

ESSENTIAL *Communication* SKILLS

Secrets
for Successful
Relationships

Resolutions
for Common Issues



**ACTIVITY
BOOK**

PATTY ANN

Essential



Communication Skills

*Secrets for Successful Relationships
And, Resolutions for Common Issues*

**This Book Completely
Written, Illustrated & Designed
By Patty Ann**

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How to Use this Guidebook

Welcome to **ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS** *Secrets 4 Successful Relationships*

Who is this book written for?
All Chapters are Important~!
And some are written specifically for:
Teachers~Teenagers~Parents~Mentors~Employers!

Communication Skill Development...

- Acquire Skills to Enhance Interpersonal Relationships
- Assess Behaviors for Communication Best Practices
- Understand How Perceptions Affect All Interactions
- Recognize, Modify & Develop Effective Listening Habits
- Critique to Find Resolution for Challenging Interactions
- Develop Awareness for Non-verbal Body Language Uses
- Discern, Evaluate & Clarify Message Content & Context
- Distinguish Dialogue Differences Between Peer, Parent & Teacher

Chapter End Worksheets Can Be Used...

- As an overhead slideshow to share with groups.
- As a handout to start a discussion.
- As an independent worksheet.
- As a quiz.

*Use this guidebook as a primary or
supplemental instructional aid!*

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What is Communication?

Communication is defined using these terms:

Announce * Declare
Speak * Voice * Say * Interact
Converse * Convey * Present * Make a Statement
Tell a Message * Utter * Inform * Advise * Notify
Mention * Point Out * Bring to Attention Enlist
Give Understanding * Talk * Proclaim
Disclose * Reveal * Divulge

Can you think of some other words to describe communication?

Types of Communication

Talking



**Whispering,
Even Gossiping**



Shouting



Arguing



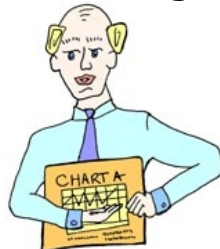
Demonstration



Chatting



Teaching



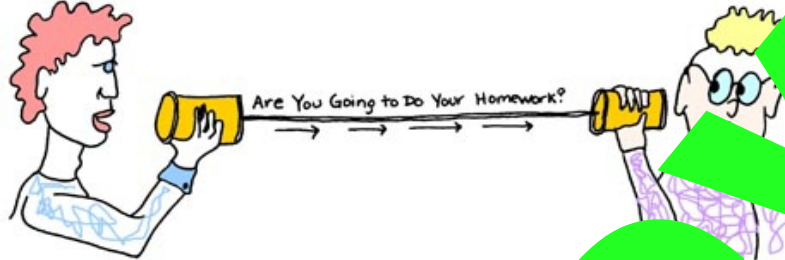
Singing



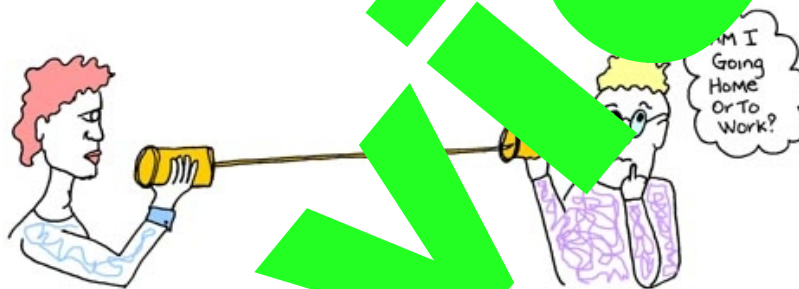
How Communication Works

Communication is a Circular Process

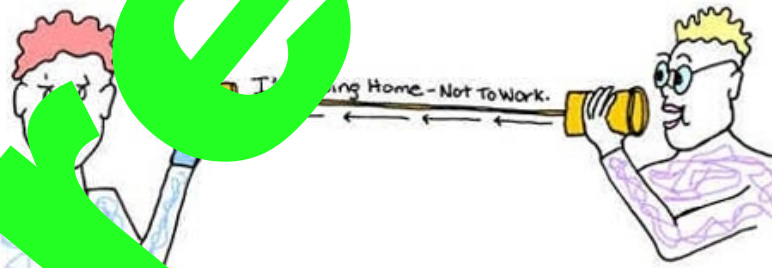
A person sends a message to the recipient.



The recipient interprets the message into meaning.



The recipient sends feedback to the sender.



And people? If it were simple there would be no misunderstandings!



