The facilitator summarizes the outcomes of the experience and presents a brief theory input on negotiation as the strategy with the greatest potential payoff (win-win strategy), emphasizing the skills necessary for successful negotiation.

**Variations**

- A participant can volunteer his or her imagery to be role played in front of the entire group. Role players can be coached by subgroups. Several role plays can be carried out in succession.

- Role playing can be done in the trios, with one of the participants as an observer, one as the confronter, and one as the confrontee. Three rounds can take place, with roles switched on each round.

- The guided imagery can be restricted to include only persons present in the group. Participants volunteer to act out their images in front of the group. Afterwards, participants can be encouraged to share their images with the individuals toward whom they felt some conflict.

- Members of the trios can be encouraged to assist one another in planning appropriate confrontation strategies.

Submitted by Joan A. Stepsis.
CONFLICT RESOLUTION THEORY SHEET

Conflict is a daily reality for everyone. Whether at home or at work, an individual’s needs and values constantly and invariably come into opposition with those of other people. Some conflicts are relatively minor, easy to handle, or capable of being overlooked. Others of greater magnitude require a strategy for successful resolution if they are not to create constant tension or lasting enmity in home or business.

The ability to resolve conflict successfully is probably one of the most important social skills that an individual can possess. Yet there are few formal opportunities in our society to learn it. Like any other human skill, conflict resolution can be taught; like other skills, it consists of a number of important subskills, each separate and yet interdependent. These skills need to be assimilated at both the cognitive and the behavioral levels (i.e., Do I understand how conflict can be resolved? Can I resolve specific conflicts?).

Responses to Conflict Situations

Children develop their own personal strategies for dealing with conflict. Even if these preferred approaches do not resolve conflicts successfully, they continue to be used because of a lack of awareness of alternatives.

Conflict-resolution strategies may be classified into three categories—avoidance, defusion, and confrontation. The accompanying figure illustrates that avoidance is at one extreme and confrontation is at the other.

Avoidance. Some people attempt to avoid conflict situations altogether or to avoid certain types of conflict. These people tend to repress emotional reactions, look the other way, or leave the situation entirely (for example, quit a job, leave school, get divorced). Either they cannot face up to such situations effectively, or they do not have the skills to negotiate them effectively. Although avoidance strategies do have survival value in those instances where escape is possible, they usually do not provide the individual with a high level of satisfaction. They tend to leave doubts and fears about meeting the same type of situation in the future, and about such valued traits as courage or persistence.

Defusion. This tactic is essentially a delaying action. Defusion strategies try to cool off the situation, at least temporarily, or to keep the issues so unclear that attempts at confrontation are improbable. Resolving minor points while avoiding or delaying discussion of the major problem, postponing a confrontation until a more
auspicious time, and avoiding clarification of the salient issues underlying the conflict are examples of defusion. Again, as with avoidance strategies, such tactics work when delay is possible, but they typically result in feelings of dissatisfaction, anxiety about the future, and concerns about oneself.

**Confrontation.** The third major strategy involves an actual confrontation of conflicting issues or persons. Confrontation can further be subdivided into power strategies and negotiation strategies. Power strategies include the use of physical force (a punch in the nose, war); bribery (money, favors); and punishment (withholding love, money). Such tactics are often very effective from the point of view of the “successful” party in the conflict: He or she wins, the other person loses. For the loser the real conflict may have only just begun. Hostility, anxiety, and actual physical damage are usual byproducts of these win-lose power tactics.

With negotiation strategies, unlike power confrontations, both sides can win. The aim of negotiation is to resolve the conflict with a compromise or a solution which is mutually satisfying to all parties involved in the conflict. Negotiation, then, seems to provide the most positive and the least negative byproducts of all conflict-resolution strategies.

**Negotiation Skills**

Successful negotiation requires a set of skills that must be learned and practiced. These skills include (1) the ability to determine the nature of the conflict, (2) effectiveness in initiating confrontations, (3) the ability to hear the other’s point of view, and (4) the utilization of problem-solving processes to bring about a consensus.

**Diagnosing the nature of a conflict** is the starting point in any attempt at resolution through negotiation. The most important issue which must be decided is whether the conflict is an ideological (value) conflict or a “real” (tangible) conflict—or a combination of both. Value conflicts are exceedingly difficult to negotiate. If, for example, an individual believes that women should be treated as equals in every phase of public and private life, and you believe they should be prohibited in certain areas, it would be very difficult for the two of you to come to a position that would satisfy both of you. A difference of values, however, is really significant only when opposing views affect both of you in some real or tangible way. If your stand on women’s place in society results in an individual being denied a job that she wants and is qualified to perform, then there is a negotiable conflict. Neither of you need to change your values to come to a mutually acceptable resolution of the “real” problem. If each of us stands on his or her principles—maintaining our value conflict—we probably will make little headway. But if, instead, we concentrate on the tangible effects in the conflict, we may be able to devise a realistic solution.

**Effectiveness in initiating a confrontation** is a second necessary skill. It is important not to begin by attacking or demeaning the opposite party. A defensive reaction in one or both parties usually blocks a quick resolution of differences. The
most effective way to confront the other party is for the individual to state the tangible effects the conflict has on him or her. For example: “I have a problem. Because of your stand on hiring women as executives, I am unable to apply for the supervisory position that I feel I am qualified to handle.” This approach is more effective than saying, “You male chauvinist pig—you’re discriminating against me!” In other words, confrontation is not synonymous with verbal attack.

**Hearing the other’s point of view.** If the initial statement made by the other person is not what the confronter was hoping to hear, defensive rebuttals, an uncompromising approach, or explanations often follow. Argument-provoking replies should be avoided. The confronter should not attempt to defend himself or herself, explain his or her position, or make demands or threats. Instead, he or she must be able to engage in the skill of *reflective or active* listening. He or she should listen and reflect and paraphrase or clarify the other person’s stand. When the confronter has interpreted his or her opposition’s position to the satisfaction of the other person, he or she should again present his or her own point of view, being careful to avoid value statements and to concentrate on tangible outcomes. Usually, when the confronter listens to the other person, that person lowers his or her defenses and is, in turn, more ready to hear another point of view. If both persons are skilled in active listening, the chances of successful negotiation are much enhanced.

**Using problem-solving process to negotiate a consensus decision.** The steps in this process are simply stated and easy to apply. (1) Clarifying the problem. What is the tangible issue? Where does each party stand on the issue? (2) Generating and evaluating a number of possible solutions. Often these two aspects should be done separately. First, all possible solutions should be raised in a brainstorming session. Then each proposed solution should be evaluated. (3) Deciding together (not voting) on the best solution. The one solution most acceptable to all parties should be chosen. (4) Planning implementation of the solution. How will the solution be carried out? When? (5) Finally, planning for an evaluation of the solution after a specified period of time. This last step is essential. The first solution chosen is not always the best or most workable. If the first solution has flaws, the problem-solving process should be begun again at step 1.

Because negotiation is the most effective of all conflict-resolution strategies, the skills necessary to achieve meaningful negotiation are extremely important in facing inevitable conflicts.

**REFERENCES**


FRUSTRATIONS AND TENSIONS

Goals
- To help participants to become aware of their responses to tense, frustrating situations.
- To study alternative responses to such situations.

Group Size
Six to twelve participants. A number of groups may be directed simultaneously in the same room.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- Frustrations and Tensions Work Sheet I.
- Frustrations and Tensions Work Sheet II.
- Pencils.

Physical Setting
Groups should be seated around tables, or lapboards should be provided.

Process
1. The facilitator explains the goals of the experience.
2. Each of the participants is handed a copy of Work Sheet I and instructed to fill in the missing dialogue in the two cartoons and to briefly note the assumptions that he or she is making about each situation.
3. Each group then discusses the responses made by its members to each of the situations, exploring the probable effects of each response.
4. Work Sheet II is distributed. Again each participant works independently on the two situations depicted in the cartoons.
5. Groups discuss members’ responses to the second set of situations and try to derive generalizations about effective responses in tense, frustrating interpersonal situations.
6. The facilitator opens the discussion to all participants, drawing out the generalizations from each of the groups.

**Variations**

- An alternative would be to have group members create their own cartoons on posters. These may be instances in which they have been actually frustrated and/or tense. Group members may suggest responses, and the group member who was actually involved may compare the response which he or she actually made to what is suggested.

- Another variation might be to use the cartoons as a vehicle for feedback to individual group members. Members may be asked to predict what one particular member might say in each of the four situations.
FRUSTRATIONS AND TENSIONS WORK SHEET IA

Assumptions that you made about the situation:
FRUSTRATIONS AND TENSIONS WORK SHEET IB

Assumptions that you made about the situation:
FRUSTRATIONS AND TENSIONS WORK SHEET IIA

Assumptions that you made about the situation:

You’ll have to see the manager. We’re not permitted to cash student’s checks.
FRUSTRATIONS AND TENSIONS WORK SHEET IIB

Assumptions that you made about the situation:
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: 
TWO-PERSON SHARING

Goals
- To identify and share reactions to ways of dealing with conflict.
- To explore new ideas about managing conflict.

Group Size
An unlimited number of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Materials
- A Conflict Management Booklet for each participant. (The booklet should be prepared in such a way that participants are presented statements one at a time.)
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for the pairs to converse without disturbing one another.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity by stating that everyone is involved in some type of conflict at one time or other and that most people have evolved their own methods of dealing with conflict. By sharing and discussing these methods, we can identify conflict-management techniques from which all can benefit.

2. The facilitator directs the participants to form pairs. He or she gives each participant a copy of the Conflict Management Booklet.

3. The facilitator tells the participants that they are to take turns responding to or completing each statement in the booklet and that they are not to look ahead in the booklet, but are to proceed from one page to another. He or she tells them that they will have one-half hour in which to complete the activity and that they may begin.
4. The facilitator calls time, and the total group is reassembled. The facilitator encourages each participant to share what he or she learned about his or her method of dealing with conflict as a result of the activity.

5. Participants then discuss what new ways of viewing or managing conflict they learned from one another as a result of the sharing process. The facilitator lists all pertinent learnings on newsprint.

6. The facilitator leads a discussion of conflict management. He or she may give a lecturette on effective conflict-management techniques. The group is encouraged to discuss situations in which these learnings and techniques could be applied.

Variations

- Each partner can complete each statement, alternating who goes first.
- After the lecturette the pairs can reassemble and role play a conflict situation for each member, utilizing the skills they just learned.
- Participants can fill out the personal parts of the booklet, meet in groups, and share and discuss those items most relevant to the group.

Submitted by Marc Robert.
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT BOOKLET

The facilitator should prepare a booklet, prior to the experience, for each participant. The booklet will begin with page 1 and will be prepared in such a way that participants see only one page at a time. The contents of the booklet are as follows:

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: TWO-PERSON SHARING

Read silently. Do not look ahead in the booklet, since the experience is effective only if your answers are spontaneous and unrehearsed.

This booklet contains a series of open-ended statements intended to help you discover and share your reactions to conflict and your ways of dealing with it. You also will have an opportunity to learn from your partner’s responses.

These ground rules should be followed:

1. Take turns initiating the discussion. Complete each statement orally. (Do not write in the booklet.)
2. This discussion is confidential.
3. Do not skip items. Respond to each one in the order in which it appears.

When both you and your partner finish reading, you may turn the page and begin.
Conflict is . . .

The time I felt best about dealing with conflict was when . . .

When someone disagrees with me about something important or challenges me in front of others, I usually . . .

When I get angry, I . . .
When I think of negotiating, I . . .

The most important outcome of conflict is . . .

I usually react to negative criticism by . . .

When I confront someone I care about, I . . .
I feel most vulnerable during a conflict when . . .

When someone avoids conflict with me, I . . .

My greatest strength in handling conflict is . . .

Right now I am feeling . . .
Here is an actual situation in which I was involved in a conflict (*explain*). What do you think I did? How do you think I felt?

_Tell your partner how accurate his or her prediction is._

---

When things are not going well I tend to . . .

---

I imagine that you handle most conflict by . . .

_Check out your prediction with your partner._

---

I will sometimes avoid unpleasant situations by (*explain*) . . .
I am most apt to confront people in situations such as . . .

I usually hide or camouflage my feelings when . . .

My greatest weakness in handling conflict is . . .

When I think about confronting a potentially unpleasant person, I . . .
I sometimes avoid directly confronting someone when . . .

I am most likely to assert myself in situations that . . .

With you and me, conflict could . . .

By next year I would like to be able to handle conflict better by improving my ability to . . .
ESCALATION: AN ASSERTION ACTIVITY

Goals
- To allow participants to experience success in communicating while under stress.
- To enable participants to practice communicating effectively in stressful situations.

Group Size
Any number of subgroups of six or eight participants each.

Time Required
One to two hours.

Materials
- A pencil and paper for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough so that each subgroup can work without being disturbed by other subgroups.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the experience and outlines its goals.
2. The facilitator leads the participants in brainstorming a list of typical stressful situations. (Approximately ten minutes.)
3. The facilitator gives a lecturette defining assertion and presents some specific guidelines for formulating an assertive response.
4. The facilitator distributes pencils and paper and says that each participant is to record a hypothetical or actual stressful situation that he or she would like to practice responding to. The facilitator says that each participant should also write down an assertive response that he or she would like to be able to make in the situation that he or she has described. (Ten minutes.)
5. Participants are directed to choose partners and to share with their partners what each has written.
6. The partners are directed to form subgroups of four to six participants each.
7. The facilitator says that one participant from each subgroup is to volunteer to share his or her situation and desired response with the members of his or her subgroup.

8. The facilitator directs the members of each subgroup, other than the volunteer and his or her partner, to stand in a line. The facilitator explains that these people will serve as “harassers” to create a stressful situation. The person on the left is designated the “mild harasser,” and the roles are escalated from left to right so that the member on the right will serve as the most intense “harasser.”

9. The facilitator then explains the roles (volunteer, partner, and harassers) to be played by the group members:

- The volunteer is to describe the stressful situation that he or she has written about. He or she then is to respond to each harasser, in turn, with the assertive response that he or she has stated he or she would like to be able to make.

- The volunteer’s partner is to be sure that he or she understands the situation and response and is to offer suggestions for making the response as specific and assertive as possible. He or she accompanies the volunteer as he or she proceeds from one harasser to the next. He or she (a) makes sure that the harassers follow their role guidelines; (b) lends support, by his or her presence, to the volunteer; (c) solicits positive feedback from the subgroup members on the volunteer’s performance after each new harasser has been dealt with; and (d) confers with the volunteer, following each solicitation of feedback, on one or two things the volunteer would like to do or could do to improve his or her response to the next harasser.

- Each harasser is to play the role of antagonist in the situation described by the volunteer and is to remain true to that situation without expanding or adapting it. Each harasser is to play his or her role with the degree of intensity assigned to it; “mild” harassers may ask one question or make one statement, and so on. (Harassers in the far right position are cautioned not to harass indefinitely.) Finally, all harassers are to ensure a successful experience for the volunteer by allowing the volunteer to “win” each encounter as he or she progresses along the line of harassers.

10. The role play is conducted. (Approximately twenty minutes.)

11. The members of each subgroup discuss the activity in terms of what helped and what hindered the volunteer in making an effective assertive response and the degree to which the experience brought about an increase in his or her confidence and skill in communicating the response.

12. The total group reassembles, and subgroups report on their discussions. The facilitator then leads the total group in processing the experience.
13. Steps 10 through 12 are repeated with other volunteers as time allows.

**Variations**

- Prewritten situations can be used instead of ones brainstormed by the subgroup members.
- The activity can be performed by a subgroup initially, to serve as a demonstration for the total group. It can then be performed by many subgroups simultaneously.

Submitted by Colleen Kelley. The techniques of escalation and the use of a hierarchy are common in behavior therapy, especially in assertion training.
VMX PRODUCTIONS, INC.: HANDLING RESISTANCE POSITIVELY

Goals
- To increase the participants’ understanding of resistance.
- To provide an opportunity for the participants to explore and compare strategies for dealing with resistance.
- To present the participants with a positive and effective method for handling resistance.

Group Size
Optimally, up to twenty pairs. The design of this activity permits the participation of virtually an unlimited number of pairs; however, if the total group consists of more than forty participants, the time required will be more than that indicated.

Time Required
One hour and twenty minutes to one and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the resister role sheet and a pencil for each resister.
- A copy of the demander A role sheet, a pencil, and blank paper for each demander designated as “A.”
- A copy of the demander B role sheet, a pencil, and blank paper for each demander designated as “B.”
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A large room in which the members of each pair can interact without disturbing the other pairs. Writing surfaces should be provided.

Process
1. The facilitator announces that the participants are to be involved in an activity concerning resistance and then introduces the goals.
2. The participants are instructed to form pairs. The facilitator explains that the participants are to decide what their personal power ratings are in terms of the
percentage of time that they get what they want from others (fifty percent of the
time, eighty percent of the time, and so forth). The pair members are instructed
to share their individual ratings and to briefly elaborate on the ratings as well as
the strategies they typically use in getting what they want. The participants are
told that they have ten minutes to accomplish this task.

3. The pairs are instructed to conclude their conversations. The facilitator divides
the total group roughly in half, designating one-half of the pairs as subgroup A
and one-half as subgroup B. The facilitator explains that each pair is to conduct a
role play in which one member demands something from the other member, who
resists the demand. In the subgroup A pairs, the member with the higher power
rating will play the role of the demander and the member with the lower rating
will play the role of the resister: In the subgroup B pairs, the situation is
reversed; the member with the lower power rating will play the demander, and
the member with the higher rating will play the role of the resister. Then each
resister is given a copy of the role sheet for the resister and a pencil; each
subgroup A demander is given a copy of the role sheet for demander A, a pencil,
and blank paper for making notes; and each subgroup B demander is given a copy
of the role sheet for demander B, a pencil, and blank paper for making notes. All
participants are told to read their role sheets. In addition, each resister is told to
fill out the “Initial Reaction” section of his or her role sheet by circling the
appropriate number. (Ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator explains that the role plays are to last for ten minutes and then
asks the pairs to begin. (Ten minutes.)

5. The facilitator stops the role plays and reconvenes the total group. Each resister
is instructed to fill out the “Concluding Reaction” section of his or her role sheet
by circling the appropriate number. Then the resisters take turns reporting the
numbers circled under “Initial Reaction” as well as those circled under
“Concluding Reaction.” The facilitator records these data on newsprint as they
are reported, taking care to separate the subgroup A responses from the
subgroup B responses. The facilitator explains the differences between the two
demander role sheets, links these differences with those in the newsprint data,
and discusses how the pair members’ individual power-rating differences may
have affected the outcome of the role plays. The facilitator asks the following
questions:

- What feelings did you experience as the resister? What feelings did you
  experience as Demander A? Demander B?

- How was this experience different from your typical experience with resisting?
  How was it different from your typical experience with demanding?
How would you describe the interaction with Demander A? How would you describe the interaction with Demander B? What was productive about the interaction in which you participated? What was unproductive?

How does the outcome of the interaction that you participated in relate to the power rating you assigned yourself?

What does this experience say, in general, about resistance? What does it say about demanding?

What might be some basic guidelines for dealing with resistance positively and productively?

As the participants contribute answers the facilitator records them on newsprint. (Twenty minutes.)

6. The facilitator delivers a lecturette on a positive approach to resistance and ties in the participants’ contributions from the previous step. (Fifteen minutes.)

7. The facilitator concludes the activity by asking the following questions:

- What is one strategy that you learned for dealing with resistance that you can use at work or at home?
- What is one thing that you can do differently with regard to your own resistance?

Variations

- The concept of the individual power ratings may be eliminated.
- The participants may be assembled into two subgroups in step 3 according to those with high power ratings (A) and those with low power ratings (B).
- The participants may be asked to role play the same situation without the strategy instructions. Instead, they would simply behave in the ways they typically would in resisting or demanding.
- The facilitator may conclude the activity by distributing copies of the lecturette and encouraging the participants to refer to it from time to time.
- The facilitator may conclude the activity by instructing the participants to complete action plans and to discuss them in pairs.

Submitted by H.B. Karp.
VMX PRODUCTIONS, INC. ROLE SHEET: RESISTER

You are the director of manufacturing for VMX Productions, Inc. Profits have been slowly declining; a recent organization-wide survey has indicated that employee morale is very low; and an attempt is currently being made to unionize the corporation, although the president is strongly opposed to unionization. Your view is that although these are not good trends, they are natural given the present state of the economy and the recently ended recession. These negative signs should start to reverse themselves any day now.

The corporation has just hired a new director of training and development. You think that this decision is an overreaction to the declining profits and morale. Although you are not opposed to management training per se, the training that you have personally experienced has been a bunch of psychological nonsense and has represented a waste of management time and corporate budget. In your opinion what is needed is more old-fashioned hard work and company spirit.

In a few minutes you will be meeting with the new training director, who wants to discuss plans for a new management-training program. Although this human resource development stuff irks you, you plan to listen, primarily because of your sense of common courtesy. However, you do plan to make your feelings known. As director of manufacturing, you have a lot more important things to deal with than this training business.

Initial Reaction

On the scale below, circle the number that indicates your initial reaction (how you feel before the meeting) with regard to resistance to or acceptance of the idea of embarking on a new training and development program.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
Totally Resistent

Concluding Reaction

On the scale below, circle the number that indicates your reaction after the meeting with regard to resistance to or acceptance of the idea of embarking on a new training and development program.

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
Totally Resistent
The Situation

You have just been hired as director of training and development for VMX Productions, Inc. Profits have been slowly declining, and a recent organization-wide survey has indicated that employee morale is very low. As a matter of fact, these conditions precipitated your being hired.

There is very little organized internal training for managers. The few internal programs that are available are outdated, unresponsive to participants’ needs, and poorly supported. You feel strongly that what is needed to turn things around is an organized, professionally designed, integrated training effort for all levels of management in the corporation. The training program that you envision would provide a common management approach and language to be used at all levels and yet would also meet each level’s unique needs.

Another important consideration is that an attempt is currently being made to unionize the corporation, and the president is strongly opposed to unionization. This attempt could succeed if the company’s managers do not become more effective in dealing with their subordinates.

The president agrees with your views and is willing to back your approach to a new management-development program on the condition that you persuade the director of manufacturing to go along with the program. You know that the director is not an advocate of human resource development, and you will probably meet some stiff resistance. In a few minutes you will have your first meeting with the director.

Your Approach

Although the director of manufacturing is a tough executive, you are no “light-weight” either. If you are not able to obtain at least a degree of support at this first meeting, your training program will never get off the ground and you will fail in your job. Consequently, your strategy during the meeting is to do whatever you can to, break down, avoid, or minimize the director’s resistance.

Dealing with the Director

Here are some tacks that you might take:

1. Appeal to the director’s professional pride.
2. Use your status or position power: “The president of the company is behind this, you know.”
3. Use facts to sell the program. For example, talk about the results of the organization-wide survey (the need for a training program to raise morale).
4. Appeal to conscience and basic values: “You owe it to the company.”
5. Try to evoke guilt: “I’m really counting on you.”
6. Try discounting the director’s objections: “You can’t mean to tell me that a little problem like . . . is going to stand in the way.”
7. Appeal to self-interest: “Let me show you what’s in it for you.”
8. Try a veiled threat: “You’ll get left behind.”
9. Appeal to the need to conform: “We’re all in this together.”
10. Ignore the resistance and just keep talking.

Remember that you must make some impact at this meeting. Use whatever tactics work best for you.
The Situation

You have just been hired as director of training and development for VMX Productions, Inc. Profits have been slowly declining, and a recent organization-wide survey has indicated that employee morale is very low. As a matter of fact, these conditions precipitated your being hired.

There is very little organized internal training for managers. The few internal programs that are available are outdated, unresponsive to participants’ needs, and poorly supported. You feel strongly that what is needed to turn things around is an organized, professionally designed, integrated training effort for all levels of management in the corporation. The training program that you envision would provide a common management approach and language to be used at all levels and yet would also meet each level’s unique needs.

Another important consideration is that an attempt is currently being made to unionize the corporation, and the president is strongly opposed to unionization. This attempt could succeed if the company’s managers do not become more effective in dealing with their subordinates.

The president agrees with your views and is willing to back your approach to a new management-development program on the condition that you persuade the director of manufacturing to go along with the program. You know that the director is not an advocate of human resource development, and you will probably meet some stiff resistance. In a few minutes you will have your first meeting with the director.

Your Approach

Your main objective in this first meeting is to ensure that the director expresses all reservations and objections fully. Listen carefully, be very patient, and encourage the director’s comments. You want the most candid statements possible, no matter how dissonant or antagonistic they may be.

Although it would be nice to obtain the director’s support at this meeting, you realize that this is not likely to happen. As a matter of fact, if the level of resistance that you anticipate at this meeting cannot be reduced to a workable level, you are better off leaving things as they are for the moment. After all, the very last thing you need right now is for the director to give you “lip service” and then sabotage or starve the program once you are committed to it and have it running. You can always send the managers who need training to external seminars or workshops for the immediate future and then “test the water” again in six months, after you have become better acquainted with the director.
Dealing with the Director

Here are some steps to take:

1. At the beginning briefly state your position about the training needs and why these needs must be addressed. Talk about the specific outcome that you want, the potential benefits, and what you want from the director. Once you have made your points clearly and positively, do not repeat them unless you are specifically asked to do so.

2. Invite negative comments and opinions: “I’d like to hear about whatever problems there may be.” Say why you want to hear the resistance.

3. Acknowledge the director’s disagreement: “I realize that you see things differently from the way I see them, and you may not like all of what I’m proposing. I’d like to know what else is bothering you about this approach.”

4. Answer any question, and restate your position if you are asked to do so. But do not introduce new arguments or “sell.”

5. Listen to the director’s resistance when it surfaces and honor it: “I understand how that could be a problem for you” or “I see that we need to take that into consideration if we decide to go ahead. Thank you.” However, do not agree with the point of resistance.

6. Reinforce permission to resist by accepting and empathizing: “I can understand why you would resent that.”

7. Explore alternatives after resistance has been stated and acknowledged: “I understand your objection. What could I do that would make it better?” or “You make a good point. What could we do to make sure that doesn’t happen?” or “I understand your position. What would you prefer?”

8. If there is time, briefly recap the tone of the meeting and anything that you were specifically in agreement or disagreement with so that you can start from this point the next time you meet.

Points to Remember

Here are some things that you should keep in mind:

1. The director is not a personal enemy or a fool, but rather a strong executive who sees things differently from the way you see them. There is nothing wrong with this difference of opinion.

2. Stay in control of the meeting. Do not give or take any abuse.

3. When the meeting is over, express your thanks for the director’s time and input.

4. Take a few notes during the meeting so that you miss nothing during the recap at the end.
5. Regardless of how strongly the director disagrees with the idea of the training program, you still believe that it is a great idea. Do not “give away the store.”
THE DECENT BUT PESKY COWORKER: DEVELOPING CONTRACTING SKILLS

Goals
- To acquaint the participants with the significance and usefulness of contracting as a means of facilitating the helping process.
- To develop the participants’ understanding of and skills in contracting.

Group Size
Any number of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- One copy of The Decent but Pesky Coworker Role Sheet A for each pair.
- One copy of The Decent but Pesky Coworker Role Sheet B for each pair.
- One copy of The Decent but Pesky Coworker Theory Sheet for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room with plenty of space so that the pairs can enact their role plays without disturbing one another.

Process
1. The facilitator tells the participants that they are to be involved in a role play.
2. The participants are instructed to assemble into pairs. One member of each pair receives a copy of role sheet A, and the other member receives a copy of role sheet B. The facilitator asks each participant to read his or her role sheet and to spend a few minutes thinking about how to play the assigned role. In addition, the facilitator emphasizes the importance of maintaining roles during the role play and cautions the participants not to share the contents of their role sheets with one another. (Ten minutes.)
3. The facilitator instructs the pairs to begin their role plays. (Ten minutes.)
4. The participants are instructed to stop their role plays. The members of each pair are asked to discuss what they think was happening during the role play and
what might have been done differently to improve the situation for both members. Again, the participants are cautioned not to discuss the particulars of their agendas as described on the role sheets. (Ten minutes.)

5. The total group is reconvened, and the facilitator elicits comments from the participants about their paired discussions. (Ten minutes.)

6. Copies of The Decent but Pesky Coworker Theory Sheet are distributed, and the participants are asked to read this sheet. Then the facilitator leads a discussion of the handout’s contents, clarifying points as necessary and relating them to the comments made during step 5. (Twenty minutes.)

7. The participants are instructed to reassemble into their pairs and to start their role plays again from the beginning, this time using the contracting process and incorporating what they have learned from the activity to this point. (Fifteen minutes.)

8. The facilitator stops the role plays and reconvenes the total group. The following questions are asked:

   - What were the differences between the first and second role plays? How do you account for these differences?
   - What new questions did you ask during the second role play? What new statements did you make?
   - How productive were the two role plays in terms of problem solving? How satisfying were the resolutions of the two role plays?
   - How would you characterize your relationship with your partner during the second role play? In what ways were the two of you interacting differently from the way you interacted during the first role play?
   - What have you learned about the skills necessary for contracting? How can you relate what you have learned to what happens in your private life and in your own organization with regard to problem solving?
   - What steps will you take the next time you want help from a coworker or friend? What steps will you take when someone asks for help from you?
   - What might be some other uses of the contracting process? What might be the benefits of using contracting in various situations?

**Variations**

- During step 7 the members of each pair may be asked to switch roles. An observer may be asked to join each pair. When the members of the pair experience difficulties, the observer may be instructed to help in the contracting process by serving as a third-party consultant.
The facilitator may devise several different sets of role sheets based on different coworkers’ problems. Subsequently, during processing, the participants are asked to compare the effects of the different problems on the contracting process.
THE DECENT BUT PESKY COWORKER ROLE SHEET A

For the past two months, one of your coworkers has been in the habit of visiting your office once or twice a week to complain about personal financial problems. You have tried to be as understanding and as helpful as possible and even have suggested some actions that the coworker might take to alleviate the situation; however, despite your efforts, the financial problems remain the same, and your efforts to complete your work in peace continue to be thwarted by your coworker’s visits.

You want to be helpful and to remain on friendly terms with your coworker, but you are tired of hearing the same complaint repeatedly and you are beginning to be extremely concerned about the amount of time these conversations take away from your work.

Here the coworker comes again. Quick! Think of how you can manage the conversation in such a way that you are friendly and helpful to this person and can attend to your own needs as well.

THE DECENT BUT PESKY COWORKER ROLE SHEET B

You are in a real bind. For some time now, you have been experiencing serious financial problems. A couple of months ago you confided in one of your coworkers about this situation and how serious it is. Since then you have visited the coworker’s office once or twice a week to discuss your financial problems, but so far this person has failed to suggest anything helpful. However, you admire the coworker’s problem-solving ability and believe that eventually this person will give you the “right answer.”

Lately you have begun to feel desperate about your financial future. You are on your way to the coworker’s office now to ask for help again.
THE DECENT BUT PESKY COWORKER THEORY SHEET

Contracting is a procedure frequently used by professionals in their dealings with clients. It is a process by which both the professional and the client become aware of and agree to how the work in question will be done, what their relationship will be like, what methods and resources will be used, what the objectives and standards for measuring success will be, and so forth.

This process is an important part of any helper/helpee relationship—professional or nonprofessional—and often has a direct bearing on the success or failure of the “consultation.” It establishes important understandings and guidelines and clarifies what the potential “client” wants from the “consultation.” As is true with legal contracts, there should be a “consideration” for each party; in other words, each should be rewarded in some way. In addition, both parties should have a clear understanding about the contract and should have the freedom either to accept it or not. Ideally, the contract should be “open” in the sense that it can be renegotiated at any point, subject to the approval of both parties.

In a situation such as that involved in “The Decent but Pesky Coworker,” the worker who serves as consultant might ask an initial contracting question like “How do you think I can be helpful to you?” The discussion generated by this question can be useful in clearing away a lot of assumptions and hidden agendas. Once this question has been satisfactorily answered—with both parties in agreement about what is being asked for and what the “consultant” can agree to deliver—the “consultant” might well ask other basic contracting questions: How much time do you think we will need? What have you tried already? How will we know if this consultation has been helpful? What do I (as “consultant”) want from the consultation? In addition, the question of confidentiality may need to be addressed as well as other ethical issues, such as whether the “consultant” will be asked to take sides in the situation or to manipulate someone or something.

Contracting can be extremely useful in relatively informal, personal situations. In professional relationships its importance is much greater, and many more questions need to be raised and negotiated before the work can begin.1 The clearer and more acceptable the contract to both parties, the greater the chances for the success of the consultative venture.

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DEBENSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION: A PAIRED ROLE PLAY

Goals
- To examine the dynamics of defensive and supportive communication in supervisor/subordinate relationships.
- To develop skills in listening to and understanding a contrasting point of view.
- To explore the concept of synergy in paired communication.
- To examine the expectations that defensive communication creates for a continuing relationship.

Group Size
Any number of pairs, preferably with an equal balance between the sexes.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the appropriate Defensive and Supportive Communication Background and Role-Description Sheet for each participant.
- Two copies of the Defensive and Supportive Communication Discussion Guide for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough to allow pairs to interact without disturbing one another.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the experience by presenting a lecturette on defensive and supportive communication, covering the following points:
   - Communication becomes defensive when the sender’s goal is to persuade the receiver to agree with his or her opinions, ideas, facts, or information.¹

Defensive communication is characterized by evaluation, control, strategy, superiority, and certainty.\(^2\)

Communication becomes supportive when the goal is to actively hear and understand the other’s opinions, thoughts, or feelings.

Supportive communication is characterized by empathy and spontaneity; it promotes problem solving and synergy.

2. The facilitator divides the participants into pairs and announces that there will be four rounds of paired role play to enable participants to experience the two forms of communication and to understand how the dynamics of each form emerge. He or she explains that during rounds 1 and 2, one member of the pair will role play a supervisor and the other a subordinate and that their roles will be reversed during rounds 3 and 4. Pairs are instructed to determine who will role play the supervisor and subordinate for rounds 1 and 2.

3. A Defensive and Supportive Communication Background and Role-Description Sheet is given to each participant (Case 1, 2, or 3 may be used). The facilitator notes that specific instructions for each round are described on the role-description sheet. Players are given time to study their roles.

4. The facilitator initiates round 1. He or she allows five to seven minutes for the interaction.

5. After stopping the role play, the facilitator distributes one copy of the Defensive and Supportive Communication Discussion Guide and a pencil to each participant. Each participant fills out the form by placing a “1” in the spaces provided to indicate his or her feelings about round 1 (three minutes). The round is then discussed by the partners (five minutes).

6. The facilitator initiates round 2. At the conclusion of round 2, participants once again fill out the same Defensive and Supportive Communication Discussion Guide, this time by placing a “2” in the appropriate places. They then discuss round 2 with their partners. They are told to focus on the differences between rounds 1 and 2.

7. For rounds 3 and 4, the pairs of participants reverse roles. The facilitator distributes different versions of the Defensive and Supportive Communication Background and Role-Description Sheet, and steps 4 through 6 are repeated with new role-play situations. Following round 3, another copy of the Defensive and Supportive Communication Discussion Guide is distributed to each participant. It is filled out (three minutes) and discussed (five minutes) as before.

8. At the conclusion of round 4, participants once again fill out their discussion guides and briefly discuss the differences between rounds 3 and 4. They then are

instructed to think about the differences between their two different role-playing situations.

9. The facilitator assembles the total group and leads a discussion of the different modes of communication. He or she may ask the group:

- What were the differences between the defensive and supportive modes of communication? (Reactions to questions on the Defensive and Supportive Communication Discussion Guide can be reviewed at this point.)
- What were the differences between sending and receiving the two types of communication?
- How did the power relationship of the supervisor and subordinate roles affect the communication processes?
- How were the outcomes of rounds 1 and 2 different? To what degree were the outcomes of round 2 synergistic? (The facilitator explains the concept of synergy.)
- What are the implications of the two modes of communication in real-life settings?

**Variations**

- Role-play situations can be invented by the facilitator, the total group, or individual pairs.
- A demonstration role play in front of the total group can precede the paired role play.
- Rounds 3 and 4 can be eliminated.
- A group discussion of rounds 1 and 2 can precede rounds 3 and 4.
- Participants can change partners for rounds 3 and 4.
- Supportive communication can be used first in round 1. Differences between rounds 1-2 and 3-4 (in which defensive is used first) can be processed in terms of different expectations for the next communication.

Submitted by Gary W. Combs.
Case 1: The Performance Appraisal System

Background: This case focuses on the development of a system to appraise employee performance. Dale Clark, personnel director, has asked to meet this afternoon with Robin Smith, director of administrative services, to discuss Robin’s proposal for such a system. They are meeting at 2 p.m.

Role-Description Sheet 1 (Supervisor)

Robin Smith: You are director of administrative services for an organization that has tripled its size since its creation two years ago. This rapid growth has led to a need to develop an appraisal system that will foster the development of employees for managerial positions and furnish data for maintaining an inventory of employee talent and for making promotion and transfer decisions.

Early last week, you wrote a memo to the company personnel director, Dale Clark—who is your subordinate—describing the need for such a system and outlining your thoughts for its design. As soon as a design is agreed on, you expect Clark to implement and administer the system.

Under your plan, supervisors would use a standard form to appraise employees every twelve months. The appraisal would be discussed with the employee and signed by both the supervisor and employee. Copies of the appraisal would be retained by the personnel department and the appraising supervisor, as well as the employee.

Your proposed system is based on the assumption that it is important for supervisors to let employees know those areas in which they need to develop. For purposes of record keeping, you also feel that it is important that a standardized form be used for performance appraisal. Two days ago, Dale Clark requested a meeting to discuss your proposal and, you think, probably to raise some questions about your design.

Round 1: Your goal is to get Dale Clark to agree with the tenets of your design. You should explain as best you can the rationale supporting the design. You are determined that your way shall prevail.

Round 2: Your goal is to create a climate to explore the differences between yourself and your personnel director. You should encourage Clark to express his or her position and search for a resolution that achieves your objectives as well as those of the personnel director.
Case 1: The Performance Appraisal System

Background: This case focuses on the development of a system to appraise employee performance. Dale Clark, personnel director, has asked to meet this afternoon with Robin Smith, director of administrative services, to discuss Robin’s proposal for such a system. They are meeting at 2 p.m.

Role-Description Sheet 2 (Subordinate)³

Dale Clark: You are the personnel director for an organization that has tripled its activity since its creation two years ago. Last week you received a memo from your boss, Robin Smith, director of administrative services, noting that the organization’s growth has led to a need to develop a performance-appraisal system. The purpose of the system is to foster the development of employees for managerial positions, furnish data for maintaining an inventory of employee talent, and aid in making promotion and transfer decisions.

Under the plan outlined in Smith’s memo, supervisors would use a standardized form to appraise employees once a year. The appraisal would be discussed with the employee and signed by both the supervisor and employee. Copies of the appraisal would be retained by the personnel department, the supervisor, and the employee.

You believe that this approach is detrimental to employee development. It places the supervisor in the role of judge and tends to bring about a defensive reaction from the subordinate. You favor a problem-solving approach in which the supervisor initiates an interview with the employee and elicits ideas for job improvement. The supervisor stimulates employees to self-diagnose their needs for development; the interview is not initiated by a written appraisal. Problems not addressed by the subordinate can be brought up by the supervisor after the employee has voiced his or her concerns. Such problems can be introduced by asking for the subordinate’s help.

You feel that this method of appraisal is superior to the traditional one suggested by Smith because it develops a climate of mutual interest and almost always leads to new ideas and improved performance. The employee is motivated to think constructively rather than defensively.

Two days ago, you requested a meeting with Robin Smith to discuss your ideas. You hope to achieve some modifications in your supervisor’s design.

Both Rounds: You are to interact with Smith, explaining your approach and its rationale.

Case 2: Management and Organizational Behavior

Background: Gerry Thompson is a student in Professor Reilly’s management and organizational behavior class. The class is an introductory, graduate-level seminar that meets from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday afternoons. Each student is required to complete midterm and final examinations and a library-research paper on a topic of his or her own choosing. Each student is expected to submit a brief proposal (one-half to one page) noting his or her topic and objectives for research. The proposals are returned with comments and suggested bibliographic sources. When a proposal is deficient, Professor Reilly asks to meet with the student.

Role-Description Sheet 1 (Supervisor)

Professor Reilly: You are an associate professor of organizational behavior in a major university. You have been teaching for six years and have published several articles reporting your research. You teach a seminar in management and organizational behavior once a year; most of the people in the class are full-time students pursuing a master’s degree in administration.

Because this is an introductory seminar, you believe that it is important for students to become familiar with the research literature in organizational behavior. Students should develop their capacities to critically examine and compare major theories and ideas in the field and be able to present their analysis in a logical and coherent fashion. Because of these beliefs, you require students to complete a major paper based on library research. Gerry Thompson, a student in the seminar who works full time for a major organization in the area, wrote a proposal for a paper on organizational change. It would be a case study of the reorganization that recently occurred in the administrative-services division of Gerry’s organization. Because it is not based on library research, the paper, as far as you are concerned, is unacceptable. You have asked Gerry to meet you after class so that you can explain the proposal’s deficiencies.

Round 1: Your goal is to have Gerry revise the proposal so that it is based solely on library research. You should be friendly, patient, and explain as best you can your rationale for requiring a paper based on a survey of appropriate literature. You are determined that your way shall prevail.

Round 2: Your goal is to create a climate in which to explore the differences between your ideas and Gerry’s. You should encourage Gerry to express his or her position and search for a resolution that achieves both of your objectives.
Case 2: Management and Organizational Behavior

Background: Gerry Thompson is a student in Professor Reilly’s management and organizational behavior class. The class is an introductory, graduate-level seminar that meets from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday afternoons. Each student is required to complete midterm and final examinations and a library-research paper on a topic of his or her own choosing. Each student is expected to submit a brief proposal (one-half to one page) noting his or her topic and objectives for research. The proposals are returned with comments and suggested bibliographic sources. When a proposal is deficient, Professor Reilly asks to meet with the student.

Role-Description Sheet 2 (Subordinate)

Gerry Thompson: You are a middle manager in the data-processing section of your organization. Your college degree is in mathematics. Your organization’s flexible time program enables you to go to school two afternoons a week to obtain your master’s degree in administration. By returning to school you hope to become a better manager and improve your chances for promotion.

For your term project, you wrote a proposal for a paper on organizational change. The paper will be based on an analysis of the reorganization that recently occurred in the administrative-services division of your organization. From the analysis you intend to extract a number of principles regarding organizational change. You feel that this approach will be of more benefit to you than a paper based on a review of research studies.

Professor Reilly has asked to meet with you after class. You assume that the professor wants to make some suggestions about your proposed project.

Both Rounds: You are to interact with Professor Reilly to explain your rationale for doing an analytical case study instead of a paper based on library research.
Case 3: Internal Auditing

Background: The setting is the internal auditing division of a large governmental insurance organization. Lee Black is the administrator of the division; it includes five units charged with reviewing the work of field claims examiners. Black has asked Pat Fisher, one of the unit supervisors, to meet to discuss a specific problem.

Role-Description Sheet 1 (Supervisor)

Lee Black: You have worked for this organization for twelve years, seven of them at the administrative level. You have been the division administrator for three years. Your bachelor’s degree is in psychology; in addition, you have completed several courses in administration.

The problem concerning you is that total work production in the unit that Pat Fisher supervises is lower than that of other units. Fisher’s unit completes approximately fifty audits a week; the other units average eighty audits a week, with some completing as many as one hundred a week. The quality of work completed in Fisher’s unit, however, is superior to that completed in the other units.

You have thoroughly evaluated the situation and its implications for the divisions. Because of pressures for production from your boss and complaints from the other unit supervisors that Fisher’s unit is giving the division a bad reputation, you feel that you must insist on higher production. You have decided to impose a quota on the unit of seventy-five audits per week, even though there might be a temporary decline in the quality of work produced. This seems to you to be more than fair, since it is still below the average production of the other units.

You are meeting with Pat Fisher this morning at 10 a.m. to explain your plan and its rationale.

Round 1: Your goal is to have Fisher implement a quota of seventy-five audits per week. You should be friendly, patient, and explain as best you can the rationale supporting your decision. You are determined that your way shall prevail.

Round 2: Your goal is to create a climate for exploring the problem of low production; Fisher should be encouraged to express his or her position. You should discuss your idea for a quota system, but be open to other ways of resolving the problem.
Case 3: Internal Auditing

Background: The setting is the internal auditing division of a large governmental insurance organization. Lee Black is the administrator of the division; it includes five units charged with reviewing the work of field claims examiners. Black has asked Pat Fisher, one of the unit supervisors, to meet to discuss a specific problem.

Role-Description Sheet 2 (Subordinate)

Pat Fisher: You have worked for this organization for sixteen years. You have had supervisory responsibilities for ten years and have had your present position of unit supervisor for three years. You have a B.S. degree in accounting and have had several in-service training classes in supervision.

