Unit II: Interpersonal Leadership Skills

Module 1: Building Trust

Overview

Trust is initially built on a one-to-one basis. Conversations which include active listening between two people — whether friends or family members, a leader and a group member, two group members, two leaders, or others — is a fundamental first step. Open communications and team work are based on trust.

Trust is an issue at the heart of many interpersonal and group difficulties. Lack of trust is a concern in many problematic relationships. Trust is a vital component of shared leadership attitudes and actions. Authentic leadership is based on ethical principles. Introductory information about ethics and leadership, including a definition of ethics as used in this curriculum, is included in Unit I, Module 2.

Objectives

Participants will:

- Internalize the importance of trust in interpersonal and group relationships.
- Define basic principles of ethical behavior as a basis for building trust.
- Recognize causes and symptoms of mistrust.
- Learn what to do to build and maintain trust.

Teaching Tips

As you plan ways to use this module, refer back to the experiential learning, or "learning by doing," model in the introduction.

Experiential learning lets people learn from one another. Each person:

- experiences, performs, or is involved in an activity,
- reflects or looks back on what took place by sharing and processing, and
- applies the new information or ideas by generalizing about the results and using the new information in other ways.

Experiential learning provides opportunities for active involvement and offers a variety of activities and techniques.

The real learning comes from the thoughts and ideas created as a result of the experience. Include time to debrief or process. Let participants reflect and share what happened so everyone understands the point of the activity and how it relates to their leadership roles.

Building Trust

There are two parts to trust: an intangible, "feeling" part and a performance record that confirms this trust. An active feeling of trust is confidence in leadership, indicated in ability and integrity. Trust is also expressed by the absence of worry or suspicion. Productive relationships are already based on trust, sometimes unrecognized and frequently taken for granted. The track record is a confirmation of well-placed trust.

Trust is a vital ingredient in all relationships. If you find it hard to trust someone, you are less likely to talk to that person. But, a relationship built on mutual trust is marked by open communication and fewer arguments. It's the feeling of safety you have with another human being.[1]

How Does Trust Develop?

Many scholars have created lists of the characteristics of leaders. Trust always makes the list. Trust develops as the cumulative effect of one-on-one, day-to-day relationships. Trust is won or lost by how well you know yourself, how open you are to letting others see your real self, and how well you show your interest in others. These personal actions depend on you, regardless of the organization, committee, or other group.[8]

Think of trust as an emotional bank account. If you make deposits with another person through courtesy, kindness, honesty, and promise-keeping, you build up a reserve. That peson's trust toward you becomes higher, and you can call on that trust when needed. When the account is high, communication is easy, instant, and effective. But, if you show discourtesy, disrespect, threats, or just do not listen, your emotional bank account will become overdrawn. Trust needs continuing deposits. Furthermore, it takes more deposits to outweigh a negative balance or withdrawal. One guideline suggests that every negative encounter requires six positive encounters to restore the original level.[2]

You can show you are trustworthy by being responsible. Being open and honest with people is essential. In any relationship, it takes time and effort to develop trust, and trust and commitment are closely related. If you trust more, you are willing to commit more. Each person must accept some responsibility.

Following principles of ethical decision making and action are vital to developing and maintaining trust among leaders and followers.

Perceptions of Trust

Trust exists only in the mind. Trust depends on individual conduct as well as how that conduct is perceived. Perceptions are difficult things on which to agree. Involved people may try to come to an understanding (if not agreement) about behaviors, perceptions, interpretations, and expectations.

There is no guaranteed process to change a trustless group, and there is no specific outcome to measure. However, spending time and attention improving the trustworthiness of group member relationships is a worthwhile endeavor. Trust is probably the most highly valued group component, and is essential to the processes of influence and collaboration.

Trust builds slowly over time. It takes a long time to build trust, but only takes a moment or two to lose it.

Self-Disclosure Skills

Skills that bring about trust, clearer communication, and a more productive atmosphere are described as self-disclosing. Following are examples of these types of skills:

Behavior description: Reporting specific, observable actions of others without adding feelings of attitude, motive traits, or personality characteristics. For example: you might say, "Bill, you have been late to our meetings the last three times," not, "Bill, you are surely disorganized — you're always late!"

Feeling description: You describe your own feelings to give a clearer understanding of your emotional reaction. For example: "I feel good about the way that we are working together." Or, "I feel hurt when you cut me off."