Why Communication Goes Astray:

Reasons why communication goes wrong comes from sources both from inside and outside yourself. Here are 3 basic categories:

1) External Reasons are distractions that come from outside the person receiving the message, such as:

- A smoke filled establishment
- The aroma of fresh hot buttered popcorn
- A loud broadcast system in an auditorium
- The traveling fragrance of a perfume counter

Any disturbance that comes from outside yourself that interferes with your ability to concentrate while listening to others, qualifies as an external reason.

2) Internal or Physiological Reasons prevent you from properly hearing a message sent. Causes can include an illness, hearing loss, or any health related issue.

3) Psychological Factors come from inside a person and contributes to ineffective communication. For instance, if a male worker refers to his female coworker as a 'chic' his counterparts may take offense to his language and therefore discredit anything else he has to say. Psychological issues are probably the biggest factor in miscommunication. Some controversial issues that contribute to poor communication include:

- Race
- Gender
- Perception
- Religious Beliefs
- Social Class
- Family Values
- Cultural Standards
- Communication Climate

Nonverbal Communication

Did you know that 70-80% of all communication is nonverbal? This means that most messages are sent without using words! Unspoken behaviors are often more effective than verbal statements. Think about these non-verbal ways of communicating:

- The tone of a person's voice: a barking command
- Body gestures and movements: a slap on the back
- The pitch of a voice: a squeal of excitement
- Facial and eye expressions: keeping eye contact
- Other vocals: a sigh of relief; crying in agony; screaming for joy
- A person's appearance: clothing or hairstyle

Try this Exercise:

What do you think when:

- You see someone crying: do you think they are happy or sad?
- You notice someone's body is shaking: do you think they are exhausted, or sick?
- You see someone's face flushed: do you believe they're angry or overheated?
- You see someone bent over holding their belly: are they laughing hard, or having a stomach ache?

All nonverbal expressions convey a message. The circumstances where gestures are observed tend to dictate your judgment of a person's mood. However, from this exercise you've learned that:

- All behavior communicates a message
- Nonverbal communication defines a relationship with you
- Expressions carry more power than spoken words

Nonverbal messages convey emotion.

- Behavior taken out of context can be ambiguous



* * * * *

**There's a big difference between observing
nonverbal behaviors and interpreting their meaning.**

* * * * *

Types of Nonverbal Communication

Face & Eyes

The most noticeable part of the human body is the face and eyes. The face, so it's said, mirrors the mind, while the eyes are the windows to a person's soul.

Body Movement

Included are postures, gestures, and physical proximity or closeness to others. Some gestures are intentional, like a wave good-bye, other behaviors like fidgeting are unintentional.

Touch

Making contact with others is healthy and essential to our well-being. A mother's embrace, a passionate kiss, a nod of acknowledgment and a playful tumble are powerful reinforcements between people.

Voice

The character of a message conveys different meanings. Tone, pitch, volume, speed of delivery, and length of pauses all add force, compliment or contradict spoken words.

Why we Communicate

Here are a Few Facts About Communication:

- You need ongoing communication for your health and well-being.
- Communication links humanity together to ensure survival.
- Communication is the only way you learn about yourself. It gives you your sense of identity.
- Communicating is the primary way you interact socially with other people.
- Communication helps in your everyday needs such as: making appointments; finding solutions to problems; or buying merchandise.



Communication gives you your sense of self-worth.

TALKING POINTS 1

Name 3 types of non-verbal communication behaviors (IE. hugging)

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Name 2 non-verbal communication behaviors or expressions that could be confusing to interpret:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Give 3 examples of where information is communicated to you by alternative means other than by another person

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Sometimes it's difficult to understand messages that get sent to you. What are some reasons for misperception of communication?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Challenge Question: You are with two good friends at a dance. The music is loud. All of a sudden your friends conversation appears to turn serious. You could not hear what was said it appears your friends are looking at you in disgust. How are you going to handle this?

"Perception Checks" Clarify Misunderstandings

Nobody can read another person's mind, but you do have the ability to learn more about what another person is thinking. The skill of 'perception checking' provides a way to share your interpretations and enable a common understanding. Perception checks have 3 parts:

1. A description of the behavior you noticed;
2. Several possible interpretations of the behavior;
3. A request for clarification, or an explanation, about how you should interpret the behavior.