You believe that quality work is important and take pride in the fact that your unit’s work is generally of a higher quality than that of other units. To achieve high quality, you insist that each case be fully examined regardless of the size or importance of the claim. This frequently entails researching the latest interpretation of government regulations and consulting with others outside the division. You encourage those who work for you to help each other and frequently hold staff meetings to discuss problem cases. Lee Black, your supervisor, has asked you to meet this morning at 10 a.m. One of your subordinates has informed you that, according to rumor, Black is going to impose a quota on your unit. Although you are aware of the fact that your unit’s production is somewhat lower than that of the other units, you feel that this is compensated for by the higher quality of work within your unit.

You are willing to listen to Black’s arguments, but you are dead set against quotas. It has been your experience that quota systems are easily subverted and inevitably lead to a lower quality of work.

Both Rounds: You are to interact with Black, expressing your position and its rationale.
**DEFENSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION DISCUSSION GUIDE**

Use these scales to guide your discussion after each round of interaction. Place a “1” on each of the scales to indicate your experience in round 1, a “2” on each scale at the end of round 2, etc.

1. **How well did you listen to the other person’s point of view?**
   
   Not Well ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Very Well

2. **What kind of feeling climate was stimulated by the interaction?**
   
   Competitive ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Cooperative
   Judging of the Other Person ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Empathetic
   Controlling ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Problem Oriented
   Superior ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Equal
   Positive ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Provisional
   Defensive ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Supportive

3. **How satisfied are you with the interaction?**
   
   Very Dissatisfied ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Very Satisfied

4. **How satisfied are you with the outcome or product of the discussion?**
   
   Very Dissatisfied ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Very Satisfied
THE PARKING SPACE: 
RELATIONSHIPS AND NEGOTIATING

Goals

- To develop the participants’ understanding of the effects of relationships on negotiations.
- To help the participants to become more aware of how changes in roles affect negotiations.
- To help the participants to develop negotiation skills.

Group Size

Any number of pairs.

Time Required

One and one-half hours.

Materials

- One copy of The Parking Space Theory Sheet for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room with adequate space for pairs to enact their role plays without disturbing one another.

Process

1. The facilitator tells the participants that they are to be involved in a role play that focuses on certain aspects of negotiation and that they will be shown the specific goals later.

2. The participants are asked to assemble into pairs and to designate one person as “A” and the other person as “B.” When this has been accomplished, the facilitator reads the following information:
   
   Person “A”:
   “You have driven to the downtown section of your city for a very important meeting with a new client, who represents at least $50,000 in new business for your company. The lot in which you usually park is closed for repairs, but you do not know of another parking lot nearby. You are running late and are very
concerned about the time. While driving down the street on which your client’s office is located, you see an open parking space. You stop alongside the car parked in front of the open space in order to parallel park. As you start to back into the open space, another person drives up from behind and begins to pull into the space. The cars block each other and neither can park. You shut off your engine, get out of your car, and go back to talk with the person in the other car.”

**Person “B”:**

“You are on your way to a job interview. Finding parking downtown is a difficult process; most of the parking lots are already full. While driving down a street near where you will be interviewed, you notice an open parking space. You begin to pull into the space, but at the same time, another person tries to back into the same space. The cars block each other and neither can park. You shut off your engine, get out of your car, and go to talk with the person in the other car.”

(Ten minutes.)

3. The facilitator instructs the pairs to begin their role plays.

4. After ten minutes, the participants are instructed to stop their role plays; not all the participants will be finished. The members of each pair are asked to describe to each other what they saw happening during the role play. (Five to ten minutes.)

5. The total group is reconvened, and the facilitator elicits comments from the participants about their discussions, using questions similar to the following:

   - What happened in your role play? What were your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors?
   - Did you resolve the dilemma? If so, how? (Ten minutes.)

**Note to the facilitator:** It is important **not** to do complete processing here; the goals of this activity hinge on the contrasts between the two role plays.

6. The facilitator says that the role play is to be redone, but adds the following information: “This time, when you meet the person from the other car, you discover that it is your next-door neighbor, whom you like.” (Ten minutes.)

7. After ten minutes, the participants are instructed to stop their role plays. The members of each pair are asked to discuss what happened during the role play, the ways in which it differed from the first role play, what they learned, and what might have been done differently to improve the situation for both members. (Fifteen minutes.)

8. The total group is reconvened, and the facilitator gives a lecturette based on The Parking Space Theory Sheet. Alternatively, the facilitator may distribute copies of The Parking Space Theory Sheet and allow time for the participants to read it. The facilitator then leads a discussion based on the following questions:
In what ways were you satisfied with the results of the first role play? In what ways were you dissatisfied?

In what ways were you satisfied with the results of the second role play? In what ways were you dissatisfied?

What were the sources of conflict in the situations? How did they differ between the two role plays?

How was the scarce resource (the parking space) managed? How was the perception of scarcity changed?

What was the difference in competitiveness between the first and the second role plays?

How did the focus on the relationship change between the two role plays? How did that appear to affect the outcome?

Which of the win-win negotiating skills were used? What was the outcome? Which were not used? What was the outcome?

How can you use what you have learned in interactions with coworkers?

How can you use what you have learned in your personal life?

(Thirty minutes.)

Variations

In step 6, participants may be instructed to choose new partners for the second role play.

In step 6, partners may be asked to reverse roles.

The information that sets up the second role play may be changed to one of the following sentences or any other that the facilitator feels is appropriate:

- “The other driver is on crutches.”
- “The other driver is wearing a campaign button for a candidate you oppose.”
- “The other driver is the person with whom you have the appointment.”

In an ongoing group, the role play could be revised to reflect a specific scarce resource relevant to the group and the information for the second role play changed appropriately.
Attempts to resolve conflict involve assessing the relative power of the people involved and the relationship between them. Negotiation and mediation are most effective when—indeed, are effective only when—the people involved in the conflict perceive themselves to be of relatively equal power. Relative power is directly related to the relationship between people.

In conflicts between people with greatly discrepant power, the person with more power can at any time exercise that power in an attempt to gain his or her objectives. By agreeing to negotiation or mediation, two people agree to put power aside; however, one or the other may often resort to power advantages if the resulting agreement is not to his or her liking. In situations of greatly discrepant relative power, to use negotiation and mediation effectively, the lower-power person must first equalize the perception of power.

The sociologist Lewis Coser (1956) provided an important, early definition of conflict. The first part of his definition refers to struggles over values and scarce resources, including status and power. Conflict over values refers to differing beliefs of “right” or “wrong.” People in the contemporary United States experience value conflicts over abortion, animal rights, the death penalty, and smoking in public places, among other issues. Conflicts over scarce status, power, and resources are the kinds of conflict likely to be present in organizations. Scarce resources might be thought of in terms of limited dollars and budgets; in organizations, individuals and departments compete for adequate resources to fund their legitimate activities. However, organization members compete over a host of other resources: the office with the best view, the newest computer, access to upper levels of management, the most productive territory and employees, preferential scheduling of days off, and even parking places.

Why are these things sources of conflict? Because people believe them to be limited. In fact, one can observe that as desired resources become more limited, the conflict over them becomes more intense. This suggests a first step to resolving such conflicts: to determine whether or not the resources are as limited as the parties believe them to be. Is there another office with an approximately equal view? Can access to the new computer be shared by scheduling time slots?

It is important to recognize how competition can turn into conflict. The second part of Coser’s definition says that in conflict situations, opponents strive to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals. Runners in a foot race compete for the limited resource of first prize. There is only one first prize and there is intense competition for it—but runners do not attempt to harm one another in their attempts to secure the limited resource. If the runners sought to sabotage one another’s efforts, conflict would exist. Similarly, in organizations employees may not attempt to kill their rivals, but they often look for ways to neutralize their power and influence.

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1 This theory sheet was prepared by Fred E. Jandt.
In reality, the best possible resolution of conflict is not an all-or-nothing proposition. When either party wins all, it either kills the relationship or sets the stage for future conflicts. Negotiation involves creating a solution that satisfies both parties and enables the relationship to continue. In the vast majority of conflicts, the relationship is more important than the conflict. Often a person’s interests are best served by thinking of the relationship with the other person rather than thinking of winning the conflict.

The Issue/Relationship Matrix (Figure 1) clarifies this point by classifying issues as “noncritical” or “critical” and relationships as “good” or “poor.” In this model, if noncritical and critical issues are not dealt with in good relationships, they “drop down” in the model and can damage the relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Relationship</th>
<th>What Happens When an Issue Is Not Critical</th>
<th>What Happens When an Issue Is Critical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People accept differences.</td>
<td>People are more concerned with truth than with their own positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving is easy.</td>
<td>Differences are expressed and understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Differences are expressed and understood.</td>
<td>Issues are considered worth raising and working toward agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue is not worth resolving.</td>
<td>Problem-solving negotiation is win-win.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The relationship can be strengthened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If relationship ends, the ending is painful but “clean.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Relationship</td>
<td>Differencess present problems.</td>
<td>Differences present almost insurmountable problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little things easily become big things.</td>
<td>Situations have the potential to polarize parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situations can escalate.</td>
<td>People have low willingness to work toward agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Issue/Relationship Matrix

A focus on maintaining relationships encourages people to use win-win negotiation skills. Win-win outcomes support and reinforce the relationship and make it possible for both parties to achieve their goals. Major win-win negotiating skills include the following:
1. **Unpacking.** To unpack a single-issue conflict, determine all the components of the issue. This changes single-issue conflicts into multiple-issue conflicts that are more likely to result in win-win outcomes. For example, the demand for a raise can result in a negotiation over how large the raise might be. But to unpack that demand is to negotiate over the raise, its date of implementation, other benefits, and so on.

2. **Looking for the reasons that led to the demands.** It is often a mistake to believe that problems that lead to an adversary’s demands can only be solved by agreeing to the demands. Frequently, an adversary’s problem can be mitigated to the adversary’s satisfaction in other ways that may be easier to meet. For example, an employee’s demand for a salary increase might have resulted from a need to buy another car because work hours have created problems. Rather than negotiate a raise, it may be easier to change the work hours.

3. **Being the first to make a concession, to link issues, and to suggest trade-offs.** Take the lead in making the negotiation work. An early concession in areas important to an adversary usually results in his or her reciprocating in other areas. Take the lead in suggesting trade-offs by giving something another person wants in return for something you want.

**REFERENCES**


QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE: WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

Goals
- To increase the participants’ understanding of customer behaviors.
- To enhance the participants’ awareness of their own responses to customer behaviors.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to share ideas about dealing with difficult customers.
- To help the participants to identify the behaviors that create a positive relationship with customers.

Group Size
Eight to thirty participants (subgroups of four to six members each).

Time Required
One and one-half to two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Quality Customer Service Work Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Quality Customer Service Discussion Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Quality Customer Service Idea Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A container in which to collect the participants’ completed work sheets (see Process, step 4).
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting
A room large enough so that the subgroups can converse without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided; at the beginning of the activity, the chairs should be arranged in a circle.
**Process**

1. The facilitator introduces the activity by announcing its goals.

2. The facilitator distributes copies of the Quality Customer Service Work Sheet, pencils, and clipboards or other portable writing surfaces. Each participant is instructed to complete all three sentences (parts a, b, and c) of the first item on the sheet, to fold the sheet so that the sentences are covered, and to pass the sheet to the person on his or her right. (Five minutes.)

3. Each participant is instructed to complete the sentence in the second item on the sheet, to fold the sheet again so that the sentence just written is covered, and to pass the sheet to the person on his or her right. This procedure is completed *eight times* altogether so that all sentences on each sheet are completed and each sheet is entirely folded. (Twenty minutes.)

4. The facilitator collects all of the folded sheets and then asks each participant to select one.

5. The facilitator distributes copies of the Quality Customer Service Discussion Sheet, instructs the participants to assemble into subgroups, and asks the members of each subgroup to complete the following procedure:
   - Select a recorder.
   - Take turns reading the content of the work sheets aloud, one item at a time.
     (All subgroup members read their completions to the three sentences in item 1 aloud; then they read their completions to item 2; then item 3; and so on until all items have been read.)
   - Answer the questions on the discussion sheet. During this discussion the recorder jots down answers to the questions so that they can be reported later to the total group.

   (Thirty to forty minutes.)

6. The total group is reconvened, and the recorders are instructed to take turns sharing their subgroups’ answers to the questions on the discussion sheet. The facilitator records highlights on newsprint and posts the newsprint. (Ten to twenty minutes.)

7. The facilitator distributes copies of the Quality Customer Service Idea Sheet and asks the participants to read this sheet. (Ten minutes.)

8. The facilitator leads a discussion of the contents of the idea sheet, comparing these contents with the ideas previously generated by the participants. The following questions are incorporated into the discussion:
What similarities did you identify in people’s work-sheet responses? What differences did you identify? How do you account for the differences?

What new thoughts do you want to adopt? What new behaviors do you want to try in dealing with customers?

Submitted by Bonnie Jameson.
QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE WORK SHEET

1. (a) When I first come in contact with a difficult customer, my usual reaction in terms of thoughts/feelings is . . .

(b) As a result of my reaction to a difficult customer, my typical behavioral response is . . .

(c) The consequences of my typical behavioral response are . . .

2. To form a positive relationship with a difficult customer, I usually . . .

3. If a difficult customer perceives me as a friend, the consequences are . . .

4. If a difficult customer perceives me as threatening, the consequences are . . .

5. The barriers to establishing a positive relationship with a difficult customer and to providing assistance to such a person are . . .

6. In order to be of assistance to someone, I need to think/feel . . .

7. The best way to establish a positive relationship with another person is to . . .

8. The most important thing I have learned about customer service as a result of answering these questions is . . .
QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE DISCUSSION SHEET

1. (a) What patterns of thoughts/feelings can you identify in people’s reactions to difficult customers?

(b) What patterns of behavioral responses can you identify?

(c) What patterns can you identify in the consequences that arise from the behavioral responses?

2. What are the barriers to establishing a positive relationship with a difficult customer?

3. What can be done to build bridges instead of barriers?

4. What generalizations can you draw about forming positive relationships with customers?

5. How can you apply what you have learned about dealing with customers?
QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE IDEA SHEET

Providing customers with the service they need and want can be deeply gratifying. No doubt you have experienced the good feeling that comes from helping a customer in just the right way; the customer expresses appreciation by smiling, by complimenting or thanking you, or by returning to your company again for a similar service or product and asking to speak with you. However, we all know that customers can be “difficult,” too. A customer whom you perceive as difficult is angry, frustrated, or confused because of an unmet need and expresses that need in an emotional way. It is never pleasant to be faced with behavior that you perceive as difficult; but the experience can be transformed into a positive one that benefits the customer, you, and the company you represent. The following four-step process can be extremely effective in handling a difficult customer:

1. Be aware of your personal perceptions, biases, and reactions. Ask yourself whether you are becoming defensive and annoyed, whether you are breathing more quickly, and whether you are thinking of inappropriate comments to make. An awareness of yourself and your personal reactions allows you to choose consciously to remain calm and to control your own behavior. Your attitude and the thoughts you choose are your most powerful assets in controlling your personal response to any situation.

2. Calm the customer with basic counseling skills. A difficult customer will not behave calmly and rationally until he or she has vented the underlying emotions. Three counseling skills may help you to facilitate this venting and then to establish rapport with the customer:

   - Maintain a neutral, nondefensive stance. Maintaining neutrality while being verbally attacked is a difficult skill to learn, but it can be managed with practice. The first step is to breathe deeply and slowly from your diaphragm, counting to five as you inhale and again as you exhale. This procedure also allows you enough time to gather your thoughts. Stay focused on the problem presented and not on the person attacking. Difficult customers tend to use “you” statements, placing blame instead of presenting problems realistically. Resisting the impulse to take such comments personally decreases the probability that you will react defensively.

   - Understand the customer’s need by actively listening to his or her concerns. Active listening consists of listening carefully to the customer and then responding by paraphrasing the situation as you understood it. Paraphrasing offers the customer a chance to calm down and realize that he or she was heard accurately. In some cases active listening itself will solve the problem; some customers want only to vent their frustrations and dissatisfaction.
Reflect the customer’s feelings by empathizing with the emotion presented. For instance, if the customer is angry, an appropriate response might be “I can understand why you’re angry” or “I understand your disappointment.” Using “I” messages is a powerful communication technique that allows you to put yourself in the customer’s place and understand the emotion expressed as well as the problem involved. When a customer feels personally understood, his or her defensiveness is diminished. Problem analysis and solution are more likely to occur as the result of an objective (detached) approach rather than a subjective (emotionally invested) approach.

3. Diagnose and analyze the situation. Often miscommunication occurs because not enough information has been gathered and analyzed. A good technique for eliciting information is the use of open questions, which cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”; instead, they encourage lengthy responses. Open questions begin with the words what, when, who, where, which, and how. Here are some examples of open questions:

- What are your specific concerns?
- What information can you share with me so that I can help you?
- When did the situation take place?
- Which part of the product does not work?
- From which department did you purchase the product?
- Where did the problem occur?
- Who spoke with you?
- Who else was present?
- What would you like to see happen?
- How would you like to resolve this situation?

After you have gathered enough information so that you clearly understand the problem, summarize what you understand the situation to be and confirm with the customer that your understanding is correct.

4. Work with the customer to develop an action plan for solving the identified problem. Help the customer to understand the alternatives that are open to him or her as well as the consequences of each alternative. Clearly communicate company policies and/or any constraints that apply. State positively what will be done to solve the customer’s problem and when the action will take place; explain the specific procedure that will be used to follow through on the service promised.1 Finally, thank

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1 Although this approach may not be consistent with standard practice in the past, it is consistent with the current drive toward empowerment in organizations. “Empowered” employees are ones who, within the realm of their own jobs, seize opportunities, make decisions, and solve problems on their own (to the greatest extent possible and with the encouragement of management).
the customer for the valuable feedback given to your company and encourage the 
continuation of open communication.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUGGESTED READINGS

CONFLICT ROLE PLAY: RESOLVING DIFFERENCES

Goals
n To examine individuals’ reactions to situations in which a “double standard” of behavior operates.

n To allow participants to explore their emotional responses to conflict.

n To examine the problem-solving behavior of participants in conflict situations in which a power difference exists.

Group Size
Two or more subgroups of three members each.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
n Two copies of one of the three sets of Conflict Role Play Sheets for each subgroup (the sheets are cut to separate the manager and subordinate roles).

n A sheet of blank paper and a pencil for the observer in each subgroup.

n Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

n Masking tape.

Physical Setting
A room that is large enough for each subgroup to meet without disturbing the other subgroups.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity as one that will examine problem-solving behavior in situations that involve conflict. No mention is made of the “double standard” aspect of the role play.

2. The facilitator separates the participants into subgroups of three members each and instructs the members of each subgroup to assume the roles of manager, subordinate, and observer. The manager and subordinate in each subgroup receive only their own role descriptions from the Conflict Role Play Sheet; the
observer in each subgroup receives the complete Conflict Role Play Sheet (both role descriptions), a sheet of blank paper, and a pencil. If there are only two or three subgroups, each subgroup receives a different Conflict Role Play Sheet. (Five minutes.)

3. The facilitator directs the members of each subgroup to study their role descriptions in preparation for a meeting between the manager and the subordinate. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator directs each subgroup to a separate area and tells the managers and subordinates that they will have fifteen minutes in which to conduct their meetings while the observers watch. The observers are told that they may take notes during the role plays if they wish. The role plays begin. (Fifteen minutes.)

5. The facilitator calls time and reassembles the complete subgroup.

6. The facilitator solicits the participants’ reactions to the experience, including:
   - Reactions of the subordinates to the situations involving double standards.
   - How the managers felt about presenting situations that involve double standards.
   - Comments from the observers regarding whether the issue of double standards was raised in each of their role plays and how that issue was dealt with.
   (Five minutes.)

7. The discussion then is focused on the problem-solving behaviors (or lack of them) that emerged during each role play. The participants’ various attempts to solve their problems are discussed, and the observers offer their comments. (Fifteen minutes.)

8. The facilitator divides the participants into three subgroups: one of managers, one of subordinates, and one of observers. The subgroup members are directed to discuss their responses (both feeling and behavioral) to the role-play conflicts in which there was unequal power and to compare these with their typical responses to conflict. (Fifteen minutes.)

9. The total group is reassembled, and the facilitator asks for reports from the discussion subgroups on the members’ typical modes of response to situations involving conflict. These may be listed on newsprint. (Ten minutes.)

10. The facilitator then introduces a discussion of the problem-solving behaviors that worked and why these were effective. The facilitator then summarizes the most effective modes of response to conflict and solicits additional ideas and comments from the participants. Key points are noted on newsprint and posted. (Fifteen minutes.)
11. The participants are directed to form discussion subgroups of four or five members each and to discuss ways in which they can apply their learnings from the experience to real-life situations. (Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- The role plays can be used to focus primarily on double standards across sexes.
- The same role play can be conducted with two subgroups in which the sexes of the manager and subordinate are reversed across subgroups for comparison.
- The facilitator can provide each participant in a subgroup the opportunity to be the manager, subordinate, and observer by conducting all three role plays with each subgroup and rotating the roles.
- The facilitator can provide each participant the opportunity to be the manager and the subordinate by eliminating the role of observer and conducting two of the role plays with each subgroup.
- If there are only four to six participants, role plays can be conducted consecutively by two persons, with the non-role players serving as observers.

CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 1: Manager’s Role

You are Kenneth Potter, regional sales manager for the APEX Corporation, a manufacturer of heavy industrial equipment. You have worked as a sales representative and instructor in the company for twenty-three years and have been in your present position for five years. You have sixteen sales representatives working for you; of these, only Janet Wilson and two males qualified for the prestigious “100% Club” this year. The hard work exhibited by Janet and the two men has resulted in their being invited to the annual 100% Club awards convention, to be held in a city that is known for its exotic entertainment. The convention consists of meetings and expositions during the day, and the various award winners go their separate ways at night. Ninety percent of the convention attendees are male. In addition to the daytime activities, many informal parties have been planned for the evenings. However, Perry Smith, the general sales manager, has reminded you that these are not the types of parties that “nice women” attend and he has suggested that you discourage Janet from attending. You realize that Janet’s attendance at these parties could have detrimental effects on her future with the company as well as on your own career. You have decided to approach Janet on the subject.

CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 1: Subordinate’s Role

You are Janet Wilson, a twenty-four-year-old sales representative for the APEX Corporation, a manufacturer of heavy industrial equipment. You have been with the company for eighteen months and have made your full quota in your first year. As a result, you have been invited to the annual “100% Club” awards convention, to be held in a popular resort city. The convention consists of meetings and expositions during the day, and it seems to you that the various award winners go their own ways at night. About ninety percent of the convention goers are male. You are looking forward to attending the awards ceremony on the last night of the convention and to the informal parties that follow. You have been told that it is a “super time” and that many valuable business contacts are established at these events. You have just seen your boss, Kenneth Potter, approaching, and you have decided to tell him how glad you are to be attending the convention.
CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 2: Manager’s Role

You are Pat Miller, the manager of an accounting unit within the Great Northwest Insurance Company, where you have worked for the past ten years. At a recent company cocktail party, you became engaged in a stimulating conversation with Lee, the very attractive spouse of one of your subordinates, Chris Rogers. As the conversation progressed, you had the distinct impression that Lee, the spouse, had more than a casual interest in you. Deciding that there was no harm in taking advantage of the situation, you felt compelled to “make a move.”

Now you have the feeling that Lee has told Chris about your behavior, and the relationship between you and Chris has become strained. You are willing to let bygones be bygones, but Chris seems to be holding a grudge.

There is a meeting scheduled for today between you and Chris to discuss Chris’s possible promotion, which would depend in large part on a good recommendation from you. You are wondering just what tone the meeting will take.

CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 2: Subordinate’s Role

You are Chris Rogers, a young accountant. You have been in the same position for seven years. Finally, you are a candidate for a higher position in your company.

You were recently invited to a cocktail party that was also attended by the corporate vice presidents and all of your supervisors. You realized the importance of your attendance and the possible implications for your career. Because it was a “couples” gathering, you brought your spouse, Lee, who is very attractive. Soon after you arrived, Lee came and asked to speak with you privately. Obviously disturbed, Lee then told you that your boss, Pat Miller, had made obvious advances. You know that Lee is not one to exaggerate and you wonder if you should confront Pat or ignore the issue.

You are upset about what has happened. The relationship between you and Pat has become strained, and the open-door policy between the two of you has ceased to exist. Communication now usually is through written correspondence.

You realize that you need your supervisor’s recommendation for the promotion. A meeting has been scheduled for today between you and Pat to discuss the promotion.
CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 3: Manager’s Role (if the subordinate is male)

You are Lynn Baxter, the head architect and building designer for Pyramid Ltd., a large and growing firm in the Sun Belt. Several months ago, you hired Seth Malloy, a promising young architect. When you interviewed Seth, you had some misgivings about his effeminate manner, but you had to admit that he was the top candidate for the job.

Your entire staff was invited to Ace Construction’s open-house cocktail party, to celebrate the opening of its latest facility. Because you wanted to maintain a good relationship with such a potentially good client, you urged each of your staff members to come and to bring a guest. Because you never had heard Seth mention a female friend, you expected to see him alone at the party.

However, Seth has just arrived at the party with a “friend,” whose name is Virgil. It is obvious that they are more than just friends. Mr. Chambers, the vice president of Ace Construction, has just pulled you aside and stated that this is a largely conservative gathering and that he does not approve of such a couple being present. He strongly suggested that you take steps to remedy the situation immediately.

CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 3: Manager’s Role (if the subordinate is female)

You are Lynn Baxter, the head architect and building designer for Pyramid Ltd., a large and growing firm in the Sun Belt. Several months ago, you hired Karen Malloy, a promising young architect. When you interviewed Karen, you had some misgivings about her masculine manner, but you had to admit that she was the top candidate for the job.

Your entire staff was invited to Ace Construction’s open-house cocktail party, to celebrate the opening of its latest facility. Because you wanted to maintain a good relationship with such a potentially good client, you urged each of your staff members to come and to bring a guest. Because you never had heard Karen mention a male friend, you expected to see her alone at the party.

However, Karen has just arrived at the party with a “friend,” whose name is Jill. Obviously they are more than just friends. Mr. Chambers, the vice president of Ace Construction, has just pulled you aside and stated that this is a largely conservative gathering and that he does not approve of such a couple being present. He strongly suggested that you take steps to remedy the situation immediately.
CONFLICT ROLE PLAY SHEET

Role Play 3: Subordinate’s Role (for Seth or Karen Malloy)

You are a promising young architect and you are determined to become a star in your field. You graduated from an established school and now hold a good position with Pyramid Ltd., a large and growing firm in the Sun Belt.

At a recent staff meeting, it was announced that Ace Construction, a potentially lucrative client, would be holding a cocktail party at which staff members and their guests would be welcome. You decide to attend with a date, who is of the same sex as yourself. You feel justified in bringing your companion, because everyone else has his or her own choice of guest.

You and your guest enjoy each other’s company, and you like the looks of this party. Your guest is very affectionate, which is a quality that you admire, but you recognize the inappropriateness of such a display at a public gathering.

You notice that people seem to be avoiding the two of you. Just now, you have spotted your immediate supervisor, Lynn Baxter, approaching the two of you. Lynn has a great deal of influence over any promotion that you might receive, and you are anxious to engage Lynn in conversation to see if you can learn anything about your prospective future with the firm.
RESISTANCE: A ROLE PLAY

Goals
- To provide an opportunity to experience the effects of two different approaches\(^1\) to dealing with resistance.
- To increase awareness of typical responses to attempts to break down resistance.
- To develop strategies for coping with resistance from others.

Group Size
Subgroups of five to seven members each.

Time Required
Two to two and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Resistance Team Member Role Sheet for each team member.
- Two copies of the Resistance Rating Sheet for each team member (excluding the two vice presidents) in each subgroup.
- A copy of the Resistance Role Sheet: Vice President A for the member from each subgroup who will play vice president A.
- A copy of the Resistance Role Sheet: Vice President B for the member from each subgroup who will play vice president B.
- A Resistance Data Analysis Chart (prepared on newsprint by the facilitator).
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for subgroups to listen to their vice presidents’ presentations without being disturbed by other subgroups, or a separate room for each subgroup.

\(^1\) This activity is based on the Gestalt theory of resistance presented by Edwin C. Nevis at the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland.
**Process**

1. The facilitator discusses the goals of the experience.
2. The facilitator divides the participants into subgroups of five to seven members each and directs each subgroup to select a member to play vice president A and one to play vice president B.
3. The facilitator distributes Resistance Team Member Role Sheets and two copies of the Rating Sheet to all team members but not to the two persons who will role play the vice presidents in each subgroup. The facilitator gives a copy of the Resistance Role Sheet: Vice President A to each member playing vice president A and a copy of the Resistance Role Sheet: Vice President B to each member playing vice president B.
4. Subgroup members read over the materials. (Ten minutes.)
5. The facilitator takes the vice presidents aside for a few minutes to coach them on their roles and to clarify any questions they may have. (Five minutes.)
6. The vice presidents rejoin their subgroups, and the subgroups are directed to separate locations.
7. The facilitator directs each vice president A to try to convince his or her team of his or her position for fifteen minutes.
8. The facilitator calls time and directs all team members to fill out one copy of the Resistance Rating Sheet, designating A as vice president. (Five minutes.)
9. Each vice president B then attempts to convince his or her team to accept his or her position. (Fifteen minutes.)
10. Each team member fills out the second Resistance Rating Sheet regarding vice president B. (Five minutes.)
11. Team members debrief the activity, and the members playing the roles of the vice presidents comment on their experiences. (Fifteen minutes.)
12. Each team then calculates the average score for each question on both rating sheets. The results are entered on the Resistance Data Analysis Chart (prepared on newsprint by the facilitator), and the chart is posted. (Ten minutes.)
13. The facilitator leads the total group in discussing and comparing members’ reactions to the experience, using the information from the rating sheets as the basis of comparison. The group discusses differences on the Resistance Data Analysis Chart for vice presidents A and B. Consistent differences across subgroups are identified and the implications of these differences are discussed. (Twenty to twenty-five minutes.)
14. Subgroup members reconvene to discuss ways in which they can use their learnings from the experience in back-home situations involving resistance. (Fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- With large groups, the activity can be conducted by a “presenting group” with other participants serving as observers. Observers focus on identifying the impact of the vice presidents’ behavior in attempting to cope with team members’ resistance.

- To shorten the time required for the activity, both vice presidents can attempt to cope with team members simultaneously, thus heightening the differences in their coping styles. Team members then record their reactions to the experience in total.

Submitted by H.B. Karp.
RESISTANCE TEAM MEMBER ROLE SHEET

You are an experienced manager and have been a department head in this company for four years. You take pride in your ability to get things done in your own way, and the company has recognized this with the rapid promotions and pay increases that you have received.

Recently you have been aware of increasing unrest on the part of the younger workers and supervisors in the organization. In your opinion, if other department heads acted more directly and independently with their subordinates, this kind of problem would be minimized.

About ten days ago, you received an enthusiastic memo from the executive vice president, to whom you report, regarding a recent seminar on team building. The vice president has decided that the top level of management should be reorganized and trained to begin functioning as a management team. The memo identified the managers included in this reorganization, and you are one of them.

You are not happy about this designation because you are not, and never have been, a believer in the team approach. You think that team building is a waste of time and is just a way for ineffective managers to cover up their incompetence and avoid taking responsibility for their own mistakes. You have friends in other organizations who work this way and they report problems with it. You know that it will take a lot of extra time and effort to set this team business in motion. Besides, you do not feel comfortable in suggesting things to other managers in their areas of expertise, and you do not want some outsider telling you how to run your department. Furthermore, you do not like, respect, or trust some of the others who will be on the team and would prefer not to work closely with them.

The vice president has scheduled the first meeting with the team in ten minutes. You plan to deal with this issue at the outset.
RESISTANCE RATING SHEET

Vice President  A  B
(Circle the appropriate letter)

Having just left the first meeting of the new management team, please indicate your impressions of the team and the vice president on the sheet below:

1. To what extent do you trust the vice president as your team’s leader?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Not at all                        To a great extent

2. How do you feel now about working with the other team members?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Uncooperative                   Cooperative

3. To what extent, if any, has your attitude toward team building changed?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   More resistant                  More receptive

4. How willing are you to give the team approach a chance—say for six months?
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Totally resistant               Very willing
RESISTANCE ROLE SHEET: VICE PRESIDENT A

You recently have been promoted to executive vice president for internal affairs. You feel that management team building throughout the entire organization would produce tremendous results. You recently attended a seminar on team building and are convinced that the sooner a move is made in this direction, the better. As you see it, the main advantages of team building are:

1. Work can take advantage of the different skills of the team members.
2. It will provide a support system for managers, who are currently isolated in their own departments.
3. Managers will stimulate one another’s thinking, thus becoming more creative.
4. It will create the flexibility needed to deal with a variety of problems.
5. It will provide the base for project management, should that be indicated.
6. In other companies that you know of, it has led to significant changes in corporate policy that were not otherwise easy to achieve.

You have informed the management team of your intention and today you are going to meet the managers for the first time as a team. You have heard through office gossip that there is a good bit of grumbling about this change. Your managers are sharp, effective people, but they are used to working almost totally independently. You expect to meet some strong resistance at this meeting.

**Your Approach to the Team’s Resistance**

You are to do your best to influence as many team members as you can to accept the concept of team building. Your goal is to break down or work around the resistance that the managers will offer.

In addition to making points that appeal to professional pride, feel free to influence the managers with facts and figures, an appeal to loyalty and fair play, your own power and status, guilt, and self-interests and benefits.

Use any other methods that fit for you. Keep in mind that it would be very helpful to get most if not all of the managers “on board” at this meeting because this is the most prestigious group in the company. If you can get them to join you, it will influence others who are ambivalent or negative to the approach.
RESISTANCE ROLE SHEET: VICE PRESIDENT B

You recently have been promoted to executive vice president for internal affairs. You feel that management team building throughout the entire organization would produce tremendous results. You recently attended a seminar on team building and are convinced that the sooner a move is made in this direction, the better. As you see it, the main advantages of team building are:

1. Work can take advantage of the different skills of the team members.
2. It will provide a support system for managers, who are currently isolated in their own departments.
3. Managers will stimulate one another’s thinking, thus becoming more creative.
4. It will create the flexibility needed to deal with a variety of problems.
5. It will provide the base for project management, should that be indicated.
6. In other companies that you know of, it has led to significant changes in corporate policy that were not otherwise easy to achieve.

You have informed the management team of your intention and today you are going to meet the managers for the first time as a team. You have heard through office gossip that there is a good bit of grumbling about this change. Your managers are sharp, effective people, but they are used to working almost totally independently. You expect to meet some strong resistance at this meeting.

Your Approach to the Team’s Resistance

Your main aim for this session is to help the managers to express all their reservations. Try to elicit the most frank statements you can from each manager.

Give arguments in favor of team building only when the managers directly and specifically ask. Do not talk about future action steps until you are convinced that the managers have expressed all of their objections and negative feelings.

Although it would be very nice if you could obtain agreement and clear support in this first meeting, you realize that the likelihood of that happening is rather small. If the resistance you anticipate cannot honestly be reduced to a workable level, you are much better off leaving things as they are for now. The very last thing you want or need is a lot of “yeses” now and no support once you have made the changes. So, while you maintain your opinion, you realize that it is better not to force the issue.
# RESISTANCE DATA ANALYSIS CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Vice President</th>
<th>Subgroup 1</th>
<th>Subgroup 2</th>
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TIME FLIES: NEGOTIATING PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH ASSERTION

Goals
- To demonstrate to the participants the importance of assertive behavior in managing one’s time.
- To give the participants an opportunity to practice assertive behavior.
- To give the participants an opportunity to receive feedback about their use of assertion in interpersonal issues that concern time management.

Group Size
Any number of trios.

Time Required
Two hours and twenty minutes to two and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Time Flies Instruction Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Time Flies Situations Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Time Flies Partner Characteristics Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Time Flies Observer Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Time Flies Assertion Theory Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Time Flies Action Plan for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint poster prepared in advance showing the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Role Player</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Observer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Role Play</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Role Play</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Role Play</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A stopwatch for the facilitator’s use.
A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
Masking tape for posting newsprint.

**Physical Setting**

A room in which the subgroups can work without distracting one another. Movable chairs should be provided.

**Process**

1. The facilitator introduces the role play as an effective way of practicing new skills and explains that the participants will be role playing situations that deal with assertiveness in time management (that is, being able to say “no” without losing one’s job or ruining a relationship). (Five minutes.)

2. The facilitator assembles the participants into trios and asks each trio to designate one member as “A,” another member as “B,” and the third member as “C.” Note to facilitator: If there are two participants without a group, they may do the activity as a pair; similarly, if a single person is without a group, he or she may form a pair with the facilitator. (Five minutes.)

3. The facilitator posts the newsprint chart of role-play assignments and explains that each person in each trio will have the opportunity to be a role player, a partner, and an observer. Note to facilitator: In the case of a pair, the role of observer is omitted and the pair conducts three role plays. The facilitator distributes one copy of the Time Flies Instruction Sheet, one copy of the Time Flies Situations Sheet, one copy of the Time Flies Partner Characteristics Sheet, and one copy of the Time Flies Observer Sheet to each participant. The facilitator instructs the participants to read the Time Flies Instruction Sheet. (Ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator instructs the subgroups to read the Time Flies Situations Sheet and to select a role-play situation from it. (Five minutes.)

5. The facilitator directs Person A (Role Player) in each subgroup to complete the Time Flies Partner Characteristics Sheet, to hand it to Person B (Partner), and to relate any information about the situation that would be helpful to Person B (Partner), such as “When I talk to my boss, she doesn’t pay attention after the first few moments and she interrupts me.” Person B (Partner) may take notes on the completed Time Flies Participant Characteristics Sheet. Person C (Observer) is instructed to review the questions on the Time Flies Observer Sheet and to take notes while the role players are sharing information. (Five minutes.)
6. The participants are directed to role play the two people in their selected situations. Person A is instructed to attempt to manage Person B’s time demands, and Person B is instructed to attempt to achieve his or her demands. (Five minutes.)

7. The facilitator calls time and instructs the observers to summarize for the other subgroup members their observations and reactions to the role plays. (Five minutes.)

8. The facilitator reconvenes the total group and leads a discussion based on the following questions from the Time Flies Observer Sheet:
   - How did the role-play partner make demands on the first role player? What behaviors appeared to be demanding?
   - How successful was the first role player in managing the demands? What did he or she do that worked? What did not work?
   - How would you describe the role players’ communication patterns? What might the patterns indicate about their relationship?
   - How was the situation resolved? Was it a “win-win” situation or a “win-lose” situation? If it appeared to be a win-lose situation, who was the loser? What could the person who lost have done to balance the outcome? If it appeared to be a win-win situation, how was that achieved? (Ten minutes.)

9. The facilitator instructs the members of each subgroup to switch roles and to repeat the activity two more times, choosing the same situation or other situations and sharing information as in step 5, until each member has held the roles of the role player, the partner, and the observer. The facilitator calls time after each role-play segment and instructs the participants to debrief as directed in steps 7 and 8. (Twenty-five minutes.)

10. Copies of the Time Flies Theory Sheet are distributed, and the participants are asked to read this sheet. Then the facilitator leads a discussion of assertion theory, clarifying points as necessary and relating them to the comments made during step 8. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

11. The facilitator then instructs the participants to complete three more role plays, thus repeating steps 5-9. (Thirty minutes.)

12. The facilitator reconvenes the total group and leads a discussion based on the following questions:
   - What were the differences between the first and second group of role plays? How do you account for these differences?
   - What new questions or statements did you, as the first role player, make during the second group of role plays?
- Which of the rights listed in the Time Flies Theory Sheet did you find yourself exercising? How were they appropriate to the situation? What level of difficulty did you experience in asserting these rights? How could the assertion of these rights be beneficial in a work situation?

- In your role-play situations, did you find that you needed to negotiate with your role-play partners to ensure the best use of your and your partners’ time? Did negotiation prove to be a time saver? How did it save time? Waste time? Are there instances in your work situation in which negotiation could be a time saver?

- What have you learned about the skills necessary to behave assertively? In what other situations, both related and unrelated to time management, might assertive behavior be beneficial? What could you do differently to manage your time as a result of this activity?

(Fifteen to twenty minutes.)

13. The facilitator distributes copies of the Time Flies Action Plan and leads the group in a brainstorming session on tips to enhance effective use of assertiveness. (Ten minutes.)

**Variations**

- To shorten the time and to proceed directly to the activity’s focus, the first set of role plays may be eliminated.

- Participants may be instructed to think of “real-life” situations to role play and to develop action plans for them based on question 5 in step 12.
TIME FLIES INSTRUCTION SHEET

You will be asked to choose a situation and then to role play it with one of the members of your group. The member designated as “observer” will watch your role play and will give you feedback when you have finished.

Role Player: You are to take the part of the “you” described in the situation (the person with the problem). Think of what you would say to the other person in this situation. You may write out your response if you wish to do so.

Partner: You are to take the part of the “other person” described in the situation (the person who is making demands on the first role player). Think of what you would say or what approach you would take if you were the “other person” in this situation. You may write notes if you wish. It is important that you not take an extreme position at this point. Allow the Role Player to negotiate a resolution if what he or she says is reasonable.
TIME FLIES SITUATIONS SHEET

**Situation 1:** Your manager literally looks over your shoulder, continually checks on your progress, and asks for details about your dealings with clients and with other managers. His or her behavior is a continual drain on your time.

**Situation 2:** You ask one of your staff members to do a task. He or she replies that your manager has just assigned an urgent, “top-priority” project to him or her. You were unaware of this assignment.

**Situation 3:** Your manager, who seems to have difficulty planning ahead, has begun to schedule frequent department meetings before or after normal working hours. It is 6:00 in the evening, and you have just been informed that tomorrow morning’s meeting will commence at 7:00 a.m.

**Situation 4:** A coworker begins to talk to you about last night’s sporting event; you do not wish to listen.

**Situation 5:** Your manager often calls you into his or her office. During your meetings, your manager frequently takes phone calls and makes you wait until he or she is finished.

**Situation 6:** You often find yourself doing tasks, such as making copies, collating, and proofreading, that other people should be doing. You are hesitant to delegate these tasks because the others seem so busy and because they seem to resent being assigned “drudge work.”

**Situation 7:** One of your subordinates frequently asks you to make decisions that he or she should be willing and able to make.

**Situation 8:** On short notice, you learn that the manager of a department on which you depend to get your work done has scheduled you for a meeting. You already are scheduled to visit the site of a major project and to meet with a client on that date.

**Situation 9:** Every assignment from your manager is “ASAP,” or “Number 1 Priority.” You are expected to complete all of your assignments, but you believe that that is not humanly possible.

**Situation 10:** Your manager gives you work that is really his or her own job. You are expected to do this work while keeping your own work on schedule. Although there are people to whom you could delegate the work, you are expected to complete it yourself.
TIME FLIES PARTNER CHARACTERISTIC SHEET

Instructions: When it is your turn as the role player, use this checklist to mark the characteristics that your partner should display during the role play. In this way, the role-play situation will more closely resemble situations that you face in back-home situations.

______ Interrupts me.
______ Talks down to me.
______ “Listens” but does not hear what I say.
______ Only talks about his or her needs.
______ Labels my explanations as excuses.
______ Talks about things that are not related to my concerns.
______ Appears to be angry when I talk.
______ Displays no emotions.
______ Repeats his or her demands without variation.
______ Questions my commitment, loyalty, or competence.
______ Summarizes what I have said, but repeats the same demands.
______ Ignores what I say.
______ Allows telephone interruptions.
______ Refuses to look me in the eye.
______ Always agrees with me, but presses his or her own demands.
______ Always ends with “What are you going to do about this?”
______ Other (please specify):
TIME FLIES OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: Two members of your subgroup are about to role play one of the situations outlined on the Time Flies Situations Sheet.

Your task is to observe the role play between the two members. While you are observing the role play, think about and/or jot down answers to the following questions. Also keep track of “quotable quotes” or any “emotionally loaded” words or phrases used by either participant (for example, unreasonable, ridiculous, and so on). Later you will be asked to share the questions and your answers with the members of your subgroup.

1. How did the role-play partner make demands on the first role player? What behaviors appeared to be demanding?

2. How successful was the first role player in managing the demands? What did he or she do that worked? What did not work?

3. How would you describe the role players’ communication patterns? What might the patterns indicate about their relationship?

4. How was the situation resolved? Was it a “win-win” situation or a “win-lose” situation? If it appeared to be a win-lose situation, who was the loser? What could the person who lost have done to balance the outcome? If it appeared to be a win-win situation, how was that achieved?
TIME FLIES ASSERTION THEORY SHEET

Assertion theory is based on the premise that every person is entitled to certain basic human rights. These rights include the right to refuse requests without feeling guilty or selfish, the right to believe that one’s own needs are as important as the needs of others, and the right to make mistakes.

People relate to these basic human rights with one of three general response styles: nonassertion, aggression, and assertion.

**Nonassertion**

Nonassertion represents an inability to maintain adequate boundaries between one’s own rights and those of others. When one of her friends asked to borrow Jan’s new sports car for a trip, Jan lent the car, fearing that her friend would perceive her as petty or distrustful; however, she spent the rest of the afternoon wishing that she had not done so. Thus, by being nonassertive, Jan did not act on her right to say no.