Ethical Leadership

Leadership is the investment of trust into people who serve the common good. It creates value. It refines and develops services that enrich people's lives. Leadership is ethical, but what does that mean?

The following important attributes of ethical leaders are consistent across age, gender, and sector:

- Committed to the mission.
- Care deeply about those they serve.
- Are competent and work with competent people.
- Are honest and have integrity.
- Acknowledge their own mistakes.

Honesty, fair-mindedness, and concern for others are qualities people look for in leaders. If the leaders selected do not serve reliably, trust erodes and creates a loss of faith in the leaders and the systems they work within.[2, 3]

Ethical behavior requires:

1. A high *degree of commitment*, the desire to do the right thing (These are not complete sentences, and therefore do not require periods at the end until the list is finished.)

2. *Consciousness*, the heightened awareness of the ethical implications of decisions and actions, the claims of all stakeholders, and the tendency to rationalize unethical conduct

3. Enhanced *competencies*, particularly the ability to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in dealing with personal, professional and group situations, and

4. *Courage*, the ability to face and deal with difficult situations instead of withdrawing or taking the easy way out.

The *Six Pillars of Character* are one useful guide for ethical leadership. Keep in mind these six core ethical values:

- Trustworthiness (honesty, promise keeping, integrity, loyalty),
- Responsibility (accountability, pursuit of excellence, concern for others).

- Caring (concern for others, minimize harm),
- Respect (courtesy, decency, tolerance, acceptance),
- Justice and fairness (procedural fairness, impartiality, equity), and
- Civic virtue and citizenship (community service, doing one's share, contributing to the overall social good).

You can use different words for these values. You may have some ideas that don't quite agree with this formulation, but it is a useful approach to making more ethical decisions. The essential component is to maintain respect for everyone and to avoid doing harm whenever possible.

Traditional Guides For Ethical Behavior

Philosophers and theologians are, and have been for centuries, concerned with the development of theories which describe the nature of moral obligations and which provide guidance in meeting these obligations.[5, 6] Some different approaches to ethical behavior are:

The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule establishes the principle that people should be concerned with and responsible for the well-being of others. They will help others when they can and avoid doing harm whenever possible. "Treat others as you would have them treat you" is the basic premise.

"The Means Justifies the Ends"

This approach says that the ethical character of an action is determined by the principle upon which it was based, rather than on the consequences it produces. In this model, people have an absolute duty to do the "right" thing in all situations. The rules must always be followed. The means, rather than the end result, is critical.

"The Ends Justify the Means"

This approach states that actions are right and good when they produce benefit, and/or prevent harm or pain. In this view, the ethical nature of an act is best determined by the consequences produced, regardless of how the result was obtained.

Various Other Guidelines

Additional ethical standards may be included in or derived from broader moral traditions. Some ethical rules vary from culture to culture, or group to group, and are constantly evolving.

Applying Ethical Principles

One universal tenet, the instruction to "Do No Harm," is present in most sets of rules. However, in some group or public issues, it is impossible to find a resolution that does no harm to anyone. Shortcomings of each of the traditional theories become particularly apparent in cases where there are many competing interests, values, and benefits. Various ethical standards evolve as individuals or groups become more aware of the consequences of their actions on others or as new abilities or technologies raise new issues.

Making Ethical Decisions

One practical approach for the issues faced by leaders and followers is the Six Pillars of Character framework, which prioritizes a set of core ethical values as higher than non-core ethical values (which vary across time, religion, culture, or professions), and these in turn rank above non-ethical (neutral) values. This approach doesn't provide the answers. It doesn't provide the solution to a controversy. It helps make sure that the right questions are being asked and that the stage is set for people to exchange viewpoints and identify their common interests.

Ethical decision-making refers to the process of evaluating and choosing among alternatives in a manner consistent with ethical principle. It adds specific consideration of ethical principles in making personal, professional, and program choices. Ethical behavior requires that leaders and group members work together to:

- perceive and eliminate unethical options — and when there is a conflict, eliminate options that favor non-ethical values over ethical values;
- select the best ethical alternative; and
- when there is more than one ethical response to a situation, examine the choices carefully because not all may be equal.

These criteria can be added to other criteria for evaluating options and consequences of a group or public policy choices.