Example:

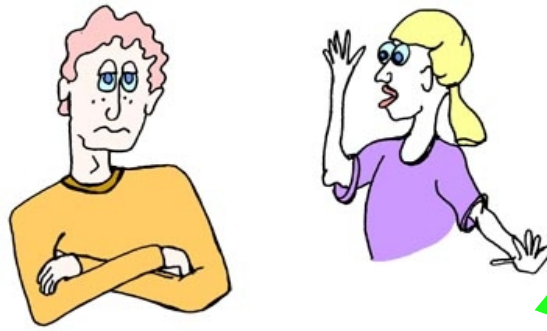
1. "I noticed that you have been really quiet lately." (behavior description)
2. "Are you feeling sick or are you upset?" (2 interpretations)
3. "What's going on?" (a request for an explanation)

Example:

1. "I just heard that the promotion I applied for was given to Kim." (behavior description)
2. Did my skills not qualify me for this job? (interpretation)
3. Can you tell me you're not angry?" (a request for clarification)

Example:

1. "Every time I ask a question about this project, I never seem to get an answer." (behavior description)
2. "Am I misinterpreting your responses, or don't you have all the information I need to proceed?" (2 interpretations)
3. "Please tell me because I don't want to keep bothering you." (a request for an explanation)



Poor Listening Habits

Not all listeners receive the same message. We tend to assume that just because someone gives another person a chance to talk, they are actively listening. Every person listens and interprets information differently. A person's poor listening habits can be a source of miscommunication. See if you can recognize some or all of these behaviors.

Stage hogs want to be the center of attention. It's typical for stage hogs to talk too much or talk over another person to prevent them from talking. Do stage hogs listen to others when they are concerned about being heard?

Pseudo-listeners nod their heads and appear to be good listeners, but in reality, their thoughts are elsewhere. If you're thinking about a friend's party, are you really listening?

Selective listeners listen to parts of a message that interest them and reject the rest. Beware a selective listener will choose certain words out of the original conversation and use it to their advantage.

Fillers who fill the gaps tell distorted stories. They make up missing information to give the impression they 'got the whole story'.

ambusher will listen carefully to you, but only to gather information that will be used against you later. Be careful of sharing personal information with someone who may use abuse your trust.

GREAT Reasons to Listen !



Now that you understand some of the challenges of listening, let's talk about why you should listen up!

1) To understand and retain information. Whether you are a student or a professional in the work world, people who listen well are far more successful than their non-listening counterparts.

2) To build and maintain relationships. Listening is a powerful way to improve and enrich your personal life. Listening to others shows that you care, and respect their companionship which in turn bonds you closer together.

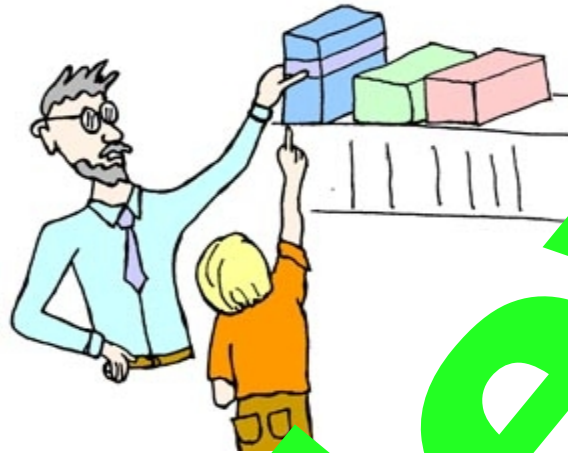
3) To help others when they are in need. At some point everyone either needs help, or has to help someone else. Can you think of an instance today when this was, or will be true for you?

4) To problem-solve. By participating in problem-resolution you will grow and benefit by learning to be more resourceful.

5) To respond. Actively listening to what someone has to say puts you in a better position to give accurate and timely feedback.

6) To evaluate messages. As a message is received its interpreted on many levels. For instance, you must decide if you need to take action; if it's just good information to know and remember; or even if the message is credible. Evaluating what you hear is an ongoing process which can be influenced by learning good listening habits.

Creating Positive Communication Climates



To help enable a more positive climate let's discuss how to create one. To invite an atmosphere of cooperation there are some methods you can employ. Although you can not control someone else's behavior, respect you can maintain your own integrity by adhering to these guidelines. And, who knows – perhaps you'll teach your counterpart a new way to communicate. Here are some ideas:

- Seek to understand more information.
- Acknowledge and respond to comments. If statements appear rude, refrain from taking caution to overreacting. Your best weapon is to remain calm and unruffled, and ask for clarification because your integrity is more likely to prevail over a potentially explosive situation.
- Listen carefully, ask questions, paraphrase, and be empathetic.

Ask for specific examples which will help you understand the other person's viewpoint. If they are vague in their response, continue to ask for clarification.

Use "I" statements. Avoid placing blame on others and take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and actions. For example: Instead of saying "You always win," try saying "I feel frustrated when we can't compromise."

Types of Messages

Let's look at some messages you'll be sure to recognize.



Confirming messages happened when someone acknowledges another person in a supportive manner. There are three types of confirming messages that lead to a positive communication. They include:

Recognition comes in many forms: a phone call to a friend to say hi; an award for excellent achievement; a thank you card; or eye contact when someone directly addresses you.