**Aggression**

A second response style, aggression, occurs when one person invades the other’s individual rights. If Jan had reacted aggressively to her friend’s request, she might have said “Certainly not!” or “You’ve got to be kidding!” In this case, Jan would have violated her friend’s right to make the request and her right to be treated with courtesy and respect.

**Assertion**

Standing up for one’s basic human rights without violating the rights of others is assertion (Jakubowski-Spector, 1973). This response style recognizes boundaries between one’s own rights and those of others and operates to keep the boundaries stabilized.

In Jan’s case, an assertive response might have been to say, “I appreciate your need for some transportation, but the car is too valuable to me to lend.” By this response, Jan would have respected both her friend’s right to make the request and her own right to refuse it.

**Components of an Assertive Situation**

Basic human rights include the right to say yes and no with conviction, to give and to receive criticism, to initiate and to conclude conversations, to allow or to resist interruptions, to give and to receive compliments, to demand fair deals, to deal with discriminatory remarks, and to negotiate win-win arrangements.

---

A person may feel capable of being assertive in a situation but may decide not to because of factors such as power or time or effort. Before deciding to be assertive, it is helpful to examine the six components of an assertive situation:

1. The basic human rights and the level of confidence in both the potential asserter and the other person;
2. The specific behavior to which the potential asserter is responding;
3. The potential asserter’s feeling reactions to this specific behavior;
4. The specific behaviors that the potential asserter would prefer;
5. The possible positive and negative consequences for the other person if he or she behaves as the potential asserter wishes; and
6. The possible consequences of the assertive response for the potential asserter.

Conclusion

Assertiveness offers a model for those who wish to stand up for their own rights without violating the rights of others. Such a model can be used in all types of situations—personal, professional, and social—to facilitate honest, direct, functional communication.

REFERENCE

**TIME FLIES ACTION PLAN**

*Instructions:* List some examples of new behaviors that you would like to use in situations you typically encounter. Be sure to set target dates at which to reassess the behaviors.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Situation</th>
<th>Behavioral Goals</th>
<th>Reassessment Date</th>
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THE COMPANY TASK FORCE: DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Goals

- To help the participants to become aware of the roles and behaviors that are disruptive in meetings, the degree to which they are disruptive, and the positive as well as negative consequences associated with each.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to develop strategies for dealing with disruptive roles and behaviors.

Group Size

Any number of subgroups of seven to nine participants each.

Time Required

Two and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of The Company Task Force Background Sheet for each participant.
- One set of The Company Task Force Role Sheets 1 through 9 for each subgroup. Each subgroup member is to receive a different sheet; Sheet 8 and/or Sheet 9 may be eliminated for any subgroup consisting of fewer than nine members. (The facilitator may also want to have an extra copy of each role sheet available for distribution during step 13.)
- Blank paper and a pencil for each group leader.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each group leader.

Physical Setting

A room large enough so that each subgroup can be seated in a circle and can work without disturbing the other subgroups. In addition, a separate room should be provided for the use of those subgroup members who are designated as most obstructive.
**Process**

1. The facilitator tells the participants that they are to be involved in a role play and explains the goals of the activity.

2. Subgroups of seven to nine participants each are formed, and the members of each subgroup are asked to be seated in a circle.

3. Copies of The Company Task Force Background Sheet are distributed, and the participants are asked to read this handout.

4. A set of role sheets is distributed to each subgroup in such a way that each member receives a different sheet. All participants are asked to read their sheets and are advised that they must maintain their roles during the role play.

5. The facilitator requests that the subgroup leaders start their meetings.

6. After fifteen minutes the facilitator stops the meetings and instructs all subgroups to remain intact. The members of each subgroup are asked to spend ten minutes determining which role was the most obstructive.

7. Each participant who is designated most obstructive by his or her subgroup is asked to join the others so designated, to form a separate subgroup in another room, and to await instructions.

8. The remaining participants are told that when the role play resumes, they are to assume new roles as cooperative, insightful people who are seriously working on the task-force problem. The facilitator then instructs each subgroup to spend fifteen minutes establishing two strategies for dealing with its most obstructive member when that person returns; one strategy is to serve as the primary plan, and the other is to be used only if the first is unsuccessful.

9. While the majority of the participants are working on their strategies, the facilitator asks the participants who were designated most obstructive to reflect on the positive aspects of their behaviors within their subgroups. (For example, The Rambler relieves tension, and The Organization Man/Woman provides valuable reminders of various obstacles to be overcome.) It is explained that when they return in approximately ten minutes, their subgroups will use specific strategies to deal with them. They are told to be sensitive to these strategies: If they are approached with humane attitudes, they are to respond in kind and adjust their behaviors to be more reasonable; however, if they are approached with aggression or in a demeaning way, they are to be creative in responding negatively and in character so that their subgroups can learn from their reactions. Finally, the obstructive members are asked to discuss ways to manifest their behaviors quickly when they return so that their subgroups can use the chosen strategies as soon as possible.
10. After the allotted time has passed, the obstructive members are asked to return to the main assembly room and to rejoin their subgroups. Then the facilitator instructs the subgroups to resume their meetings.

11. After fifteen minutes the facilitator asks the subgroups to stop their role plays. Each subgroup is instructed to discuss the experience; the nonobstructive members are asked to concentrate on whether the primary or backup strategy worked and how well, and the obstructive member is asked to concentrate on his or her reactions to the strategy(ies). Blank paper, pencils, and clipboards or other portable writing surfaces are distributed to the individual subgroup leaders, who are asked to take notes during the discussions so that reports can be presented to the total group. (Fifteen minutes.)

12. The total group is reconvened, and the facilitator asks the subgroup leaders to take turns sharing the results of the discussions. (Ten minutes.)

13. The subgroups are reassembled. Each subgroup is assigned one or two roles and is asked to determine the following for each role:

- Positive features;
- Negative features;
- Interventions that might be used when dealing with this type of behavior in meetings; and
- Ways in which these interventions might or might not be helpful.

(Twenty minutes.)

14. The total group is reconvened for a discussion of the results of the previous step and for summarizing. The following question is useful in concluding the experience: If you were to give advice on handling disruptive people, what would it be?

Variations

- The activity may be shortened by eliminating step 13.
- After step 12, copies of the lecturette entitled “Dealing with Disruptive Individuals in Meetings” (from the 1980 Annual) may be distributed and the subgroups’ strategies compared with those presented in the lecturette.
- In step 14 each participant may be asked to select a partner, to discuss with the partner a disruptive person with whom he or she must interact, and to develop a strategy for dealing with this person.
- The role play may be enacted in a group-on-group configuration, with the majority of participants observing as one subgroup conducts its meeting. Subsequently, the observers report on the factors listed in step 13.

Submitted by Susanne W. Whitcomb.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE BACKGROUND SHEET

You are an employee of Organic Foodstuffs, Inc., a company that has been manufacturing vitamins and food supplements in the town of Belmont Shore since 1913. Gradually the residential areas of the town have encircled the company’s factory, and complaints from those who live nearby have been escalating over the last few years. These complaints generally involve air and water pollution, residential-parking abuses, the piercing sound of the 8:00 a.m. whistle, and lunch-time littering. The company president has recently joined the Community Service League and since then has become aware of the extent of the factory’s unpopularity. Consequently, the president has appointed a task force of employees to address the company’s poor image. You are a member of this task force, which is meeting today to determine recommendations to be submitted to the president immediately afterward.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 1

The Leader

You have been appointed by the company president to be the leader of the task force. As the leader, your basic responsibilities are to accomplish the following:

- Keep the discussion flowing and on track;
- Control the members who try to dominate the discussion; and
- Ensure that the session results in specific recommendations for ways to improve the company’s image.

At the beginning of the meeting, you introduce yourself as the officially appointed leader, emphasize the seriousness of the task at hand, and elicit ideas for image improvement.

Do not show this role description to anyone.

THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 2

The Power Monger

You want to usurp the leadership role from the officially appointed leader and make a big impression on the other task-force members. You have no real interest in the task at hand; instead, your objective is to obtain some of the power you need in order to bring to fruition your “pet” project: convincing the company to open a branch office in Tahiti. Once you have assumed control of the task force, your plan is to switch the focus of the meeting to your project. At this point you hope to gain support for the project by emphasizing its positive points. For example, opening the branch office will attract worldwide publicity, show the company’s concern for world affairs and bring fame to Belmont Shore.

Do not show this role description to anyone.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 3

The Pain in the Neck

You are the negative member of the task force. The other members appear to be extremely poorly organized, and you fail to see how anything can be accomplished in this meeting. In fact, you do not understand why you were appointed to the task force; you have nothing to contribute, and you resent the fact that you have to take time from your busy work schedule to attend. You are hoping to convince the others that the task is impossible and should be abandoned.

Do not show this role description to anyone.

THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 4

The Idealist

You have a deep, spiritual commitment to eliminating pollution. You feel that the entire focus of the task force is wrong; the appropriate task is not to reverse the company’s negative image, but to put an end to the abuses for which the complaints have been received. It is important to you that the company be concerned not only with its own welfare, but also with that of the entire world.

Because you cannot compromise your values by helping to complete the assigned task, you try to persuade the other members to adopt your viewpoint and work on solving the real problem.

Do not show this role description to anyone.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 5

The Rambler

In this meeting, as in all others that you attend, you cannot stay focused on the subject at hand. You have an active but undisciplined mind, and the comments made at meetings frequently remind you of unrelated anecdotes and bits of news or information that your gregarious nature compels you to share aloud.

Do not show this role description to anyone.

---------------------------------------------------------------

THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 6

The Organization Man/Woman

You are highly conscious of the formal organizational hierarchy; during your career with the company you have always been careful to proceed through the “right channels,” obey the rules, and adhere to the established norms. Your instinct for professional survival makes you extremely cautious; in fact, you refuse to act on any idea until you are certain that it meets the company standards. Consequently, you maintain a wary stance throughout this meeting. You feel responsible for reminding the others that trying to change the company’s regular operating procedures may be dangerous and that those in authority must make the ultimate decisions.

Do not show this role description to anyone.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 7

The Mediator

You cannot stand conflict and you believe that compromise is always possible. Consequently, during the meeting you make a concerted effort to maintain harmony among the members of the task force. You feel compelled to remind the others when appropriate that all viewpoints are worth hearing, that most positions on issues are not so very different, and that everyone should have a chance to participate in the process of establishing recommendations.

Do not show this role description to anyone.

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THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 8

The Veteran

You have been employed with the company twice as long as any other member of the task force. In your opinion, the current situation with the company’s image does not warrant operational changes. During your long period of employment, you have seen a number of practices implemented and then abandoned; you believe that changes arising from the image problem will fall into the same category. In addition, over the years you have learned why certain approaches have failed and why they will continue to fail in the future. Consequently, you feel it is important to let the others know when they suggest alternatives that have proven ineffective.

Do not show this role description to anyone.
THE COMPANY TASK FORCE ROLE SHEET 9

The Silent One

Attending meetings is always difficult for you because you are too shy and reserved to participate actively. You are professionally insecure and believe that your opinion, even when elicited, is not worth stating. When the others ask for your input, you are forced to tell them that although you find the discussion interesting, you are present only to listen and to learn.

Do not show this role description to anyone.
ALPHA/BETA: EXPLORING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN WORK TEAMS

Goals

- To develop the participants’ understanding of the complexities of working in culturally diverse work teams.
- To provide the participants with an opportunity to understand how culturally diverse work teams operate in a simulated environment.
- To encourage the participants to explore the problems and the possibilities that exist in culturally diverse work teams.

Group Size

Thirty-five participants (seven teams, each of which has four role players and one observer). If there are more than thirty-five participants, the extra participants may be assigned as extra observers.

Time Required

Approximately two hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Alpha/Beta Work-Team Configuration for each participant.
- Twenty copies of the Alpha/Beta Culture Sheet for Alphas (enough for the thirteen participants who play Alphas plus one for each of seven observers). If there are more than seven observers, extra copies must be available for the additional observers.
- Twenty-two copies of the Alpha/Beta Culture Sheet for Betas (enough for the fifteen participants who play Betas plus one for each of seven observers). If there are more than seven observers, extra copies must be available for the additional observers.
- A copy of the Alpha/Beta Observer sheet for each observer.
- A pencil for each observer.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each observer.
- Fourteen magazines (two per team).
- Fourteen pairs of scissors (two pairs per team).
- A large supply of blank 8½" × 11" paper (enough so that each team can have approximately thirty sheets, if necessary).
- Glue, paste, and/or tape for each team.
- At least thirty-six name tags:
  - Four name tags labeled “Alpha Leader”;
  - Nine name tags labeled “Alpha Worker”;
  - Three name tags labeled “Beta Leader”;
  - Twelve name tags labeled “Beta Worker”;
  - Seven name tags labeled “Observer” (or more, if there are more than seven observers); and
  - One name tag labeled “President (Alpha)” (for the facilitator’s use).
- A sign for each of the work stations, posted prominently on the wall by each station or on the table at that station. The signs read “Work Station 1,” “Work Station 2,” “Work Station 3,” and so on up to “Work Station 7.”

**Physical Setting**

A large room in which the teams can work without disturbing one another. A separate work station, consisting of table and chairs, should be provided for each of the seven teams. In addition, a separate room or area should be provided where the Betas can meet (see step 5).

**Process**

1. The facilitator makes the following introductory remarks:

   “The activity that you are about to participate in is intended to provide you with an opportunity to understand how culturally diverse work teams operate in a simulated environment. The two cultures involved, the Alphas and the Betas, interact on work teams. The activity will simulate two work assignments.

   “Alpha and Beta are fictitious representations that may have incidental likenesses to real cultures. By participating in fictitious cultures rather than real ones, you should be able to break away from your preconceived notions of ‘correct behavior’ more fully. The simulation is meant to be fun. As with any learning experience, however, the more effort you put forth and the more closely you follow the instructions, the more you and those around you are likely to learn from the experience.

   “Please listen carefully to all instructions as we move along. You will be told everything you need to know at the appropriate time.”
2. The facilitator distributes copies of the Alpha/Beta Work-Team Configuration and explains this handout:

“Please look at the work-team configuration. We will number off in just a moment. When the simulation begins, I will be serving as president of the organization in which the Alphas and Betas work.

“As you can see, aside from the role of the president, the organization consists of seven work teams of four members each. Each team has a designated leader, whose job is to coordinate the team’s activities and keep the team headed in the right direction. The other members of the team are simply referred to as workers. Also, each team will have at least one person who does not participate but observes its activities.

“This chart indicates which team you will be on; whether you will be a leader, a worker, or an observer; and, if you are a leader or a worker, whether you will be an Alpha or a Beta. The circled numbers represent the Beta culture, while the numbers that are not circled indicate the dominant Alpha culture. You will be provided the specifics of your particular culture in a few moments.”

3. The facilitator asks the participants to number off and to remember their numbers. Each participant calls out his or her number in succession up to number thirty-five. (If there are more than thirty-five participants, the facilitator assigns those above number thirty-five to be extra observers.)

4. The facilitator continues the explanation of the activity, noting the location of each work station. Then the facilitator makes these comments:

“Soon you will receive some materials, including a handout describing your culture. When I signal for you to split into the two cultures, the Alphas will stay in this room and the Betas will assemble in a separate area. After you have read and studied your handout and talked briefly among yourselves about your culture and how you can represent your culture’s behavior in your team, you will be asked to go to your appropriate work stations.”

5. The Alphas are given copies of the culture sheet for Alphas and Alpha name tags (for the leader and the workers), and the Betas are given copies of the culture sheet for Betas and Beta name tags (for the leader and the workers). The observers are given copies of both culture sheets, copies of the observer sheet, pencils, clipboards or other portable writing surfaces, and observer name tags. All participants are instructed to put on their name tags and to wear them for the duration of the activity. After showing the Betas where to meet, the facilitator asks the two groups to meet separately and to read, study, and discuss their culture sheets and how they will role play behavior until further notice. In addition to the culture sheets, the observers are told to read their observer sheets but not to discuss the contents with anyone. (Fifteen minutes.)

6. The Betas are called back to the main assembly room. The facilitator asks the participants to go to their work stations, puts on his or her name tag labeled
“President (Alpha),” announces the beginning of the simulation, and then makes these comments:

“Welcome, all of you Alphas and Betas! I hope you’ll enjoy your first work assignment. Before I tell you about the assignment, though, I’d like to make some brief comments about the kind of environment we want to promote around here. Some of you are Alphas, like me, and others of you are Betas. Although the Alphas and Betas come from different backgrounds, I’m sure we can still find a way to work together productively.

“In the past some of the Betas have accused our staff of not being caring enough. So, even though it may seem strange to you Alphas, I want all team leaders to go out of their way to give workers a pat on the back when they’re working well. Just literally come up behind them and give them a good, old-fashioned pat on the back! I’m sure that will motivate them to work harder.

“Now here’s some information about your first work assignment. In your teams you are to cut out letters of the alphabet from magazines and secure them, in their A-to-Z order, to a sheet of paper. Then begin another sheet in the same way. Complete as many sheets of the alphabet as you can.

“You will get your supplies from me. Once you have your supplies, start working.”

The facilitator distributes the magazines; the pairs of scissors; the blank paper; and the glue, paste, and/or tape. Then the participants are told to begin.

7. After the participants have worked for approximately ten minutes, the facilitator asks them to stop and to listen to the second assignment:

“Thanks for all of your hard work on the first assignment. Now, for your second assignment, I’d like you to cut out pictures of people’s heads and place them on sheets of paper, with three heads on each sheet.

“This assignment represents a large contract that could make or break our company’s survival in the coming months, so it’s extremely important that every team do its best work. Start now.”

8. After the participants have worked for ten minutes, the facilitator breaks in with an announcement:

“I regret to inform you that the market has taken a significant, downward shift. Every team leader must now lay off one person from the team. The company can only survive if we get rid of the deadwood. After laying off one member, return to your assignment and strive for higher productivity.”

9. After ensuring that every team has laid off one member, the facilitator monitors the team activities for another ten minutes.

10. At the end of the ten-minute period, the facilitator asks the participants to stop their work and to come out of their roles as leaders and workers to discuss the experience.
11. The facilitator asks one person who role played an Alpha and one person who role played a Beta to read the contents of their respective culture sheets to the total group. Then the facilitator asks the observers to take turns sharing the contents of their observer sheets, making sure that each observer clarifies whether he or she observed an all-Alpha, an all-Beta, or a mixed team. (Twenty minutes.)

12. The facilitator leads a debriefing based on the following questions:

- How did you react to playing your cultural role? How did you react to interacting with people who played a different cultural role?
- What real-life experiences have you had that you can relate this experience to? When have you faced communication difficulties because of cultural differences?
- What have you learned about cultural diversity in work teams? What would you have done differently if you could?
- What practical insights from this activity will you apply to real-life interactions with people from different cultures?

Variations

- The facilitator may create a shortage of materials so that the teams must negotiate for supplies.
- Rather than having leaders, the facilitator may stipulate that all four participants on each work team are of equal status.
- To simplify the simulation, the facilitator may omit certain portions of the culture sheets.
- After step 12 the participants may be asked to return to their teams to practice what they would have done differently. The facilitator may instruct them to do their best to understand the other culture before proceeding to work.

Submitted by Steven R. Phillips.
ALPHA/BETA CULTURE SHEET FOR ALPHAS

Instructions: The following is a list of behavioral characteristics of your culture. During the work simulation, be certain that you exhibit these characteristics. If you are a leader, it is even more important that you serve as a model of the cultural behaviors.

1. You are assertive, proud, loud-mouthed, and free-spirited. You love to work hard and play hard.

2. You strive for productivity and quickness, and you concentrate on quantity—not quality!

3. Although you do not like to touch or be touched, you know that Betas love touching. Consequently, you are willing to touch them—briefly—in the belief that they may work faster as a result.

4. You demand eye contact from others at all times, especially from your coworkers. Failure to make eye contact shows disrespect.

5. Most of the time you like to keep a distance of at least an arm’s length between yourself and others.

6. You do not trust Betas to be alone with scissors, glue, or tape, because they tend to do strange things with them. However, you do trust Betas to have these supplies when they are supervised.

7. Alpha males are very protective of Alpha females. If a Beta male touches an Alpha female, the nearest Alpha males immediately surround the Beta male until he stops touching the Alpha female or leaves the area.

8. When giving instructions or talking about work, especially with a Beta, you check and double-check to make sure that the Beta understands what you are saying. After all, there is an important link between clear communication and productivity.
ALPHA/BETA CULTURE SHEET FOR BETAS

Instructions: The following is a list of behavioral characteristics of your culture. During the work simulation, be certain that you exhibit these characteristics. If you are a leader, it is even more important that you serve as a model of the cultural behaviors.

1. You are submissive.
2. You talk softly. If you are in the presence of an Alpha, out of politeness, you cover your mouth and talk even more softly.
3. You are very intelligent. You are offended if people ask you if you understand what they are saying.
4. You strive to do things slowly, with grace and calmness.
5. You are interested in quality—not quantity.
6. You like to stand close to other people.
7. You love to touch and be touched. You like to hold hands and link arms, even with Alphas. It is a special sign of respect to touch an Alpha female on the cheek.
8. In your culture being touched on the back is a sexual advance. When that happens, you immediately stop what you are doing and sit on the floor without moving.
9. It is very inappropriate to make eye contact with others, especially a coworker. Making eye contact is a form of disrespect.
ALPHA/BETA OBSERVER SHEET

Note here whether the team you are to observe consists of all Alphas, all Betas, or mixed Alpha and Beta members.

____________________________

Once the simulation begins, observe the team’s activity and jot down answers to the following questions. Later you will be asked to share your observations with the total group. When you do so, be sure to mention whether the group you observed consisted of all Alphas, all Betas, or mixed members.

1. How does stereotyping manifest itself?

2. How does the cultural identity of the leader (Alpha or Beta) impact the team’s interactions and productivity?

3. What conflicts arise between team members?
4. How successful are the team members in attempting to resolve and work through their conflicts?

5. How would you characterize the interactions of the team members? Are these interactions helpful or not helpful in terms of completing the task?

6. How would you describe the team’s cohesiveness?

7. How would you describe the team’s productivity?

8. What is the impact of firing one of the team’s members?
COMMON GROUND: INTERVENING IN INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Goal

- To acquaint the participants with a method of helping two people to resolve an interpersonal conflict.
- To provide the participants with an opportunity to practice serving as third-party consultants for people who are experiencing interpersonal conflict.
- To demonstrate useful conflict-resolution behaviors.

Group Size

Three to seven subgroups of four participants each. This activity has been designed for use with practicing and prospective consultants.

Time Required

Approximately three hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Common Ground Task Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Common Ground Consultant Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Common Ground Worker Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Common Ground Observer Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil and a portable writing surface for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room large enough so that the subgroups can conduct role plays without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided.

Process

1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity and forms subgroups of four participants each.
2. Each participant is given a copy of the task sheet, a copy of the consultant sheet, a copy of the worker sheet, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing
surface. The participants are asked to read the task sheet first, the consultant sheet second, the worker sheet third (completing it as they read), and the observer sheet last. The facilitator elicits and answers questions about the activity, ensuring that all participants understand what will transpire. (Fifteen minutes.)

3. Each subgroup is instructed to decide which two members will participate in the first role play as workers, which one will be the consultant, and which will be the observer. The workers are asked to spend five minutes deciding who will take which role and thinking about how to play their roles (using their completed worker sheets for ideas); the consultant and the observer are asked to review their respective handouts during this time.

4. The facilitator instructs the subgroups to spend about fifteen minutes on the first role play and asks them to begin. (Fifteen minutes.)

5. After fifteen minutes the facilitator stops the first role play and asks the subgroups to spend ten minutes discussing the results, including the role players’ reactions to the experience. The observers are reminded to share the contents of their observer sheets. (Ten minutes.)

6. Steps 3 through 5 are repeated until each participant has had a chance to function as a consultant and all four role plays have been discussed. (Approximately two hours.)

7. The facilitator reconvenes the total group and leads a discussion based on these questions:
   - Which behaviors of the role players helped to resolve conflict? Which behaviors hindered conflict resolution?
   - How satisfactory were the resolutions that were achieved?
   - How well did the suggested consulting procedure work? What was useful? What was not useful?
   - What have you learned about conflict-resolution behaviors? What have you learned about assisting in interpersonal-conflict resolution? How will you apply what you have learned in the future?

(Fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- Prior to the activity, the participants may submit ideas for role plays based on their experiences.
- The participants may be asked to generate a list of some successful conflict-resolution behaviors for the consultant role players to use.
To save time the participants may be asked to conduct one or two role plays per subgroup rather than four. In this case the participants should be asked to choose the roles that would be most beneficial for them.
COMMON GROUND TASK SHEET

You and your fellow subgroup members will be engaged in a series of role plays. In each role play a third-party consultant will try to help two workers resolve a shared conflict while another individual observes the interaction and takes notes. (Twice you will play the role of worker, once you will play the role of consultant, and once you will serve as observer.)

After each role play you and the other subgroup members will discuss the interaction and determine how successful the role play was in terms of (1) the role players’ reactions, (2) the workers’ resolution, and (3) the workers’ satisfaction with that resolution.

Role-Play Situations

For each role play, the subgroup members playing workers should choose one of the following situations to enact (a different situation for each of the four role plays, the assumption for each being that the workers have the power to negotiate a solution):

- Two coworkers responsible for presenting a proposal to a client disagree on its content and format. One worker wants to take an innovative approach, while the other want to stick with the tried-and-true ideas and presentation that the client has liked previously.

- A worker in maintenance and a worker in manufacturing disagree about whose responsibility it is to keep the manufacturing work area clean. The manufacturing worker insists that cleaning is part of maintaining equipment, and the maintenance worker insists that only the manufacturing worker knows how to properly care for manufacturing equipment.

- A worker and his or her manager disagree about whether the worker should be promoted to a supervisory position. The worker has never held a supervisory position, is respected and admired by the rest of the staff, has held his or her job for fourteen months, has trained three new employees in the past two months, and for three months has served as a resource of knowledge and recommendations for other staff members. The manager feels that the worker has not had enough experience and should be in his or her present job, performing current duties and responsibilities for at least two years before being promoted.

- Two coworkers in research and development disagree about how to handle a project that they have been working on for the past two years. The project has run into many obstacles on its way to completion. One worker wants to pursue the project, convinced that there is a good product to be developed. The other worker wants to drop the project and devote scarce time, money, and energy to another project that will be easier to complete.
Two executives disagree about whether a new copier is necessary for the office. One, who is known as a “people person” and is very popular with subordinates, maintains that the old copier malfunctions frequently and that a new one is essential to the efficient and harmonious operation of the office. The other, who is known as a “cost cutter” and is highly respected by most executives, maintains that the company cannot afford a new copier at this time.

Two coworkers must hand off work to each other but argue every time they do because they have very different styles of communicating. The person who gives the work wants to provide essential information only; the one who receives the work to be done wants details about why a task is necessary, exactly how it should be performed, and so on.

Two coworkers are competing with each other for use of the same computer. Both work the same hours and have a computer project due at the same time.
COMMON GROUND CONSULTANT SHEET

Use the following steps to investigate the workers’ problem and to help them reach a resolution. (Space has been allotted so that you can take notes.) Feel free to add to this process if doing so seems like a good idea.

1. Invite each person to listen to the other throughout the process.

2. Find out each person’s agenda (what he or she needs/wants).

- Person A’s Agenda:

- Person B’s Agenda:
3. Make sure that each person understands the other’s agenda by having each paraphrase the other’s wants/needs.

4. Determine what each person prefers in terms of conflict-resolution behaviors. Ask each to refer to his or her worker sheet to determine which behaviors would be helpful in the current situation. Ask the workers questions such as the following:

   - What would a successful resolution require you to do?

   - What would a successful resolution require the other person to do?
- What common ground can the two of you agree on? What can you agree to do that will lead toward resolution?

5. Assuming that the workers reach a resolution, ask them the following questions:

- What is the first step you will take toward resolution?

- How satisfied are you with the progress made toward resolution?
COMMON GROUND WORKER SHEET

Think of a time when you were involved in a conflict that was resolved to your satisfaction. First review the following list of behaviors used when experiencing conflict with others; then put a check mark in the blank by each one that you used during the conflict that was successfully resolved. If your response is “Other,” write a brief explanation of the action you took.

Which behavior(s) did you use?

_____ I justified.
_____ I stated what I needed.
_____ I fought.
_____ I asked the other person how we could work together.
_____ I gave in.
_____ I asked what the other person needed.
_____ I apologized.
_____ I searched for underlying issues and causes.
_____ I negotiated.
_____ I listened to the other person’s side.
_____ I expressed my feelings.
_____ I dropped back from my original position without giving up what I really wanted.
_____ I postponed.
_____ I took the blame.
_____ I avoided.
_____ I insisted I was right.
_____ I used a mediator.
_____ Other (explain):
COMMON GROUND OBSERVER SHEET

Rate the consultant’s level of success at:

1. Encouraging the workers to listen to each other.

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2. Eliciting understandable descriptions of each worker’s agenda.

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3. Making sure that each worker understands the other’s agenda.

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4. Drawing out what each worker prefers in terms of conflict-resolution behaviors.

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5. Encouraging each worker to determine what he or she needs to do and what the other person needs to do.

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6. Helping the two workers find common ground.

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7. Helping the workers to resolve the conflict to their satisfaction.

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Write answers to these two questions:

1. What emotional reactions seemed to occur during this process?

2. What conflict-resolution behaviors seemed to move the process along?
THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN: A CONFLICT-MANAGEMENT ICEBREAKER

Goals

- To open a session or a training event on conflict management.
- To illustrate the fact that people sometimes erroneously assume that conflict or competition is necessary to resolve a problem or situation.

Group Size

Six to fifty participants.

Time Required

Approximately fifteen minutes.

Physical Setting

A room in which the participants can sit beside or close to one another. Movable chairs are desirable but not essential.

Process

1. The facilitator starts the activity by saying, “Let’s do a quick experiment. Turn to the person sitting next to you and take that person’s hand like this.” The facilitator approaches one of the participants and takes his or her hand in the posture shown in Figure 1. However, the facilitator is careful not to use the term “thumb wrestling” and gives no further instructions or clues. If the participants ask questions, the facilitator repeats, “Take your partner’s hand like this.”

![Figure 1. Illustration of Hand Positioning for Step 1](image)

2. Once the partners have positioned their hands properly, the facilitator announces the objective: “Each of you is to get your partner’s thumb down, like this.” To
demonstrate, the facilitator releases the participant’s hand and models the position alone by moving the thumb down from its upright position so that it rests on top of the index finger. The facilitator must not use his or her other hand to push the thumb down. (By this time most participants will assume that they will be thumb wrestling and that the objective can only be accomplished through that form of conflict.)

3. The facilitator asks the participants to reposition their hands as they did during Step 1 and then says, “Begin.” (If there is an odd number of participants, the facilitator should work with the remaining participant and follow that person’s lead.)

4. After one person from each pair has triumphed, the facilitator says, “Winners?,” and pauses, waiting for a show of hands. Similarly, the facilitator says, “Losers?,” and waits for a show of hands. Note: If both people in a partnership raise their hands, the facilitator asks them to explain how they both won. The ensuing explanation will eliminate the need for Step 5.

5. The facilitator then says, “Watch me,” and goes back to the participant who had helped him or her model the posture in Step 1. They reassume the Step 1 positioning of hands, and the facilitator says to the partner, “Let’s try putting both of our thumbs down together.” Then each puts his or her thumb down on the forefinger so that no conflict is involved.

6. The facilitator processes the activity briefly with the following questions:

- What did you assume that you were supposed to do in this activity? How does your assumption differ from what you just saw?
- How did you feel when you and your partner were trying to meet the objective? How did you feel immediately after you finished?
- What did you think or feel after you witnessed the cooperative approach to meeting the objective?
- What does this activity tell you about conflict? About your assumptions regarding conflict?
- What have you learned that will help you the next time you approach a conflict?

(Ten minutes.)

**Variations**

- This activity may be used when learning is blocked through the interference of other dynamics in the group. For example, it may be used as an intervention with an ongoing team when the members are experiencing interpersonal conflict or are battling one another instead of the team problem.
■ The participants may be assembled into two groups, one based on competition and the other based on cooperation. The facilitator then addresses the differences in processing.

■ The activity may be used as an icebreaker in a team-building session when the team members are having difficulty cooperating with one another.

Submitted by Roger Gaetani.
BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION TRIOS: READING BODY LANGUAGE

Goals
- To practice describing nonverbal behavior objectively, without interpretation.
- To study the body-language messages that accompany verbalization.
- To alert group members to the variety of signals they use to communicate.

Group Size
Unlimited number of trios.

Time Required
Approximately fifteen minutes.

Physical Setting.
A room large enough to permit trios to work separately, without distraction.

Process
1. The facilitator briefly discusses the goals of the activity.
2. Trios are formed.
3. Participants in each trio identify themselves as A, B, or C.
4. Round 1. Participants A and B stand facing each other. For two minutes A describes all of the nonverbal behavior of B. (The facilitator may demonstrate by rapidly describing the body language of another person.) Participant C acts as a referee to ensure that A is nonevaluative and noninterpretive in his or her description. The trio then discusses round 1. Feelings, interpretations, and other observations may emerge.
5. Round 2. The process is repeated, with B describing C’s behavior and A acting as referee. Then they discuss the experience.
6. Round 3. The process is repeated again, with C describing A and with B acting as referee. Then they discuss the experience.
7. Trios link up with one or two other trios to process the activity. During this phase of the meeting, participants should observe all messages emitted, both verbal and nonverbal.
Variations

- Participants can be instructed to add their interpretations to their observations.
- Participants can focus on symbols, instead of nonverbal behavior. They may describe (and interpret) clothes, hair, jewelry, etc.
- A two-person interchange can be videotaped for replay before an audience, which can read the body language of the participants. The sound can be turned off during the replay.
A NOTE TO MY TEAMMATE: POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Goals
- To provide the participants with an opportunity to experience positive feedback.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to practice giving specific positive feedback.
- To offer the participants a method for improving their working climate.

Group Size
All members of an ongoing work group.

Time Required
Thirty minutes or less, depending on the size of the group.

Materials
- Several sheets of colored paper for each participant.
- Colored pens for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint poster prepared in advance with the following information:
  - Take responsibility for the perception—use “I.”
  - Make it personal—use “you” or the person’s name.
  - Use the present tense.
  - Use positive, active verbs (“has,” “can,” “chooses,” “deserves,” “sees”).
  - Focus on specific, concrete, observable behaviors, as opposed to general, abstract personality qualities that are inferred from behavior.
- A copy of A Note to My Teammate Theory Sheet for the facilitator.

Physical Setting
Any room in which the group can meet comfortably.
Process

1. The facilitator explains that the participants will have an opportunity to write and to share positive phrases, to develop the habit of thinking positively, and to experience receiving positive feedback. He or she then presents a lecturette based on A Note to My Teammate Theory Sheet. (Ten minutes.)

2. The facilitator distributes paper, pencils, and portable writing surfaces to the participants and instructs each person to write his or her name on the paper.

3. The participants are asked to circulate, and each is asked to write a positive phrase on every person’s paper. (Five to ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on questions such as the following:

   ■ How do you feel about yourself right now?

   ■ What do you notice about the phrases that others use to describe you? What themes do you recognize? What does that tell you about yourself? What does that tell you about your contribution to the team?

   ■ How can you use positive feedback on yourself to help break a habit or overcome a limitation?

   ■ How might the group use this process during its work? How will this kind of experience aid the group in being more productive?

   (Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

■ This activity can be conducted during each meeting of the group, becoming a regular programming practice. It can be carried into the general work place, with coworkers writing phrases on posted sheets or on a community board.

■ The group can brainstorm a group or team phrase.

■ Rather than circulate the notes, each participant could write a separate note to every other team member. Each team member could be given a big envelope to serve as a mailbox.

Submitted by Deborah M. Fairbanks.
A NOTE TO MY TEAMMATE THEORY SHEET

Throughout a person’s personal and professional life, he or she gives and receives feedback. Some feedback comes from other people; other feedback can be self-feedback, based on one’s own observations and evaluations of experiences. A person’s feelings, thoughts, and behavior are shaped by this feedback, whether it be positive or negative.

Self-feedback influences behavior. For example, when a person makes a mistake, his or her self-feedback might take the form of “What a dunce I am! I can’t seem to do anything right!” On the other hand, the self-feedback might sound more like “That didn’t work the way that I wanted it to work. Next time I’ll try something else.” The phrasing of the self-feedback makes a difference in how this person will react to the experience of making the mistake.

Feedback from others also influences behavior. For instance, if another person sees the mistake and judges it to be the result of a lack of experience, he or she might say, “That’s O.K. What works best for me is to do it this way.” However, if that person perceives the mistake to be a careless one, he or she might say, “Why can’t you be more careful? You must pay more attention to what you’re doing!” Once again, the phrasing of the feedback from others makes a difference in how a person reacts to an experience.

A person’s tendency to respond positively or negatively—constructively or destructively—is a pattern that can be modified. Positive feedback empowers, supports, and informs. It is a technique for managing one’s thoughts and making conscious choices about how to respond to people and to situations. Learning to use positive feedback appropriately can alter a person’s responses and can create a more positive and supportive environment.

One form for giving positive feedback is “I think/perceive/sense that you, (name), (general quality), because (specific description).” For example, a person might say, “I think that you, Chris, are a dedicated worker because I see the quality of the work you produce.” Another example might be to say “I perceive that you, Robin, are a careful listener because I hear you ask insightful questions.”

In summary, key characteristics of positive feedback include the following:

- Take responsibility for the perception—use “I.”
- Make it personal—use “you” or the person’s name.
- Use the present tense.
- Use positive, active verbs (“has,” “can,” “chooses,” “deserves,” “sees”).
- Focus on specific, concrete, observable behaviors, as opposed to general, abstract personality qualities that are inferred from behavior.
INTROSPECTION: PERSONAL EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Goal
- To provide an opportunity for each participant to compare his or her self-assessment with those of others.

Group Size
Any number of subgroups of five to seven participants each.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- An Introspection Work Sheet and a pencil for each participant.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
One room large enough to accommodate the subgroups, with a writing surface for each participant.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity as a way to help participants look at their attitudes and feelings about themselves in relation to the way other people describe themselves. He or she encourages the participants to be honest in their responses.
2. The facilitator distributes pencils and copies of the Introspection Work Sheet to participants and directs them to find a place in the room where they can mark their work sheets in relative privacy. He or she instructs the participants to initial or otherwise code their work sheets on the back so that they can be identified later on.
3. The facilitator answers any questions and then tells the participants to begin marking their work sheets.
4. When most participants have completed their task, the facilitator gives a one-minute warning. At the end of that time, he or she collects the work sheets. The facilitator divides the participants into subgroups of five to seven members.
each and randomly distributes—on the floor or table in the middle of each subgroup—one completed work sheet for each subgroup member. (Participants do not get their own work sheets.)

5. Participants look over the work sheets in their subgroups and exchange observations, reactions, etc., among themselves. The facilitator advises the subgroups to record any patterns or observations on each work sheet. (A line may be drawn between the X’s on each work sheet, thus illustrating any patterns.)

6. The facilitator again collects the work sheets and places them on a table, face down. The participants are instructed to retrieve their own work sheets (identifying them by the initial or code on the back of each sheet) and to read the comments made on their work sheets by other participants. (Ten minutes.)

7. The total group is reassembled. The facilitator solicits the members’ reactions to the notes made on their work sheet. The facilitator then goes through the work sheet items, directing participants to indicate their own responses to each item by raising their hands. From this, he or she illustrates the group norms on newsprint.

8. Subgroups report on their findings and discussions. The facilitator leads the members in a discussion of the learnings gained from the experience.

**Variations**

- Each participant may receive an additional work sheet, on which he or she writes his or her name and then gives it to another person, asking that person to complete it in terms of how that person sees him or her. Each member then compares his or her personal work sheet with the one completed by another member and discusses his or her reactions to the similarities and differences with the members of the subgroup. Members are asked to describe why they think their descriptions of themselves are different from (or similar to) other people’s descriptions of them.
- Participants can discuss their own work sheets rather than those of others.
- The group members can develop the adjectives to be used on the work sheets.
INTROSPECTION WORK SHEET

The following words were selected to enable you to record your perceptions of yourself. You are to indicate these by placing an “X” on one of the spaces between each pair of words. The distance from the “X” to a word indicates the degree to which it represents your view of yourself.

I AM

Impulsive ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Cautious
Relaxed ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Tense
Interesting ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Boring
Self-Confident ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Timid
Insecure ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Secure
Modest ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Arrogant
Pleasant ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Unpleasant
Mature ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Immature
Agreeable ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Disagreeable
Friendly ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Unfriendly
Attentive ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Inattentive
Compassionate ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Malicious
Competent ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Incompetent
Compulsive ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Flexible
Industrious ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Lazy
Happy ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: ___: Sad
SCULPTURING: AN EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS

Goals
- To provide a nonverbal medium for the expression of feelings toward another person.
- To promote feedback on individual behavior.

Group Size
Six to twelve participants.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- One large sheet of paper or cardboard, at least 18" x 24".

Physical Setting
A moderately-sized, comfortable room: ideally, the room in which the group has ongoing meetings. All participants, including the facilitator, are seated in a circle.

Process
1. In the illustration here, the sculpturing intervention comes from the facilitator as part of the interaction and life of the group. If the facilitator perceives that a participant is having difficulty in expressing feelings toward another, and if that behavior is interfering with the growth of the individual or the functioning of the group, the facilitator asks the person needing to express his or her feelings to stand in the center of the circle with the other participant. The individual toward whom the feelings will be expressed (A) will be told to assume the role of a lump of clay, and the participant who will be expressing feelings (B) will assume the role of sculptor.

2. The facilitator instructs B to sculpt A into a statue which reflects the way in which B is experiencing A and his or her behavior. B should give A the facial expression, gestures, and body posture that will illustrate this feedback. A is asked to hold the position after B finishes sculpting.

3. The facilitator then instructs B to sculpt himself or herself in relation to his or her feelings about A and to hold the position. Both A and B reflect on their positions.
in relation to each other. If A or B cannot hold the position into which he or she has been sculpted, the facilitator asks the other participants to act as “cameras” to recall gestures, postures, or expressions.

4. The facilitator, using the sheet of paper or cardboard as an imaginary mirror, slowly moves around the statues of A and B and asks A to describe what A sees in the “mirror,” speaking of himself or herself first and then describing B. This is repeated with B. The facilitator may adjust the imaginary mirror if either A or B seems to be missing a significant factor in the statue.

5. The facilitator asks A and B to resume their ordinary postures. He or she assists A and B in talking through the experience, discussing the motivations and feelings of B in sculpting A in that particular manner and the feelings A was having during the experience. The facilitator may ask the group to suggest any significant behaviors which A and B overlook.

Variations

- If the facilitator feels it is appropriate, B may be asked to resculpt both A and himself or herself as B would like their relationship to be.

- The facilitator may wish to use this intervention to work through issues of concern to the whole group by asking two participants to illustrate the group issue through the sculpturing and having the group affirm or deny their perceptions of the issue.

- The facilitator may ask the group to help model the group image, emphasis, mood, and so on. One participant stands in the center of the circle, and every other participant in sequence modifies the sculpturing until there is a nonverbal consensus that the statue represents the group as it exists.

- Another possibility would be to employ sculpturing immediately following a pairs experience such as the Partners Encounter to allow pairs to illustrate the growth of their relationship as a result of their experience.

- All members of a group can position themselves to form a group statue. The relative positions of the individuals can then be discussed in terms of subgroups and cohesiveness.

ADJECTIVES: FEEDBACK

Goals

- To help participants clarify values that apply to human relationships.
- To establish the norms for soliciting and conveying both positive and negative feedback.

Group Size
Unlimited.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Materials

- Newsprint, felt-tipped markers, and masking tape.
- Paper and a pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room with wall space for posting adjective lists so that everyone can see them.

Process

1. Without discussing the goals of the activity, the facilitator announces that participants are about to take a two-item “test.” He or she gives the following directions: “First Item: Think of the one person in the world (other than yourself) with whom you have the most satisfactory relationship. Write three adjectives that describe that person.” (A two-to-three-minute pause.) “By now you can imagine what the second item is. Think of the one person in the world with whom you have the least satisfactory relationship. This should be a different person. Now write three adjectives that describe that person.” (A two-to-three-minute pause.)

2. The facilitator explains that the test gives a rough indication of one’s values; that is, the adjectives say more about the writer than about the persons described. On the basis of the adjectives they listed, participants are instructed to write a sentence that begins with the phrase, “I am the kind of person who values . . .”
3. Participants form pairs with nearby persons. They share what the test indicated about them, but they do not discuss the persons about whom they wrote the adjectives. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator asks participants to contribute the adjectives they have written under item 1; these are listed on newsprint in rough alphabetical order. Then the adjectives from item 2 are listed on newsprint. These two lists are displayed side by side on a wall so that all participants can easily read them.