Dialogue, reflection, and questioning are needed as you:

- Examine the situation.
- Identify all the important points of conflict.
- Decide whose interests are involved and consider their key values.
- Identify the conflicting loyalties.
- Identify the alternatives and consequences.
- Eliminate any options that are clearly unethical, illegal, or impractical.
- Identify which principles are respected and which are violated in the various options.
- Examine possibilities for combining or rearranging options or look for others.
- Determine the priority of competing values as you weigh the options.

The decision should take into account and reflect a concern for the interests and well-being of all stakeholders. When ethical values conflict, the decisions should be those that produce the greatest balance of good in the long run.[6, 7]

Dealing with Ethical Dilemmas

An ethical dilemma occurs when there is a conflict between core ethical values, sometimes described as a conflict between "right and right" (when two good choices conflict) or between "wrong and wrong" (the lesser of two evils). Ethical decision-making in situations with complex and difficult ethical dilemmas requires critical thinking. These choices are the tough ones. Leaders who can analyze the conflicting choices in an ethical dilemma and explain their reasoning are leaders who contribute to trusting relationships.

Symptoms of a Trustless Relationship

It is not difficult to know when a lack of trust is affecting either personal relationships or group work. Some of the more common symptoms of trustless relationships are as follows:

Poor Communication:	Characterized by a lack of openness, reluctance to explore concerns, unwillingness to truly listen.
Inflexibility:	Members dogmatically stick to their perceptions and beliefs, even in the face of contrary evidence.
Lack of Respect:	Concerns about members' competence, knowledge, or motives.
Guarded Information Flow:	Excessive control of information and information processes is the norm.
Hidden Agendas:	Objectives and expectations are not freely shared with the group.
Avoidance of Conflict:	Group members avoid interpersonal confrontation about legitimate concerns.
Backbiting:	Critical discussions of team members occur behind their backs.
Backstabbing or Sabotage:	One or more group members attempt to undermine the credibility or success of a team member.
"End-Arounds":	Avoiding or eliminating someone who should legitimately be involved in a decision, request, or communication.
Inappropriate Independence:	Stubbornly refuses to seek the input of other team members or to work toward consensus.
Poor Follow-through:	Failure to keep commitments or take agreed-upon actions.
Disinterest:	Displaying apathy, indifference, or inattention toward group activities.

Although often very difficult, rebuilding trusting relationships is possible. Careful attention to open communication and ethical behavior is the stepping stone to building and rebuilding trust.

In order to build or rebuild trust, you can:

- Show consistency in the basic values that guide your decision making; take the time to think about your values, beliefs, and personal goals. Articulate them clearly so others can see that you are following a course they can support and share.
- Show respect for old ideas and traditions while you explore new ones. In your leadership roles, you can help people make transitions from the present to the future. This is particularly important during times of rapid change.

- Listen in ways that show you respect others and value their ideas. Listen especially for the vision, the context, and different ways of looking at situations.

- Show you are working for others' interests as well as your own. This does not mean neglecting your own needs and motivations (such as recognition, achievement, the opportunity to use your skills, and accept new challenges) as well as your willingness to work toward common goals. People will look at your track record to see if you aim for the overall group benefit or for protecting your personal turf. They will watch to see if you build and help others excel or if you treat everyone else as competitors.

- Practice openness and sharing. Trust is based on perception as well as fact. Share whatever information you have in order to improve the group's work, rather than hoarding it to boost your ego. People also need to know your feelings. When you disagree with some opinion, say so. Share your concerns, worries, or whatever stands in the way of your commitment. Do not say you agree with a plan or action if you really do not support it. Tell it like it is but in a caring way. Explain what you understand and indicate the things you do not understand. Share in the search for additional information rather than pretending you have the answer to everything.

Summary

It may be important to distinguish between trust and trustworthiness. Trust is a broader concept, usually pertaining to feelings or attitudes. It is what we give to someone. Trustworthiness, on the other hand, stems from behavior. It is what we perceive in someone. Trustworthiness includes honesty, integrity and courage, promise-keeping, loyalty and fidelity.

An interesting feature of trust is that to be trustworthy, you must trust others in return. This is demonstrated by an individual's ability to delegate responsibility, share power, and allow freedom of choice.

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5. Josephson, Michael. *Making Ethical Decisions Using the Six Pillars of Character*. Marina Del Rey, California: Josephson Institute for the Advancement of Ethics, 1994.