Endorsement means others agree with your ideas and values. Types of endorsements include agreeing with someone; voting for a candidate; or donating to a cause.

Acknowledgment is actively listening to what someone else says and then responding appropriately with questions, paraphrases, and empathy when appropriate.

Praise is given to those who have done a good deed. Praise often means an approval of good behavior and communicated with kind-hearted words such as 'Thank you' or 'Great job!'.

Coping with Conflict



What is Conflict

Conflicts come in many forms. Here are some examples:

- Argument or shouting match
- Disagreement or Squabble
- Quarrel or Controversy
- Hostility or Feud
- Antagonism or Bickering
- Refusal to Communicate
- Using Passive-Aggressive Behaviors

A conflict exists between two people who have opposing viewpoints, ideas, beliefs, values or interests. Conflicts are unavoidable. We all have different thoughts and feelings and each of us will eventually be challenged by another.

We also have conflicting thoughts within our self. Daily, our choices can present inner conflicts that make it difficult for us to make up our mind.

For example, you may need to decide on which college to apply for; whether to accept a job, or how to rekindle a friendship. However, for our immediate purpose we will discuss conflict within the context of two people who cannot agree.

A Win-Win Approach to Conflicts

Let's take a look at skills you can develop so when conflict crops up you can cope:

Use "I" Statements

Avoid blaming the other person. Instead use "I" statements to get your point across. Placing blame threatens and puts others on the defence. Using "I" statements shifts the responsibility and consequently puts you in control.

Example:

Placing Blame: "You are so bossy!"

Using "I" statements: "It really upsets me when I'm crossed around. Please don't."

Confront the Issues:

Deal with the issues at hand. Do not attack a person's personality or blame their shortcomings. Use "We" statements to be inclusive to resolve a problem collaboratively instead.

Example:

Personality attack: "You're so stubborn! Why not go to the appointment on Friday?"

Confront the issue: "We need to compromise and choose a day to go to the appointment."

Find Solutions

Learn what the heart of an issue is and find a solution that satisfies the needs of all parties. Use specific rather than vague language. Tell others what you need to succeed. Own your part, and set an example for others to follow.

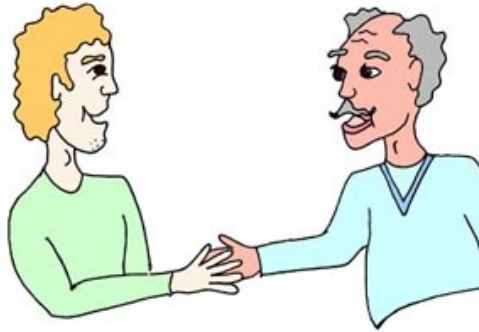
Example:

Confusing the issue: "This project is a mess!"

Learning the issue: "I need to know specifically why this project isn't working for us."

Finding a solution: "Let's take a consensus so we'll know what skills everyone can contribute to the project."

Teen Talk with Teachers



For Teens Talking to Teachers (This Applies to Your Bosses, too)

Communication with teachers, bosses, and supervisors is different because:

- You only see your teacher or boss on a limited basis
- Your verbal communication time is typically for short periods
- Student-teacher or employee-employer communication is restricted to specific topics within a controlled environment

Consider This Example:

As a high school student you have probably experienced being one of thirty students in a class. With only limited to 50-minute periods your teacher has only so much time to dedicate to you individually. Because of this time restriction your teacher is interested in your academic achievement. Communication during conference time to you, or your parents, usually includes your level of academic achievement and your class time behaviors and attitudes. And although you might not discuss your personal thoughts and feelings – or even your hobbies with your teacher, you do communicate your attitudes through your daily conduct.

Teen-to-Teen Talk



Teen Relationships

After reading this communication guide, you now have a better understanding of the types of skills used to create healthy relationships. You are probably doubly aware that all successful relationships rely on good communication skills. As you continue to meet new friends in your life you may want to ask yourself some of these questions:

- What do I want from my relationships?
- What do I value in a true friendship?
- What attributes do I want to maintain friendships and not to others?
- How do I make others value me?
- What kind of friend am I?

You may find that your answers to these questions have similar results. That you and your friends value in relationships reflects in the type of friendship you develop. As another cliché goes: birds of a feather flock together. This means: similar people hang out in the same social circles. Here are some examples:

- People have people with the same interests. Do you and your friends share a common hobby?
- People gather for similar social events. Are you and your friends high school cheerleaders; in your school's chess club; or members of a youth group?

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ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS



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on this Book are Very Much Appreciated!*

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