5. The facilitator announces that the next phase of the activity will involve feedback. Participants are instructed to select someone with whom to share both positive and negative feedback. The facilitator indicates that one member of each pair is to solicit feedback about himself or herself from both the negative and positive lists before that person describes himself or herself. Then the other partner does the same. (Twenty minutes.)

6. The facilitator leads a discussion of the entire experience. He or she may wish to solicit comments about the tendency to offer evaluative feedback to others and about the feelings associated with giving and receiving both positive and negative feedback.

**Variations**

- The number of adjectives in each of the two items can be varied; e.g., for large groups, only one adjective may be requested.
- The adjective subject can be varied. Other topics might be job situations, discipline, best/worst boss (colleague, employee, etc.).
- A break can follow step 4 in order for the lists to be duplicated and distributed to all participants.
- Instead of feedback (or in addition to it), the lists can be used for self-assessment and self-disclosure.

Submitted by John E. Jones.
THE GIFT OF HAPPINESS: EXPERIENCING POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Goals
- To promote a climate of trust, self-worth, and positive reinforcement within a small group
- To experience giving and receiving positive feedback in a nonthreatening way.

Group Size
Six to ten participants who have had some experience together as a group.

Time Required
Approximately five minutes per participant and about thirty minutes for processing.

Materials
- Pencils and paper.

Physical Setting
Tables or desk chairs (if not available, use lapboards or other solid writing surfaces). Participants should be located around the room so that a sense of privacy is preserved while writing.

Process
1. The facilitator distributes pencils and paper. Each participant receives enough paper to write a message to every member of the group.
2. The facilitator makes a statement such as the following: “It is often possible to enjoy a small gift more than a large one. Yet, we sometimes become so concerned about not being able to do great things for one another that we neglect to do the little things that can also be very meaningful. In the following activity we will all be giving a small gift of happiness to each person in this group.”
3. The facilitator then invites each participant to write on a slip of paper a message to every member of the group. The messages are intended to make that person feel positive about himself or herself.
4. The facilitator recommends several possible approaches to giving positive feedback so that participants can find appropriate means of expression even for
individuals whom they do not know well or do not feel close to. The facilitator may tell the participants to:

- Try to be specific: Say, “I like the way you smile at everyone when you arrive,” rather than, “I like your attitude.”
- Write a *special message* to fit each person rather than a comment that could apply to several people.
- *Include every participant,* even if the two of you are not too well acquainted. Choose whatever it is about the person that you respond to most positively.
- Try telling each person what you have observed as his or her real *strength* or notable *success* in the group, why you would like to know him or her better, or why you are glad to be in the group with him or her.
- Make your message personal: Use the other person’s name, state your message in the first person, and use such terms as “I like,” or “I feel.”
- Tell each person what it is about him or her that makes you a little happier. (The facilitator may wish to distribute or post such guidelines.)

5. Participants are encouraged to sign their messages, but they are given the option of leaving them unsigned.

6. After each message is finished, the facilitator asks the participants to fold it once and place the name of the recipient on the outside. The facilitator designates an area of the room to serve as the “mailboxes” for the group members, and participants deliver their completed messages to this area.

7. When all messages have been delivered, the facilitator invites participants to share the feedback that was most meaningful to them, to clarify any ambiguous messages, and to express the feelings they have experienced during the process.

**Variations**

- Participants may be permitted to send messages only to those persons toward whom they have significant positive feelings.
- The content can be changed to *negative* feedback. One alternative is to have two phases, one positive and the other negative. The order of the phases can be reversed.
- Participants can be focused on one at a time. The other members can write messages to an individual while he or she is predicting what feedback he or she will receive.
- The process can be generalized to include almost *any* content, as in the following examples:
“What I can’t say to you is . . .”

“You are the (superlative adjective) person in this group . . .”

“I want you to . . .”

“I rank you in closeness to me in this group because . . .”

Actual gifts may be exchanged as symbolic feedback. Participants can be instructed to bring to the session a personal gift that is significant to them. They may also be asked to leave the meeting to find symbolic gifts, such as flowers, stones, leaves, books, pictures, etc.

Submitted by Don Keyworth.
GROUP-ON-GROUP¹: A FEEDBACK EXPERIENCE

Goals
- To develop skills in process observation.
- To develop skills in giving appropriate feedback to individual group members.

Group Size
Two subgroups of five to twelve participants each. More than one pair of subgroups may be directed simultaneously.

Time Required
Approximately one hour.

Physical Setting
The two groups sit in concentric circles facing inward, as shown in the following diagram. Participant “A” is observed by “a,” “B” by “b,” etc.

¹ This activity is commonly referred to as a “fishbowl” design. The term “group-on-group” has less threatening connotations.
Process

1. The facilitator instructs participants to seat themselves according to the diagram and then explains the goals of the activity and the general sequence of steps.

2. The facilitator instructs members of the outer circle to observe individuals’ effects on group process and on group task accomplishment.

3. The inner-circle group participates in an activity chosen by the facilitator.

4. After about ten minutes, the facilitator asks the participants in the inner circle to caucus with their observers. The facilitator instructs observers to give feedback in accordance with the following criteria of effective feedback:
   - It is descriptive rather than evaluative.
   - It is specific rather than general.
   - It is solicited rather than imposed.
   - It focuses on modifiable behavior.
   - It is well-timed.
   - It is validated with the receiver.
   - It is validated with others.

5. The process is then reversed so that observers now become inner-circle participants. New pairs should be formed to minimize retribution.

6. The facilitator introduces another activity, and the process is repeated.

7. The facilitator reassembles the entire group and leads a discussion of the process.

Variations

- Observers may be briefed by a co-facilitator in a separate room.
- Any of several behavior checklists may be used by observers.
- Two rounds of interaction can be experienced by each group. This permits observations about the effects of the feedback.
PIN SPOTTER: PRACTICING POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Goals
- To assist the participants in assessing their abilities to provide feedback.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to practice creating positive feedback statements.

Group Size
Three to five subgroups of four or five participants each.

Time Required
One hour and fifteen minutes.

Materials
- A copy of the Pin Spotter Task Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room with plenty of space so that the subgroups can work without disturbing one another.

Process
1. Each participant is given a copy of the Pin Spotter Task Sheet, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface and is asked to read and complete the sheet. (Fifteen minutes.)
2. After the participants have completed the task, the facilitator makes the following comments:

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“One of the most important concepts presented by Blanchard and Johnson in *The One Minute Manager* is that people work well when they feel good about themselves. Although this idea is not new, the authors have expanded it into a creative technique that they call ‘one-minute praisings,’ an approach that offers managers who practice it an opportunity to increase the productivity of their subordinates.

“Blanchard and Johnson state that in order to use this approach, a manager must make a conscious effort to discover an employee in the process of doing something right. As the authors point out, the manager may need to invest a great deal of time and energy in this effort with a subordinate who is experiencing difficulty on the job.

In addition, monitoring a subordinate’s performance means that the manager will witness—and must de-emphasize—instances of poor performance. The rationale behind emphasizing what is right and de-emphasizing what is wrong is that the manager wants to perpetuate good performance and inspire the subordinate to continue positive behaviors.”

At this point each participant is asked to reread the content of the task sheet, including his or her fifteen-word response; to consider whether that response emphasizes the positive or the negative aspect of the bowler’s performance; and to alter the response if desired. (Ten minutes.)

3. The facilitator assembles the participants into subgroups of four or five each and instructs the members of each subgroup to share their fifteen-word responses with one another, to discuss the merits of each response, and to combine their efforts to create one fifteen-word response that incorporates the principles of “one-minute praising.” (Twenty minutes.)

4. The facilitator reconvenes the total group and asks representatives from the subgroups to take turns reading aloud the responses created during step 3. As each response is read, the facilitator writes it on newsprint.

5. The participants are asked to vote for the best response by a show of hands and to share their comments about the winning response. (Ten minutes.)

6. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion about this approach to giving feedback. Questions such as the following may be asked:

- What was your reaction to the fifteen-word constraint?
- What was your reaction to stating the feedback in a positive way?
- What caused your subgroup the greatest difficulty in composing the final feedback statement? How did you overcome this difficulty?
- How would you compare this activity with your own experiences in giving feedback? How would you compare it with your experiences in receiving feedback?
What do your experiences in giving and receiving feedback tell you about yourself? What do they tell you about your organization?

How can you apply positive feedback in your back-home situation?

**Variations**

- During step 5 the participants may be asked to generate a list of short, positive exclamations to accompany the winning response (for example, “Great!” or “Super!” or “Nice job!”).

- After step 6 the facilitator may ask the participants to work with partners to compose one-minute praisings that they might implement in their back-home environments.

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Submitted by M. Nicholas Mann.
PIN SPOTTER TASK SHEET

You have been given the responsibility of teaching a blind person to bowl and supervising his or her performance. You have already taught this person the basics of bowling and provided him or her with the proper attire and equipment, and now the prospective bowler is ready to try the sport. The two of you set off for a nearby bowling alley. When you arrive, the bowler takes the ball in hand, and you escort him or her to the proper position at the head of a lane. The following illustration shows the configuration of the pins at this point.

You instruct the bowler to throw the ball, providing guidance as necessary. The ball travels down the lane, knocking down three pins and leaving the following configuration.

Others are anxious to use the lane, and you do not want to keep them waiting. However, you do want to provide the bowler with feedback about his or her performance. Using no more than fifteen words, write in the space below what you would say to the bowler.

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COINS: SYMBOLIC FEEDBACK

Goals

- To experiment with giving feedback symbolically.
- To share feelings involved with giving, receiving, and rejection.

Group Size

Between eight and twelve participants.

Time Required

Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials

- Each participant brings a penny, a nickel, a dime, and a quarter to the group meeting.

Physical Setting

Participants are seated in a circle.

Process

1. The facilitator explains the goals of the exercise.
2. To establish an appropriate atmosphere, the facilitator leads a guided-imagery activity. Participants are instructed to close their eyes and to imagine themselves as something other than persons, something they would like to be. After about two minutes, the facilitator tells his or her own image (and why that particular thing was chosen) and asks members to do the same, taking turns around the circle, in a clockwise direction.
3. Participants are instructed to examine their four coins and to select one with which they can identify. (Some selection criteria are size, utility, inscriptions, denomination, composition, year, person depicted, and mint.) The other coins are put away, and participants place the coins they each chose on the floor in front of them.
4. Participants take turns sharing reasons for their selection of coins. The participant on the facilitator’s right begins, and the process moves counterclockwise.
5. The participants then silently make an emotional commitment to give this part of themselves to another member of the group. *It is important to stress this commitment so that participants will not change it for reasons of reciprocation or compassion.* Participants may not present their coins to the group as a whole. As soon as participants have made their individual commitments, they place their chosen coins on the floor in front of them.

6. As soon as all the coins have been put on the floor, the facilitator explains the next step. Moving clockwise, participants each present their coins, i.e., a part of themselves, to another member. The presentation is made standing in front of the person, with eye contact.

7. Beginning with the participant who received the most coins and working through all who received coins, each receiver shares his or her feelings about the experience of receiving. Comments should be directed to the giver(s).

8. The facilitator introduces processing of the rejection experience by making the point that rejection, however slight, is one of the most difficult emotional reactions with which we deal. Participants who did not receive coins are now asked to respond.

9. After some time for silent reflection, the facilitator opens a discussion of the total process.

**Variations**

- Instead of taking turns around the circle in steps 2, 4, and 6, participants can carry out the instructions in any order they wish.
- Participants can bring objects other than coins. These can be given as symbolic feedback.
- More than one coin can be given by each participant. If the rejection experience is inappropriate for the goals of the group, giving more than one coin makes it more probable that each person will receive at least one.
- In large groups the talking in steps 2 and 4 can be done by volunteers. The giving phase is done all at once as participants mill around the room. Processing in steps 7 and 8 is done in subgroups.
PUZZLEMENT: A “MILD” CONfrontation

Goals
- To help participants confront one another’s behavior in helpful ways.
- To stimulate the amount of feedback given and received in a group.
- To share the feelings involved in giving and receiving feedback.

Group Size
Six to fourteen participants who have been interacting long enough to have observed one another’s behavior in the group.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Puzzlement Theory Sheet for each participant.

Process
1. The facilitator distributes copies of the Puzzlement Theory Sheet, allows time for the participants to read the theory sheet, and leads a brief discussion on the purpose and process of confrontation.
2. Each member in the group is asked to take a few minutes to look around the group to select the person in the group (including the facilitator) whose behavior puzzles him or her the most. Participants are asked to commit to a specific person and to resolve not to change later.
3. Each group member in turn announces his or her nomination and describes the behavior that is puzzling. Each member starts the interaction with the sentence, “The person who puzzles me most is ____________, and the thing that puzzles me is__________________________________________________.”
4. The selected person has a number of alternatives when selected, any of which is acceptable. The person may: (1) indicate that he or she does not want to explore this and remain silent, (2) explore or explain in terms of his or her own personal dynamics why this behavior might be puzzling, or (3) explore what there is about their relationship that might foster the puzzling behavior.
5. After the two members interact and explore their own perceptions, they should request feedback from the other group members. This request for comments and
feedback from other group members can provide a source of consensual validation or disconfirmation, which can aid in clearing up interpersonal distortions on either member’s part.

6. After each person has interacted with the person whose behavior puzzles him or her, the technique may be extended by the facilitator, saying, “Now, I’m sure that there are others in the group whose behavior has puzzled you as well. Would anyone like to share this with the group?” With this statement the confrontation becomes voluntary, and the activity takes on less structure.
PUZZLEMENT THEORY SHEET

Interpersonal confrontation is one of the more potent experiences in human interaction. As such, it can be either growth-facilitating or harmful to the people involved. Perhaps because of its potency, confrontation has come to hold many negative connotations. This is a popular misconception of the meaning and the purpose of confrontation in growth groups. Confrontation is not always negative. For example, it may be positive and directed toward another’s strength or an encouragement to take action.

The purpose of this theory sheet is to explore the concept of confrontation and to discuss the conditions and processes that can make it a positive experience to group members.

A Model of Confrontation

Berenson, Mitchell, and Laney (1968) distinguish five major types of confrontation: Experiential, Strength, Weakness, Didactic, and Encouragement to Action. These types of confrontation are defined as follows:

- **Experiential**: a response to any discrepancy perceived by the confronter between the confrontee’s statements and the confronter’s own experience of the confrontee.
- **Strength**: focused on the confrontee’s resources, especially if he or she is unaware of them.
- **Weakness**: focused on the confrontee’s pathology or liabilities.
- **Didactic**: clarification of another’s misinformation or lack of information.
- **Encouragement to Action**: pressing the confrontee to act in some constructive manner and discouraging a passive stance toward life.

The results of the research done on these types of confrontation suggest that effective helpers use experiential and strength confrontations more frequently, while less effective helpers tend to confront their client’s weaknesses. It may well be, however, that variables other than the content of the confrontation are the more important factors in determining the outcomes of the confrontation.

Conditions for Helpful Confrontation

The purposes of helpful confrontation should be primarily to create a situation in which it becomes possible for the confrontee to explore and change behaviors that hinder his or her own growth and development.

Whether or not a confrontation is helpful to the confrontee depends on the confronter, the confrontee, and the conditions that exist in the situation in which the confrontation takes place.
Confronter Conditions. Confrontations are probably more helpful if the confronter (a) has a good relationship with the confrontee or at least is sensitive to the quality of their relationship, (b) accepts the confrontee and is willing to get more involved with him or her as a person, (c) phrases the confrontations as suggestions or requests rather than demands, (d) directs the confrontations toward concrete behavior rather than to motives, (e) makes the confrontations positive and constructive rather than negative, (f) states the confrontation succinctly and directly, and (g) represents facts as facts, hypotheses as hypotheses, and feelings as feelings.

Confrontee Conditions. A confrontee will probably benefit more from a confrontation if he or she (a) accepts it as an invitation to self-exploration, (b) is open to knowing how he or she is experienced by others, (c) is willing to tolerate some temporary disorganization that may result from a confrontation, and, (d) responds differently to different modes of confrontation rather than responding in a stereotyped way, such as accepting all and every confrontation as truth or dismissing all confrontations as worthless.

Group Conditions. Confrontation that takes place in a group situation is facilitated by a high degree of acceptance and trust. It is difficult for a person to receive confrontation without being defensive if he or she does not trust or feel accepted by the group members. Confrontation is also better received if it fits the goals and purposes of the group. An interpersonal confrontation at a faculty meeting or at a social gathering, for example, can have disruptive effects. This is so because these groups are meeting for different purposes than the typical growth group, and the confrontation comes as a surprise.

Some behaviors that may not seem to be confronting can be. Sharing tender feelings about a fellow group member can have a confronting effect because this is something some members experience little of in their everyday lives. Ignoring others or not reinforcing certain behaviors may have the same impact. In summary, the purposes and motives of the confrontation have a strong effect on the outcome of that confrontation. If given with sensitivity and with the desire to help and if received in that vein, then the outcome is more likely to be helpful. Because no one can predict with absolute certainty what impact a confrontation will have on another person, it is wise to elicit feedback from the confrontee about the impact it had on him or her.

REFERENCE
**SEEING OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US: USING VIDEO EQUIPMENT FOR FEEDBACK**

**Goals**
- To enable participants to compare the images they have of themselves with the images they project.
- To increase feedback skills.
- To help participants understand how the differences in self-image and projected image influence interaction.

**Group Size**
From two to eight pairs plus a person to operate the video equipment.

**Time Required**
Approximately one hour plus an additional ten minutes for each speaker.

**Materials**
- A copy of the Seeing Ourselves As Others See Us: Video Feedback Sheet for each participant and the camera operator.
- A few sheets of paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A portable writing surface for each participant.
- A video camera with a wide-angle lens.
- A video monitor for instant replay.

**Physical Setting**
A room large enough for a video-camera operator to move around and photograph a good portion of the entire group and the speaker.

**Process**
1. The facilitator explains the advantages of using video equipment for giving feedback and attempts to alleviate fears of being videotaped. (Five minutes.)
2. The goals of the activity are explained as well as the procedure that will be used. The facilitator assures the participants that no one will be coerced into speaking in front of the camera.
3. A copy of the video feedback sheet, several sheets of blank paper, a pencil, and a portable writing surface are given to each participant. Participants are asked to read the video feedback sheet. (Five minutes.)

4. Participants are assembled into pairs and asked to interview their partners so that they can introduce their partners to the group. The facilitator specifies that each videotaped introduction should last no longer than two minutes. (Five minutes.)

5. The facilitator volunteers to be videotaped first and introduces an imaginary guest.

6. After the facilitator’s introduction has been videotaped, it is shown on the monitor. Participants are asked to focus on the facilitator on the screen and to write brief notes as they watch.

7. After the participants finish watching the facilitator on the monitor, the facilitator points out something he or she did that could be improved and gives an example of how feedback, based on what was seen on the screen, could be given without being a threat to the person receiving it. (Five minutes.)

8. The facilitator’s introduction is replayed, but the participants are asked to watch themselves or (if the camera did not include them) other members of the audience on the screen and to take brief notes as they watch.

9. The facilitator leads a discussion on the following questions:
   - Did you immediately recognize yourself on the screen?
   - What were you doing during the introduction?
   - What was different about what you saw in yourself and your previous perception of yourself?
   - If you were not on the screen, what observations did you make about other members of the audience?
   - What types of things were obvious on the screen that you generally do not observe off screen?

   (Ten minutes.)

10. The facilitator asks for volunteers to make their introductions, and the process is repeated until every participant has had an opportunity to speak before the camera and to be on camera as part of the audience. When the focus is on the speaker, the facilitator asks the speaker to point out something that could be improved and to request feedback from the other participants. When the focus is on the audience, the facilitator leads a discussion on the following questions:
   - What specifically (about yourself or others) did you observe this time?
   - What are you learning from those observations?

   (Approximately ten minutes per volunteer.)
11. After all the introductions are replayed and discussed, the facilitator leads a discussion on the following questions:

- What conclusions can you draw about the difference between your self-image and your projected image? What can you say about that difference for people in general?
- How does the difference between the way we see ourselves and the way we come across to others affect our interactions with them?
- What did you learn from this look at yourself? What changes might you want to make because of this experience?

(Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- Participants could tell a story, give an impromptu speech, or introduce themselves.
- The feedback session could have a single focus: either on the speaker or on the listener.
- Two cameras could be used, thereby providing views of the speaker and the audience throughout the entire presentation.
SEEING OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US:
VIDEO FEEDBACK SHEET

Perhaps you have seen a photograph of yourself that you did not immediately recognize. If your face were blurred or turned away from the camera, you might have even argued that the picture was not of you. Many things that we do can project images that do not coincide with the images we think we are projecting. Sometimes the images we project are more negative than we hope; but in many cases, they are more positive than our own self-images.

The activity planned for your group provides an opportunity to take part in a nonthreatening situation in which you can see yourself as others see you. How you walk, stand, and talk are, collectively, as distinct as fingerprints.

In this activity you will interview someone long enough to gather enough facts (or fantasies) to introduce that person to the audience. You will introduce the person as though he or she were going to make a speech, but time will not permit the speech to actually be made.

The facilitator will be the first person to speak in front of the camera. You will hear the facilitator’s introduction live and then watch it twice on the video monitor. The first time you see it on the screen, focus on the facilitator’s presentation; the next time, focus on yourself or another member of the audience. After the first showing, the facilitator will draw attention to something in his or her presentation and talk about how it could be used in giving feedback. When the focus is on the audience, you will be asked some specific questions. In answering, try to use examples of behavior you observed while viewing the videotape.

If you volunteer to speak in front of the camera, you should make the introduction in the following manner:

Enter the room from a doorway, walk to the front of the audience, face the audience, and begin speaking. Finish the introduction by indicating that the speaker is coming on stage. Then take a seat with the audience. The camera will then be turned off, and the person you introduced will remain seated.

You should not deliberately face the camera. The camera operator will obtain the proper shots of you and the audience. If you keep your mind on what you are saying and how you are presenting the information, you may discover that you are unaware of the camera.

Attempt to use your ordinary style. The purpose is not to see who can act like a movie star. This is an opportunity for you to see yourself as others usually see you.

After your introduction, you will see yourself on the video monitor. The first time, everyone will be concentrating on you. After watching the video, tell the group one thing that you think could be improved. After viewing it the second time, the discussion will center around people in the audience.
CARDS: PERSONAL FEEDBACK

Goals
- To encourage the exchange of personal feedback.
- To provide a means for giving and receiving personal feedback.

Group Size
An unlimited number of subgroups of five members each.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- Five blank 3" x 5" cards for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough to accommodate several subgroups working independently.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity and gives some guidelines to follow and some of the benefits of giving and receiving personal feedback.
2. He or she divides the participants into subgroups of five members each and gives five blank index cards and a pencil to each member.
3. The facilitator instructs each participant to write a different subgroup member’s name (including the participant’s own name) on each card and then to turn the card over and write a description, characteristic, or impression of that person, based on any of the following topics:
   - A positive characteristic of this person is . . .
   - This person is a good leader because . . .
   - This person could be a more effective leader . . .
   - What impresses me most about this person is . . .
   - I think this person should . . .
   - I would like to know if this person . . .
My first impression of this person was . . .

This person performs the role of . . .

4. Each participant completes one card for each member in his or her subgroup. On the participant’s own card, he or she writes something that he or she thinks or feels which the other subgroup members do not know about him or her and which he or she would be willing to share with the subgroup.

5. The cards for each subgroup are collected (names down), shuffled, and placed in a pile. The description on the first card is read aloud, and the subgroup members decide by consensus whom the card describes and place the card—still with the name facing down—in front of that person. This step is repeated until all the cards in the subgroup have been assigned to the subgroup members.

6. Each member, in turn, briefly gives his reaction to each card he or she has received.

7. The cards are then turned over and the names on the cards are compared with the person who received them. The subgroup discusses (a) why cards were given to the right or wrong people and (b) whether the descriptions on the cards are accurate for the people for whom they were intended.

8. The entire group is reassembled, and the facilitator elicits comments from the members on their reactions to and feelings about other members’ impressions of them. The facilitator then leads a discussion of the things that can be learned from the experience and how they can be applied to other situations.

**Variations**

- Feedback can be given through symbols or imagery (an oak, a fawn, etc.) rather than words.
- Participants can sign their names to the cards.
- In step 5, before the subgroup decides who is described on each card, participants can be given a chance to nominate themselves for that particular card and say why they feel it belongs to or describes them.
DEVELOPING TRUST: A LEADERSHIP SKILL

Goals
- To examine some of the behaviors and personal qualities that affect the process of establishing trust in relationships.
- To analyze current behaviors and attitudes that are related to establishing trust in relationships.
- To increase awareness of how one is perceived by others in regard to behaviors that enhance the building of trust.

Group Size
Approximately six to twenty-four participants.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Developing Trust Analysis Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Self) for each participant.
- One or more copies of the Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Other) for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for participants to move about freely and conduct semiprivate discussions.

Process
1. The facilitator briefly discusses the goals of the activity and the general importance of trust in effective interpersonal relationships. (Five minutes.)
2. The facilitator distributes one copy of the Developing Trust Analysis Sheet and a pencil to each participant and instructs the group members to follow the instructions provided. (Ten minutes.)
3. The facilitator divides the participants into subgroups of three or four members each and instructs them to discuss their rankings of the items on the Developing Trust Analysis Sheet. (Ten minutes.)

4. The subgroups are disbanded, and the facilitator distributes a copy of the Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Self) to each participant. Each participant is instructed to complete the form and put it aside for later use. (Five minutes.)

5. The facilitator distributes a copy of the Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Other) to each participant and instructs each member to find a partner.

6. The members of the pairs work independently to complete the Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Other) with regard to their partners. (Five minutes.)

7. Inventories are exchanged between partners and the ratings are discussed. As time permits, this process can be repeated one or more times. A new Developing Trust Inventory Sheet (Other) is used for each new pair. (Five minutes.)

8. After all data from the partners have been collected and shared, the participants are instructed to work independently to compare their self-appraisal data with the scores they received from others. (Five minutes.)

9. The participants are directed to return to their original discussion groups to debrief the activity. (Fifteen minutes.)

10. After each subgroup member has had an opportunity to discuss some of the significant aspects of the activity, the facilitator instructs the participants to focus on key learnings they have had regarding their current functioning in establishing trust in relationships. Subgroup members can take turns completing the sentence “Something I learned/relearned/am in the process of learning about trust is . . .” (Fifteen minutes.)

11. Subgroup members then are directed to work independently to develop behavioral goals to increase their effectiveness in establishing trust in relationships. (Ten minutes.)

12. The subgroups are reconvened and the members are directed to read their goals and to help each other clarify and refine them if necessary. (Fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- The feedback step can be eliminated. Participants then use self-appraisal data as the source from which developmental goals are generated.
- Participants can generate all or some of the components and follow the scaling and group procedures as outlined.
- Group or subgroup comparisons profiling the rankings can be generated by the facilitator during step 3.
When working with intact work groups, the data shared during step 3 can be discussed in terms of their implications for group functioning.

Participants can average all the scores they received from others in order to determine a “Trust Inventory Index.” This index can be compared with subsequent scores obtained at a later date to help evaluate progress in trust relations.
Current theories and research concerning leadership stress the situational aspects of leadership effectiveness. In other words, a leader must take into account the particular organization, the existing social conditions, the characteristics of the followers, and his or her own leadership style. This means that effective leadership cannot be viewed as an isolated component. Leadership is relative, subjective, and interactive.

One component of leadership that appears to be germane to all leadership roles is “relating.” Relating, as a leadership skill, involves a variety of behaviors, including a particularly important one: establishing trust relationships.

Some behaviors and qualities involved in establishing a climate of trust are:

- Sharing (the sharing of personal events, e.g., family matters, feelings)
- Vulnerability (the extent to which the leader is perceived as having the capacity to be vulnerable, i.e., to err is human)
- Loyalty (commitment to consistent goals of the organization and its leaders)
- Accepting others (accepting the unique behavior of others)
- Involving others (using others for input or decision making)
- Valuing (willingness to exchange ideas and ideals with others)
- Awareness (sensitivity to the needs of others)
- Communicating (giving clear communications, both oral and written)
- Openness (willingness to explore new experiences)
- Honesty (avoidance of deceit)

Take a few minutes right now to think about these items. You will probably be aware that some of the items on the list mean more to you than to others. You may want to add to the list.

In order to become aware of the relative importance of these items to you, rank them from one to ten (one representing the most important item). If you add items to the list, you may include them in your ranking.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior or Quality</th>
<th>Why You Ranked It This Way</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be prepared to discuss your reactions to the items and your rationale for the rankings you have given the items.
DEVELOPING TRUST INVENTORY SHEET (SELF)

Consider each of the components of establishing trust in relationships in turn. Give yourself a score, based on the following rating scale, that best describes your behavior to most people, most of the time, at this time in your life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The behavior is exhibited consistently (most of the time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The behavior is exhibited frequently (much of the time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The behavior is inconsistent (sometimes yes, sometimes no).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The behavior is exhibited infrequently (sometimes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The behavior is seldom exhibited (very little).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Your Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting Others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Involving Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
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<td>Communicating</td>
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<td>Openness</td>
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<td>Honesty</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## DEVELOPING TRUST INVENTORY SHEET (OTHER)

**Points** | **Meaning** |
---|---|
1 | The behavior is exhibited consistently (most of the time). |
2 | The behavior is exhibited frequently (much of the time). |
3 | The behavior is inconsistent (sometimes yes, sometimes no). |
4 | The behavior is exhibited infrequently (sometimes). |
5 | The behavior is seldom exhibited (very little). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Perceptions from Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting Others</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involving Others</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuing</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
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<td>Openness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
 FEEDBACK: INCREASING SELF-PERCEPTIONS

Goals
- To facilitate the process of giving and receiving feedback in a group.
- To help the participants to understand the feedback that they receive.
- To promote a process for exploring the participants’ “hidden” characteristics.

Group Size
All members of an ongoing group. (If the group consists of more than six members, the activity may be conducted in subgroups or in more than one session.)

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- For each participant, enough 3" x 5" index cards to equal the number of other participants. (For example, if there are five participants, each participant receives four 3" x 5" cards.)
- A pencil for each participant.
- A sheet of newsprint and a felt-tipped marker for each participant.
- Masking tape.

Physical Setting
A room with chairs and writing surfaces for the participants.

Process
1. The facilitator presents a lecturette on “The Johari Window”¹ and the process of giving and receiving feedback. (Fifteen minutes.)
2. The facilitator announces that the group members are to participate in a process whereby they provide one another with feedback for the purpose of increasing

each member’s self knowledge. Each participant is given 3” x 5” index cards and a pencil. Then the facilitator gives the following instructions:

“Take one of the cards and write ‘From (blank) to (blank),’ inserting your name and that of any other member, respectively, in the blanks; underneath this line write three adjectives or short phrases that describe your own perception of the other member’s ‘hidden’ characteristics. Try to be specific so that the member being described will receive useful feedback. After you have completed this task, do the same for every other member of the group.”

(Fifteen minutes.)

3. The participants are asked to distribute their cards to the appropriate members.

4. The facilitator distributes sheets of newsprint and felt-tipped markers and instructs each participant to write his or her name at the top of the sheet and then to list all feedback items provided by every fellow member. It is explained that the sources of the various items need not be identified. (Ten minutes.)

5. Each participant is asked to review his or her list, identifying and underlining items of particular concern or interest. (Five minutes.)

6. The participants are provided with masking tape and are instructed to post their lists and to spend a few minutes reviewing all posted data.

7. The facilitator reconvenes the group for a discussion period during which each participant is allowed a maximum of ten minutes to review his or her list with the fellow members. It is emphasized that this process should consist of requesting clarification and assessing how widely shared some of the opinions may be; justification and argument are not permissible.

8. After the discussion has been concluded, the facilitator invites the participants to share their reactions to the experience. The following questions may be helpful:

- How did you feel about the balance between positive and negative adjectives used to describe you?

- How do these adjectives compare with your perception of yourself? What did you learn about the ways in which others perceive you? How do you feel about what you learned? Are there any other thoughts that you would like to express?

- Based on this experience, what would you like to change about yourself? How could you go about changing? How could the other members of the group help you with the change process?

**Variations**

- At a subsequent meeting of the group, the participants may be invited to explore further certain personal characteristics that previously may have been hidden from
others. The facilitator explains that for an hour the participants may discuss these characteristics and that the following rules will apply:

- Anyone may ask a fellow member any question.
- The member being questioned has the right to decline answering by saying, “I pass on that question.”
- If the questioned member decides to answer, he or she agrees to do so as fully as possible.
- The group may choose to concentrate on either positive or negative adjectives.
- The feedback may be given in forms other than adjectives that describe the person in question. For example, experiential statements such as the following may be completed: “When I am with you, I feel . . .”
GAINING SUPPORT: FOUR APPROACHES

Goals
- To acquaint the participants with various approaches to developing individual support within a group.
- To develop the participants’ awareness of the positive and negative consequences of these approaches.
- To help each participant to identify his or her preferred approach to developing support.
- To help the participants to identify ways in which they might implement various approaches in their back-home environments.

Group Size
Four or five subgroups of three to five participants each.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Gaining Support Theory Sheet for each participant.
- Blank paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough to accommodate individual as well as group work.

Process
1. The goals of the activity are announced.
2. The facilitator explains that during the first phase of the activity each participant is to reflect on a past situation that was important to him or her, that took place in a group setting, and that created personal discomfort that had to be dealt with. The facilitator emphasizes that each participant should choose a situation that can be shared with others. The following examples are given:
A critical business meeting;
A Thanksgiving dinner with the family of a new “significant other”;
A party attended almost exclusively by strangers; and
The first meeting of a new training group.

3. After allowing a minute or two for choosing situations, the facilitator directs the participants to close their eyes and briefly relive their experiences. The facilitator asks the following questions, pausing after each, to guide the participants as they reflect:
- What was the setting? What do you remember seeing, hearing, feeling?
- What about the situation was important?
- What was the source of your discomfort?
- What did you do to alleviate this discomfort?
- What were the positive consequences of what you did?
- What were the negative consequences?

(Five minutes.)

4. Each participant is given blank paper, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface and is asked to write his or her responses to the questions asked during the previous step. The facilitator writes these questions on newsprint so that the participants may refer to them while they work. (Fifteen minutes.)

5. After the participants have completed their individual work, they are assembled into subgroups of three to five participants each. The members of each subgroup are instructed to take turns sharing and discussing their written responses. Each subgroup is also asked to select a reporter to summarize and record each member’s responses and to report on these responses later. The subgroups are told that they have thirty minutes in which to complete this step and are asked to begin.

6. Each participant is given a copy of the Gaining Support Theory Sheet and is asked to read this handout. Questions about the content are elicited and answered. (Fifteen minutes.)

7. The facilitator reproduces the Support Model (Figure 1 in the theory sheet) on newsprint, asks the reporters to share the results of the subgroup discussions, and records the participants’ approaches to developing support in the appropriate quadrants. (Twenty minutes.)

8. The facilitator leads a discussion about these approaches, their positive and negative consequences, and the ways in which the participants might implement various approaches in their back-home environments. The following questions may be helpful:
Which quadrant represents your typical approach to developing support? What is your reaction to discovering this fact?

What are you gaining through this approach? What are you sacrificing?

What does the posted profile of approaches say about the members of this group?

What generalizations can we make about the ways in which people support themselves in group situations?

How does the information that you shared and/or discovered about yourself relate to your behavior in the groups to which you belong?

How would you like to support yourself in group situations in the future? What could you do differently?

**Variation**

After step 8 the participants may be assembled into four subgroups, each representing a different quadrant of the Support Model. In each subgroup the members then practice behaviors that are characteristic of their quadrant.

Submitted by Juliann Spoth, Barry H. Morris, and Toni C. Denton.
GAINING SUPPORT THEORY SHEET

Most of us tend to think of support as one person’s effort to comfort, provide encouragement to, or express approval of another person. However, it is also possible to think of support as a person’s effort to create comfort, encouragement, or approval for himself or herself. This kind of effort is particularly appropriate in a group situation that is unsettling or threatening in some way; creating support for oneself becomes a way of reducing discomfort and increasing self-affirmation.

In the process of developing support within a group, a person can choose both the kind of support desired and the source of that support. Two kinds of support are possible: that based on cognitive or “thinking” information and that based on physioemotional or “feeling” information. Similarly, two sources of support are available: oneself (in which case the person creates support by assuming a private, reflective posture) and other group members (in which case the person creates support by assuming a sharing, active posture). The combination of kinds of support and sources of support yields four possibilities for creating support in a group situation (Figure 1).

1. **Reflective-Physioemotional Support.** Quadrant I in the Support Model represents a possibility for support that involves turning attention inward and acknowledging one’s physical or emotional responses. The person who uses this approach notes internal signals of discomfort or anxiety, such as rapid breathing or tense body posture; acknowledges them; and takes action to manage them, thereby alleviating the discomfort and supporting himself or herself in a difficult situation.

2. **Reflective-Cognitive Support.** Quadrant II in the model represents a possibility that involves supporting oneself through thoughts rather than physical or emotional responses. The person who creates support with this approach turns attention inward, tries to make sense of what is happening within the group that is causing discomfort, and concentrates on various affirming thoughts. For instance, a person may realize that other group members are probably
experiencing discomfort over a given situation, too, and this realization leads to a lessening of his or her own uneasiness.

3. Active-Cognitive Support. Quadrant III reflects a possibility that entails sharing one's thoughts with the group. Unlike the possibilities represented by the first two quadrants, this approach involves reaching outward to the other group members rather than inward toward oneself. In this case the person may share with the group an explanation, theory, or analysis of the situation that is causing his or her discomfort. This act of thinking through the situation and expressing ideas helps the person to deal with and decrease the discomfort.

4. Active-Physioemotional Support. Quadrant IV also represents sharing with the group, but in this case feelings rather than thoughts are expressed. This approach is manifested in verbal expressions of such emotions as anger, frustration, or joy as well as in nonverbal expressions such as hugging other group members.

Each of these four possibilities for creating support carries negative as well as positive consequences. The person who chooses to turn attention inward for either cognitive (thinking) or physioemotional (feeling) support risks alienation from the group. Similarly, the individual who chooses to share either thoughts or feelings with the group incurs the risks involved in this kind of disclosure. In addition, each of us has a unique personality and set of past experiences that may make it difficult to seek support through one or more of these means. Still further difficulties can arise in that certain groups develop norms of behavior that preclude seeking support in one or more of these ways. However, if we can learn to develop support in more than one way, we can increase our chances of achieving comfortable and satisfying group experiences in a number of different settings.
I AM, DON’T YOU THINK?: ZODIAC FEEDBACK

Goals
- To assist the participants in gaining insight about themselves and about their fellow subgroup members.
- To provide the participants with an opportunity to compare their self-perceptions with others’ perceptions of them.
- To heighten the participants’ awareness of the ways in which a variety of member characteristics can enrich a group.

Group Size
Two or three subgroups (a maximum of thirty participants). The members of each subgroup should be acquainted with one another.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the I Am, Don’t You Think? Characteristics Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the I Am, Don’t You Think? Zodiac Key for each participant.
- A copy of the I Am, Don’t You Think? Zodiac Signs Handout for each participant.
- A copy of the I Am, Don’t You Think? Discussion Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- For each participant, enough 3” x 5” index cards to equal the number of other members in that participant’s subgroup. (For example, if there are six members in one subgroup, each member of that subgroup receives five 3” x 5” cards.)

Physical Setting
A room with chairs and writing surfaces for the participants.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the goals of the activity and asks the participants to assemble into their subgroups.
2. Each participant is given a copy of the characteristics sheet and a pencil and is asked to read the characteristics listed. After the participants have finished reading, the facilitator instructs each participant to select the ten characteristics that describe himself or herself best and to place a check mark in the “My Opinion” column beside each of these ten. (Fifteen minutes.)

3. The facilitator gives each participant the appropriate number of 3” x 5” index cards. Each participant is instructed to consider each of the other subgroup members in turn, to write this person’s name on one of the 3” x 5” cards, to select four characteristics from the sheet that best describe this person, and to write the numbers of these four characteristics on the card below the person’s name. The participants are asked not to consult one another while they complete this task. (Twenty minutes.)

4. After each participant has completed a card for every other member of his or her group, the facilitator asks the participants to distribute their cards to the people whose names appear on the cards. Then the participants are instructed to go through their cards one by one; each participant is told to refer to the characteristics sheet and to tally the contents of the received cards by placing a tick mark in the “Others’ Opinions” column to indicate each time a specific characteristic is noted by number.

5. Each participant is instructed to write the number of matches between the self-assessments and others’ assessments in the appropriate places in the “Number of Matches” column, to determine his or her score, to write it in the blank provided, and to determine the consistency between the self-assessments and others’ assessments.

6. The facilitator distributes copies of the zodiac key and asks each participant to compare his or her matches with the characteristics that are representative of his or her sign.

7. Each participant is given a copy of the zodiac signs handout and is instructed to read the entire list of characteristics for his or her sign. In addition, the facilitator distributes copies of the discussion sheet and asks the members of each subgroup to read and follow the instructions on this sheet and to select one member to lead them in their discussion. (Forty-five minutes.)

8. The facilitator reassembles the total group and leads a concluding discussion about the ways in which the participants can use what they have learned to improve their interaction with their fellow group members.

Variations

- The participants may be encouraged to give and receive additional feedback about characteristics they especially like in their fellow subgroup members,
characteristics that their fellow members might want to emphasize more, and/or characteristics that they would like to develop for personal growth.

- The zodiac model may be eliminated, and the participants may be asked simply to complete the characteristics sheet and to provide one another with feedback.