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Learning Activity: *Post Your Strengths*

Purpose: To have participants reveal something about themselves.

Items Needed: Several packages of 3" x 3" large sticky notes, and one blank wall for sticky notes.

Procedure:
1. Give the participants six notes each. Ask them to write a positive personal characteristic on each note. Keep the characteristics general. Do not sign. Examples might include: happy, self-creative, and/or good listener.

2. Have all stick their notes on the wall. Allow time for participants to look over the notes to see similarities and differences of self-perceptions.

3. Ask all to select a note that identifies a characteristic they would like to have that they do not have now.

4. Form groups of five to six people. Ask the participants to reveal to their group the characteristic they selected, and explain why they selected it.

Discussion:
1. How did this activity help you identify some of your own strengths?

2. What sort of characteristics are helpful when groups address public issues?

Summary: Group members learn strengths about themselves and others in the group.

Learning Activity: *What Makes a Person Trustworthy?*

Purpose: To explore the ways people demonstrate that they can be trusted.

Items Needed: Paper and pencil.

Procedure:
1. Think of someone in your life whom you trust completely. It can be a work acquaintance, a family member, or friend. Write that person's name on your paper.

2. Below that, write the specific behavioral characteristics this person demonstrates that cause you to trust him or her. As much as possible, avoid writing attitudes, feelings, or mental characteristics (such as "he is helpful"). Write what this person actually does that causes you to trust him or her (for example, "he stops what he is doing to assist me whenever I need help").

Discussion:
1. How did this activity help you discover things about yourself?

2. How can you create trust?

3. How can someone, such as a person in the group, increase trust in you?

Summary: Explore ways people demonstrate that they can be trusted.

Learning Activity: *Mummy Wrap**

Purpose: To develop group cohesion and group trust

Items Needed: Toilet tissue roll (1 per team of 3 to 4) and 1 roll masking tape.

Procedure: Every team of 3 to 4 receives a roll of toilet tissue. One member of the group is designated as the mummy. The other team members are given 5 minutes to wrap their mummy with the roll of tissue paper. The masking tape is used to keep the paper from separating or tearing. The mummy should be wrapped from head to toe, but with some leg movement so walking is possible. At the end of 5 minutes, wrapping stops and team members walk their mummy around the room. Care must be taken to be sure the mummy doesn't get hurt or bumped. Team members should gently move their mummies. A race could be held with teams racing their mummies.

Discussion:
1. How does it feel to be confined and have to rely on others?

2. What times created some anxiety?

3. How careful were the group members?

4. How can we depend on others as well as use our skills as helpers or guides?

Summary: Relate how this activity developed group cohesion and group trust.

* Adapted from Energizers and Icebreakers, by Elizabeth S. Foster. Educational Media Corp., 1989

Learning Activity:
Characteristics of Trustworthiness

Purpose: To explore characteristics of trustworthiness.

Items Needed: Copy of worksheet of *How Would You Rate Yourself in Trustworthiness?*

Procedure:
1. Ask each participant to complete the worksheet.

2. Tell the group there are no right or wrong answers.

Discussion:
1. This activity has no right or wrong answers. Do you usually view group differences as good, bad or neither? Explain.

2. Do you usually give recognition to yourself and others? Explain.

3. How does this activity help you as a leader?

Summary: To explore the characteristics of trustworthiness, group members looked at themselves to see the ways in which they demonstrate trustworthiness and how they could improve their actions.

Worksheet:
Characteristics of Trustworthiness

	Seldom	Usually	Almost always
How would you rate yourself in trustworthiness?			
Follow through on commitments.			
Maintain confidences.			
Directly address individuals with whom there is conflict — rather than telling uninvolved parties.			
Listen respectfully.			
Accept others without judgment or question.			
Perform responsibilities with quality and timeliness.			
Seek and consider opposing viewpoints.			
Behave consistently and predictably over time.			
Act in a way that matches expressed values, beliefs and priorities.			
Openly express goals, intentions and priorities.			
Share information.			
Show respect for others' viewpoints during disagreements.			
Evaluate plans and ideas objectively and logically.			
Demonstrate sensitivity and tact.			
Involve others in problem-solving and decision-making.			
Communicate clearly to minimize misunderstanding.			
Work to solve problems rather than to assign blame.			
Give recognition and credit to others when warranted.			
Encourage the open discussion of problems and differences of opinion.			
Value input from others — regardless of position.			
Admit mistakes and lack of knowledge.			
Approach conflict constructively.			
Remain non-defensive when met with disagreement.			
Request help when it is needed.			