Submitted by Jane C. Bryant.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>My Opinion</th>
<th>Others’ Opinions</th>
<th>Number of Matches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. is determined, ambitious</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. assesses situations quickly</td>
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<td>3. thrives on constant activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. possesses a firm sense of values; is trustworthy</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. has strong nurturing instincts</td>
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<td>6. has sense of discipline and purpose</td>
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<td>7. has a progressive outlook</td>
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<td>8. is independent; needs privacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. has an ability to relieve the suffering of others</td>
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<td>10. has a pioneering, adventurous spirit</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. exhibits considerable interest in health and hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. likes to have power and authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. is refined, diplomatic, tactful</td>
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<td>14. is brave, with little regard for danger</td>
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<td>15. is good at coping with life</td>
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<td>16. pursues causes; is often in favor of change</td>
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<td>17. has leadership ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. is idealistic; shows strong sense of justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. has excellent business sense</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. is a generous, loving, devoted friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. is a nonconformist</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. is able to see clearly all sides of a situation</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. is dynamic, fascinating, mysterious</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. is conventional, rational, serious</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. is impulsive, spontaneous</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. enjoys country living, gardening</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. is a wonderful lover with a flair for the romantic</td>
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<td>28. exhibits a flair for writing and languages</td>
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<td>29. is domestic; loves home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristic</td>
<td>My Opinion</td>
<td>Others’ Opinions</td>
<td>Number of Matches</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. needs a challenge; likes to show initiative</td>
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<td>31. is original, inventive, resourceful</td>
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<td>32. has a tendency to flirt</td>
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<td>33. is easygoing, good-natured</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. knows a little bit about a lot of things</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. prizes harmony and pleasant living conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. possesses great personal magnetism</td>
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<td>37. loves animals</td>
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<td>38. is proud, self-confident</td>
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<td>39. likes “important” work, not trivialalities</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. likes detail; is good at organizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. is passionate in politics, work, play</td>
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<tr>
<td>42. presents a solid, steady, reliable front to the world</td>
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<tr>
<td>43. is receptive and devoted to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. is intellectual, logical, busy</td>
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<td>45. exhibits a sense of showmanship and drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>46. has a humanitarian, reforming, altruistic spirit</td>
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<tr>
<td>47. likes “doing” and “making” hobbies</td>
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<tr>
<td>48. has a strong sense of responsibility</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Number of Matches Divided by Number of Others’ Opinions = Score

\[
\frac{\text{My Opinion}}{\text{Others’ Opinions}} = \text{Score}
\]

Scoring Scale

- 3.1 - 4.0 = High Consistency
- 2.1 - 3.0 = Moderate Consistency
- 1.1 - 2.0 = Moderate Discrepancy
- 0 - 1.0 = High Discrepancy
I AM, DON’T YOU THINK? ZODIAC KEY

The numbers listed below for each of the twelve zodiac signs correspond to the numbers assigned to the characteristics on the characteristics sheet. Although each of the four characteristics listed for each sign is representative of that sign, you should note that many characteristics are shared by different signs. You should also note that different astrologers may list slightly different dates for the various signs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aries (March 21-April 20)</th>
<th>Taurus (April 21-May 21)</th>
<th>Gemini (May 22-June 21)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancer (June 22-July 23)</td>
<td>Leo (July 24-August 23)</td>
<td>Virgo (August 24-September 23)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Libra (September 24-October 23)</td>
<td>Scorpio (October 24-November 22)</td>
<td>Sagittarius (November 23-December 23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capricorn (December 22-January 20)</td>
<td>Aquarius (January 21-February 19)</td>
<td>Pisces (February 20-March 20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I AM, DON’T YOU THINK? ZODIAC SIGNS HANDOUT

Aries (March 21-April 20)
1. assesses situations quickly
2. has a pioneering, adventurous spirit
3. is vigorous, enthusiastic, highly energetic
4. hates restrictions; loves freedom
5. is self-sufficient, independent, self-assured
6. is honest and direct with others
7. is inquisitive
8. loves competitive work
9. needs a challenge; likes to show initiative
10. participates in/enjoys vigorous sports
11. is intelligent, capable, dynamic
12. likes a busy, active lifestyle
13. is brave, with little regard for danger
14. is enterprising, ambitious; works hard

Taurus (April 21-May 21)
1. is practical, conservative, cautious
2. is reliable, patient, enduring
3. loves luxury and good food
4. is persistent, strong willed
5. is affectionate, warm-hearted, friendly
6. possesses a firm sense of values; is trustworthy
7. presents a solid, steady, reliable front to the world
8. needs security in career, home, marriage
9. has a well-developed sense of self-preservation
10. has excellent business sense
11. enjoys country living, gardening
12. needs a conventional office life and a guaranteed paycheck
13. enjoys music and art
14. is good at team sports
**Gemini (May 22-June 21)**

1. is adaptable, versatile
2. is intellectual, logical, busy
3. is witty, lively, talkative
4. knows a little bit about a lot of things
5. can “bluff out of tight corners”
6. needs variety and change
7. is capricious, inquisitive
8. has a penchant for media and communications work
9. has a tendency to flirt
10. likes all kinds of people
11. exhibits a flair for writing and languages
12. demonstrates a considerable talent for conversing
13. is eager to express opinions
14. is energetic; needs mental stimulation

**Cancer (June 22-July 23)**

1. has strong nurturing instincts
2. is solicitous, protective
3. is cautious, shrewd
4. is kind, sensitive, sympathetic
5. is sentimental, romantic
6. is domestic; loves home
7. cherishes marriage
8. has imaginative powers and a good memory
9. has an extremely organized mind
10. needs a calm working atmosphere
11. has a strong sense of responsibility
12. is emotionally resourceful
13. is helpful, thoughtful, understanding
14. is a generous, loving, devoted friend
Leo (July 24-August 23)

1. is magnanimous
2. is proud, self-confident
3. is broad-minded, expansive
4. exhibits a sense of showmanship and drama
5. has leadership ability
6. possesses natural, spontaneous charm
7. is affectionate, cheerful, optimistic
8. is extravagant
9. works hard; sets a good example for others
10. likes to have power and authority
11. is a constructive, quick thinker
12. is loyal and expressive in love
13. demonstrates natural exuberance and enthusiasm
14. is an excellent, motivating teacher

Virgo (August 24-September 23)

1. is discriminating, analytical, practical
2. is tidy, neat, fastidious
3. works hard
4. is careful, cautious
5. thrives on constant activity
6. strives for perfection
7. enjoys learning
8. exhibits considerable interest in health and hygiene
9. likes detail; is good at organizing
10. is a good follower who lends stability and practical help
11. is modest
12. is kind, caring
13. needs financial security
14. likes “doing” and “making” hobbies
**Libra (September 24-October 23)**

1. has a romantic nature
2. is idealistic; shows strong sense of justice
3. is refined, diplomatic, tactful
4. prizes harmony and pleasant living conditions
5. likes to socialize
6. loves the good life
7. possesses natural charm with a winning manner
8. is an excellent, thoughtful entertainer
9. is able to see clearly all sides of a situation
10. is warm, kind, affectionate
11. is witty, clever
12. is anxious to love and to share life experiences
13. is creative, appreciative of art
14. is fun to be with

**Scorpio (October 24-November 22)**

1. is a loyal friend and mate
2. feels a strong sense of purpose
3. is highly imaginative, discerning, subtle
4. is persistent, determined
5. is passionate in politics, work, play
6. is courageous, self-sufficient
7. is kind and compassionate
8. possesses great personal magnetism
9. is dynamic, fascinating, mysterious
10. is intuitive, perceptive, insightful
11. loves intensely, ardently, enduringly
12. likes to test abilities to fullest extent
13. has a philosophical nature
14. likes “important” work, not trivialities
**Sagittarius (November 23-December 21)**

1. is jovial, cheerful, optimistic
2. loves life
3. is sincere, frank
4. is scrupulous, idealistic
5. has a wide variety of interests
6. is impulsive, spontaneous
7. is a nonconformist
8. is independent; needs privacy
9. is active, energetic
10. needs physical and intellectual exercise
11. enjoys challenges and exploration of the unknown
12. loves animals
13. likes to have a large circle of acquaintances
14. is benevolent, kind

**Capricorn (December 22-January 20)**

1. is driven to achieve
2. is loyal, sincere, supportive
3. likes to take charge, to be in control
4. is determined, ambitious
5. values family life
6. is concerned with career and prestige
7. has a sense of discipline and purpose
8. is patient, persevering
9. exhibits a cool and calculating mental outlook
10. is shy but cherishing and protective in love
11. needs job security and regular paychecks
12. likes fame and being in the public eye
13. is conventional, rational, serious
14. is good at coping with life
Aquarius (January 21-February 19)

1. has a humanitarian, reforming, altruistic spirit
2. is friendly, sincere, loyal
3. has a progressive outlook
4. is original, inventive, resourceful
5. needs personal independence
6. pursues causes; is often in favor of change
7. exhibits an aloof glamour that is compelling
8. is drawn to scientific pursuits
9. approaches problems analytically
10. is intelligent, inquisitive, observant
11. is a good listener
12. loves mental challenges
13. is idealistic; prizes truth
14. looks at the world in new ways

Pisces (February 20-March 20)

1. is kind, compassionate, sympathetic
2. is impressionable
3. is sensitive, intuitive, meditative
4. seeks contentment more than achievement
5. is receptive and devoted to others
6. is a wonderful lover with a flair for the romantic
7. needs to be loved and needed
8. has an ability to relieve the suffering of others
9. appreciates, enjoys, and is inspired by the arts
10. is flexible in dealing with people
11. needs a congenial environment at home and at work
12. is easygoing, good-natured
13. is patient, self-sacrificing
14. is easily carried away in emotional relationships

These characteristics have been adapted from several different sources.
I AM, DON'T YOU THINK? DISCUSSION SHEET

Instructions: You and your fellow subgroup members are to discuss answers to the following questions. During this discussion you should state your own answer to each question and encourage your fellow members to do the same. The more fully you participate, the more you will learn about yourself and the other members.

1. What was your consistency score? How do you feel about this score?
2. Which characteristics from your zodiac sheet do you believe are most descriptive of you?
3. How accurate do you think your self-assessment was? How accurate were your fellow subgroup members’ assessments of you?
4. How did you feel about assessing yourself? How did you feel about assessing the other members? How did you feel about having others assess you?
5. What similarities did you discover among yourselves? What differences did you find?
6. How do these similarities and differences enrich your subgroup? How do the similarities contribute to subgroup cohesiveness? How do the differences contribute to subgroup vitality? How do similarities and differences work together to make a fully functioning subgroup?
7. What did you learn about yourself that you had not realized before?
8. What did you learn about your fellow subgroup members?
TWO BAGS FULL: FEEDBACK ABOUT MANAGERIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Goals

- To offer the participants an opportunity to provide one another with feedback about their managerial traits and behaviors.
- To help each participant to determine his or her strengths and areas for growth as a manager.
- To assist each participant in developing a set of action steps for personal growth as a manager.

Group Size

All members of an ongoing managerial group; a group with more than eight members should be accommodated in two sessions. It is advisable for the participants to have had some previous team-building experience.

Time Required

Two hours.

Materials

- For each participant, a number of 3" x 5" cards equivalent to twice the number of members in the group minus two. For example, if the group consists of six members each participant receives ten 3" x 5" cards.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A portable writing surface for each participant.
- Two small paper bags for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

Any room in which the group normally meets.
Process

1. The facilitator begins the activity by stating that one way to perceive the role of a manager is to see him or her as a person who fulfills four kinds of expectations:
   - Expectations of subordinates, which include receiving feedback about performance;
   - Expectations of peers, which include being kept informed about the manager’s activities;
   - Expectations of the manager’s supervisor, which include implementing the organization’s policies; and
   - Self-expectations, which include attending to the manager’s own professional development.

2. The facilitator guides the participants through a guided-imagery experience by making the following comments, pausing briefly after each.
   - Think about the best manager you have ever had or known.
   - Close your eyes, relax, and visualize this person.
   - What did this person expect of you?
   - What did this person expect of your coworkers?
   - How did this person behave toward subordinates?
   - How did this person behave toward his or her peers?
   - How did this person behave toward his or her supervisor?
   - What particular things did this person say and do that made him or her a top-notch manager?
   - What standards did this person set for himself or herself?
   - When you have this person clearly in mind, feel free to open your eyes.

3. The participants are asked to volunteer traits and behaviors that were characteristic of the managers they visualized. As these traits and behaviors are mentioned, the facilitator records them on newsprint. (Ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator distributes 3” x 5” cards, pencils, portable writing surfaces, and paper bags. Each participant is instructed to write the word “strengths” on one of his or her paper bags and the words “areas for growth” on the other.

5. The facilitator explains that each participant is to consider the managerial attributes of every other participant in turn: The participant is to consult the newsprint list, to choose one of the traits or behaviors listed that is a strength for the other participant under consideration, and to write this trait or behavior anonymously on a 3” x 5” card; then he or she is to choose a trait or behavior that represents an area for growth for the other participant and to write this trait.
or behavior anonymously on a separate 3" x 5" card. Subsequently, he or she is to deposit the 3" x 5" cards in the appropriate paper bags belonging to the other participant. This procedure is to be followed until each participant has deposited two cards in the appropriate bags for every other participant. After answering any questions about the procedure, the facilitator instructs the participants to begin. (Fifteen minutes.)

6. Each participant in turn shares his or her designated strengths with the rest of the group by reading aloud the 3" x 5" cards that have been deposited in the paper bag labeled “strengths.” After reading all of his or her cards, the participant asks any questions necessary for clarification and states any reactions to the feedback presented. During this phase of the activity, none of the remaining participants identity their own comments unless they choose to do so. (Twenty minutes.)

7. The facilitator instructs each participant to read privately the contents of his or her paper bag labeled “areas for growth” and to select one such area that he or she is interested in pursuing and is willing to share with the group. Then each participant in turn reads aloud the chosen 3" x 5" card and receives feedback from the remaining participants regarding this behavior and how this area of growth might be pursued. As part of this process, the participant receiving feedback also contracts with his or her fellow participants to take specific action steps in pursuit of the chosen area of growth and writes these steps on the back of his or her 3" x 5" card. In addition, arrangements are made for a follow-up meeting to determine progress and any further action steps to be taken. (Forty-five minutes.)

8. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:
   - What was your reaction to reviewing your strengths as others saw them?
   - What was your reaction to reviewing your areas for growth?
   - What patterns did you find in the feedback you received? What area of emphasis seems to be of most importance: self-development, relationships with your peers, relationships with your subordinates, or your relationship with your supervisor?
   - How do the patterns of your feedback compare with what you know about managing people?
   - What are some of the action steps that you have decided to take before the follow-up meeting?
   - What other contracts do you need to make to ensure your progress?
**Variations**

- A communication instrument may be administered before the feedback is given so that each manager can discover patterns that are common to his or her self-report and the peer feedback.

- In step 5 each manager may be asked to predict what he or she thinks others will identify as strengths and areas for growth.

- After step 7 the facilitator may deliver a lecturette on theory and research about effective managerial behaviors.

- Specific strengths and areas for growth may serve as the focus of separate sessions. For example, sessions may be conducted on self-development, relationships with peers, relationships with subordinates, or relationships with supervisors.
FEEDBACK AWARENESS: SKILL BUILDING FOR SUPERVISORS

Goals
- To enhance the participants’ awareness of the impact of feedback.
- To offer principles and guidelines for giving and receiving feedback.
- To provide a vehicle for practice in giving and receiving feedback.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to discuss and identify feedback characteristics and techniques.

Group Size
Four to six subgroups of four participants each. This activity is designed for use with supervisors as participants.

Time Required
Two hours to two hours and fifteen minutes.

Materials
- A copy of the Feedback Awareness Theory Sheet for each of the participants.
- A copy of the Feedback Awareness Procedure Sheet for each of the participants.
- Two copies of the Feedback Awareness Communication Sheet for each of the participants.
- Several sheets of blank paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- Five newsprint posters prepared in advance:
  - On the first poster:
    The importance of feedback to supervisors and subordinates
    The roles of the supervisor and the subordinate in the performance-feedback process
  - On the second poster:
    Tips for eliciting quality feedback from a subordinate
    Tips for discovering whether feedback given to a subordinate has been effective
On the third poster:

**Procedure**
Brainstorm ideas. One partner records. (5 min.)
Choose best ideas. Other partner records. Monitor behavior. (10 min.)
Fill out Feedback Awareness Communication Sheet. (5 min.)
Share ideas with total group. (10 min.)
People in outer chairs switch places.
Repeat first four steps, using new topics. (30 min.)

On the fourth poster:

**Guidelines for Giving Feedback**
Be objective.
Be specific.
Write about changeable behavior.
Describe how behavior affected you.

On the fifth poster:

**Guidelines for Receiving Feedback**
Keep an open mind.
Listen. Do not interrupt, justify, explain.
Paraphrase the feedback.
If necessary, ask for example or explanation.

A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
Masking tape for posting newsprint.

**Physical Setting**
A large room in which the subgroups can work without disturbing one another. There should be plenty of wall space for posting newsprint, and movable chairs must be provided.

During step 3 the chairs for each four-member subgroup should be arranged in two pairs as shown in Figure 1. (When the subgroups have been assembled, each participant is seated directly opposite another.)

![Figure 1. Arrangement of Chairs for One Subgroup](image)

**Process**
1. The facilitator announces the goals of the activity, distributes copies of the theory sheet, and asks the participants to read this handout. (Ten minutes.)
2. The facilitator elicits and answers questions about the handout, clarifying the content as necessary. (Ten minutes.)

3. The participants are assembled into four-member subgroups, and each subgroup’s chairs are arranged according to the configuration shown in Figure 1.

4. The facilitator posts the first, third, fourth, and fifth prepared newsprint posters. (See Materials. Note that the second prepared newsprint poster is displayed later, after the participants have finished dealing with the topics on the first poster.) Each participant is given a copy of the procedure sheet, two copies of the communication sheet, several sheets of blank paper, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface. The facilitator reviews the content of both handouts while the participants follow on their copies and then elicits and answers questions about the content. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

5. The facilitator instructs the participants to begin and uses the steps on the procedure poster to guide the participants. (One hour.)

6. After the steps described in the procedure sheet have been completed, the participants are instructed to distribute their completed communication sheets to the partners whose names appear on those sheets and to clarify written comments as necessary. The participants are reminded to use the guidelines for giving and receiving feedback. (Ten to twenty minutes.)

7. The facilitator reconvenes the total group and leads a discussion based on the following questions:

   ▪ How did you feel when you wrote comments about other people’s communication techniques?

   ▪ How did you feel when you read the comments written about your own communication techniques?

   ▪ On the basis of your experience during this activity, what barriers can you identify as interfering with the feedback process? What might be done to remove some of those barriers or to reduce their impact?

   ▪ What have you learned about your own abilities to give and to receive feedback?

   ▪ How might you improve your abilities to give and to receive feedback?

   ▪ What will you do differently in the performance-feedback process in the future?
Variations

- The facilitator may ask the participants to concentrate on either giving or receiving feedback.
- After step 7 the participants may be asked to return to their subgroups. Within each subgroup two members role play a brief performance-feedback session while the remaining two members observe. Subsequently, the observers give feedback and all four members discuss the experience.

Submitted by Robert William Lucas.
FEEDBACK AWARENESS THEORY SHEET

The following statements describe the appropriate way to give feedback to a subordinate. As you read each, think about whether it reflects your own behavior.

1. Before I give feedback, I consider whether to do so publicly or privately. I praise people in front of peers or coworkers, but I reprimand in private.

2. Before giving feedback, I check my impressions of the behavior with others, doing so in a way that does not threaten or incriminate. I understand that misperceptions on my part can lead to giving ineffective feedback.

3. I provide timely feedback. I give feedback as soon as possible after the behavior has occurred so that it has maximum impact for my subordinate.

4. I avoid surprising my subordinates with performance feedback. I tell them that I intend to provide regular feedback on their performance, and then I follow through.

5. I am objective in describing behavior. I base my comments on observation, not on conjecture. I describe the behavior fully before I offer personal thoughts or feelings about it.

6. I state specific details, not generalities. I avoid comments like “You did a good job on the monthly report.” Instead, I say things like “Your monthly report was clear and concise, and the graph you included gave an excellent illustration of the changing trend in production.”

7. I direct feedback at behaviors that my subordinates can change. I realize that it is not helpful to comment on a subordinate’s stutter, for example, whereas it is helpful to comment on a subordinate’s need to improve writing skills.

8. After describing the behavior, I tell my subordinate what I think and how I feel about that behavior, describing its impact on me. I recognize that comments about personal thoughts and feelings help my subordinate to put the feedback in perspective.

9. After giving feedback, I verify that my subordinate has understood my message as I intended it. I listen carefully to what my subordinate has heard; if the message has been misunderstood, I clarify as necessary.

10. After I have given negative feedback, I give my subordinate time to make the desired change while I monitor the behavior in question. I avoid constant negative feedback on a particular behavior because it is counterproductive and harmful. If the behavior improves, I praise my subordinate; if it does not improve, I consider performance-counseling alternatives.
FEEDBACK AWARENESS PROCEDURE SHEET

Procedure

1. You and your partner spend five minutes brainstorming ideas about the two topics listed on newsprint. One of you records ideas.

2. The two of you spend ten minutes discussing the brainstormed ideas and choosing the best ones. The other partner (the one who did not write previously) records final ideas. As you work, each of you monitors the other’s use of the techniques listed on the Feedback Awareness Communication Sheet. Two minutes before the end of the discussion period, the facilitator announces the remaining time. Two minutes later you are told to stop working.

3. Each of you writes his or her name and the partner’s name on one copy of the Feedback Awareness Communication Sheet and spends five minutes writing brief comments about the partner’s communication techniques. Each strives to write feedback according to the “Guidelines for Giving Feedback” on this sheet. (Your facilitator will post these guidelines in abbreviated form for your convenience.) Until instructed otherwise, each of you keeps the completed communication sheet.

4. After five minutes the facilitator asks you to stop writing. The person who recorded final ideas shares them with the total group when instructed to do so. The other subgroups also share their ideas. As ideas are presented, the facilitator records them on newsprint, displays them, and leads a brief discussion about them.

5. The two people in the outer chairs (see the illustration below) switch places so that everyone has a new partner. The facilitator displays another newsprint poster with two new topics.

6. Steps 1 through 4 are completed again, this time centering on the new topics.
Guidelines for Giving Feedback

- Be objective in describing the behavior.
- State specific details, not generalities.
- Deal only with changeable behavior.
- Describe the impact of the behavior on you.

Guidelines for Receiving Feedback

- Keep an open mind; be willing to hear ways to improve.
- Listen without interrupting, justifying, or explaining.
- Paraphrase the feedback so that the person who gave it can determine whether you understood the intended message.
- If you do not understand, ask for an example or further explanation.
FEEDBACK AWARENESS COMMUNICATION SHEET

Instructions: Write your name and your partner’s name in the blanks below. Answer the six questions, jotting down any specifics that might be useful to your partner. Then describe your partner’s communication strengths and areas for development.

Your Name __________________________________________________________

Your Partner’s Name __________________________________________________

During the conversation, did your partner:

1. Use clear language?

2. Speak at a rate that you could easily follow and comprehend?

3. Use specific rather than general terms?

4. Avoid jargon?

5. Periodically verify that you understood?

6. Maintain good eye contact?

Communication Strengths:

Communication Areas for Development:
ANALYZING AND INCREASING OPEN BEHAVIOR: 
THE JOHARI WINDOW

Goals
- To describe open and closed behavior in terms of the Johari Window.
- To identify facilitating and inhibiting forces which may affect the exchange of feedback.
- To encourage the development of increased open behavior in the group through facilitated feedback.

Group Size
Eight to twelve participants. Several subgroups may be directed simultaneously.

Time Required
Approximately two and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Johari Window Self-Rating Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A copy of the Johari Window Model Theory Sheet for the facilitator.
- Newsprint and felt-tipped markers for each subgroup.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker for the facilitator’s use.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.
- A copy of the Johari Window Model (optional).

Physical Setting
A room large enough to accommodate the group or subgroups and to allow subgroups to work comfortably and with minimal noise distraction.

Process
1. The facilitator begins with a lecturette to the total group on giving and receiving feedback, based on the Johari Window Model Theory Sheet. Central to the lecturette, the facilitator will emphasize how decreasing the “Blind Spot” (the area unknown to self) and decreasing the “Facade” (the area unknown to
others) will increase the “Arena” (the area known to everyone), thereby fostering openness. The facilitator will also emphasize the role of meaningful feedback in this process.

2. Each participant is given a copy of the Johari Window Self-Rating Sheet and a pencil.

3. The facilitator suggests that one goal participants may have is to discover data about themselves that they were previously unaware of, i.e., “decreasing the Blind Spot.” The only way they can do this is to solicit feedback and to be receptive to it. In terms of the Johari Window Model, the vertical line will move to the right as the “Blind Spot” is decreased.

4. The facilitator illustrates the decreasing “Blind Spot” on newsprint using the following model:

5. The facilitator explains that a scale from one to nine runs across the top of the Self-Rating Sheets, describing the extent to which a person solicits feedback. The participants are asked to think about their last group meeting and about times when they wondered how they were being perceived by other group members.

6. Participants then are asked to look at the scale across the top of the blank window and to find a point on that scale that describes the extent to which they actually solicited feedback in that group session. The facilitator emphasizes that the participants are not rating how many times they felt the need for feedback but how many times they actually asked for it. The participants then are instructed to draw a vertical line to the bottom of the window from the point they have identified on the top scale.

7. The facilitator suggests that another goal they may have in the group setting is that of becoming more open by disclosing some of the data that they have kept from the group or by giving feedback to others, i.e., decreasing the “facade.” The facilitator illustrates how the horizontal line drops when the “facade” is decreased:
8. The facilitator tells the group to notice how as the “Blind Spot” and “Facade” decrease, the “Arena,” or openness to others, increases. He or she then asks them to look at their Johari Rating Sheets again and to notice on the left-hand margin a scale running from one to nine, measuring the extent to which a person discloses himself or herself, or gives feedback to the group. The facilitator asks the participants to think back again on their last group meeting(s) and remember how many times during that group session they felt the need to give feedback to other group members, express their own feelings and perceptions about themselves, or take a stand on group issues.

9. The participants are asked to locate on the scale at the left-hand margin the extent to which they actually gave feedback or disclosed themselves to the group. The facilitator emphasizes that they are to rate only the extent to which they actually gave feedback, not how many times they felt like doing so. When they have located the position on the scale they are to draw a horizontal line across the window pane.

10. At this point, the facilitator will illustrate the use of the Johari window by interpreting variously constructed windows.

11. The group or groups is divided into subgroups of three or four, depending upon the size of the group.

12. The facilitator asks the participants to take twenty to thirty minutes to share their windows with the members of their subgroups. They are to ask for feedback as to how they would have been rated in terms of soliciting and giving feedback, thus comparing self-ratings with others’ perceptions. When this exchange is complete, they are to begin to identify the forces in their groups that make it easy or difficult to solicit or give feedback. As a subgroup they are to make a list of these facilitating and inhibiting forces, taking about fifteen minutes to accomplish this task. The facilitator supplies newsprint and felt-tipped markers to each subgroup.

13. After approximately forty-five minutes, the facilitator asks the participants to reassemble and to share the information generated by the subgroups. The subgroups are asked to integrate their lists into a final list of forces and in this process discuss what steps the group wants to take in order to increase
facilitating forces and decrease inhibiting forces affecting the feedback process. The facilitator may wish to suggest that participants make contracts with one another as a method of increasing the exchange of feedback.
The process of giving and receiving feedback can be illustrated through a model called the Johari window. The window was originally developed by two psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, for their program in group process. The model can be looked upon as a communication window through which you give and receive information about yourself and others.

Looking at the four panes in terms of columns and rows, the two columns represent the self and the two rows represent the group. Column one contains “things that I know about myself;” column two contains “things that I do not know about myself.” Row one contains “things that the group knows about me;” row two contains “things that the group does not know about me.” The information contained in these rows and columns is not static but moves from one pane to another as the level of mutual trust and the exchange of feedback varies in the group. As a consequence of this movement, the size and shape of the panes within the window will vary.

The first pane, called the Arena, contains things that I know about myself and about which the group knows. It is an area characterized by free and open exchange of information between myself and others. The behavior here is public and available to everyone. The Arena increases in size as the level of trust increases between individuals or between the individual and his or her group and more information, particularly personally relevant information, is shared.

The second pane, the Blind Spot, contains information that I do not know about myself but of which the group may know. As I begin to participate in the group, I communicate all kinds of information of which I am not aware, but which is being picked up by other people. This information may be in the form of verbal cues, mannerisms, the way I say things, or the style in which I relate to others. The extent to which we are insensitive to much of our own behavior and what it may communicate to others can be quite surprising and disconcerting. For example, a group member once commented on that every time their facilitator was asked to comment on some personal or group issue, the facilitator always coughed before answering.

In pane three are things that I know about myself but of which the group is unaware. For one reason or another I keep this information hidden from them. My fear may be that if the group knew of my feelings, perceptions, and opinions about the group or individuals in the group, they might reject, attack, or hurt me in some way. As a consequence, I withhold this information. This pane is called the “Facade” or “Hidden Area.” One of the reasons I may keep this information to myself is that I do not see the supportive elements in the group. My assumption is that if I start revealing my feelings, thoughts, and reactions, group members might judge me negatively. I cannot find out, however, how members will really react unless I test

Requests to reprint the Johari Window model should be addressed to Mayfield Publishing Company in Mountain View, California.
these assumptions and reveal something of myself. In other words, if I do not take some risks, I will never learn the reality or unreality of my assumptions. On the other hand, I may keep certain kinds of information to myself when my motives for doing so are to control or manipulate others.

The last pane contains things that neither I nor the group knows about me. Some of this material may be so far below the surface that I may never become aware of it. Other material, however, may be below the surface of awareness to both myself and the group but can be made public through an exchange of feedback. This area is called the “Unknown” and may represent such things as intrapersonal dynamics, early childhood memories, latent potentialities, and unrecognized resources. Because the internal boundaries can move backward and forward or up and down as a consequence of soliciting or giving feedback, it would be possible to have a window in which there would be no Unknown. Because knowing all about oneself is extremely unlikely, the Unknown in the model illustrated is extended so that part of it will always remain unknown. If you are inclined to think in Freudian terms, you can call this extension the “Unconscious.”

One goal we may set for ourselves in the group setting is to decrease our Blind Spots, i.e., move the vertical line to the right. How can I reduce my Blind Spot? Because this area contains information that the group members know about me but of which I am unaware, the only way I can increase my awareness of this material is to get feedback from the group. As a consequence, I need to develop a receptive attitude to encourage group members to give me feedback. That is, I need to actively solicit feedback from group members in such a way that they will feel comfortable in giving it to me. The more I do this, the more the vertical line will move to the right.

Another goal we may set for ourselves, in terms of our model, is to reduce the Facade, i.e., move the horizontal line down. How can I reduce my Facade? Because this area contains information that I have been keeping from the group, I can reduce my Facade by giving feedback to the group or group members concerning my reactions to what is going on in the group and inside of me. In this instance, I am giving feedback or disclosing myself in terms of my perceptions, feelings, and opinions about things in myself and in others. Through this process the group knows where I stand and does not need to guess about or interpret what my behavior means. The more self-disclosure and feedback I give, the farther down I push the horizontal line.

You will notice that while we are reducing our Blind Spots and Facades through the process of giving and soliciting feedback, we are, at the same time, increasing the size of our Arena or public area.
JOHARI WINDOW MODEL

SELF
Solicits Feedback

Things I Know

Things I Don't Know

Things They Know

ARENA

BLIND SPOT

Things They Don't Know

FACADE
(Hidden Area)

UNKNOWN

GROUP
Self-Disclosure
or
Gives Feedback

UNCONSCIOUS
THE ART OF FEEDBACK: PROVIDING CONSTRUCTIVE INFORMATION

Goals
- To develop the participants’ understanding of how to give and receive feedback.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to practice giving and/or receiving feedback.
- To develop the participants’ understanding of the impact of receiving feedback.
- To develop the participants’ understanding of how the feedback process can help an individual or a work group to improve functioning.

Group Size
All members of an ongoing work group. A generally well-functioning group should be able to complete this activity without any major difficulties. However, because this feedback process poses a degree of risk, the facilitator is advised to ensure that the group is ready to handle it. If preparation is necessary, a trust-building activity can be useful.

Time Required
Approximately two and one-half hours.

Materials
- One copy of The Art of Feedback Principles for each participant.
- One copy of The Art of Feedback Guidelines for Feedback on Peer Behavior for each participant.
- One copy of The Art of Feedback Guidelines for Feedback on Subordinate Behavior for each participant.
- One copy of The Art of Feedback Guidelines for Feedback on Supervisor Behavior for each participant.
- Two pencils and two clipboards or other portable writing surfaces to be used by the group spokespersons (see steps 4 and 10) and by the supervisor (see step 7).
**Physical Setting**

A room in which the participants can work without distractions. A separate area should be provided so that one to three of the participants can work on tasks outside the main meeting room (see steps 4, 7, and 10).

**Process**

1. The facilitator introduces the activity by explaining the goals, distributes copies of the principles handout, and leads a discussion on the handout content. (Twenty minutes.)

2. *Feedback Round 1:* Each participant is given a copy of the guidelines for feedback on peer behavior. The facilitator asks for a volunteer who is willing to receive feedback from his or her peers on the three activities listed on this handout. The peers are told that they have fifteen minutes to prepare appropriate feedback and that they should select a spokesperson to give this feedback; they are given a pencil and a clipboard or other portable writing surface for the spokesperson’s use. Then the facilitator and the supervisor leave the room with the volunteer so that they can coach the volunteer on how to receive the upcoming feedback. (Fifteen minutes.)

3. The facilitator, the supervisor, and the volunteer return to the main meeting room. The facilitator asks the spokesperson to give the group’s feedback to the volunteer. The remaining participants are told to listen carefully to determine whether the spokesperson and the volunteer follow the principles for giving and receiving feedback, respectively. (Ten minutes.)

4. The facilitator assists the participants in evaluating the feedback, how it was given, and how it was received. First the spokesperson and the feedback recipient critique themselves; then the remaining participants are invited to contribute suggestions for ways in which the feedback process might have been improved. (Fifteen minutes.)

5. *Feedback Round 2:* Each participant is given a copy of the guidelines for feedback on subordinate behavior. The facilitator asks for a volunteer subordinate who is willing to receive the supervisor’s feedback on the three activities listed on the handout. The facilitator tells the supervisor that he or she has ten minutes to prepare appropriate feedback responses about the volunteer’s effectiveness in the three activities and gives the supervisor a pencil and a clipboard or other portable writing surface; then the supervisor leaves the room to complete the task. The facilitator stays in the main meeting room with the remaining participants and leads a discussion on how the volunteer can best receive the feedback. (Ten minutes.)

6. The supervisor is invited to return to the main meeting room and to give feedback to the volunteer. The remaining participants are instructed to listen and
determine whether the supervisor and the volunteer follow the principles for giving and receiving feedback, respectively. (Ten minutes.)

7. The group evaluates the feedback, how it was given, and how it was received. First the supervisor and the subordinate critique themselves; then the remaining participants offer comments. (Ten minutes.)

8. Feedback Round 3: Each participant is given a copy of the guidelines for feedback on supervisor behavior. All participants except the supervisor are instructed to work as a group to determine appropriate feedback for their supervisor with regard to the three activities listed on the sheet. The participants are also told to select a spokesperson to give this feedback to the supervisor (a different person from the one selected in step 2); the first spokesperson is told to give the pencil and clipboard or other portable writing surface to the new spokesperson. The facilitator tells the participants that they have ten minutes to complete this task, leaves the room with the supervisor, and coaches the supervisor on how to receive the upcoming feedback. (Ten minutes.)

9. The facilitator and the supervisor return to the main meeting room. The spokesperson gives the group’s feedback to the supervisor while the remaining participants listen and determine whether the principles for giving and receiving feedback are being followed. (Ten minutes.)

10. The group evaluates the feedback, how it was given, and how it was received. First the spokesperson and the supervisor critique themselves; then the remaining participants offer comments. (Ten minutes.)

11. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:
   - How did you feel while giving feedback? How did you feel while receiving feedback? Which would you rather do and why?
   - What interactions occurred among the members while determining what feedback to give? What patterns of giving and receiving feedback developed during the three feedback rounds?
   - What generalizations can be made about the effect of constructive feedback on the individual who receives it? What generalizations can be made about the effect on the work group that receives feedback?
   - How can the effect of feedback improve individual functioning? How can it improve group functioning?

12. The facilitator suggests that the participants keep their copies of the handout on principles of feedback and refer to them from time to time to refresh their understanding of the feedback process. The facilitator also suggests that the participants repeat this process periodically to improve group functioning.
Variations

- The feedback rounds may be presented in a different order: (1) supervisor as recipient, (2) subordinate as recipient, and (3) peer as recipient. This order works well when subordinates are more accustomed to giving feedback to their supervisor than to one another. Also, this design alternative offers the advantage of allowing the supervisor to model the appropriate receiving of feedback.

- In addition to the feedback provided by the spokesperson during the peer-feedback step, each participant may be asked to provide the recipient with individual feedback.

- The activity may be continued by repeating the feedback process for each participant who has not yet received feedback. Feedback may be given either by the supervisor or by a peer.

- At the conclusion of the activity, the facilitator may assist the participants in developing an action plan covering what they will do with the feedback they heard and what they can do in the future with the feedback process.

- To shorten the activity, one focus may be chosen: supervisor, subordinate, or peer.

THE ART OF FEEDBACK PRINCIPLES

Definitions of Feedback

Constructive feedback is information that helps people to decide whether their behaviors have had the intended effects.

Positive feedback is information that reinforces desired behaviors and encourages repetition of those behaviors by communicating that they had the intended effects.

Negative feedback is information that discourages behaviors by communicating that they did not have the intended effects.

Principles of Giving Feedback

1. Be sure that your intention is to be helpful.
2. If the recipient has not asked for feedback, check to see whether he or she is open to it.
3. Deal only with behavior that can be changed.
4. Deal with specific behavior, not generalities.
5. Describe the behavior; do not evaluate it.
6. Let the recipient know the impact that the behavior has on you.
7. Use an “I statement” to accept responsibility for your own perceptions and emotions.
8. Check to make sure that the recipient understood your message in the way you intended it.
9. Encourage the recipient to check the feedback with other people.

Principles of Receiving Feedback

1. When you ask for feedback, be specific in describing the behavior about which you want the feedback.
2. Try not to act defensively or rationalize the behavior at issue.
3. Summarize your understanding of the feedback that you receive.
4. Share your thoughts and feelings about the feedback.
THE ART OF FEEDBACK GUIDELINES FOR
FEEDBACK ON PEER BEHAVIOR

The peer is to be given feedback on how effective he or she is at the following activities:

1. Contributing during team meetings

2. Supporting and encouraging other team members

3. Working for the good of the team (instead of just for himself or herself)
THE ART OF FEEDBACK GUIDELINES FOR
FEEDBACK ON SUBORDINATE BEHAVIOR

The subordinate is to be given feedback on how effective he or she is at the following activities:

1. Completing work accurately and on time

2. Working without close supervision

3. Problem solving with fellow team members
The supervisor is to be given feedback on how effective he or she is at the following activities:

1. Communicating expectations and task instructions

2. Listening when a subordinate presents a problem

3. Praising a subordinate or providing suggestions for improvement when appropriate
PARTY CONVERSATIONS: A FIRO ROLE-PLAY

Goals
- To experiment with different types of interpersonal behavior.
- To demonstrate the concepts in Schutz’s theory of interpersonal relations.

Group Size
Four to twelve participants.

Time Required
Approximately two and one-half hours.

Materials
- A copy of the FIRO-B is required for each participant.¹
- Party Conversations Instruction Sheets I, II, and III, one role for each participant. Each role is printed on a separate card or slip of paper.
- Pencils.

Physical Setting
Participants are seated in a semicircle.

Process
1. The facilitator administers the FIRO-B to all participants.
2. When the instrument has been completed, the facilitator gives a lecturette on Schutz’s theory of interpersonal relations.
3. The facilitator explains the FIRO-B scoring system and asks participants to predict their own scores. The facilitator may choose to have participants also predict one another’s scores.
4. The facilitator directly the scoring. Results are shared within the group on a voluntary basis.
5. The facilitator explains that participants will engage in three sets of a role play that allow them to experience the theory concepts. He or she describes the role-play situation: a party setting with individuals who have just met one another.

6. The facilitator distributes the role-play cards for Party Conversations Instruction Sheet I, adjusting the roles to the number of participants. For example, if only four participants are involved, roles 1 through 4 would be assigned. If twelve participants are involved, each of the six roles would be duplicated.

7. The facilitator tells the participants that they have fifteen minutes to interact.

8. After the interactions, the facilitator explains to the participants that their roles focused on the inclusion dimension. He or she leads a discussion of the inclusion behaviors that occurred during the first set of role plays.

9. The facilitator follows the same procedure for Party Conversations Instruction Sheets II and III (control and affection dimensions).

10. The facilitator asks the participants to discuss their views of themselves and others in terms of the interpersonal dimensions illustrated in the role-play activities.

11. The facilitator directs a discussion of the relationships between the FIRO-B profiles and the behavior that was observed in the role-play activity.

**Variations**

- Each participant may ask another participant to provide feedback for him or her following the role play.

- The experience may be done within a group-on-group situation, with some participants engaging in the party conversation while others function as observers to identify behaviors illustrating the three dimensions.

- With groups of six or more, the three types of behavior can be role played simultaneously.

- Instrument other than the FIRO-B can become the basis for the activity.

- The FIRO-B could be administered following the role play (but prior to the discussion).

**REFERENCES**


Submitted by Charles L. Kormanski.
PARTY CONVERSATIONS INSTRUCTION SHEET I (INCLUSION)

Role 1
During the social gathering you are to act as host, attempting to get everyone involved in conversation with one another.

Role 2
During the social gathering you are to invite one or more persons to join you in some activity.

Role 3
During the social gathering you are to act bored and uninterested in the conversation. You are to act as if you would prefer to be doing something else.

Role 4
During the social gathering you are merely to listen to those speaking. If asked questions, give short, friendly answers.

Role 5
During the social gathering you are to resist getting involved in the activities of others by talking about how busy you are.

Role 6
During the social gathering you are to initiate a conversation about a recent book you have read, movie you have seen, or place you have been.
PARTY CONVERSATIONS INSTRUCTION SHEET II (CONTROL)

Role 1
You are to get the party organized by suggesting an activity in which all will take part.

Role 2
You are to get the party organized by polling participants on their wants and getting consensus on an activity.

Role 3
You are to attempt to impress others by constantly describing things you have done and places you have been.

Role 4
You are to resist actively any efforts to organize the party.

Role 5
You are to go along with and support any suggestions that are made.

Role 6
You are to ask for leadership and to complain about the lack of structure.
PARTY CONVERSATIONS INSTRUCTION SHEET III (AFFECTION)

**Role 1**
You are to express liking and/or caring to those persons with whom you would like to have a close, personal relationship.

**Role 2**
You are to act cool and distant with others.

**Role 3**
You are to act friendly and personable. You deal with others on the level of feelings and willingly share your emotions with others.

**Role 4**
You are to show interest in developing friendships with others, but you prefer to do so on an intellectual level. You avoid dealing with feelings.

**Role 5**
You are to act friendly and to initiate physical contact with people.

**Role 6**
You are to act somewhat quiet and shy. You like people and interpersonal interactions, but you take time to get close to people.
THE PORTRAIT GAME: INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK

Goals

- To allow participants to receive a composite feedback picture from the members of their group as a departure from single-source individual feedback.
- To provide an opportunity for participants to compare their individual perceptions of how the group is experiencing their behavior with the reality of the group’s experience.
- To develop skills in giving and receiving constructive feedback.

Group Size

No more than nine participants.

Time Required

A minimum of twenty minutes per participant. (Approximately two and one-half hours for a group of six participants if each wishes to participate.)

Materials

- Sheets of newsprint, felt-tipped marker, and masking tape.

Physical Setting

A comfortable, intimate room with a place to display the “portraits” so that everyone can see them.

Process

1. The facilitator explains that group members will have an opportunity to request individual feedback from the entire group. They may choose to have the feedback “heavy” or “light,” depending upon how comfortable they feel with receiving feedback data or the nature of the risk they are willing to take. They need neither to give nor to receive feedback if they do not wish to. The facilitator also suggests that participants can wait to make this decision after the experience has begun if they wish.

2. The facilitator chooses a secretary to write down the feedback (perhaps a member who is not willing to receive feedback at this time) or may decide to perform this function himself or herself. Should the secretary later decide to
participate, a member who has already received feedback could take the secretarial role for a round.

3. The facilitator asks a member who is ready to receive feedback to instruct the group to give him or her “heavy” or “light” feedback and to leave the room. The individual is instructed to use this time to make notes on what he or she expects to hear from the others.

4. The facilitator explains that the rest of the group will concentrate on the member who just left the room and that they will individually verbalize their feedback when they are ready. Each statement will be written down by the secretary. The facilitator cautions the participants that they may not comment on what was said by others but that they may enlarge upon previous statements or provide comments in opposition to what has been previously stated. This session will be halted by the facilitator after ten to fifteen minutes.

5. The facilitator invites the participant who left the room to return. The participant is asked to read the statements aloud and to ask for further explanation on certain statements if he or she wishes. The facilitator says that he or she may comment on individual statements or on the portrait as a whole, sharing his or her predictions. Interactions between the participant and the group are allowed at this time.

6. The facilitator asks for another participant to instruct the group and leave the room. The experience is over after all the participants who wish to take part have received their feedback.

7. The facilitator leads a discussion of the experience, focusing on the diversity of the individual members, how it feels to receive positive or negative feedback, or other concepts relevant to the particular group.

**Variations**

- The person who is the subject of the feedback session may leave the group but stay in the room, so that he or she can overhear what is said.
- Instead of verbal feedback, individual remaining members may write feedback messages to the person. These may then be discussed in his or her absence, and a composite portrait may emerge. The individual receives the slips of paper as well as the consensus.
- Two persons may solicit feedback on their relationship from all of the rest of the group.
- Cassette tape recordings of the discussion may be made so that the members can later listen to what was said about them.

Submitted by Ferdinand Maire.
FEEDBACK ON NONVERBAL AND VERBAL BEHAVIORS: BUILDING COMMUNICATION AWARENESS

Goals
- To enhance the participants’ awareness of their own and others’ nonverbal and verbal communication patterns.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to give and receive feedback about their communication patterns.

Group Size
Four subgroups of three to five participants each.

Time Required
Approximately two hours and forty-five minutes.

Materials
- Approximately fifty 3” x 5” index cards. (During step 2 and again during step 7, each member of each subgroup is given enough index cards to equal the number of other subgroup members. For example, if a subgroup has five members, each member is given four cards during step 2 and four cards during step 7.)
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough so that the members of each subgroup may sit in a circle and work without disturbing any other subgroups. Movable chairs should be provided for the participants.

Process
1. The facilitator reviews the goals and assembles the participants into four subgroups of three to five members each. The members of each subgroup are instructed to be seated in a circle; to put all of their personal materials under their chairs; and to refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, and talking until further notice.
2. After ten minutes each participant is given a pencil and the appropriate number of 3" x 5" index cards.

3. The facilitator states that when people congregate, they communicate, whether intentionally or not, and that this phenomenon was obvious during step 1, even though the participants were instructed not to talk to one another. Each participant is asked to write the names of the other members of his or her subgroup on the index cards, using a different card for each member, and to write one sentence on each card that describes a nonverbal communication behavior displayed by that member during step 1. The following examples of nonverbal communication behaviors are mentioned: smiling, frowning, giggling, drumming fingers, adjusting clothing, tapping a foot, pulling a beard, and twisting hair. The facilitator stresses the rules for giving feedback about behavior and asks the participants to ensure that they adhere to these rules in completing this step:
   - Feedback must have to do with the matter at hand (in this case, nonverbal communication behaviors that were observed as opposed to other kinds of behaviors).
   - Feedback must be descriptive and specific (for example, “Tom scowled” rather than “Tom was angry”).
   - Feedback must be constructive. The purpose is to inform and enlighten, not to embarrass.
   - Any behaviors mentioned must be ones that the recipient of the feedback is capable of changing, if he or she chooses to do so.

   (Twenty minutes.)

4. The participants are instructed to distribute the completed cards face down to the subgroup members described. All participants are cautioned not to look at the cards received until instructed to do so.

5. The facilitator explains that the members of each subgroup are to take turns completing this procedure: The member turns over his or her cards, silently reads them, and selects one behavior that is of particular interest. For example, the member may choose a behavior about which he or she would like advice, further explanation, or opinions about what the behavior implies. Then the member reads the card aloud to the subgroup, elicits whatever information he or she would like (but avoids arguing about or justifying the behavior), and makes a final comment about his or her reaction to the feedback. The remaining members keep their cards face down until their respective turns. After answering questions about this procedure, the facilitator informs the participants that they have forty minutes in which to complete this task and asks the subgroups to begin.
6. At the end of the forty-minute period, the facilitator calls time and asks the participants to remain where they are and to take a five-minute break before the next phase of the activity.

7. The facilitator again distributes index cards, ensuring that each participant receives the same number of cards as before.

8. The participants are asked to repeat the tasks involved in steps 3 through 5, concentrating this time on verbal communication behaviors displayed during the five-minute break. The following examples of verbal communication behaviors are given: “I” statements that indicate an internal focus, such as “I hated that activity”; “you” or “we” statements that indicate an external focus, such as “You didn’t say very much” or “We seemed to be hesitant to talk”; statements about internal feelings, such as “I was nervous”; specific or concrete statements such as “Joe got a lot of feedback” versus abstract comments such as “That was interesting”; and statements that question motive, such as “Why do you suppose we were asked to do this?” (Fifty minutes.)

9. The total group is reconvened for a concluding discussion based on the following questions:
   - What were your reactions to giving and receiving feedback?
   - Which kind of feedback was more difficult to deal with—feedback about nonverbal behaviors or feedback about verbal behaviors? In what way was it more difficult?
   - What conclusions can you draw about yourself from your nonverbal and verbal behaviors?
   - What conclusions can you draw about communication behavior in general?
   - What changes would you like to make in your communication behavior? How might you accomplish these changes? What obstacles might stand in your way?
   - What might be the benefits of changing your communication behavior?

Variations

- The activity may be shortened by focusing exclusively on either nonverbal or verbal communication behavior.
- After step 9 the participants may be asked to reassemble into their subgroups either for planning behavioral changes or for practice on desired behaviors.

Submitted by Gilles L. Talbot.
GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK: CONTRACTING FOR NEW BEHAVIOR

Goals
- To provide an opportunity for members of a personal-growth group to give and receive feedback on their in-group behavior.
- To enable participants to set behavioral goals for the remainder of the group experience.

Group Size
Eight to twelve members of an ongoing personal-growth group.

Time Required
Approximately three hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Giving and Receiving Feedback Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room with a hard floor or other flat surfaces to facilitate writing tasks.

Process
1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity and distributes a copy of the Giving and Receiving Feedback Work Sheet and a pencil to each participant. (Two to three minutes.)
2. The facilitator announces that each individual participant is to make a roster of the group, rank ordered according to one dimension that is personally meaningful, e.g., liking, similarity, comfort, power in the group, growth so far. In a separate column beside each name, participants are to write characteristics of each member as they have been exhibited in the group so far and their reactions to these behaviors. (Twenty minutes.)
3. Each person is then directed to write predictions of what his or her feedback will be. (Ten minutes.)
4. The participants take turns publishing their data. Recipients of feedback record data relating to them in the last spaces on their work sheets. (Thirty minutes.)

5. After all members have completed giving feedback, they are instructed to consider the feedback that they have given, focusing on the perceptual biases in it. The facilitator then leads a discussion of these biases. (Twenty minutes.)

6. The participants are instructed to analyze the differences between their actual and their predicted feedback. (Thirty minutes.)

7. The facilitator focuses on each member in turn, discussing feedback gaps, trends, reactions (surprises, affirmations, puzzlements, etc.). Each individual is then asked to move out of the group while the rest write a prescription for his or her participation during the remainder of the group’s life. The individual returns and negotiates planned new behavior and support for experimentation. (One hour.)

8. A practice session using the new behavior is held. Each member announces what he or she is going to do in the group and contracts with the other group members for their help in this effort. (Thirty minutes.)

Variations

- Feedback can be limited to adjectives, critical incidents, one trait, etc.
- For step 2, the participants can write the names of group members along a continuum.
- Instead of writing in names, each person can physically arrange the group members on a continuum.
- Instead of group prescriptions, pairs can be formed to contract for new behavior.
- Headbands can be used for the practice sessions, with the planned new behaviors written on them.

Submitted by John E. Jones.
**GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK WORK SHEET**

*Instructions:* Select a dimension on which you believe that members of this group are different, for example, how much you like them, how similar they are to you, how comfortable you are with them, how influential they are in the group, how much they have grown so far, etc. Write the name of your chosen dimension here.

Next, rank order all the members of the group (including yourself) on this dimension. Put the “highs” at the top and the “lows” at the bottom. To the right of each name, write adjectives that describe that person’s behavior in the group so far and your reactions to that behavior.

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<tr>
<th>Group members in rank order</th>
<th>How I have seen this person in the group so far</th>
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Next, write your predictions of what each person will say about you.

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<th>Group member</th>
<th>How I predict this person will see me in the group</th>
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Finally, as group members publish their lists, write down how each member ranked you, the dimension, and how that member saw you in the group.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group member</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>How this person has seen me in the group so far</th>
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LINES: UNDERSTANDING GOALS AND PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

Goals

- To demonstrate the characteristics of effective feedback and how it influences performance.
- To illustrate the differences in performance based on receiving no feedback, partial feedback, and full feedback.

Group Size

Twelve to fifteen participants, divided into three subgroups of four or five members each.

Time Required

One hour to one and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Lines Characteristics of Effective Feedback Sheet for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped markers for each subgroup.
- A blindfold for each subgroup.
- A yardstick for the manager of each subgroup.
- A copy of the Lines Recording Sheet and a pencil for the manager of each subgroup.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for the manager of each subgroup.
- A copy of the Lines Observer Sheet and a pencil for each subordinate.
- A newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped marker for the facilitator.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting

A room large enough to accommodate the three groups, so that each group can work without disturbing the others.
**Process**

1. The facilitator explains that the participants will be working in groups and will need to quickly select three “managers” to lead three groups of “subordinates.”

2. As soon as the managers are identified, they are asked to select four subordinates each. (Five minutes.)

3. The facilitator asks all subordinates to stay in their groups at one end of the room and to discuss what “good feedback” is. The facilitator takes the managers to another part of the room where they cannot be overheard by the subordinates.

4. The facilitator introduces the activity to the managers: “This activity is designed to help distinguish between different types of feedback and to identify the characteristics of effective performance feedback. The task of each subordinate, in turn, will be to draw five 24-inch (61 cm) lines, one at a time, while blindfolded.”

5. The facilitator assigns each manager to give one of the three types of feedback, as follows:
   - The “no feedback” manager will measure and record each line and simply say “continue with the next line” or “that is the last one, thank you.”
   - The “partial feedback” manager will measure and record each line and say only “too long” or “too short,” depending on the actual length of the line.
   - The “full feedback” manager will measure and record each line and tell the subordinate exactly how long the line is. The manager will encourage and compliment each subordinate as his or her lines get closer to the goal of 24 inches.
   (Ten minutes.)

6. After providing each manager with a newsprint flip chart, felt-tipped markers, a blindfold, a yardstick, a Lines Recording Sheet, and a pencil, the facilitator assigns each manager and his or her “subordinates” to a specific area of the room. (Five minutes.)

7. Each subordinate is given a copy of the Lines Observer Sheet and a pencil.

8. The facilitator tells the managers to begin the activity. Each manager takes the following actions:
   - Invites one subordinate at a time to come to the flip chart.
   - Explains to the subordinate that the goal is to draw five lines, each 24 inches (61 cm) long.
   - Shows the subordinate the newsprint flip chart, gives the subordinate a felt-tipped marker, blindfolds the subordinate, and tells the subordinate to begin by drawing his or her first line.
• Measures and records each line as it is drawn and records it on the Lines Recording Sheet.

• Provides the assigned type of feedback.

(Five minutes.)

9. Each manager continues the process until all subordinates have completed five lines each. (Ten to twenty minutes.)

10. The total group is reassembled. The facilitator reviews the goals of the activity and states how each group differed in the nature of its feedback. The facilitator totals the number of “successful” (i.e., 23-25 inches long) lines for each group, lists the results on newsprint, and discusses the results. The following chart may be created:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>No Feedback</td>
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<td>Partial Feedback</td>
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<td>Full Feedback</td>
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(Five minutes.)

11. The facilitator begins a discussion by asking the subordinates to report on what they observed. As key feelings and ideas are identified, the facilitator writes them next to the appropriate group’s graphed results. The facilitator then asks the following questions:

• *The no feedback group.* How did you feel about your performance? How did you feel about your manager? What similar feelings have you experienced on the job? What are some examples?

• *The partial feedback group.* How did you feel about your performance? How did you feel about your manager? What similar feelings have you experienced on the job? What are some examples?

• *The full feedback group.* How did you feel about your performance? How did you feel about your manager? What similar feelings have you experienced on the job? What are some examples?

(Fifteen to twenty minutes.)

12. The facilitator leads a discussion of the characteristics of effective feedback and lists them on newsprint as each is identified. (The Lines Characteristics of Effective Feedback Sheet may be distributed to the participants at the end of the discussion.) (Ten minutes.)

13. The facilitator asks the following questions:
What ramifications do you see in setting goals without providing feedback on goal progress?

How would you vary the kind and amount of feedback under different conditions, for example, with a new employee or one who is learning a new task or with an experienced, motivated employee?

What implications does this activity have for managers? What implications does this activity have in other roles you play?

How and to whom could you improve your feedback? What, specifically, will you do to start? How will you ensure that you will follow through in providing effective feedback?

(Ten to fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- Allow the full feedback manager to provide ongoing coaching to his or her subordinates (e.g., as the subordinate draws a line, the manager says “a little longer . . . stop!”).

- Diameters of circles or sides of squares, rectangles, or triangles can be drawn instead of lines.

- Participants can create action plans for improving their feedback with specific individuals. They may share their plans with partners.

Submitted by Michael R. Larsen.
### LINES RECORDING SHEET

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Subordinate 1</th>
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LINES OBSERVER SHEET

Please make notes on the following information as you watch the other subordinates in your group attempt to complete the task.

1. How would you describe the feedback given by your manager?

2. How did subordinates in your group respond to the feedback? What emotions did you detect?

3. How did the feedback seem to affect performance?

4. If you were the manager, how would you give feedback differently?
LINES CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK SHEET

Effective feedback is

1. **Specific.** It is explicit, free from ambiguity, and quantitative, whenever possible.

2. **Behavioral.** It is descriptive of what has been seen or heard or of results that have been evaluated thoroughly.

3. **Timely.** It is delivered soon after the performance.

4. **Frequent.** Regular feedback helps the performer to reach the desired standard of performance more quickly. It builds accountability.

5. **Balanced.** We need feedback both when performance is desirable (to help us sustain the effort) and when it is undesirable (so that we can take appropriate corrective actions).

6. **Constructive.** Feedback, particularly on undesirable performance, should be delivered in a supportive manner.

7. **Relevant.** Not all of a person’s work is equally important. Most feedback should be reserved for more critical accountabilities. Its focus should be on end results or, at least, on progress toward results, not on the means of achieving them. Discussion of other issues should be avoided; it dilutes the primary feedback.

8. **Accurate.** A manager’s evaluation of a subordinate’s performance must be relatively precise. An accurate assessment of performance builds mutual trust and the manager’s credibility.
PETER-PAUL: GETTING ACQUAINTED

Goals
- To help group members get acquainted quickly in a relatively nonthreatening manner.
- To explore feelings generated by “becoming another person.”
- To explore the dimensions of a brief encounter.
- To emphasize the need for careful, active listening during conversation.

Group Size
Even-numbered groups of eight to twenty persons.

Time Required
Minimum of ten minutes plus two minutes per group member.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for participants to converse freely in pairs, with a circle of chairs for the whole group, one chair per member.

Process
1. Group members are paired, and the facilitator instructs participants to “get to know your partner” for the next few minutes (5-10). Participants take turns interviewing each other, without note-taking. They are instructed to avoid demographic data (where you are from, what is your job, etc.) and to try to find out what kinds of characteristics the interviewee has. This is an exercise in active listening, so participants should paraphrase often to make sure that they are hearing what is intended (e.g., “What I hear you saying is . . .”). The person being interviewed should not volunteer too much; the interviewer should have to work at finding out who the interviewee is.
2. After the interviewing phase, group members reassemble, seated in a circle. The facilitator indicates that they now have the responsibility of introducing their partner to their group. Each group member, in turn, is to stand behind his or her partner, with hands on the partner’s shoulders, and introduce the partner by speaking in the first person, as if the interviewer were that partner. There should be no rechecking between partners during this phase. The individual who is being introduced should “hold comments” for the discussion period. Both the
interviewer and the interviewee should have eye contact with the “audience.” Optional: The person being introduced may be asked immediately afterwards to share his or her reactions to the experience.

3. After all of the introductions have been made, the facilitator leads a discussion of the activity, focusing on feelings generated and/or the issues inherent in the goals of the activity.

The title of this exercise comes from the idea that when Peter talks about Paul, he says as much about Peter as he does about Paul. Citing this idea during the processing of the activity promotes discussion about the imposed values and selective perceptions inherent in the interview questions as well as those inherent in the ordering and weighting during the introduction.
NOT LISTENING: A PAIRED ROLE PLAY

Goals
- To allow participants to experience the frustration of not being heard.
- To promote listening readiness.

Group Size
Unlimited numbers of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately thirty minutes.

Materials
- For each pair, copies of the two roles to be played.
- Newsprint and felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
A room large enough for the pairs to confront each other in their respective roles, with minimum disturbance of other pairs.

Process
Note: This activity is intended to be the first activity in a training event. It should be followed by a success experience in effective listening.

1. The facilitator discusses the goals of the activity.
2. The group forms pairs, and the facilitator gives each pair a copy of each role. These may be devised by the facilitator; or Not-Listening Role-Briefing Sheets (Option No. 1 or Option No. 2) may be used.
3. The pairs then have about three minutes to study their roles.
4. All pairs should begin the activity at the same time.
5. The facilitator makes sure that paired participants are not listening to each other and confronts those participants who appear to be doing so.
6. When the facilitator feels that the group is experiencing maximal frustration (usually indicated by a sharp, sustained increase in noise), the activity is stopped.
7. The remaining time is spent listing participants’ responses to the frustration. The group discusses these observations.

**Variations**

- Participants can develop their own role-play situations.
- Trios can be used, with the third person acting as an observer/judge, who notes evidence of frustration and enforces the “no-listening” rule.
- As a part of step 3, the total group can be divided in half with all participants in each half preparing to play the same role. Subgroups can be formed to rehearse the role play.

Submitted by H. B. Karp.
NOT LISTENING ROLE-BRIEFING SHEET (Option No. 1)

Chief Purchasing Agent

You have just been hired as the chief purchasing agent of a large corporation. Your title is Vice-President of Purchasing. You have a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard, have headed a presidential advisory board, and have published two books in your field. You see that the best way to bring order out of chaos is to centralize the purchasing operations, quickly! You have decided that any purchase over $10,000 must be approved by the head office. You realize that the independent purchasing power of each plant has been jealously guarded. You are also aware that the peak buying season starts in three weeks.

You have decided that the only way to put this policy in operation, in time is to visit each plant general manager, inform the manager of your plan, explain why it is necessary, and insist that it must be followed. You know you are going to meet some stiff opposition; however, you are the expert, and you have the power. You are determined you will not be sidetracked by minor objections; you are the only one who knows the total picture.

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General Manager

You are the general manager of the second largest plant in a large corporation. You just received a memo from the home office that a new chief purchasing agent has been hired, and the word is that the agent may try to centralize the purchasing operation. Although this plan might look good on paper, you know that the strength of the corporation has always been its flexibility. The key to this flexibility has been management development and autonomous plant decisions.

You are aware that, if this new policy takes effect, it will not only reduce the plant’s flexibility, but it will signal an end to the power now held by general managers.

You are determined that the chief purchasing agent will not enforce this new policy. The agent probably means well but just does not understand the situation at your plant. After all, you have twenty-seven years’ experience and you are much more competent than anyone else to make decisions affecting this plant. You know you will have to make your points quickly and decisively when you see the agent. Who is boss at this location must be clear. Your prestige with your subordinate managers rests on the outcome of this meeting.
NOT LISTENING ROLE-BRIEFING SHEET (Option No. 2)

**Client**

You have just moved into the city to begin a job with a small local business. On arriving two days ago, you were informed by this company that your position had to be dropped. You are now unemployed, and your funds are running out. To make matters worse, your youngest child awoke this morning with a temperature of 103 degrees. You called the company again, but all they could suggest was that you contact your Neighborhood Assistance Center.

You are about to talk to a case worker to get help. You are quite upset, and you feel you have no time to waste in small talk. You must make the case worker understand the seriousness of your situation. You feel that the staff member’s sole concern should be to get you the help you need immediately.

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**Case Worker**

You have been a case worker for two months at the Neighborhood Assistance Center. One of the biggest problems you face in your job is that most of the people you try to help have preset notions about what you should do for them.

You feel very strongly that the best solution to this problem is to inform a client precisely what services the Center does offer. Then the client will be in a much better position to be helped.

Furthermore, you resent those clients who make demands rather than ask you for your help and advice. After all, you are the professional.

Therefore, at the beginning of any interview, you make sure that each client knows (1) that you are in a position to know what is best for helping that person and (2) exactly what the various services of the Neighborhood Center are.
RUMOR CLINIC: A COMMUNICATIONS EXPERIMENT

Goal
- To illustrate distortions that may occur in transmission of information from an original source through several individuals to a final destination.

Group Size
Unlimited. There should be a minimum of eight participants.

Time Required
Thirty minutes.

Materials
- Copies of the Rumor-Clinic Observation Form for process observers.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
- A meeting room. All observers are seated facing an area where the rumor clinic is staged.
- A separate room in which volunteers can be isolated.

Process
1. The facilitator asks for six volunteers. (The rest of the group remains to act as process observers.)
2. Five of the six volunteers are asked to go into the isolation room. One remains in the meeting room with the facilitator and the observers.
3. The facilitator distributes Rumor-Clinic Observation Forms to the observers, who are to take notes on the proceedings.
4. The facilitator then reads the “accident report” or the Observation Form to the volunteer, who may not take notes.
5. The facilitator asks a volunteer in the isolation room to return.
6. The first volunteer repeats to the second what was heard from the facilitator. It is important that each volunteer transmit the message in his or her own way, without help.
7. A third volunteer returns, and the second repeats what he or she heard from the first.

8. The process is repeated until all volunteers but the sixth have had the message transmitted to them.

9. Then the sixth volunteer returns to the room. That person is told to assume the role of police officer. The fifth participant repeats the message to the police officer. Afterwards, the police officer writes the message on newsprint so the group can read it.

10. The facilitator then posts the original message (previously prepared on newsprint) so it can be compared with the police officer’s version.

11. Observers are asked to report their notes. Volunteers then discuss their experience. The facilitator leads a discussion with the entire group on implications of the Rumor Clinic.

Variations

- The succession of messages can be recorded (either audio or video) for replay during the processing.

- The message can be rewritten to be more pertinent to the particular group.

- The entire group can be used as conveyors of messages. (No observers are then used.) Subgroups of six are formed, and five persons from each subgroup are sent to the isolation room. The facilitator reads the message to the remaining participants. One member from each subgroup is brought back into the meeting room at the same time to receive the message. The final members simultaneously write the message for all to see.
RUMOR-CLINIC OBSERVATION FORM

Accident Report: “I cannot wait to report this accident to the police. I must get to the hospital as soon as possible.

“The delivery truck, heading south, was turning right at the intersection when the sports car, heading north, attempted to turn left. When they saw that they were turning into the same lane, they both honked their horns but continued to turn without slowing down. In fact, the sports car seemed to be accelerating just before the crash.”

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LISTENING TRIOS:
BUILDING COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

Goals
- To develop skills in active listening.
- To study barriers to effective listening.

Group Size
Unlimited number of trios.

Time Required
Approximately forty-five minutes.

Materials
- One copy of the Listening Trios Topics for Discussion Sheet for each participant.
- One copy of the Listening Trios Questions for Discussion Sheet for each participant.

Physical Setting
Room large enough for trios to be seated apart to avoid noise interference.

Process
1. The facilitator briefly discusses the goals of the activity.
2. Trios are formed.
3. Participants in each trio identify themselves as A, B, or C.
4. The facilitator distributes copies of the Listening Trios Topics for Discussion Sheet.
5. The following instructions are given by the facilitator:
   - Participant A is the first speaker and chooses the topic to be discussed from those listed.
   - Participant B is the first listener.
   - Participant C is the first referee.
The topic chosen is to be discussed by the speaker. It is important that the speaker be sensitive to the capacity of the listener. The listener and speaker can establish nonverbal cues for pacing the discussion.

- The listener must summarize in his or her own words and without notes.
- If the summary is thought to be incorrect, both the speaker and the referee are free to interrupt and correct any misunderstanding.
- The referee is to make certain that the listener does not omit, distort, add to, respond to, or interpret what the speaker has said.
- The total process of speaking and summarizing shall take seven minutes in each round.

6. Round 1 is begun. The facilitator stops the process after seven minutes and responds to procedural questions.

7. Participant B then becomes the speaker, participant C the listener, and participant A the referee. The new speaker chooses a topic and begins. Round 2 should also take seven minutes.

8. Then C becomes the speaker, A the listener, and B the referee. After seven minutes, the discussion in round 3 ends.

9. The facilitator distributes copies of the Listening Trios Questions for Discussion Sheet, and trios discuss their process. Then generalizations about barriers to effective listening are elicited from the entire group.

**Variations**

- Topics for discussion may be generated within the group. The facilitator may ask, “What are some topics about which there is likely to be disagreement within this group?” Suggestions are posted for use in the activity.

- Participant expectations about the training event can be discussed within the listening trios format.

- Instead of only one speaker during each of the three rounds, there can be two speakers. Each must paraphrase what he or she hears before responding. (The role of referee rotates from round to round.)

- Instead of telling the speaker what is heard, the listener can report what he or she remembers to the referee, with the speaker free to interrupt.

- A fourth round can be added, in which each of the participants both speaks about and listens to another topic. This three-way conversation is a practice session for using what is learned in the earlier rounds.

- Whenever two participants do not seem to be speaking and/or listening effectively to each other, the facilitator may referee or ask the entire group to referee.
During round 1, the listener can be instructed to “parrot” the speaker, repeating word-for-word. In the second round the listener paraphrases, and in the third round the listener reflects the feelings being expressed by the speaker. A final round incorporates all three listening modes.
LISTENING TRIOS TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION SHEET

Each speaker chooses one topic.

1. Capital punishment
2. Prison reform
3. Drug use and abuse
4. Women’s liberation
5. Foreign policy
6. Ecology
7. The new morality
8. Interracial marriage
9. Premarital and extramarital sex
10. Cohabitation
11. All-volunteer army
12. Political reform
13. Divorce
14. Homosexuality
15. The open classroom
16. The profit motive
LISTENING TRIOS QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION SHEET

Instructions: Please use this discussion sheet to guide the discussion within your trio. Make notes to share with the whole group later.

1. What difficulties did you experience in each of the roles—speaker, listener, and referee?

2. What barriers to effective listening emerged during the activity?

3. What did you learn about the effectiveness of your self-expression?

4. What applications might you make of this paraphrasing technique?
ACTIVE LISTENING: A COMMUNICATION-SKILLS PRACTICE

Goals
- To identify the emotional messages that are often hidden in communication.
- To gain practice in active-listening skills.

Group Size
An unlimited number of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- Two copies of the Active Listening Work Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Active Listening Feedback Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting
An area in which the pairs can talk without disturbing one another.

Process
1. The facilitator gives a lecturette on active-listening skills, emphasizing that people communicate much more than words or ideas and that strong feelings often lie behind the words. He or she points out the confusion that often results from the difference between “think” and “feel” and the nonverbal cues that can reveal feelings that are not verbalized.

2. The facilitator divides the group into pairs and directs that each pair is to identify one member as the employee and the other as the supervisor.

3. The facilitator gives a copy of the Active Listening Work Sheet and a pencil to each participant. He or she reviews the instructions and tells the participants that they will have twenty minutes in which to complete the activity.

4. After twenty minutes, the facilitator calls time. He or she distributes a second copy of the Active Listening Work Sheet to each participant and directs the
participants to reverse roles and repeat the activity with different members playing the supervisor and the employee.

5. After twenty minutes, the facilitator calls time and reassembles the total group. He or she gives each participant a copy of the Active Listening Feedback Sheet and then reviews the suggested responses with the participants. Any questions are discussed by the group. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

6. The facilitator directs each pair to write on the back of the Active Listening Feedback Sheet one or more observations about the experience and conclusions about how active-listening skills can help or hinder effective communication. (Five minutes.)

7. The observations and reactions of members are shared. The facilitator then leads a discussion on the application of active-listening skills.

Variations

- Situations and messages can be developed to suit the needs of the group (e.g., parent-child, teacher-student, husband-wife, counselor-client, etc.).
- The activity can be done individually, and responses compared with a partner.
- The activity can be done as a group effort, with the group composing the active-listening responses.
- The activity can be set up so that only the person giving the message sees the script. The listener responds as in a role play.

Submitted by Jack N. Wismer.
ACTIVE LISTENING WORK SHEET

Instructions: People communicate much more than words or ideas. Behind the words often lie feelings. These feelings often are communicated through nonverbal means, even while conflicting ideas are communicated verbally. Trying to look and listen for feelings, write an active-listening response for each situation and message on this sheet.

The employee will begin by reading Statement 1, and the supervisor will give an active-listening response. The supervisor will then read Statement 2, and the employee will give an active-listening response. This process will continue, with the employee reading all odd-numbered statements and the supervisor reading all even-numbered statements.

As each member gives a response, it should be noted in the space provided.

Example

Situation and Message: Supervisor sets policy that he or she will sign all letters. Employee says: “I want to sign my own letters. I wrote them, didn’t I”

Active-Listening Response: The supervisor responds: “You feel frustrated (resentful) when you are not allowed to sign letters that you have written.”

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Situation and Message: 1. Supervisor says a report is not thorough enough. Employee says: “Now I have to write this report over. You never tell me what you expect until it is written.”

Active-Listening Response: 1. The supervisor responds:

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Situation and Message: 2. Supervisor must meet a report deadline. Supervisor says: “We have got to be better organized.”

Active-Listening Response: 2. The employee responds:

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Situation and Message: Employee is not implementing supervisor’s ideas. Employee says: “I was on this job long before you came here. I don’t need you to tell me how to do it.”

Active-Listening Response: 3. The supervisor responds:

situation and message: regular staff meeting never starts on time. Supervisor says: “I get tired of waiting for some people every week before we can start these meetings.”

Active-Listening Response: 4. The employee responds:

Situation and Message: Supervisor has just made a project team assignment. Employee says: “I don’t want to work with Bill on any more assignments. He never meets his deadlines.”

Active-Listening Response: 5. The supervisor responds:

Situation and Message: An employee has not turned in the last two monthly progress reports. Supervisor says: “Can’t you be as professional as the rest of the staff and turn in your report on time?”

Active-Listening Response: 6. The employee responds:
Situation and Message: Supervisor has initiated a new work procedure. Employee says: “We tried something like this three years ago and it didn’t work then.”

Active-Listening Response: The supervisor responds:

Situation and Message: Supervisor recognizes that some employees’ talk is so loud it is interfering with other employees’ writing a report. Supervisor says: “Can’t you be more considerate while others are trying to work?”

Active-Listening Response: The employee responds:

Situation and Message: Supervisor has passed on a change in work priorities from the top office. Employee says: “You give us too much unscheduled work. I never can get it all done.”

Active-Listening Response: The supervisor responds:

Situation and Message: Employee has refused to work overtime on a project. Supervisor says: “Young people today are lazy!”

Active-Listening Response: The employee responds:
ACTIVE LISTENING FEEDBACK SHEET

This sheet provides possible responses for each situation; it is not intended to identify “correct” responses. A response may be influenced by how you perceive the situation and the intonation that accompanies the verbal message. In some situations, the speaker appears to be more defensive than in others. If the listener resists evaluative statements or solutions, active listening and observation skills can be effective.

1. a. You are uncertain and puzzled about what is expected.
   b. You probably feel frustrated or discouraged about revising this report.
2. a. You are concerned about finishing the report by the deadline.
   b. You are feeling bogged down by all the work.
3. a. You are frustrated when I offer suggestions because of your experience with this job.
   b. You think that I distrust you when I give ideas on how to do your job.
4. a. You feel irritated that our meetings always start late.
   b. You are anxious to start our meetings on time.
5. a. You feel that Bill will not do his share if he is assigned to this project.
   b. You feel disappointed that I did not consult with you before the assignment.
   c. You feel afraid that your performance might be jeopardized as a member of this team.
6. a. You think that I am not responsible when I do not turn in my progress reports.
   b. You are irritated when my progress reports are late.
7. a. You are concerned that this new procedure will not work.
   b. You feel impatient when procedures that failed once are implemented again.
8. a. You are angry that our talking is disturbing others.
   b. You are afraid that our talking will keep others from doing their work.
9. a. You feel frustrated when your work load appears to change constantly.
   b. You feel discouraged because there is too much to do.
10. a. You are angry because you think that young people today are not as dedicated as you are.
    b. You feel discouraged about the lack of interest in this project.
POOR LISTENING HABITS:
IDENTIFYING AND IMPROVING THEM

Goals
- To help participants to identify their poor listening habits.
- To allow participants to practice effective listening skills.

Group Size
Any number of pairs.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials
- Enough copies of the Poor Listening Habits: ABC Listening Sheet for half the participants.
- Enough copies of the Poor Listening Habits: NL Sheet for half the participants.
- One copy of the Poor Listening Habits: Theory Sheet for each participant.
- One copy of the Poor Listening Habits: Effective Listening Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting
A room that is large enough to allow pairs to converse without disturbing one another.

Process
1. The facilitator explains the goals of the activity and tells the participants they will be involved in several activities that will require them to exaggerate poor listening habits.
2. The group is divided into pairs.

3. A copy of the ABC listening sheet and a pencil are distributed to one person in each pair. The participants who do not have the ABC listening sheet are designated “speaker number one” and are instructed to start talking to their partners about any subject they wish. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator stops the conversations and asks how it felt to be the speaker. The facilitator explains that the listeners were asked to count the speakers’ words that began with “a,” “b,” and “c.” The listeners are asked, “How did this scorekeeping affect your ability to listen?” (Five minutes.)

5. A copy of the NL sheet and a pencil are distributed to each number-one speaker, and the other participants are designated “speaker number two.” The number-two speakers are instructed to start talking to their partners about any subject other than that discussed previously by their partners. (Five minutes.)

6. The facilitator interrupts the conversation and asks the number-two speakers how it felt to be the speaker. The facilitator explains that the listeners were instructed not to listen. The number-one speakers are asked what methods they used to keep from listening. They are also asked to recall some of the things the number-two speakers said. The facilitator leads a discussion on which methods seemed to interfere most with listening and how a habit of using such methods can be broken. (Ten minutes.)

7. The facilitator gives the following instructions:
   The number-one speakers will try to talk to their partners about the topics they previously chose, and the number-two speakers will respond by talking about the topics they previously chose. Continue the conversation until you are told to stop.

8. After a couple of minutes, the facilitator interrupts the conversations and asks, “What was the biggest listening problem with these conversations?”

9. The facilitator announces that the number-one speakers should select new topics and that as they talk, the number-two speakers should interrupt repeatedly by asking “why” questions (e.g., “Why did he do that?” or “Why is that important?”). The number-one speakers must begin their responses with the word “because.”

10. After a couple of minutes, the facilitator interrupts the conversations and asks, “What were the listening problems in this why-because conversation?”

11. The facilitator asks the number-two speakers to choose topics about which they feel positively and strongly. The facilitator then announces that each number-one speaker will attempt to argue forcefully against the number-two speaker’s position.
12. After a couple of minutes, the facilitator asks participants how this conversation felt and what the listening problems were.

13. The total group is reassembled. Each participant is given a copy of the theory sheet and a copy of the effective listening sheet and is asked to read both handouts and to identify his or her own poor listening habits.

14. The facilitator elicits comparisons between the items listed on the theory sheet with the listening methods that were used in each of the activities. The participants’ responses are recorded on newsprint. (Ten minutes.)

15. The facilitator leads a discussion on how to break each habit listed on the theory sheet and how to acquire the skills listed on the effective listening sheet. (Ten minutes.)

16. The participants are instructed to resume conversations with their partners. This time one member of each pair relates a personal experience while his or her partner attempts to use effective listening skills; then the roles are reversed. (Five minutes.)

17. The facilitator leads a discussion on the following questions:
   - How did it feel to be a speaker this time? A listener?
   - How was this last experience similar to and different from the previous experiences in this activity? What poor listening skills did you continue to use?
   - How can you improve your listening skills? With whom do you need to practice more effective listening?
   - What can you conclude about effective listening and its benefits?

   (Fifteen minutes.)

Variations

- The activity also can be used as an icebreaker by rotating partners for each new conversation.
- Subgroups can be formed for identifying and discussing poor listening habits.
- The activity can be shortened by eliminating some of the conversations.

Submitted by Joseph Seltzer and Leland Howe.
POOR LISTENING HABITS: ABC LISTENING SHEET

Do not allow your partner to read this sheet.

As your partner is talking, keep track of the total number of words he or she uses that begin with “a,” “b,” and “c.” Do not count the articles “a” and “an” and do not count the conjunction “and.” Do not tell your partner what you are doing.

You can take part in the conversation, but be sure to keep an accurate score while your partner is talking.

A

B

C

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POOR LISTENING HABITS: NL SHEET

Do not allow your partner to read this sheet.

The “NL” in the title stands for “Not Listening.” While your partner is talking, your task is to not listen. You may attempt to not listen in any way you like, as long as you stay in your seat. You may occasionally say something, but it need not relate to what your partner has been saying. Although your partner may realize you are not being attentive, do not tell him or her that you are deliberately not listening.
POOR LISTENING HABITS THEORY SHEET

Most people spend more time listening than they spend on any other communication activity, yet a large percentage of people never learn to listen well. One reason is that they develop poor listening habits that continue with them throughout life. The following list contains some of the most common poor listening habits.

1. *Not Paying Attention.* Listeners may allow themselves to be distracted or to think of something else. Also, not wanting to listen often contributes to lack of attention.

2. “*Pseudolistening.*” Often people who are thinking about something else deliberately try to look as though they were listening. Such pretense may leave the speaker with the impression that the listener has heard some important information or instructions offered by the speaker.

3. *Listening but Not Hearing.* Sometimes a person listens only to facts or details or to the way they were presented and misses the real meaning.

4. *Rehearsing.* Some people listen until they want to say something; then they quit listening, start rehearsing what they will say, and wait for an opportunity to respond.

5. *Interrupting.* The listener does not wait until the complete meaning can be determined, but interrupts so forcefully that the speaker stops in mid-sentence.

6. *Hearing What Is Expected.* People frequently think they heard speakers say what they expected them to say. Alternatively, they refuse to hear what they do not want to hear.

7. *Feeling Defensive.* The listeners assume that they know the speaker’s intention or why something was said, or for various other reasons, they expect to be attacked.

8. *Listening for a Point of Disagreement.* Some listeners seem to wait for the chance to attack someone. They listen intently for points on which they can disagree.
POOR LISTENING HABITS: EFFECTIVE LISTENING SHEET

One way people can improve their listening is to identify their own poor listening habits and make an effort to change them. The list on the Poor Listening Habits Theory Sheet will help people to identify some of their own listening patterns. If the listeners will then pay special attention to the circumstances that seem to invite such behavior, they can consciously attempt to change their habits. For example, if you realize that you are “pseudo-listening” to someone, you can stop and ask that person to repeat his or her last idea. You can even say, “I’m sorry; my mind was wandering.” The more you become conscious of poor listening behavior, the more likely you are to change your poor listening habits.

Besides ridding themselves of bad listening habits, people can acquire positive listening habits. Listed below are a few descriptions of behavior that can lead to effective listening:

1. **Paying Attention.** If people really want to be good listeners, they must, on occasion, force themselves to pay attention to the speakers. When speakers are dull conversationalists, a listener must sometimes use effort to keep from being distracted by other things. It is important not only to focus on the speakers, but to use nonverbal cues (such as eye contact, head nods, and smiles) to let them know they are being heard.

2. **Listening for the Whole Message.** This includes looking for meaning and consistency or congruence in both the verbal and nonverbal messages and listening for ideas, feelings, and intentions as well as facts. It also includes hearing things that are unpleasant or unwelcome.

3. **Hearing Before Evaluating.** Listening to what someone says without drawing premature conclusions is a valuable aid to listening. By questioning the speaker in a nonaccusing manner, rather than giving advice or judging, a listener can often discover exactly what the speaker has in mind—which many times is quite different from what the listener had assumed.

4. **Paraphrasing What Was Heard.** If the listener nonjudgmentally paraphrases the words of the speaker and asks if that is what was meant, many misunderstandings and misinterpretations can be avoided.
I’M ALL EARS: ENHANCING AWARENESS OF EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Goals
- To develop the participants’ awareness of some of the requirements for listening effectively.
- To explore the effects of distractions on a person’s ability to listen.

Group Size
Two to four subgroups of six to eight participants each.

Time Required
One hour and forty-five minutes.

Materials
- A copy of the I’m All Ears Reading Sheet for each reader and each observer.
- A copy of the I’m All Ears Observer Sheet for each observer.
- A copy of the I’m All Ears Retention Test for each listener.
- A copy of the I’m All Ears Scoring Sheet for each listener.
- A pencil for each observer and each listener.

Physical Setting
A large room in which each subgroup can complete its listening task without disturbing the other subgroup(s). The facilitator should plan the arrangement of the room carefully so that each subgroup is allowed as much privacy as possible. A table and chairs should be provided for each subgroup, and a separate table and chairs should be provided for each reader-observer pair (see step 7).

A separate room should be provided for the purpose of preparing the readers and observers for their tasks.
Process

1. The facilitator announces that the activity concentrates on listening and reviews the following deterrents to effective listening:1
   - Assuming in advance that the subject is uninteresting and unimportant;
   - Mentally criticizing the speaker’s delivery;
   - Becoming overstimulated when questioning or opposing an idea;
   - Listening only for facts, wanting to skip the details;
   - Pretending to be attentive;
   - Allowing the speaker to be inaudible;
   - Avoiding messages whose content is technical;
   - Overreacting to certain words and phrases; and
   - Withdrawing attention and daydreaming.

Questions about these deterrents are elicited and answered. (Fifteen minutes.)

2. Subgroups of six to eight participants each are assembled and are seated at separate tables. The participants are told that during the activity the members of each subgroup will be given an opportunity to practice effective listening while a fellow member reads a particular piece of copy to them. Each subgroup is asked to select one member to be that subgroup’s reader and one member to be the observer.

3. The readers and observers are asked to leave the main assembly room, to gather in a separate room, and to wait for instructions from the facilitator. After they have left, the facilitator makes the following announcement to the remaining participant:

   “In a few minutes, your reader will read the selected copy one time only, without repeating any word, phrase, or sentence. Be sensitive to any information that is read to you; if a command or instruction is given, you act accordingly. After the reading has been completed, you will be tested on the material that you have just heard. Consequently, you should listen carefully. You are not allowed to take notes during the reading.”

The members of each subgroup are instructed to spend the next fifteen minutes discussing the qualities needed to be a good listener while the facilitator, the readers, and the observers prepare for the activity.

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4. The facilitator leaves the main assembly room and joins the readers and observers. Each of these participants is given a copy of the I’m All Ears Reading Sheet and is asked to read the entire sheet. Questions are elicited and answered, and the facilitator coaches the readers as necessary while they practice their reading. In addition, the facilitator gives each observer a copy of the observer sheet and a pencil and explains that during the listening activity the observers are to follow the instructions on this handout. The observers also are encouraged to provide the readers with suggestions during the practice period. (Fifteen minutes.)

5. The facilitator, the readers, and the observers return to the main assembly room, and the readers and observers rejoin their subgroups.

6. Each reader is instructed to begin reading. The facilitator monitors the subgroups to ensure that the participants are following instructions. (Five minutes.)

7. After the readings have been concluded, each listener is given a copy of the I’m All Ears Retention Test and a pencil and is asked to work independently to complete the test. Each reader is instructed to join his or her subgroup’s observer at a separate table, and each of these pairs is asked to discuss quietly what happened during the previous step so that the observer can complete the observer sheet. (Ten minutes.)

8. Each listener is given a copy of the I’m All Ears Scoring Sheet and is instructed to determine his or her own score.

9. The readers and observers are asked to return to their respective subgroups, and the observers are asked to share and discuss the contents of the completed observer sheets with their fellow members. (Twenty minutes.)

10. The facilitator reassembles the total group and leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:

- How did you feel during this activity?
- What did you do to help yourself retain and recall information?
- What caused you the most trouble in listening to the material that was read?
- What are some common distractions that cause faulty listening?
- What did you learn about your own listening skills? about the listening skills of others?
- How can distractions to listening be overcome? What is one thing that you can do to listen more effectively in the future?

**Variations**

- The section entitled “Material To Be Read” in the reading sheet may be recorded on tape prior to the activity. Playing the recorded material for the participants
eliminates the need for readers and allows all participants to hear the same oral delivery.

- The facilitator may write a different script to be read to the participants. If the participants share a common profession, the script content may be material that is of interest to members of that profession.
- The activity may be made competitive by announcing that the top-scoring individual(s) or subgroup will be rewarded in some way.
Instructions

While reading the “Material To Be Read” (below) to your subgroup, make sure that you follow these instructions:

- Read as clearly and concisely as possible and loudly enough that all members of your subgroup can hear you.
- Read the bracketed commands as if they were part of the story.
- Do not repeat any word, phrase, or sentence, even if your fellow members ask you to do so.
- Do not answer any questions.

You may not read or explain these instructions to your group.

Material To Be Read

Many college students combine their classroom work with on-the-job experience in businesses. Even though these students study and do research in the university library after attending classes and working, they still find several hours a day for recreation. Here is what a few representative students do in their spare time:

Phyllis Campbell is the editor of the bimonthly magazine, Getting the Business, published by and for the undergraduate students in the School of Business. Phyllis’ previous editorial experience consisted of editing her high school yearbook. Now she finds it great fun writing about business issues and encouraging other students [wink at the person to your left] to write for the publication. She has formed an editorial committee on which members of the faculty [touch the person to your right] serve as advisors. The students who are members of this committee were selected to represent a variety of business interests, and it is their point of view that determines the magazine’s policy and its ultimate editorial content. Other students function as reporters, feature writers, and illustrators. The magazine also has a business manager and pays its own way by selling advertising space to local fast-food shops, clothing stores, and movie theaters. Phyllis is not sure how much of her time she will devote to writing after she receives her college degree, but she knows [raise your hand and say “howdy”] that she is gaining valuable experience.

Another example of an active student who finds time for recreation is John Miller, who is the captain of the intramural swimming team sponsored by the School of Business. He supervises team practices in the university sports complex [hold hands with someone] and sees to it that members keep up to par on speed and form. Twice each year John arranges swim meets with the intramural squads sponsored by the School of Law and the School of Medicine. These meets are well attended by the
students of the School of Business [look behind you], who cheer their classmates with genuine collegiate vigor.

Even among business students who are not members of university teams, participation in sports is an important pastime. For example, the physical-education department provides opportunities for all students to play basketball, tennis, and badminton, and the courts attract plenty of business students as “customers.”

The School of Business also offers a program of social activities, primarily in the form of rock concerts, to provide relief from the stiff schedules of business and classroom work.

For the most part, the students themselves have an opportunity to plan, organize [tap the shoulder of someone near you], and run these events, although, of course, faculty members are ready to help out if needed.
I’M ALL EARS OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: Your task is to observe the behavior of the listeners in your group. After the reader has finished reading, he or she will join you to discuss what happened during the listening task; at that time you will write answers to the following questions. Then you and the reader will be asked to rejoin your subgroup and to share and discuss the completed contents of this sheet.

1. How did the listeners prepare themselves to listen? What signs of attentiveness did they demonstrate?

2. As the reader proceeded, what did the listeners do to help themselves in the listening process? What changes in their behavior did you observe?

3. What seemed to hinder the listeners as they listened? What measures did they take to overcome these hindrances?

4. How could you describe the interaction between the reader and the listeners?
I'M ALL EARS RETENTION TEST

1. What is the name of the editor of the undergraduate business magazine?

2. What is the title of the magazine?

3. How often is it published?

For items 4 and 5, list two of the magazine’s three sources of advertising revenue.

4.

5.

6. How much time does the editor of the magazine plan to devote to writing after completing college?

7. What is the name of the captain of the intramural swimming team sponsored by the School of Business?

8. How many swim meets does the captain arrange each year?
9. Where does the School of Business’ swimming team practice?

For items 10 and 11, list the two intramural squads that serve as the opponents for the School of Business’ swimming team.

10. 

11. 

For items 12, 13, and 14, list the three sports that all students are afforded opportunities to play, even if they do not belong to university teams.

12. 

13. 

14. 