Unit II: Interpersonal Leadership Skills

Module 2: Communication Basics

Overview

The ability to effectively communicate with other people is an important life skill and is vital in all leadership activities. Good communication skills can be learned through patience, practice, and a positive attitude.

Objectives

- Be more aware of effective and ineffective ways to share messages.
- Become skillful in recognizing the messages of nonverbal communication.
- Recognize the many different types of communication.
- Use "I-Messages" and the first person effectively.
- Understand the importance of listening.
- Practice active listening.
- Be aware of personal patterns and expectations in communication.
- Recognize and reduce the barriers to effective communication.

Teaching Tips

As you plan ways to use this module, refer back to the experiential learning, or "learning by doing," model in the introduction.

Experiential learning lets people learn from one another. Each person

- experiences, performs, or is involved in an activity;
- reflects or looks back on what took place by sharing and processing; and
- applies the new information or ideas by generalizing about the results and using the new information in other ways.

Experiential learning provides opportunities for active involvement and offers a variety of activities and techniques.

The real learning comes from the thoughts and ideas created as a result of the experience. Include time to debrief or process. Let participants reflect and share what happened so everyone understands the point of the activity and how it relates to their leadership roles.

Communication Basics

The ability to effectively communicate with other people is an important life skill. Through communication, people reach some understanding of each other, learn to like each other, influence one another, build trust, and learn more about themselves and how people perceive them. People who communicate effectively know how to interact with others flexibly, skillfully, and responsibly, but without sacrificing their own needs and integrity.

What is Communication?

Communication = the exchange of ideas or feelings from one person to another.

Talking does NOT = communication!

> We hear only half of what is said to us,
> understand only half of that,
> believe only half of that,
> and remember only half of that.

The communication process is complex. You send from 100 to 300 messages a day. These include:

- The message you intend to send.
- The message you actually send.
- The message as the hearer interprets it.
- The response of the hearer based on what he or she heard.
- Your reaction to the exchange of words, meaning, and interpretation.

Why do people talk to each other? When you talk, it is because you have an idea or feeling you want to share. You talk to:

- get acquainted,
- build relationships,
- express emotions,
- share information, and
- persuade others to understand your personal views.

To have communication, both speaking and listening are required.[1]

Types of Communication

Communication can be classified in many different ways. People in leadership roles have many opportunities to communicate with others.

Intrapersonal Communication

When individuals talk to themselves, communication takes place within the brain. It includes their thoughts, experiences, and perceptions during a communication event. Behavior seen on all other levels of communication begins on an intrapersonal level. On this level, the individual forms personal rules and patterns of communication.

Interpersonal Communication

Communication between individuals is the pattern for all succeeding levels of verbal communication. At this level, each person is aware of sending messages to other persons. Interpersonal communication is sometimes referred to as *dyadic communication*, or communication between two individuals.

Small Group Communication

This is sometimes included in the interpersonal level — the most obvious difference is the number of persons involved in the process. The small group may be a family of three talking at supper, five students working on a class project, or a meeting of an organization with just a few members.

Intercultural Communication

This occurs when the source of the message is from one culture and the receiver is from another — such as when a visitor from France asks directions from an American in New York City. The major difference between intercultural and the previous levels is that the communication process is affected by differing, and sometimes conflicting, rules defining acceptable communication between individuals and between groups.

Public Communication or Public Speaking

The speaker sends messages to an audience, which is not identified as individuals. Unlike the previous levels, the speaker is doing most, if not all, of the talking.

Mass Media Communication

Although mass media communication is public communication, not all public communication is mass media. At this level, there is "mass" distribution of a message to a large group of receivers. It is delivered through an impersonal means rather than directly from speaker to audience. These impersonal pathways include television, radio, motion pictures, newspapers, magazines, books, billboards, and other media. This could also include communication by way of social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, You Tube, and other social media channels.

Nonverbal Communication (Body Language)

Nonverbal communication is integral to all of the preceding levels — communication is a combination of verbal and nonverbal components.