15. What is the main form of social activity offered by the School of Business to provide relief from the stiff schedules of business and classroom work?
I’M ALL EARS SCORING SHEET

Answers

1. Phyllis Campbell
2. Getting the Business
3. Bimonthly
4, 5. Any two of the following: fast-food shops, clothing stores, and movie theaters
6. She is not sure at the present time.
7. John Miller
8. Two
9. In the university sports complex
10, 11. Squads of the School of Law and the School of Medicine
12, 13, 14. Basketball, tennis, and badminton
15. Rock concerts

Scale

15 = Superior
13-14 = Excellent
11-12 = Good
4-10 = Average
2-3 = Fair
0-1 = Poor
IN REPLY: RESPONDING TO FEELING STATEMENTS

Goals

- To offer the participants an opportunity to experience the positive and negative effects that various ways of responding to statements of feelings can have on the sender and the recipient.
- To help the participants to identify their usual patterns of sending and receiving responses to feeling statements and ways in which they might want to alter these patterns.
- To help the participants to identify the responses to statements of feelings that are beneficial to continuing communication.

Group Size

Three or four subgroups of eight participants each. (In steps 12 and 14, eight subgroups are formed.)

Time Required

Approximately three hours.

Materials

- A set of In Reply Role Sheets 1 through 8 for each subgroup.
- Several sheets of blank paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- Eight large labels (printed with the numbers 1 through 8) for each subgroup. Prior to conducting the activity, the facilitator labels the four chairs in each subgroup’s inner circle with the numbers 1 through 4 (see Physical Setting). During step 9 these labels are removed and replaced with labels reading 5 through 8.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.
- A stopwatch for timing the steps of the activity (for the facilitator’s use).
**Physical Setting**

A large room in which the subgroups can converse without disturbing one another. Movable chairs must be provided. The chairs for each eight-member subgroup initially should be arranged so that four are in a circle facing outward and four others are in a circle around the first four and facing them (see Figure 1). In this way, when all subgroups have been assembled, each participant is seated directly opposite another. The four chairs in each subgroup’s inner circle are labeled with numbers 1 through 4; each numbered label should be placed on the chair in such a way that it can be seen readily by the person seated opposite.

![Figure 1. Configuration of One Subgroup’s Chairs](image)

**Process**

1. The facilitator introduces the activity by stating that the verbal response to another person’s statement of feelings influences the recipient’s reaction; and, if the conversation is taking place in a group setting, that verbal response also influences the group climate for expression of feelings. The facilitator goes on to say that in group settings in which the goal is to encourage open expression of feelings, it is particularly important for the group members to be aware of responses that tend to promote or inhibit that expression.

2. The participants are assembled into subgroups of eight members each, and the members of each subgroup are instructed to sit in the chairs as arranged so that
each member is facing another. The facilitator explains that it does not matter who sits where because eventually the participants will switch roles.

3. Within each subgroup the facilitator distributes role sheets 1 through 4 to the participants in the inner circle, matching the number on each sheet with the number on the chair. In addition, each participant is given several sheets of blank paper, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface. The participants who have received role sheets are instructed to read them carefully, to keep the contents to themselves, and to spend a few minutes thinking about how they will play their roles.

4. While the role players are preparing, the facilitator meets with the remaining participants in a separate area and tells them that they will be experiencing various types of verbal responses to statements they make about their feelings. Each of these participants is told to think of a true statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. The facilitator offers these examples:

- “I’m nervous about this activity.”
- “I’m anxious about a problem at home.”
- “I’m excited about my child’s playoff soccer game tonight.”
- “I’m worried about a project at work.”
- “I’m happy about all the things I’m learning today.”

The facilitator explains that the chosen statement will be used to open four separate conversations, one with each of four fellow subgroup members, and that each participant should respond naturally to whatever comments are made during these conversations. The participants are also told that after each conversation they will write brief notes about their feelings and reactions during that conversation and that it is essential to record the number on the opposite chair each time such notes are made. (Five to ten minutes.)

5. The participants who will be opening conversations are instructed to return to their subgroups. After reminding the role players to retain their roles, the facilitator asks the participants to begin their conversations.

6. After one minute the participants are instructed to stop their conversations and to spend two minutes writing their thoughts and feelings about the experience. Each participant in an outer circle is reminded to record the number on the chair opposite.

7. After two minutes the participants in the outer circles are instructed to move one chair to the left and to begin new conversations.

8. Steps 6 and 7 are repeated twice so that each participant in a subgroup’s outer circle has a chance to converse with each participant in the inner circle (four conversations altogether).
9. The facilitator removes the labels with numbers 1 through 4 from each subgroup’s inner circle of chairs and replaces them with labels reading 5 through 8. Then the members of each subgroup are instructed to switch circles: Those in the inside circle go to the outside circle, and those in the outside go to the inside.

10. Within each subgroup the facilitator distributes role sheets 5 through 8 to the participants in the inner circle, again matching the number on each sheet with the number on the chair. The participants who have received role sheets are instructed to read them carefully, to keep the contents to themselves, and to spend a few minutes thinking about how they will play their roles.

11. Steps 4 through 8 are repeated. (Twenty to thirty minutes.)

12. The facilitator asks the participants who played roles 1, 2, 3, and 4 (those who received the feeling statements) to assemble into separate subgroups. (Those who played role 1 form a subgroup; those who played role 2 form a subgroup; and so on.) The participants who made the feeling statements are told to assemble randomly into four subgroups. Once all subgroups have been formed, the facilitator instructs the members of each subgroup to spend ten minutes discussing how they felt about and reacted to their conversations with the different partners. Each subgroup is also told to select a spokesperson to summarize the members’ feelings and reactions and to report this summary to the total group. (Fifteen minutes.)

13. The participants are instructed to turn their chairs so that they can see the facilitator and the newsprint flip chart. The facilitator asks the spokespersons for role players 1, 2, 3, and 4 to share their summaries and to read their respective role sheets aloud. Then the spokespersons of the subgroups whose members made the feeling statements are instructed to share their summaries. During this step the facilitator records highlights on newsprint and posts the newsprint. (Thirty to thirty-five minutes.)

14. Step 12 is repeated with those who played roles 5, 6, 7, and 8 (those who received the feeling statements) assembling into separate subgroups and those who made the feeling statements assembling randomly into four subgroups. (Fifteen minutes.)

15. The participants are again instructed to turn their chairs so that they can see the facilitator and the newsprint flip chart. The facilitator asks the spokespersons for role players 5, 6, 7, and 8 to share their summaries and to read their respective role sheets aloud. Then the spokespersons of the subgroups whose members made the feeling statements are instructed to share their summaries. The facilitator records highlights on newsprint and posts the newsprint. (Thirty to thirty-five minutes.)
16. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:

- Which role is the most like your normal pattern of responding to people’s statements about their feelings? Which role is the least like your normal pattern?
- If you were to make a feeling statement, which role would you want the listener to play? How might that role affect your interaction? Which role would you least want a listener to play? How might that role affect your interaction?
- What are some generalizations that we can make about effective responses to statements of feelings?
- Which role would you like to add to your repertoire of responses? Which role would be most useful in the groups you belong to and why?
- How might you go about learning to use these roles? Who and what might help you as you try to add these responses to your conversational repertoire? Who and what might hinder you? What might you do to overcome the hindrances?

**Variations**

- The facilitator may devise different role sheets that are better suited to the work situations or the personal styles of the participants.
- Extra participants may be asked to serve as observers and to share their observations about the conversations.
- The activity may be used with a single group of twelve to fifteen people. One discussion is held on the topic of how the participants are feeling at the moment, and all participants are encouraged to participate. In this case the eight roles are assigned to specific participants, who are urged to retain their roles throughout the conversation. Observers also should be used.
- The activity may be shortened by reducing the number of roles to four and having the participants switch positions after the second role play.
IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 1

The Adviser

You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every comment you make, give the person advice about the situation described or about how to handle the feeling involved.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “Try thinking about something else.”
- “You should just tell him how you feel.”
- “Think about some positive things that have happened.”
- “Just keep right on feeling that way!”

IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 2

The Interpreter

You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every comment you make, give the person a possible reason that he or she is experiencing the feeling involved.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “You’re probably just overcompensating for your earlier shyness.”
- “You need to be more a part of the group.”
- “Your feeling probably relates to your struggles as a parent (son, daughter, whatever).”
IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 3

The Caretaker

You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be
initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling
at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every
comment you make, reassure the person that everything is going to be all right.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “Oh, I’m so sorry. You’ll feel better tomorrow.”
- “Don’t worry; it’s only natural to feel that way.”
- “Come for a walk with me later; that’ll help take your mind off it.”
- “Well, I hope you’ll always feel that way. That’s great!”

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IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 4

The Sharer

You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be
initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling
at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every
comment you make, describe your true feelings about what the other person has said.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “I’m touched by your concern for your child.”
- “I’m shocked that you would tolerate that behavior.”
- “I’m glad to see you so happy.”
- “I’m upset that you would think that.”
- “I admire your persistence.”
IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 5

The Interviewer
You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every comment you make, ask for as many details as possible; do not worry about how relevant they are.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

■ “When was that?”
■ “Who else is in your group?”
■ “Who is the leader?”
■ “What room were you in?”

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IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 6

The Relater
You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every comment you make, relate what the other person has said to something that you or someone you know has experienced; then proceed to talk about yourself or someone else instead of the person with whom you are conversing.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

■ “You know, that’s how I felt yesterday! I remember . . .”
■ “Something like that happened to my daughter. She . . .”
IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 7

The Encourager
You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. With every comment you make, encourage the person to focus on the feeling, to feel it for a few moments, or to say more about the feeling. Maintain eye contact with the person, and make physical contact if it seems appropriate.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “How are you feeling about that?”
- “How did you feel when that happened?”
- “What’s the feeling behind that thought?”
- “Tell me more about the way you’re feeling.”

IN REPLY
ROLE SHEET 8

The Active Listener
You are about to participate in four separate conversations, each of which will be initiated by a person who will make a statement about something he or she is feeling at the moment. Each of these conversations will last one minute. Throughout each conversation you are to paraphrase or restate what you understand the other person to be saying. Do this in a tentative manner, allowing the other person to correct you if you have misinterpreted.

Here are examples of the kind of comment you may make:

- “You seem to be feeling sad because your son is growing up.”
- “It sounds as if you’re angry that your boss won’t listen to you. Am I wrong?”
- “If I understand you correctly, you seem to feel confused about this activity because you aren’t sure of its purpose.”
- “Would it be on target to say that you’re happy about the challenges of this new project yet somewhat apprehensive about your expertise in this area?”
NEEDS, FEATURES, AND BENEFITS:
EXPLORING THE SALES PROCESS

Goals

- To introduce the concepts of needs, features, and benefits in creating a “case.”
- To provide the opportunity for participants to practice writing and presenting needs, features, and benefits.

Group Size
Six to sixteen participants.

Time Required
One hour and forty-five minutes to two hours.

Materials

- Two copies of the Needs, Features, and Benefits Work Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the Needs, Features, and Benefits Theory Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped markers.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting
Either a table surrounded by chairs that will accommodate all participants or chairs for all participants arranged in a circle and a portable writing surface for each participant.

Process

1. The facilitator announces the goal of the experience and gives one copy of the Needs, Features, and Benefits Work Sheet and a pencil to each participant. (Five minutes.)
2. The facilitator asks each participant to write down his or her favorite hobby or activity in the first section of the work sheet and, in one sentence, to write how he or she became interested in that hobby or activity. (Five minutes.)
3. The facilitator asks each participant to pass his or her work sheet to the right so that each person has a new work sheet. The facilitator then asks each person to write in the second section of the new work sheet one sentence about why there is a need for the hobby or activity listed. (If someone does not know of a need, he or she is to invent one.) (Five minutes.)

4. The participants are instructed to pass their work sheets to the right once more. Each participant is instructed to write, in the third section, one positive feature of the hobby or activity listed on the work sheet (something positive that the hobby or activity offers to someone). (Five minutes.)

5. The work sheets are passed to the right once again. Each participant is instructed to write, in the fourth section, one sentence that describes a benefit of the hobby or activity listed (what benefit a person will receive by participating in the hobby or activity). (Five minutes.)

6. The work sheets are passed to the right a final time. Each participant is asked to write, in the fifth section, a one-sentence request that convinces someone to join him or her in participating in the hobby or activity listed on the current sheet (Will you join me in . . .). (Five minutes.)

7. The participants take turns reading the work sheets they are holding to the whole group. (Five to fifteen minutes.)

8. The facilitator explains that the participants have just participated in a basic process. By learning the needs, features, and benefits of something—a product, service, organization, or charity—they can effectively sell the case for that thing. The facilitator explains that, in sales, this process is followed by the close, which is a resolution of some kind. Each participant then is given a copy of the Needs, Features, and Benefits Theory Sheet and is allowed time to read it. (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

9. Each participant receives a second copy of the Needs, Features, and Benefits Work Sheet and, working individually, fills in the sentences, using his or her product/organization/favorite cause as the subject for writing a case. (Ten minutes.)

10. The participants are instructed to form pairs. (The facilitator may join in if there is an odd number of participants.) Each pair is instructed to select which member will start by presenting his or her new case to the other, an interested “customer,” for ten minutes and then receiving feedback on how he or she did from the “customer” for five minutes. The pairs are told to begin. The facilitator announces when the feedback is to begin. At the end of the feedback period, the facilitator instructs the pairs to change roles and have the second person in the pair present his or her case and the first one act as “customer.” Again, the facilitator gives time warnings and tells the pairs when to begin the feedback process. (Thirty minutes.)
11. The facilitator calls time and reassembles the total group. The participants are encouraged to share their reactions to the experience. The facilitator records pertinent points on newsprint, using the following questions as discussion starters:

- How did you feel about trying to “sell” something to another person?
- How did you feel about being the customer?
- What tended to happen during each stage of the process (needs, features, benefits)?
- What patterns do you notice in these responses? Why do you think that they occurred?
- In what ways are the steps in the process (needs, features, benefits) important in building a case?
- What guidelines can you derive from your experiences in the selling process?
- How and when might you use the process of building a case in your work? In other activities?

(Twenty to twenty-five minutes.)

**Variations**

- If participants are affiliated with a nonprofit organization, they can role play presenting their cases to “prospective donors.” If they are customer-service representatives or salespeople, they can role play selling their products or services to “prospective customers.”

- If participants are managers or trainers, they can discuss ways to teach their employees/volunteers/board members the elements of presenting a case so that they are able to promote their organization’s case to customers/prospective donors.

- For a shorter introduction to the selling process, the role playing can be eliminated.
NEEDS, FEATURES, AND BENEFITS WORK SHEET

Instructions: Please answer each of the following questions when the facilitator instructs you to do so.

1. Write down the name of your hobby or activity. Write one sentence about how you became interested in it.

2. Why is there a need for this hobby or activity? Who needs it? (Please answer in one sentence.)

3. What is a feature of this hobby or activity (something inherent that it offers to someone)? (Please answer in one sentence.)

4. What benefit will someone receive from this hobby or activity? (Please answer in one sentence.)

5. Convince someone to join you in this hobby or activity. (Please write one sentence.)
NEEDS, FEATURES, AND BENEFITS THEORY SHEET

In work and other aspects of life, we all find occasions when we are trying to “sell” something to another person. One may be actually trying to sell a product or service to a potential buyer. One may be “selling” a vision or concept while trying to solicit a donation or support for a worthy cause. Or one may be trying to satisfy a dissatisfied person by “selling” him or her a solution, for example, trying to “sell” an employee the benefits of a job change or trying to “sell” a family member a change of vacation plans. Thus, everyone engages in some type of customer service. Whether or not the customer is being asked to exchange monetary resources for a product or service, good customer service means that the customer winds up being happy with the interaction he or she has had.

The most important concepts to understand in order to help the customer to be satisfied with the exchange are as follows:

- The customer’s needs;
- The benefits the customer will receive as a result of the exchange (for example, purchasing the product or service);
- The features of the proposed solution/product or service that make it attractive to the customer; and
- How those features provide benefits to the customer and meet the customer’s needs.

A salesperson sells either a product or a service. In order to be successful, the salesperson has several obligations. The most important obligation is to become so familiar with the product or service that it becomes internalized as something familiar and something that the salesperson values a great deal. Without this understanding and sense of importance of the product or service, the salesperson has little chance of convincing anyone that the product or service has value and will satisfy customer needs. Thus, the first and most important obligation is to understand the case for the product or service. The case is all of the reasons that anyone would want to buy the product or service.

Consider the case of a consultant who is offering training services. In order to be successful, the consultant must become so familiar with the services offered that they become internalized as something of value. Without this understanding and sense of importance, the consultant has little chance of convincing anyone that the services have value and will satisfy customer needs.

Needs

If a person values something, it is easy to talk about it. However, a more important skill is getting someone else to talk about why he or she needs or would value the product or service and actively listening to what the person says. The best way to
find out about the customer’s needs is to ask the customer. A salesperson must
know how to design open-ended questions to find out what the customer needs and
then must actively listen by paraphrasing the answers heard so that the customer
knows that he or she is understood. A good salesperson may spend 80 percent of his
or her time eliciting and listening to the customer’s needs and communicating his or
her understanding of those needs by paraphrasing what the customer has just said.

The salesperson’s skill in listening for the customer’s needs enables him or her
to sell the case so that the case matches the needs of the customer. This is where it
is essential for the salesperson to know the product or service well, to value it
enough that his or her genuine enthusiasm for it is evident, and to quickly adjust the
discussion of features and benefits to match the customer’s needs.

In the case of the consultant who is offering training services, an opening
question might be to ask, “What is the problem that you want to solve?” If the
answer to the question is that supervisors need to learn delegation skills, an active-
listening response might be to ask, “Your supervisors don’t have time to plan and
coordinate because they end up doing the tasks themselves?” If this indeed is the
case, the consultant would sell the features of a supervisory training program that
are relevant to delegation.

**Features**

Assuming that the enthusiasm and value for the product or service exist, the
salesperson also must have information about the product or service. First, the
salesperson must fully understand the product or service: What are the *features*
of the product or service that make it valuable? What does it offer that is unique? What
makes it different from other products or services that are available to the customer?
This may require researching the product or service to find out its history, its
purpose, why it is valuable, and how it will benefit the customer. This is learning the
features of the product or service. These features must not only be known but also
believed by the salesperson, so that when he or she speaks about the product or
service, enthusiasm for the features is evident in his or her voice, body language, and
whole personality.

The consultant who is selling training services might communicate that his or her
training program features teaching an understanding of the supervisory position in
the organization and teaching the skills of delegating, planning, and so on. The
program may be unique in that it includes role playing. It may differ from other
services that are available in that it includes videotaped modeling and writing in
journals.

The process of selling is the same no matter what is sold. The ingredient that
sets a successful salesperson apart from others is the innate enthusiasm and value
the salesperson holds for the product or service. The axiom is “Sell something you
value or find a way to value what you sell.” The value is contained in the features.
Benefits

The next step is for the salesperson to communicate the value to the customer. This cannot be done in a believable way unless the salesperson takes the time to find out the customer’s needs and how the product or service can benefit the customer, that is, meet the customer’s needs. Only then can the salesperson tell how the features of the product or service will benefit the customer or satisfy the customer’s needs. For the consultant who is selling training services, a benefit may be to increase a unit’s productivity or to reduce the supervisors’ overtime.

Summary

In summary, presenting a case involves finding value for a product or service and learning about it so well that enthusiasm is a natural part of speaking about it. The next step is listening to the customer to discover his or her needs. Third, one must let the customer know how the features of the product or service will benefit the customer better than those of other available products or services. This is accomplished by emphasizing how the customer’s needs will be met.

Although the final step is closing, it is not as proactive as the preceding ones. It is important to let the customer make up his or her own mind. The foregoing process should be sufficient to ensure a positive closure.
LEVELS OF DIALOGUE: ANALYZING COMMUNICATIONS IN CONFLICT

Goals

- To increase personal effectiveness in resolving conflict through increased awareness and open dialogue.
- To demonstrate one method of becoming aware of the unconscious emotions that can block open and direct communication.
- To enable the participants to receive feedback about their levels of verbal communication, both in sending and receiving messages, and about the congruence of their nonverbal communication.

Group Size

Up to ten trios.

Time Required

One hour and thirty minutes to one hour and forty minutes.

Materials

- One copy of the Levels of Dialogue Theory Sheet for each participant.
- One copy of the Levels of Dialogue Awareness Log for each participant.
- One copy of the Levels of Dialogue Observer Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint poster prepared in advance with the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Listener</th>
<th>Observer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Round 1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.
**Physical Setting**

A room large enough for pairs to work without disturbing one another. Movable chairs are desirable; tables, desks, or other barriers should be avoided.

**Process**

1. The facilitator distributes pencils and clipboards, along with copies of the Levels of Dialogue Theory Sheet, the Levels of Dialogue Awareness Log, and the Levels of Dialogue Observer Sheet. He or she presents a lecturette on the Levels of Openness, the Levels of Listening, and the Awareness Log. (Twenty minutes.)

2. Participants are asked to complete the following information on the Levels of Dialogue Awareness Log:

   “Recall several recent conflict situations in which you withheld your feelings, did not tell the whole truth, or were otherwise less than fully open. Write down the reason that you gave yourself for doing this (what you feared would happen). Then identify what you believe is the fear you have about yourself that influenced your decision to withhold in that situation. The distinction between these two different fears is important. For instance, ‘I’m afraid I would get fired’ is what I feared would happen; ‘I’m afraid I couldn’t tell my family I lost my job’ or ‘I’m afraid I couldn’t cope with the stress of finding another job’ is my fear about myself.”

   (Five minutes.)

3. The facilitator assembles the participants in trios and asks each trio to designate one member as “A,” another member as “B,” and the third member as “C.” The facilitator announces that the activity will be conducted in three rounds so that each person will have a turn as speaker, listener, and observer. *(Note to facilitator: If the group does not divide evenly into trios, one or two pairs may be formed; in this case, the role of the observer will be omitted.)* The facilitator posts the prepared newsprint poster of assignments and indicates that in the first round, the “A” participants will be speakers, the “B” participants will be listeners, and the “C” participants will be observers. (Five to ten minutes.)

4. Each speaker is instructed to choose an incident from the Awareness Log that he or she would be willing to discuss within the trio. The speakers are asked to experiment with levels of openness, especially in terms of their fears about what might have happened and their fears about themselves. Similarly, the listeners should focus on Levels 4 and 5 of listening by inviting further explanation and paraphrasing. The observers are asked to identify which levels of openness and listening they notice, at which level the speaker and listener spent the most time, and how nonverbal communication was used. Participants are told that each round of the activity will last for fifteen minutes, including the discussion between
the speaker and the listener and the debrief with the observer. The facilitator gives the instruction to begin. (Five minutes.)

5. After ten minutes, the facilitator reminds participants of the time and indicates that they should be concluding their discussions and moving on to the debrief with the observers. Observers are asked to summarize their observations and reactions within their trios, using their notes from the Levels of Dialogue Observer Sheet. (Note to the facilitator: If the participants are working in pairs, they can share how the experience felt and what they noticed.) (Fifteen minutes.)

6. The facilitator instructs the members of each trio to switch roles and to repeat the activity two more times, until each member has held the roles of speaker, listener, and observer. The facilitator calls time after each discussion and instructs the participants to debrief as directed in Step 5. (Thirty minutes.)

7. After the final round of the activity, the facilitator reconvenes the total group. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on the following questions:

- How did you react to the experience in the speaker role? The listener role? The observer role?
- How did the quality of the conversation change over the course of the activity?
- What did you learn about yourself or your communication patterns?
- What did you learn about levels of dialogue?
- How might you use this learning to improve communications in your daily life? (Ten to fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- With intact work groups, depending on their sophistication and willingness, each participant may be asked to identify issues or conflicts he or she may have with another team member and then discuss the issue directly with that person using this process. This does increase risk and may require more skill and intervention on the part of the facilitator. Additional time for each discussion is generally needed.
- The role of observer can be eliminated, and the activity can be done in pairs.
LEVELS OF DIALOGUE THEORY SHEET

Levels of Openness

When “sending” messages, people need to be clear, concise, and direct; they need to describe behaviors or events rather than attribute motives to the actions of others or make character judgments. In *The Truth Option* (Schutz, 1984), Schutz describes “levels of openness” that are dependent on our awareness of our feelings about what is happening (consciousness) and our willingness to express those feelings (courage).

Level –1: Unaware. Sometimes it takes time to become aware of how you feel. Until you become aware of how you feel, you cannot tell others.

Level 0: Withholding. Withholding is the level at which you become aware of how you feel but you are unwilling to express it, at least directly, to the person involved.

Level 1: “You are . . . .” Level 1 openness is the realm of judgments, accusations, and name calling.

Level 2: “About you I feel . . . .” A person who makes a statement of this sort is revealing something about himself or herself rather than making judgments about the character of another person. This invites dialogue and increases understanding.

Level 3: “Because . . . .” At Level 3, you describe the circumstances, events, or behaviors that gave rise to the feelings revealed at Level 2.

Level 4: “Which means . . . .” Everything that happens in our lives has meaning for us. “Meaning,” however, is whatever we choose it to be; it therefore is different for each person. This level of openness allows true dialogue to occur and creates an opportunity to clear up the current misunderstanding and to build a stronger relationship for the future.

Level 5: “My fear about myself is . . . .” Level 5 is the deepest level of openness and requires a great deal of self-awareness to achieve. Admittedly, few people reach this level of openness in conversations; however, when they do, the results are often astonishing. As in Level 4, communicating at this level creates a real opportunity for understanding.

Levels of Listening

When receiving messages, people need to listen carefully, make eye contact, and occasionally paraphrase what the other person is saying, as in “What I hear you saying is . . . .” These “levels of listening” (Copeland, 1991) parallel the “levels of openness.”

Level –1: Unaware. The unaware listener is someone more preoccupied with his or her own thoughts or activities than with what you have to say.
Level 0: Avoiding. In contrast, the avoiding listener is acutely aware of the messenger, but does not want to hear what he or she has to say.

Level 1: “No! You are . . . .” When confronted, the Level 1 listener deflects the focus back to the speaker. Immediately deflecting the focus in this manner only serves to escalate emotions and limit the possibility of genuine dialogue, understanding, or resolution.

Level 2: “You shouldn’t feel that way.” At Level 2 the listener is quick to correct any “inappropriate” feelings being expressed (meaning any feelings that make him or her uncomfortable). This level of “listening” tends to stop communication so that neither party understands the other very well.

Level 3: “Let me tell you . . . .” Level 3 listening is listening for an opportunity to tell your own story; it is characterized by interruptions. The “competitor” tops your story with his or her own successes or calamities, the “debater” corrects your facts, and the “problem solver” waits for an opportunity to solve your problems.

Level 4: “Tell me more.” This level is a significant departure from the ones preceding it. At Level 4, the speaker is invited to explain the point, give examples, and discuss how he or she feels and why. Only at this level does a speaker begin to feel that the listener genuinely cares and wants to understand.

Level 5: “What I hear you saying is . . . .” When you paraphrase and reflect back the speaker’s concerns, especially when you include the quality and quantity of his or her feelings, that person knows that he or she has been understood. This does not mean that you necessarily agree, but you understand his or her point of view.

Conclusion

Communication is a lively two-way process in which people alternate speaking and listening. Ideally, a person who listens attentively at Level 5 also responds at an appropriate level. The benefits of improving our communications are enormous, and those benefits are attainable. We are most believable when all aspects of our communications are congruent, that is, when our tone, volume, inflection, and body language are in harmony. Not only does this increase effectiveness and productivity, but when we become conscious of the fears that limit us and have the courage to communicate at deeper levels, we can build trusting interpersonal relationships that enrich our lives.

References


LEVELS OF DIALOGUE AWARENESS LOG

*Instructions:* Complete this log by recalling several recent conflict situations in which you withheld your feelings, did not tell the whole truth, or were otherwise less than fully open. Write down the reason that you gave yourself for doing this (what you feared would happen). Then identify what you believe is the fear you have about yourself that influenced your decision to withhold in that situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident (Withhold or Lie)</th>
<th>Fear of What Might Happen Level (4)</th>
<th>Fear About Myself (Level 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>I pretended I was not upset by what Terry said.</em></td>
<td><em>We would get into an argument</em></td>
<td><em>I handle conflict poorly. I say things I don’t mean to hurt people’s feelings</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEVELS OF DIALOGUE OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: Use Table 1 to indicate the level at which the speaker and the listener are operating by placing a checkmark next to that level each time you observe it. Note examples of both verbal and nonverbal behavior whenever possible.

Table 1. Levels of Openness and Listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Openness</th>
<th>Speaker Using This Level</th>
<th>Specific Examples</th>
<th>Levels of Listening</th>
<th>Listener Using This Level</th>
<th>Specific Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>–1.Untalked</td>
<td></td>
<td>–1.Unaware</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.Withhold</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.Avoiding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.”You are…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.”No! You are…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.”About you I feel…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.”You shouldn’t feel that way…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.”Because…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.”Let me tell you…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.”Which means…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.”Tell me more…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.”My fear about myself is…”</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.”What I hear you saying is…”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Address the following questions as you debrief the discussion with your partners:

- Which levels were used most? How do you account for that?
- Which levels were used least? How do you account for that?
- What feelings were communicated verbally? Nonverbally?

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1 Levels of Openness are based on The Truth Option (Schutz, 1984) and Levels of Listening are based on Levels of Dialogue (Copeland, 1991). Used with permission.
SUBMISSION/AGGRESSION/ASSERTION: NONVERBAL COMPONENTS

Goals

- To experience and differentiate the nonverbal components of assertive behavior from those of aggressive and submissive (nonassertive) behavior.
- To increase awareness of one’s own assertive behavior.

Group Size

Ten to fifty participants.

Time Required

Approximately thirty minutes to one hour.

Materials

- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for individuals to move about freely without restricting the space of others.

Process

1. The facilitator asks participants to call out their associations with the word “assertiveness” and records their responses on newsprint.

2. The facilitator tells each participant to think of the most submissive (nonassertive) individual he or she has ever seen and to imagine the behavioral characteristics he or she associates with that person. The facilitator then directs the participants to mingle, each acting out nonverbal submissive behavior.

3. After five minutes, the facilitator directs the participants to “freeze” in a fixed position depicting submissive behavior, to look around at the other people, and to identify the similarities in their behavior.

4. The facilitator elicits comments about the nonverbal manifestations of submissiveness (or nonassertiveness) and lists these on newsprint. (Usually the comment will include the behavioral components of eye contact, body posture, facial expression and interaction distance.)
5. After all responses are recorded by the facilitator, participants are directed to change from submissiveness to aggressiveness. Again, they are told to think of the behavior of the most aggressive individual they have ever encountered and to use the room in any way they want in order to role play the aggressive behavior nonverbally. The only stipulation is that there be no physical abuse or destruction of property.

6. At the end of five minutes, the facilitator instructs the participants to remain in a “frozen” position depicting aggressive behavior and to look around the room and observe similarities in the behavior of the other members.

7. The facilitator then elicits comments about the similarities of the observable nonverbal behaviors that are related to aggressiveness and records the comments on newsprint.

8. The facilitator describes the behavioral characteristics of an assertive person, focusing on the nonverbal components of assertive behavior. (“The assertive person establishes good eye contact and stands comfortably but firmly on two feet with his or her hands loose at his or her sides. The assertive person stands up for his or her rights while respecting the rights of others, is aware of his or her feelings and deals with them as they occur, manages his or her tensions and keeps them within a constructive range.” The facilitator may add, “The assertive person makes ‘I’ statements, uses cooperative words, makes empathic statements of interest, and seeks a balance of power.”)

9. The facilitator directs the participants to think of a person they have observed who seems to fit best the description of an assertive person and to depict that person’s behavior nonverbally.

10. After five minutes, the facilitator directs the participants to “freeze” as before and to observe and compare one another’s behavior.

11. The facilitator leads a discussion on the differences between submissive, aggressive, and assertive behavior and lists these on newsprint. This listing may be compared to the original responses to the word “assertiveness” elicited in step 1.

12. The facilitator leads the group members in a discussion of the application of assertive behavior in everyday situations. Participants are encouraged to discuss situations in which they are usually assertive and ones in which they might wish to become more assertive.
Variations

- If the group is large, part of the group can participate in the nonverbal exercise, while the remainder can be process observers.
- Participants can be verbal while being submissive, aggressive, and assertive, and these components can be processed as well.
THE CANDY BAR: USING POWER STRATEGIES

Goals

- To acquaint the participants with seven bases of power (French & Raven, 1959; Hersey, Blanchard, & Natemeyer, 1979; Raven & Kruglanski, 1975): coercive power, connection power, expert power, information power, legitimate power, referent power, and reward power.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to experience and compare the effects of strategies associated with the seven bases of power.

Group Size

Seven subgroups of three members each. (The design calls for one member of each subgroup to function as an observer. However, if there are more than twenty-one participants, some subgroups may be assigned more than one observer.)

Time Required

Approximately one and one-half hours.

Materials

- One copy of each of the seven seller’s role sheets (A, B, C, D, E, F, and G).
- Seven copies of the customer’s role sheet.
- Seven copies of the observer’s task sheet for each observer.
- A pencil and a clipboard or other portable writing surface for each observer.
- Seven candy bars, all of the same kind.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting

A large room in which the subgroups can work without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the goals of the activity, asks the participants to assemble into seven subgroups, and instructs the subgroups to form a circle around the room. Materials are distributed within each subgroup: One member receives one of the seller’s role sheets (a different sheet for each of the seven
subgroups) and a candy bar; another receives a copy of the customer’s role sheet; a third receives seven copies of the observer’s task sheet, a pencil, and a clipboard or other portable writing surface. (If there are more than three members in some subgroups, the extra participants function as observers and are given the appropriate materials.)

2. The participants are told to read their handouts. The facilitator explains that each role play will last three minutes and that the sellers will be moving counterclockwise around the circle from subgroup to subgroup until each seller has played his or her role in every subgroup. After questions have been answered and the participants have spent a couple of minutes thinking about how they will handle their assignments, the facilitator asks the subgroups to begin. (Ten minutes.)

3. The first role play lasts for three minutes. At the end of that time the facilitator instructs the subgroups to stop, asks each seller to move counterclockwise around the circle to the next subgroup, and tells the subgroups to begin the second of the three-minute role plays. This process is followed until each seller has participated in a role play in each of the seven subgroups. (Twenty-five minutes.)

4. The total group is reconvened. The facilitator leads a discussion of the sellers’ roles, focusing on each of the seven roles separately. When each new role is considered, the facilitator asks the seller who played that role to announce the letter and the strategy that appear at the top of the role sheet and to read the second paragraph of the role sheet aloud to the group; then the discussion proceeds as follows:

- The seller describes his or her experiences in playing the role;
- The customers describe their reactions to the seller;
- The observers share their observations about that seller’s conversation with the customer; and
- The remaining participants are invited to comment.

During the discussion the facilitator records key words describing each strategy on newsprint. (Thirty minutes.)

5. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion by asking the following questions:

- Based on what you have experienced and heard about the different power strategies, what is a statement you can make about each (coercive, connection, expert, information, legitimate, referent, reward)?

- In comparing these statements, what can we conclude about the relative effectiveness of the strategies? Which are more effective and why?
Which power strategies do you most frequently experience in your organizational life? Which do you personally use most often in your organizational life? What are the outcomes of those strategies?

How might you facilitate a more effective use of power in your organizational life?

**Variations**

- The observers may interview customers at the end of each round to determine their reactions to the strategies that were used and the reasons for the decisions that were made about buying.
- Extra candy bars may be kept on hand so that the sellers can actually “sell” the merchandise. At the end the facilitator would determine who sold the most candy bars (and, therefore, which strategy seemed most effective).
- An observer may follow each seller as he or she travels from subgroup to subgroup to determine how different customer responses affected the strategy. (This variation would require twenty-eight participants.)
- The experience may be concluded by having each participant complete an action plan based on question 4 in step 5.

**References**


THE CANDY BAR CUSTOMER’S ROLE SHEET

You are to participate in seven different role plays in which you play the customer and another participant plays the seller. Both of you are employees of the same company. The seller is selling candy bars at work on behalf of his or her daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band.

It is entirely up to you whether you decide to “buy” any candy bars. Respond as you normally would to the different approaches used by the sellers, and assume that whatever situation each seller creates is true.

THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET A

Strategy: Coercive Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your strategy is to coerce each prospective customer into buying. Your basic attitude is “If you don’t buy candy bars from me, I won’t cooperate with you the next time you need something from me at work.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (A) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.
THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET B

Strategy: Connection Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your strategy is to convince each prospective customer to buy because someone important to that customer has already bought candy bars from you. Your basic attitude is something like “You should buy these candy bars because your brother-in-law just bought some from me.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (B) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.

THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET C

Strategy: Expert Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your strategy is to convince each prospective customer that you are an expert when it comes to candy bars and, therefore, that the customer should have faith in your judgment. Your basic approach is “I know all about candy bars, and this is the best one you can buy.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (C) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.
THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET D

Strategy: Information Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your approach is to win each prospective customer by promising to share valuable information if that customer buys candy bars from you. An example of this approach is “If you buy candy bars from me, I’ll tell you where you can get several other kinds of candy bars at greatly discounted prices.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (D) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.

THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET E

Strategy: Legitimate Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your approach is based on the fact that you are higher in the organizational hierarchy than each of your prospective customers. Your general attitude is “You should buy these candy bars from me because I have power in this company and I have a right to expect you to do what I want.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (E) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.
THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET F

Strategy: Referent Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your selling strategy is to convince each prospective customer to buy candy bars from you because of the positive personal qualities that you have and that the customer, by association, would like to be seen as having. An example of your approach is “If you buy these candy bars from me, you will be seen as a person with gourmet taste because that’s how I’m seen.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (F) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.

THE CANDY BAR SELLER’S ROLE SHEET G

Strategy: Reward Power

You are selling candy bars on behalf of your daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. You have decided that taking these candy bars to work with you would be a good idea. During the course of this activity you will be attempting to sell one or more bars to each of seven fellow employees.

Your approach is to convince prospective customers to buy candy bars from you by promising them rewards. An example of this approach might be “If you agree to buy these candy bars from me, I’ll handle some of your work for you next week.”

Although you should not share the details of your role with anyone before or during the role plays, you should identify the letter of your role sheet (G) for the observer(s) in each subgroup.
THE CANDY BAR OBSERVER’S TASK SHEET

In the upcoming activity you are to observe seven different role plays. Each role play consists of a conversation between a seller and a customer who are employees of the same company. The seller will attempt to convince the customer to buy candy bars on behalf of the seller’s daughter, who, in turn, is selling them to make money for her school band. The seven sellers will use seven different approaches in their attempts to sell the candy bars.

You are to fill out a separate copy of this sheet during each role play. Before the role play begins, ask the seller which role sheet (A, B, C, D, E, F, or G) he or she has. Record this letter in the blank provided below.

Seller’s Role Sheet: ____________

Make sure you are seated so that you are slightly separated from the customer and the seller but so that you can see and hear their interchanges. As you watch and listen, jot down answers to the following questions:

1. What kinds of key terms did the seller use? What behaviors accompanied the verbal strategy? How would you describe the strategy?

2. What kinds of responses did the seller elicit from the customer? What is your opinion about how the customer was feeling? On what behaviors did you base that opinion?
3. How would you describe the relationship between the seller and the customer?

4. Did the seller make the sale? How do you account for or explain that result?

5. Would you buy candy bars from this seller? Explain.
BUILDING OPEN AND CLOSED RELATIONSHIPS

Goals
- To enable group members to focus on the elements of relationships that characterize them as open or closed.
- To facilitate the cohesiveness of personal growth or otherwise-designated groups who will be working together.

Group Size
One or two groups of twelve to fifteen participants each.

Time Required
Approximately one and one-half to two hours.

Materials
- One copy of the Building Open and Closed Relationships Dimensions Diagram for each participant.
- Pencils and blank paper for each participant.

Physical Setting
A room large enough to accommodate the group or subgroups comfortably. Movable chairs should be provided that can be arranged in a group-on-group pattern.

Process
1. The facilitator begins with a lecturette and discussion of the elements of open and closed relationships. The facilitator suggests that relationships can be thought of as varying from open to closed along a continuum.
2. This continuum is discussed by the group members, and the facilitator may call for suggestions from the group of words or phrases that characterize the ends of the continuum, e.g., “open” as free, direct, varied, expressive, etc. and “closed” as tentative, routine, tight, superficial, etc.
3. The facilitator then presents the idea that degrees of openness or closedness in relationships depend on the answers to four questions:
   - Who is concerned about the “topic” of conversation?
   - What is the “time” perspective?
How do we use our “feelings”?  
How “personal” will we be?

4. The facilitator redistributes copies of the Building Open and Closed Relationships Dimensions Diagram and leads discussion on the implications of using the diagram to focus on open and closed relationships.

5. In order to enable the group members to experience what it feels like to participate in a closed and an open relationship and to understand how the four dimensions actually function to affect individuals’ feelings toward the other persons, the facilitator selects four members from the group for a role-playing sequence. The four partners are designated as A and B, and C and D.

6. Partners A and B are asked to carry on a conversation at the closed end of the diagram for two minutes. Before they begin, partners C and D are asked to observe A and B and listen for examples of statements that are and are not at the “closed” end of the diagram, taking notes for feedback reference.

7. The facilitator reverses the proceedings described in step 6 with A and B observing and giving feedback to C and D.

8. The facilitator proceeds by repeating the process, beginning with step 6, only having the conversations be at the “open” end of the diagram.

9. The two partnerships debrief for five minutes concerning reactions to the roleplaying sequence.

10. The facilitator next focuses on group interaction by having one group of participants observe another in a group-on-group arrangement. The inner group is asked to carry on a conversation at the “closed” end of the diagram for five minutes.

11. The observers in the outer group are asked to watch for statements that stray toward the “open” end. While they are still in process, the facilitator explains a method of “silent” feedback the observers may employ to impact the inner circle. If a statement begins to lean toward the “open” end, the observers may raise their hands, indicating this message: “I think you are moving toward the open end by that statement.” Those in the inner circle are free to use or ignore the feedback as they wish.

12. The facilitator gives the two groups three minutes to debrief, check on messages sent and received, and to clarify the meaning of any parts of the diagram.

13. The process is repeated beginning with step 11, only having the conversation at the “open” end of the diagram.

14. The entire process with the groups is repeated beginning with step 11, only having the outer group become the inner group.
15. The facilitator initiates a final debriefing and may wish to have groups concentrate on building open relationships based on the learning which took place.

This activity was adapted by permission from “The Relationship Contraption,” by William Barber, by permission from NTL.
## Building Open and Closed Relationships Dimensions Diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who is concerned about the TOPIC?</th>
<th>A topic of concern to neither, e.g., weather talk.</th>
<th>A topic of concern to one of us.</th>
<th>A topic of concern to both of us.</th>
<th>The topic is our relationship, you and me.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the TIME frame?</td>
<td>No time perspective, e.g., jokes generalizations.</td>
<td>Distant past or future.</td>
<td>Recent past or future.</td>
<td>Now, presently being experienced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we use FEELINGS?</td>
<td>Feelings are excluded as irrelevant or inappropriate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Describing our feelings is seen as providing helpful information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How PERSONAL will we be?</td>
<td>Generalizations: abstract ideas, intellectualizations.</td>
<td>Inner, private information: perceptions, feelings, thoughts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE HUMAN BANK ACCOUNT: PRACTICING SELF-AFFIRMATION

Goals
- To increase the participants’ awareness of their own and others’ ability to affect their self-concepts.
- To offer the participants an opportunity to practice assuming control of their self-concepts and making self-affirming responses to comments made by others.

Group Size
Five to eight trios.

Time Required
Two hours.

Materials
- Blank paper and a pencil for each participant.
- A clipboard or other portable writing surface for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting
A room large enough so that the trios can work without disturbing one another. Movable chairs should be provided for the participants.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the concept of the “human bank account” by making the following comments:

“The term ‘human bank account’ is used to represent the life pattern of basing one’s self-esteem on the opinions, attitudes, and evaluations of others. An individual who behaves like a human bank account feels good when praised, feels hurt and inferior when reprimanded, and feels angry when insulted or

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verbally attacked. Such a person allows others to raise or lower his or her feelings of self-worth and forfeits the power to influence those feelings.

“The comparison to a bank account is particularly appropriate in that others are allowed to make ‘deposits’ to and ‘withdrawals’ from such a person. A more positive life pattern consists of maintaining one’s own ‘balance’ of good feelings and self-acceptance.”

2. The facilitator distributes blank paper, pencils, and clipboards or other portable writing surfaces and then writes the following incomplete sentences on newsprint:

- The comments that people make to me that increase my feelings of self-worth are . . .
- The comments that people make to me that decrease my feelings of self-worth are . . .

Each participant is instructed to reproduce the two sentences on paper, completing each with at least three sample comments. (Fifteen minutes.)

3. The participants are asked to assemble into trios and to take turns sharing their completed sentences with one another. The facilitator explains that each comment that increases self-worth as well as each comment that decreases self-worth should be considered separately; after the participant reads a comment, all three subgroup members are to work to devise responses to the comment that indicate a strong reliance on one’s own positive self-concept rather than on altering one’s self-concept in accordance with the comment. The facilitator provides the following examples of a positive comment and an appropriate response as well as a negative comment and an appropriate response:

Comment: “I think you made a really outstanding presentation at the meeting yesterday.”
Response: “Thanks. That’s good to hear. I was pleased with it, too. Could you give me any specifics about what you particularly liked?”

Comment: “That was the worst proposal I’ve ever seen.”
Response: “I’m surprised. I thought it was rather good. Perhaps you have some specific suggestions that I could consider to make my next proposal better.”

It is also stipulated that the participant who reads the original comment is to keep a written record of all responses. After clarifying these instructions as necessary, the facilitator asks the trios to begin. (Thirty minutes.)

4. After the trios have completed their work, the facilitator reassembles the total group. One positive comment and response and one negative comment and response are elicited from each trio, written on newsprint, and posted; then
opinions are elicited regarding whether the responses are suitable and why. The participants are also asked to contribute additional responses to specific comments that might be appropriate and self-affirming, and these responses are recorded on newsprint. (Thirty minutes.)

5. New trios are assembled for the purpose of practicing self-affirming responses. The facilitator explains that one member within each trio is to select one positive comment from those listed on newsprint and to make that comment to another trio member, and the recipient of the comment is to make a self-affirming response; then the third trio member is to select a negative comment and to make that comment to the same recipient, and again the recipient is to make a self-affirming response. The facilitator clarifies that this procedure is to be followed until each participant has heard and responded to two comments. The participants are told that they are to respond to the comments they hear in as spontaneous a manner as possible and without using the responses posted on newsprint. The facilitator also stipulates that after each trio has completed the entire procedure, the members are to take turns stating an adjective that describes their feelings at the moment. After clarifying these instructions as necessary, the facilitator instructs the trios to begin. (Twenty minutes.)

6. The facilitator reassembles the total group and asks the following questions:

- How did you feel after making self-affirming responses to the comments made by your fellow trio members? What was easy and/or difficult about making these responses?
- How did you feel after hearing another person make self-affirming responses to your own comments?
- How did this experience affect your relationship with your fellow trio members? How did it affect your image of yourself?
- What have you learned about maintaining a positive self-concept? What are the “truths” that emerge from this activity?
- How can you sustain this process of maintaining your own “balance”? What are some sources of support that you can use? What are some obstacles that you might face? How can you overcome these obstacles?

Variations

- During step 5 the members of each trio may be instructed to devise their own comments instead of using those written on newsprint.
- After step 5 the members of each trio may be asked to make comments to one another based on their present knowledge of one another. After such comments are made, the members practice self-affirming responses.
After step 6 the participants may be asked to return to their trios for a follow-up self-affirming activity. For example, they may be instructed to make lists of their positive traits.

The activity may be altered to focus on responding to either positive or negative comments exclusively.

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ORGANIZATIONAL TA: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Goals
- To gain insight into the effects on communication of the three ego states: parent (P), adult (A), and child (C).
- To have the experience of operating from each of these three ego states in confrontation situations.
- To acquire skills in observing interactions based on these three ego states.
- To explore the benefits of operating from an adult ego state in confrontation situations.

Group Size
Subgroups of four members each.

Time Required
Approximately two hours.

Materials
- A copy of the Organizational TA Sample Behaviors Sheet for each participant.
- A copy of the appropriate Organizational TA Role Sheet for each of the four role players in each subgroup.
- A copy of the Organizational TA Observer Sheet for each participant.
- Newsprint and a felt-tipped marker.

Physical Setting
Enough space so that each subgroup can role play without disturbing the other subgroups.

Process
1. The facilitator introduces the activity as one that explores various ways in which people confront each other in organizations and gives a brief lecturette on Transactional Analysis. (Fifteen minutes.)
2. The facilitator distributes a copy of the Organizational TA Sample Behaviors Sheet to each participant and has the participants practice by taking turns reading the statements, with appropriate vocal expression, until all statements have been read aloud. The facilitator uses this opportunity to coach participants and to reemphasize the points made during the lecturette. (Ten minutes.)

3. The facilitator divides the participants into subgroups of four members each. Each subgroup of four further subdivides into two pairs, designated as Pair A and Pair B.

4. The facilitator instructs the members of the subgroups that there will be four different role-play situations and four different interactions within each situation, and that each role player will have a chance to practice interacting from the TA ego states of child, parent, and adult during these role plays. In situations one and three, Pair A will role play and Pair B will observe. In situations two and four, Pair B will role play and Pair A will observe.

5. The facilitator distributes a copy of the Organizational TA Observer Sheet to each participant and reads the instructions aloud.

6. The facilitator then distributes to Pair A a copy of the Organizational TA Role Sheet—Situation One and to Pair B a copy of the Organizational TA Role Sheet—Situation Two. The partners are directed to read the situations and decide who is to be role player one and who is to be role player two prior to starting each situation. They are not to show their role sheets to each other.

7. The facilitator announces the beginning of Situation One, Interaction One, and instructs each Pair A to role play while the related Pair B observes. After two minutes, the facilitator directs the role players to continue in the TA ego states indicated for Interaction Two. After another two minutes, he or she directs them to switch to Interaction Three, and soon. After all interactions have been role played (eight to ten minutes), the facilitator calls time and directs the role players to tell each other and the observers what TA ego states they were playing during each interaction. They are not to show their role sheets to each other.

8. The facilitator announces the beginning of Situation Two and instructs that each Pair B role play while the related Pair A observes. Each of the four interactions is completed, in turn, as in step 7.

9. After Situation Two is completed, the facilitator remarks that each situation ends with an adult-adult interaction. The facilitator then rereads aloud the description of adult behavior from the Organizational TA Sample Behavior Sheet and remarks that the adult is a problem-solving person. The facilitator then encourages the subgroups not to refer to the sample behaviors during the remaining interactions. The facilitator also allows a longer period of time for the adult-adult interactions.
10. Situations Three and Four are then distributed to the appropriate pairs, read, and role played. (Twenty minutes.)

11. The four members of each subgroup discuss: their feelings about playing the different TA roles; their reactions to the other person who was operating from a different TA ego state; and awarenesses they had about themselves during the role-play situations. (Ten minutes.)

12. The total group is reassembled, and the group members discuss the following questions:
   - What are the consequences of child-parent or parent-child interactions?
   - What are the consequences of adult-adult interactions?
   - What helps or hinders us from engaging in adult-adult interactions in many confrontation situations?

   The facilitator posts the answers that were generated from the last question. (Fifteen minutes.)

13. The facilitator instructs subgroup members to select a partner and to generate strategies for dealing with back-home situations on an adult-adult level by applying the content on the group lists. (Ten minutes.)

**Variations**

- Partners can be formed instead of subgroups of four members each. These two can role play all interactions and give each other feedback. Subgroups of three can be formed and divided into one observer and two role players who rotate roles for each of the four situations.

- Participants can role play the ego state that most readily comes to mind during their interactions in the situations.

- The role plays can be allowed to develop during the time allotted without the facilitator signaling the stop and start of the four interactions within each situation.

- The content of the role plays can be revised so as to represent more typical situations.

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Submitted by Rich Strand and Frederic R. Wickert.
ORGANIZATIONAL TA SAMPLE BEHAVIORS SHEET

Child

Confronter
1. I want my . . . (demanding)
2. This is no fair . . . (complaining)
3. Aw, come on . . . (complaining)
4. I know you’re right, but . . . (placating)
5. If you’ll do this . . . (bargaining)

Confrontee
1. It’s not my fault . . . (pouting)
2. I don’t know what to do . . . (confused)
3. No, I won’t do it . . . (angry)
4. O.K., O.K., I’ll do it . . . (avoiding)

Parent

Confronter
1. What is going on here? . . . (angry)
2. You’ll have to solve my problem right away . . . (demanding)
3. I knew it, I just knew it . . . (condescending)
4. You better do something, or I’ll . . . (threatening)

Confrontee
1. You are responsible for it . . . (blaming)
2. You should do it . . . (controlling)
3. Don’t get upset; it’s nothing . . . (avoiding)
4. Things could be worse . . . (avoiding)

Adult

Confronter
1. We have a problem. Let’s see if . . . (problem solving)
2. Let me tell you my problem . . . (information giving)
3. I understand that you can help me . . . (checking)
4. I feel upset. I just found out . . . (disclosing)

Confrontee
1. Let’s see if we can solve your problem . . . (problem solving)
2. Can you tell me more? . . . (information seeking)
3. Let me see if I understand you . . . (checking)
4. I think I understand how you feel . . . (defusing)
ORGANIZATIONAL TA ROLE SHEETS

(Roles should be cut apart and distributed separately to appropriate role players.)

Role Player One—Pair A

Situation One: Passenger

Interaction 1: child
Interaction 2: parent
Interaction 3: child
Interaction 4: adult

You just flew into the airport and went to pick up your luggage at the baggage pick-up area. All the other passengers from your flight found their baggage, but yours was not there. You were told to go to the lost-baggage desk and have just arrived there.

Role Player Two—Pair A

Situation One: Airline Employee

Interaction 1: parent
Interaction 2: child
Interaction 3: adult
Interaction 4: adult

You are in charge of the lost-baggage desk at the airport. Until about the last half-hour, the day has been really hectic. You just looked up from your paperwork to see someone approaching your desk. This is probably another passenger with lost luggage.
Role Player One—Pair B

Situation Two: Employee

Interaction 1: parent
Interaction 2: child
Interaction 3: adult
Interaction 4: adult

You have just found out at work that you have been rescheduled to take your vacation at a time when you have many reasons to stay in town. You have already made reservations for what you were once told was your vacation time and you don’t want to change them. You are going in to confront your boss.

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Role Player Two—Pair B

Situation Two: Boss

Interaction 1: child
Interaction 2: parent
Interaction 3: parent
Interaction 4: adult

Among all the other things you have to do is the allocation and distribution of the annual vacation schedule for your group of twenty-one subordinates. It is a real headache to plan the schedule so that the employees can take their summer vacations at the times they asked for and still keep operations going. (Your company operates all summer and does not have an annual vacation shutdown.) In fact, when it came to the last slots in the schedule, you had to put a few newer employees down for times they may not like very well, but there was no other way you could make the schedule work out. Just now you looked up to see one of these employees coming toward your desk. This person does not look happy.
Role Player Two—Pair A

Situation Three: Supervisor
Interaction 1: parent
Interaction 2: parent
Interaction 3: adult
Interaction 4: adult

You are in charge of five employees. Pat is fairly new and a bit independent, but, as you have observed, is a hard worker. During this last week, however, Pat has been about an hour late twice. Today it was an hour and a half. You have just called Pat into your office.

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Role Player One—Pair A

Situation Three: Pat
Interaction 1: child
Interaction 2: parent
Interaction 3: child
Interaction 4: adult

You are a relatively recent addition to the staff. You like your supervisor, the other members of the staff, and your work. At the same time you like to do things your own way without too much interference from others. Before you took this job, you lived and worked on the other side of town. It has been difficult trying to get across town every morning. You plan to move closer to work eventually. You know that you have not always made it to work on time, but you work more than hard enough to make up for any time you might lose. You have just been called into your supervisor’s office. You don’t know what it is about.
Role Player Two—Pair B

Situation Four:  
Manufacturing Manager  
Interaction 1: parent  
Interaction 2: adult  
Interaction 3: parent  
Interaction 4: adult  

You are in charge of one of several product-line departments of a large computer company. Lately your department has been having a lot of “down time” because of an insufficient supply of plastic casing. You are on your way to see the supply manager about this.

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Role Player One—Pair B

Situation Four:  
Supply Manager  
Interaction 1: parent  
Interaction 2: child  
Interaction 3: adult  
Interaction 4: adult  

You’re in charge of the supply operation for several product-line departments of a large computer company. To supply these departments with the many materials they need is a continuous problem. Purchasing gets behind, major suppliers cannot get materials, and it is one thing after another. You do the best you can. You just looked up to see a manager of one of the product-line departments coming down the aisle toward you.
ORGANIZATIONAL TA OBSERVER SHEET

Instructions: Your task as an observer is to develop skills in differentiating between communications that represent parent, child, and adult ego-state functioning.

1. Try to identify the ego states of the confrontee and confronter. If necessary, make notes to help you remember. Observe body language, choice of words, tone of voice, etc.

2. Check with role players at the end of the role-play situation to see which ego states they depicted.

3. Be prepared to state why you perceived the ego states of the role players as you did.

4. If there is a discrepancy between the reported or intended role-play ego state and your perceptions, note this but do not argue with the role player.

5. Be prepared to discuss later the possible consequences of the various interactions (e.g., continued emotional reactions, development of hidden agendas, hidden information, lack of cooperation during problem solving).
STATING THE ISSUE: PRACTICING “OWNERSHIP”

Goals
- To present participants with a method for describing personal and organizational issues accurately and specifically.
- To help participants to recognize when and how they may hinder problem solving by disowning responsibility for their part in the issue.
- To offer participants the opportunity to practice the skills needed for nondefensive, open (self-disclosing), and effective communication.

Group Size
Up to thirty participants.

Time Required
Approximately three hours.

Materials
- One copy of the Stating the Issue Participant Workbook for each participant.
- One copy of the Stating the Issue Lessons Learned Work Sheet for each participant.
- A pencil and a portable writing surface for each participant.
- Five newsprint posters prepared in advance:
  - On the first poster: The information contained in Figure 1. Examples of Transforming Stage I to Stage II Statements.
  - On the second poster: The information contained in Figure 2. Examples of Transforming Stage II to Stage III Statements.
  - On the third poster: The information contained in Figure 3. Examples of Transforming Stage III to Stage IV Statements.
  - On the fourth poster: The information contained in Figure 4. Examples of Transforming Stage IV to Stage V Statements.
  - On the fifth poster: The information contained in Figure 5. The Evolution of a Well-Formed Statement of an Issue.
- One copy of the Stating the Issue Theory Sheet for the facilitator’s use.
- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

**Physical Setting**

A room large enough so that the subgroups can work without disturbing one another.

**Process**

1. The facilitator presents the goals of the activity and presents a short lecturette based on the Stating the Issue Theory Sheet. (Ten minutes.)
2. The participants are asked to form subgroups of three or four participants each. One copy of the Stating the Issue Participant Workbook is distributed to each participant. (Five minutes.)
3. The facilitator describes the process for defining an issue in words similar to the following:

   “An issue can be a problem that interferes with achieving goals or objectives or something that obstructs or reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of work activities and processes. Alternatively, the issue may be an opportunity to improve conditions by increasing efficiency, productivity, or quality in your own work, the work of your team, or that of your company. Improvement opportunities may also include ways to reduce or contain operational costs.

   “Most people describe issues in terms of their most obvious elements: goals or objectives, strategic and operational plans, finances, time lines, technology, structures, procedures, or policies. These tend to be the most obvious and easily acknowledged elements of business and organizational life. Most people are familiar, competent, comfortable, and confident in discussing these elements. Less obvious and less likely to be acknowledged are the cultural, political, and social dynamics that either confound or facilitate achieving effective, innovative solutions.

   “Each of you should now select an issue. It should be a significant work relationship issue that either has caused or has perpetuated organizational problems or improvement opportunities. The issue should satisfy the following four criteria:

   - The issue must involve you personally. That is, you and your work or your work relationships must be affected by the problem or opportunity in some way.
   - The issue that you select must involve at least one other person. The other involved party or parties may be colleagues, peers, subordinates, supervisors,
managers, suppliers, providers of resources, investors, regulators, customers, or users of your products or services.

- The issue must be something about which you are personally concerned. It must be a problem or opportunity with which you are dissatisfied.

- The issue must be something into which you are willing to invest some of your time and energy in an effort to solve the problem or to capitalize on the opportunity to improve conditions.

For example, an issue could be a relationship in which one person frequently misunderstands what another person tries to communicate. An issue also could be a conflict situation in which two or more persons have become adversaries who advocate quite different, competing situational analyses, conclusions, goals, plans, methods, positions, or preferences.”

(Ten minutes.)

4. Individually, the participants are instructed to write initial, provisional descriptions of their personal issues on Work Sheet 1. (Five minutes.)

5. The facilitator posts the newsprint poster of Figure 1 and reviews it with the participants. The facilitator presents information to the participants about ways to move from Stage I to Stage II, in words similar to the following:

“What stage does your statement represent? If you have described the issue as something that is wrong or unacceptable, as something taking place ‘out there,’ as something that affects other people but not you, and as something in which you are not personally involved, then you are in Stage I.

“If your description clearly indicates how you are personally involved in and affected by the issue, then you are probably in Stage II.

“Notice the examples listed on the newsprint. Including yourself in the description makes each statement more personal and more useful for problem solving and decision making. In other words, if the issue is out there and only involves others, you have very little control of the situation.

“However, when you place yourself within the situation as a part of the issue, you enable yourself to see and to understand more clearly that you have at least two leverage points: (1) the actions you choose to take; and (2) the interactions you have with others who are involved in and concerned about the issue.”

(Ten minutes.)

6. The facilitator asks participants to compare their initial issue descriptions with the examples of Stage I and Stage II statements in Figure 1. The facilitator invites participants to rewrite their issue descriptions in a Stage II manner using Work Sheet 2. The facilitator invites participants to share their restated issue descriptions with members of their subgroups. Each participant reads his or her restated issue description to the other members of the subgroup. Subgroup
members share their reactions to each participant’s issue description in terms of
“Is this a Stage II statement? If not, how can we make it one?” (Fifteen
minutes.)

7. The facilitator posts the newsprint poster of Figure 2 and reviews it with the
participants. The facilitator presents information about moving from Stage II to
Stage III in words like the following:

“Now that you have the issue stated in terms of how you are impacted, we will
focus on what you think about the issue. How you think about an issue is based
in part on how you perceive the situation. What you perceive depends on your
personal perceptual filters, preferences, current preoccupations, expectations,
options, beliefs, values, and attitudes. If some event or condition does not
match your expectations, you have several choices of how to perceive it. First,
you might choose to ignore it, unconsciously refusing to allow it to pass through
your perceptual filter to become part of your conscious awareness. Second, you
might choose to distort it to fit your expectations. Your conscious perceptions,
therefore, are whatever registers in your conscious mind. You are to state your
conscious perceptions now. In other words, what do you think is going on with
the issue?”

(Ten minutes.)

8. The facilitator asks participants to compare their Work Sheet 2 descriptions with
the examples of Stage II and Stage III statements in Figure 2. The facilitator
invites participants to rewrite their issue descriptions in a Stage III manner on
Work Sheet 3. The facilitator invites participants to share their restated issue
descriptions with members of their subgroups. Each participant reads his or her
restated issue description to the other members of the subgroup. Subgroup
members share their reactions to each participant’s issue description and help to
rewrite it, asking “Is this a Stage III statement? If not, how can we make it
one?” (Fifteen minutes.)

9. The facilitator posts the newsprint poster of Figure 3 and reviews it with the
participants. The facilitator presents information about moving from Stage III to
Stage IV in words like the following:

“Compare your revised statement with the examples listed in Figure 3. As
instructed at Stage III, you probably described the issue as something about
which you had no feelings whatsoever. You probably described the issue as
something that was totally objective and emotionally neutral. We do this
because, in most organizations, what we think about an issue is accepted and
valued far more highly than how we might feel about it. However, feelings are
essential elements of effective problem solving and decision making.

“The perceptions and thoughts that you recorded will either support or
interfere with satisfying your goals and personal interests. What you perceive
may also fulfill or violate your beliefs and values about organizational and
business life. If your perception of a situation matches how you believe people should behave in their corporate interactions, or if the situation supports your goals and interests, you are likely to experience positive emotions. However, when there is a mismatch or an apparent threat, you are likely to experience unpleasant, negative feelings.

“You can progress to Stage IV by rewriting your statement to show how you feel about your involvement in the situation.”

(Ten minutes.)

10. The facilitator asks participants to compare their Work Sheet 3 descriptions with the examples of Stage III and Stage IV statements in Figure 3. The facilitator invites participants to rewrite their issue descriptions in a Stage IV manner on Work Sheet 4. The facilitator invites participants to share their restated issue descriptions with members of their subgroups. Each participant reads his or her restated issue description to the other members of the subgroup. Subgroup members share their reactions to each participant’s issue description by asking “Is this a Stage IV statement? If not, how can we make it one?” (Fifteen minutes.)

11. The facilitator posts the newsprint poster of Figure 4 and reviews it with the participants. The facilitator presents information about moving from Stage IV to Stage V in words like the following:

“Stage V is a critical stage in understanding and coping with most interpersonal, group, and intergroup issues. Stage V is achieved when each person involved recognizes and accepts his or her own personal contribution to the issue. That is, when each party accepts personal ownership of the ways in which his or her behaviors may have added to the problem or detracted from discovering some effective means for dealing with the issue.

“Look over your last revision (Stage IV) of your statement of the issue. Ask yourself now how you can fully explore and write down your personal contributions to the cause or perpetuation of the situation. Are there things that you do, intentionally or not, that seem to add to the difficulties? Are there things that you could but refrain from doing that could help your organization to deal with the opportunities or the difficulties?

“When your statement describes how your behavior has helped to create or how you personally may be perpetuating the issue, you have reached the point at which you are capable of describing issues at a Stage V level.”

(Ten minutes.)

12. The facilitator asks participants to compare their Work Sheet 4 descriptions with the examples of Stage IV and Stage V statements and invites them to rewrite their issue descriptions in a Stage V manner on Work Sheet 5. (Five minutes.)
13. The facilitator invites participants to share their restated (Stage V) issue
descriptions with members of their subgroups. Before allowing them to begin,
the facilitator offers the following guidelines:

“Before you return to work with your subgroup, I want to offer one caution.
Many subgroup members change the topic and detour their subgroups at this
point because they move beyond stating the issue to offering solutions to it.
Most often members do this because they are accustomed to functioning as
problem-solvers. This happens particularly with people who have been rewarded
for being effective as organizational problem-solvers; for such people, the issues
being discussed may represent an irresistible invitation to do what they do so
well. Although it is important to move into problem solving, remember that we
are here first to learn how to state the issue in order to make problem solving
easier and more efficient. At other times members of a subgroup will collude with
each other and change the topic in order to shift the focus of attention away from
an issue that is believed to be too difficult, sensitive, or embarrassing.

“To derive the greatest benefit from this activity, it is important to keep the
subgroup on track. You can help your subgroup and its members by describing
the observable behaviors that you think indicate that people are digressing or
topic jumping. You may choose to select one member to perform the function of
challenging the relevance of discussions that seem to be moving in the direction
of problem solving.”

(Ten minutes.)

14. Each participant reads his or her restated issue description to the other
members of the subgroup. Subgroup members share their reactions to each
participant’s issue description and ask “Is this a Stage V statement? If not, how
can we make it one?” During this time, the facilitator should circulate and remind
participants, where necessary, to focus on simply describing the issue. (Ten
minutes.)

15. The facilitator posts the newsprint poster of Figure 5 and presents summary
material in words similar to the following:

“To summarize, a well-formed statement of an issue has several components
(Figure 5). It is stated in terms of what I think is taking place right here in the
present situation and right now at this time among all parties involved. It is as
objective a description as possible of the transactions and interactions that are
taking place. In addition, a well-formed statement includes my assessment of the
impact of my behaviors and those of others on the current situation. Further, a
well-formed statement includes a description of what I feel about all the involved
parties and our behaviors, both positive and negative. Finally, a well-formed
statement includes a description of what I actually do in response to my
perceptions, my assessments, and my feelings.
“At this point, you are probably beginning to see and understand your issue in a new way. As a result, you may become aware that you have some feelings about yourself and how you have been dealing with the issue and the situation. You may discover that once you have taken enough time to fully discuss an issue, you can be more relaxed and open to considering new ways of understanding or looking at the situation. With this new perspective, you may find that you and your colleagues are more likely to create new, effective ways to deal with difficult issues.”

(Ten minutes.)

16. The facilitator distributes copies of the Stating the Issue Lessons Learned Work Sheet and instructs the participants, individually, to finish the sentences in writing. The participants then are instructed to share and to discuss their responses with the other members of their subgroups. (Ten minutes.)

17. The facilitator reconvenes the entire group and invites participants to share information and observations from the Stating the Issue Lessons Learned Work Sheet. (Ten minutes.)

18. The facilitator leads a concluding discussion based on questions such as the following:

- Which stage is most like your normal pattern of communicating? Which stage is least like your normal pattern? How do you feel about this discovery?
- What have you learned about stating an issue responsibly? What implications do these learnings have for your problem-solving communication skills? What might you do differently in the future?
- How can you use these skills in back-home or back-on-the-job situations?

(Fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- The facilitator may choose to add a Stage VI to the process, in which participants and the other members of their subgroups explore what they can do to improve the situations.
- The facilitator instructions can be added to the workbook and used as prework. Participants then would come together to review their Stage V descriptions.

Submitted by Arthur M. Freedman.
STATING THE ISSUE THEORY SHEET

Traditional solutions are effective with well-known, repetitive problems. However, modern society requires people to be problem-solving pioneers who address more and more one-of-a-kind “issues” in life. This demands an inquisitive attitude, realistic expectations, and flexible problem-solving approaches that can be adapted to a variety of problems and improvement opportunities.

Organizational change usually results from designing and installing “solutions” in response to challenging problems. Alternatively, change may also result from attempts to capitalize on opportunities to improve current conditions. However, a solution or an opportunity for one person or organizational group often becomes a problem for other involved parties.

Effective problem solving is a process for creating practical solutions that are mutually understood, accepted, and satisfying to all involved parties. When enacted, practical solutions must result in desirable, observable consequences that satisfy the demands of the original issue as well as being acceptable to the parties involved.

The first phase of effective problem solving is to state the issue. The goal is for all involved parties to understand the issue in the same way. People must progress through five specific stages in order for an issue to be stated in a high quality, well-formed style. These stages, which will be explained as the activity progresses, are not always recognized by those who use them or by those who are affected by them. With practice, some people can skip the early stages and state issues directly in Stage IV or Stage V terms. Other people tend not to see or understand the practicality of working beyond Stage I.

Those who become proficient in consistently working at Stage V contribute to the creation of useful ways of studying and responding to both personal and organizational issues. Working at Stage V brings issues into a focus that makes efficient and effective use of scarce problem-solving resources.

You will be invited to follow a series of instructions in order to complete the Stating the Issue process. To derive the greatest value from this exercise, follow these instructions and express your thoughts and feelings honestly and openly.

Although this skill-development exercise can be done alone, you will derive greater benefits by working with others in a small group. You do not need to have a great deal in common with these subgroup members. Remember that they are—or will be—confronted with similar problems and opportunities and will participate in this exercise for reasons like yours.

There are two elements of this skill-development exercise:

1. First you will be asked to work individually and with the other members of your subgroup on each of the five stages of Stating the Issue, in sequence. Subgroup members will provide and receive assistance from other members at each stage.
2. When your subgroup has completed all five stages of the Stating the Issue process, you will be invited to share your reactions to the entire Stating the Issue process with the members of the other subgroups. It will be up to you to determine how much of your work you are willing to share with others.
STATING THE ISSUE PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Instructions: Write down a draft statement that describes the issue as you currently understand it. Use Work Sheet 1, provided below. Write quickly, putting your thoughts down on paper just as they come to you. Put everything on paper first—you will have plenty of time to review and revise what you have written later. At this stage, the organization of your thoughts, coherence, grammar, and spelling are unimportant.

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<tr>
<th>Statement of the Issue: Initial Version.</th>
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Work Sheet 1. Issues Work Sheet for Initial Statement

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage I: “What is going on is . . .”</th>
<th>Stage II: “The impact that this has on me is . . .”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors do not let their subordinates try new ideas. Their philosophy is “Don’t fix it if it isn’t broken.”</td>
<td>My supervisor does not let me or my people try any new ideas if it means breaking with our company’s traditional work practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental regulators expect the companies to instantly comply with all of their new regulations and guidelines.</td>
<td>Government regulators expect me to get my people to comply, instantly, to all of their new, constantly changing regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors never listen to their subordinates’ concerns or suggestions.</td>
<td>My supervisor does not ask me for my input when she has to make a decision. She also does not take my concerns or suggestions seriously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People only hang around with others of their own race. Other kinds of people cannot break into their cliques so they never know what concerns they discuss.</td>
<td>People of different races with whom I work do not invite me into their conversations. They seem to avoid me except when we work together directly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The consultant is too “academic” and use too much technical jargon. Nobody understands what he’s talking about.</td>
<td>Sometimes I don’t understand the consultant’s complex way of expressing concepts that are new to me. He often uses terms that I do not understand.</td>
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**Figure 1. Examples of Transforming Stage I to Stage II Statements**
Use Work Sheet 2 below to make your first revision of your initial statement.

**Statement of the Issue: Revision #1.**

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**Work Sheet 2. Issues Work Sheet for Stage II Statement**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage II: “The impact that this has on me is . . .”</th>
<th>Stage III: “What I think is . . .”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor does not let me or my people try any new ideas if it means breaking with our company’s traditional work practices.</td>
<td>I think my boss is much too conservative. I see many opportunities to reduce costs and improve quality in our work. I believe in “improving things before they break.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulators expect me to get my people to comply, instantly, to all of their new, constantly changing regulations.</td>
<td>I think the regulators expect too much from those of us whose work has to be changed because of their unrealistic standards and demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor does not ask me for my input when she has to make a decision. She also does not take my concerns or suggestions seriously.</td>
<td>I think my input would help my supervisor and her management team to make better, more informed decisions. I also think I have legitimate concerns and useful suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People of different races with whom I work do not invite me into their conversations. They seem to avoid me except when we work together directly.</td>
<td>I think all of us can learn a lot from one another. It is unnecessary and wasteful to put up barriers between us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes I don’t understand the consultant’s complex way of expressing concepts that are new to me. He often uses terms that I do not understand.</td>
<td>I think it is up to the consultant to find a way to make himself understood to the average employee. We should not have to learn his jargon; he should learn and use ours!</td>
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Figure 2. Examples of Transforming Stage II to Stage III Statements
Use Work Sheet 3 below to make your second revision of your issues statement.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Statement of the Issue: Revision #2.</th>
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Work Sheet 3. Issues Work Sheet for Stage III Statement

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage III: “What I think is . . .”</th>
<th>Stage IV: “How I feel is . . .”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think my boss is much too conservative. I see many opportunities to reduce costs and improve quality in our work. I believe in “improving things before they break.”</td>
<td>I feel disappointed and frustrated with my boss because his limits deny me the opportunity to demonstrate the innovative contributions I can make to this company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think the regulators expect too much from those of us whose work has to be changed because of their unrealistic standards and demands.</td>
<td>I feel unappreciated and misunderstood by the regulators. I feel angry that they can impose their demands arbitrarily. I am angry with myself because I have no hope of influencing them. I feel helpless.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think my input would help my supervisor and her management team to make better, more informed decisions. I also think I have legitimate concerns and useful suggestions.</td>
<td>I feel like my supervisor thinks I’m criticizing her. I’m really trying to improve conditions of work around here. I feel misunderstood and frightened that she will make trouble for me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think all of us can learn a lot from one another. It is unnecessary and wasteful to put up barriers between us.</td>
<td>I like many of these people and I want them to like me. When I feel excluded and ignored, I feel rejected, insecure, and threatened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it is up to the consultant to find a way to make himself understood to the average employee. We should not have to learn his jargon; he should learn and use ours!</td>
<td>I feel a lot of self-doubt. I’m afraid my boss, colleagues, and subordinates think I should understand the jargon. I don’t and I’m afraid to admit it. I feel inadequate and angry with myself and with my consultant.</td>
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**Figure 3. Examples of Transforming Stage III to Stage IV Statements**
Use Work Sheet 4 to make your third revision of your issues statement.

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<th>Statement of the Issue: Revision #3.</th>
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<td>Stage IV: “How I feel is . . .”</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel disappointed and frustrated with my boss because his limits deny me the opportunity to demonstrate the innovative contributions I can make to this company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel unappreciated and misunderstood by the regulators. I feel angry that they can impose their demands arbitrarily. I am angry with myself because I have no hope of influencing them. I feel helpless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like my supervisor thinks I’m criticizing her. I’m really trying to improve conditions of work around here. I feel misunderstood and frightened that she will make trouble for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like many of these people and I want them to like me. When I feel excluded and ignored, I feel rejected, insecure, and threatened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a lot of self-doubt. I’m afraid my boss, colleagues, and subordinates think I should understand the jargon. I don’t and I’m afraid to admit it. I feel inadequate and angry with myself and with my consultant.</td>
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Figure 4. Examples of Transforming Stage IV to Stage V Statements
If you wish, you may use Work Sheet 5 to make a final revision of your statement. Please include all elaborations and clarifications.

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<th>Statement of the Issue: Revision #4.</th>
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Work Sheet 5. Issues Work Sheet for Stage V Statement
Figure 5. The Evolution of a Well-Formed Statement of an Issue

I. What is happening and who is involved. “What is going on is...”

II. The impact that the issue has on me. “The impact that this has on me is...”

III. My perceptions and thoughts about the issue. “What I think is...”

IV. My feelings about the issue. “How I feel is...”

V. What I am doing or not doing to contribute to the issues remaining a problem. “And so, I act...”
STATING THE ISSUE LESSONS LEARNED WORK SHEET

Instructions: First complete each of the following statements on your own. When everyone in your subgroup has finished, discuss the results, one statement at a time.

1. My ideas and feelings about the role that I generally play in dealing with problems or opportunities to improve conditions at work are . . .

2. In the future, there are a few things that I intend to do differently when dealing with organizational issues so that I can become more effective and contribute to producing higher quality, more gratifying work results. That is, I am willing to:
   - Stop doing . . ./Do less . . .
   - Start doing . . ./Do more . . .
   - Continue to do . . .
ENHANCING COMMUNICATION: IDENTIFYING TECHNIQUES TO USE WITH DIVERSE GROUPS

Goals

- To enhance awareness of the need to use certain techniques to enhance communication with diverse types of people.
- To identify techniques that can be used in order to clarify communication.

Group Size

Three to six groups of approximately four members each.

Time Required

One to one and one-half hours.

Materials

- A copy of the Enhancing Communication Sheet for each participant.
- A newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped markers for each group.
- A copy of the Enhancing Communication Lecturette for the facilitator.
- A newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped markers for the facilitator.
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for subgroups to work without disturbing other groups. Provide a chair for each participant. Tables for the subgroups are optional.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the activity and delivers the Enhancing Communication Lecturette. (Five minutes.)
2. The facilitator asks the participants, “What are some of the diverse types of people that could cause problems in communicating with them?” If needed, the facilitator may give one of the following as an example:
   - Those people from other cultures who have difficulty speaking the language,
Those people who have different orientations because of their cultural backgrounds,

- People who have hearing or speech disabilities,
- People who have learning disabilities or people who are illiterate/uneducated,
- Members of the opposite sex from the speaker, and
- People who are angry or have an argumentative attitude.

The facilitator lists the participants’ responses on a flip chart but does not discuss them in detail at this time. (Five minutes.)

3. The participants are divided into groups of approximately four members each. Each group is provided with a newsprint flip chart and felt-tipped markers. Each group is instructed to select a “scribe,” who will be responsible for listing all ideas presented by group members on the flip chart and reporting them later to all participants. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator either assigns to each group one of the types of people identified in Step 2 or instructs each group to select a type (with no duplication among groups).

5. Each group is asked to take five minutes to brainstorm a list of techniques for communicating effectively with people in its particular type, then to take five minutes more to select its top ten techniques. The group’s scribe lists these on newsprint. The facilitator gives time warnings during this period. (Ten minutes.)

6. The facilitator tells the groups that they have an additional ten minutes to discuss why they would use each technique. The group scribes take notes and create lists on newsprint. (Ten minutes.)

7. At the end of the allotted time, the total group is reassembled, and the groups report on their discussions. The following procedure may be used:

- Each group’s scribe, in turn, announces the group’s “type,” one of his or her group’s techniques, and the reason for it.
- The facilitator lists all ideas under each “type” on newsprint. If an idea is duplicated, a check mark is placed next to it.
- When all scribes have presented one idea, each presents a second. The facilitator records all ideas under each group’s type.
- The process is repeated until all group items have been presented and recorded.

(Fifteen minutes to one-half hour.)

8. The facilitator notes that in most situations like the ones addressed by the groups, there are some common techniques that can aid in making communication
9. The facilitator leads a discussion of the activity. The following questions may be asked:

- How did it feel to focus your attention on diversity among people?
- What do you now understand about potential communication difficulties with diverse types of people?
- What techniques seem to you most useful to try with diverse types of people?
- How can you use these techniques in your back-home and on-the-job situations?

(Ten to fifteen minutes.)

**Variations**

- If the participants deal with diverse customers in their work, the focus of the activity can be on identifying customer needs and responding to them.
- The activity can be focused on working with others in a diverse work force.
- If the participants are managers or trainers, the activity may be focused on what techniques they could teach employees that would aid in communicating effectively with a diverse customer base/work force.
ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SHEET

Communicating with a wide variety of people is a challenge. There are numerous types of people with whom conversing and extracting meaning may be difficult. The causes of communication problems may be physical (e.g., ineffective use of the voice, eyes, arms, or hands), or skill-based (i.e., lack of knowledge about verbal and nonverbal communication skills), or emotional (e.g., issues related to culture, age, sexual preference, gender, or disability).

To effectively present information and identify the other person’s needs, the following general techniques can help.

*Listen actively.* Take the time to practice effective listening skills by focusing on what is said by the other person and rephrasing it in your own words to see if you have interpreted it accurately. Check for understanding before making assumptions or decisions.

*Act responsively.* Decide whether an action is required and select the appropriate response or action.

*Reduce your rate of speech.* When dealing with people who have a hearing, learning, or speech-related disability or who are not native speakers of your language, slow your rate of speech. This allows better comprehension and formulation of a response.

*Speak audibly and clearly but not patronizingly.* Communication with people who have difficulty understanding your verbal communication can be enhanced if you clearly enunciate your words. Do not shout or exaggerate your pronunciation. This may distort your words or confuse your meaning. If the person does not have a hearing disability, it may also offend him or her.

*Look directly at the person.* When communicating, face the other person so that he or she can see you speak the words and watch your nonverbal facial expressions and gestures. This aids comprehension and verification of your message. Even if the person is using an interpreter or companion to assist in communication, speak to the person, not to the assistant.

*Be concise.* Eliminate unnecessary words and expressions and say exactly what you mean. Ask simple, open-ended questions (those that allow more than a “yes” or “no” response). In some cultures, the word “no” is used sparingly or not at all, so allow the other person to communicate unwillingness or disagreement in another way.

*Have patience.* Take time when communicating; do not rush the other person or interrupt or finish his or her sentences. Encourage the other person to continue.

*Repeat or rephrase.* If necessary, repeat your message, ensuring that it is spoken clearly and slowly. If appropriate, select shorter words. It also may be helpful to give an example, illustration, or demonstration.
Watch for nonverbal cues. Watch the person’s facial expressions and body language to help gauge his or her reactions and comprehension. For example, frowning may indicate lack of comprehension as well as disagreement. In some other cultures, the typical North American speaking distance is “too close” or “not close enough” for interpersonal communication.

Keep hands and objects away from your face. Avoid masking your speech or facial messages. Obstructing the other person’s view of your face may send the message that you are embarrassed, lying, or uncertain about what you are saying (or that you are rude). Keeping your face in view also makes it easier for hearing-impaired people to read your lips.

Use standard language. Avoid using contractions (e.g., don’t, shouldn’t, can’t), slang, technical terms and jargon, acronyms, or other verbal short cuts that may be unfamiliar or annoying to the other person.

Use pauses. Allow time for comprehension and for the other person to respond or react. Also allow opportunities for questions.

Use inclusive language. Ensure that your language does not omit anyone or any group (e.g., do not refer to a group of men and women as “you guys”).

Avoid demeaning terminology. Do not use terms that have negative meanings when referring to individuals or groups (e.g., handicapped, girls, retard). Do not make slurs about other cultures or beliefs.

Put messages in writing. In addition to verbally transmitting messages, provide written copies. This aids people who have difficulty interpreting spoken language by allowing future reference or translation from the material.
ENHANCING COMMUNICATION LECTUREtte

Some specific changes that are creating a need for skills in communicating with diverse types of people are as follows.

Globalization of the Economy. The lowering of worldwide trade barriers has opened new markets and allowed worldwide access in product production, sales, and service. Organizations are servicing a more diverse customer base. To compete effectively, they must increase worker knowledge of cultural differences and similarities and look for new ways of meeting customer expectations.

Women in the Work Force. Because of their rapid entry into the workplace, women’s traditional roles in society have shifted. Women as colleagues and consumers are changing the ways in which organizations conduct their business.

Demographic Shifts. Longer life expectancies and the decline of births in many countries have changed population profiles. There are more older people. In some areas, there is beginning to be an acute shortage of entry-level employees. Other demographic shifts include increases in the number of minorities and people with disabilities in the business environment. These people have diverse backgrounds, orientations, ways of relating and communicating, and needs.

Changing Legal Environment. In the U.S., a number of laws have been enacted in the past decades to guarantee equal treatment and opportunity to all, regardless of race, cultural background, age, gender, disability, or religion. Intentional or unintentional violations could lead to personal and organizational liability.
GO LEFT, GO RIGHT: IDENTIFYING WORK-STYLE PREFERENCES

Goals

- To introduce participants to the concept of preferences in work styles.
- To help each participant to develop awareness of his or her work-style preferences.
- To identify similarities and differences among participants’ work styles.

Group Size

As many as thirty participants or all members of an ongoing work group.

Time Required

Approximately one hour to one hour and fifteen minutes.

Materials

- A newsprint copy of the Go Left, Go Right Preferences List (prepared ahead of time by the facilitator).
- Masking tape for posting newsprint.

Physical Setting

A room with enough space so that the participants can form two subgroups of unequal size. As the participants switch subgroups several times, the facilitator should ensure that they can move freely from one side of the room to the other.

Process

1. The facilitator introduces the activity by referring to the concept of different preferences or styles of doing things. Examples are the different ways in which people give directions to the same place, the different ways in which people unwind after a day at work, the different types of movies that people prefer to watch, and so on. The facilitator says that people also have different preferences regarding how they work and the types of work they do. (Five minutes.)
2. The facilitator displays the prepared newsprint poster, folded up from the bottom and secured with a small piece of masking tape so that only the title is obvious.
The facilitator says that he or she will display and then call out two related phrases to describe different preferences regarding work. Participants are told that they are to move to the left side of the room and stand there if they prefer the description in the left column of the poster and to the right side of the room if they prefer the description in the right column.

3. The facilitator moves the poster down to reveal only the first pair of terms: “Detail Oriented” (on the left) and “Big-Picture Oriented” (on the right). The facilitator calls out these terms and encourages participants to move quickly to signify their preferences. The participants are asked to note who is on each side of the room. If the group is an ongoing work group, the facilitator jots down names in the appropriate places on the poster. (Five minutes.)

4. The facilitator goes through the rest of the poster, calling out and displaying one pair of terms at a time, with participants indicating their preferences by moving to the left or right side of the room. Each time the participants are asked to note who is where; if an ongoing work group is involved, the facilitator records names appropriately on the poster. (Thirty to forty-five minutes.)

5. When all preferences have been indicated, the entire group is reassembled. The facilitator helps the participants to debrief the activity. The following questions may be asked:

- How did it feel to have to decide your preferences?
- How did it feel to display your preferences to others?
- What were your feelings about the people whose preferences were the same as yours? What were your feelings about the people whose preferences were different?
- What patterns did you observe in the groupings?
- What implications do you think your work preferences have for the way in which you do your job? What implications do they have for the way in which your work group does its job?
- How can you apply your insights from this activity in your real life?

(Fifteen to twenty minutes.)

Variations

- If time allows, the members of each preference grouping for each set of terms may take a few minutes to formulate a description of their “side” of the preference, and the two groups may present their sides to each other.
- With an ongoing work group, the processing may include an exploration of how the information revealed could be used to better assign work tasks, to enhance group relationships, or to increase team productivity and effectiveness.
If only a small amount of time is available, the facilitator may shorten the list of poster terms.

To save time the facilitator may display the entire content of the newsprint poster at one time and ask the participants to write their initials beside their preferences.

Submitted by Cher Holton.
## GO LEFT, GO RIGHT
### PREFERENCES LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail Oriented</th>
<th>Big-Picture Oriented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face/Phone Discussions</td>
<td>Memos/E-mail/Voice Mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People Focus</td>
<td>Task Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts and Information</td>
<td>Intuition, Gut Feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Feedback</td>
<td>Diplomatic Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous, Flexible</td>
<td>Structured, Organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing, Talkative</td>
<td>Reserved, Reflective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical, Short Term</td>
<td>Strategic, Long Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Me to Do It</td>
<td>Show Me That You Will Do It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule with Head</td>
<td>Rule with Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Person</td>
<td>Morning Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit of the Law</td>
<td>Letter of the Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Player</td>
<td>Individual Achiever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Results</td>
<td>Focus on Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doer</td>
<td>Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confront Issues Directly</td>
<td>Handle Issues Indirectly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>