In nonverbal communication, people send messages to each other without talking. They communicate through facial expressions, head positions, arm and hand movements, body posture, and positioning of legs and feet. How people use "space" also transmits a message. Another example would be carrying or displaying objects that "say" something about themselves.

By being aware of nonverbal communication, you can interpret the signals of others, or send signals that will promote the productive resolution of a dispute. Awareness of nonverbal communication helps:

- project an image of confidence and knowledge,
- demonstrate power or influence,
- express sincerity, interest, and cooperativeness,

- create trust,
- recognize personal tension in self and others,
- identify discrepancies between what people say and what they actually think, and
- change behavior and environment to encourage productive discussion.

Three cautions should be mentioned about nonverbal communication. *First,* an awareness of nonverbal communication is not a panacea for conflict resolution. Recognition and use of nonverbal skills is only one tool to aid conflict managers or disputants in understanding conflicts. *Second,* awareness does not necessarily mean that something can be done about unwanted nonverbal communication. A lot of nonverbal communication is unconscious. And *third,* the meaning of nonverbal communication depends on both the sender's and the receiver's culture —race, ethnicity, class, status, gender, and individual differences. Some common interpretations of nonverbal behavior cross cultural boundaries, but others do not.[1, 2]

Visual vs. Verbal Activities

Information is shared in two ways — visually and verbally — and a combination of the two forms is generally most effective.

The use of graphics, or concrete examples, has a number of additional advantages. Concrete examples (graphics) provide a focus of attention for an audience. When people focus on a visual presentation, they share a definite point of reference. Too often, work groups get caught up in abstract word play, losing sight of the real issue. Charts, maps, and even simple lists of information can help keep discussion focused.

Visuals also help the facilitator or discussion leader prepare for a meeting. The simple exercise of preparing a series of charts, diagrams, or maps forces you to organize information and anticipate the course of the group's deliberation. When the meeting planner shows up prepared and ready to begin, group members will know what to expect.

Active Listening and Feedback

Good communication requires more than acceptance of feeling or empathy for another person. A listener must also have an accurate understanding of the content or substantive message of a speaker. Accurate feedback of the content may eliminate unnecessary communication conflicts caused by misinformation or misperception. The process of rephrasing a statement can make an item more manageable in size or scope or acceptable in terms of its tone or value.

I-Messages: Most of the messages to people about their behavior are "you" messages — messages that are directed at the person. These have a high probability of putting people down, making them feel guilty, and making them resistant to change. An "I-Message" allows a person who is affected by another's behavior to express the impact it is having on him or her. This leaves the responsibility for modifying the behavior with the person who demonstrated the behavior.

I-Messages build relationships and do not place the sender in the position of enforcing a new behavior. Many people have been taught to avoid "I" (as in "I want" or "I would like"), so it is often difficult to use this method.

Four Parts of an I-Message

1. **Specific behavior** ("When you . . .")

2. **Resulting feeling** ("It . . .")

3. **Effect** ("I feel . . .")

4. **Resolution** ("So, would you . . .")

Example:

Part 1:   "When you cut me off . . ."

Part 2:   "It hurts my feelings . . ."

Part 3:   "I feel as though you don't value my opinion,"

Part 4:   "So, would you please hear me out."

Since communication is the exchange of ideas or feelings from one person to another, it implies that the message has been heard.

Effective Listening

People do more listening than any other form of communication. But most listen at an efficiency level of less than about 25 percent. Tests show that, immediately after listening to a 10-minute oral presentation, the average listener has heard, understood, properly evaluated, and retained only half of what was said. Within 48 hours, that comprehension rate dropped to one-quarter.

People generally remember:

- 10 percent of what they read
- 20 percent of what they hear
- 30 percent of what they see
- 50 percent of what they hear and see
- 70 percent of what they say and write
- 90 percent of what they say as they do something

Whose Responsibility: The Speaker or Listener?

Who has the primary responsibility for effective verbal communications, the speaker or the listener? This question has been asked of thousands of people. Seventy-five percent of those who answer say the speaker, 25 percent say the listener.[2]

This attitude is mirrored in people's behavior as listeners. Because they assume the speaker has the main responsibility, they listen passively instead of taking an active, responsible role.

Just think how much more effective communication would be if the speaker and the listener each would take 51 percent of the responsibility. This adds up to 102 percent, which may not be good mathematics, but represents highly effective communications.

A Good Listener:

- Works at listening.
- Helps the speaker transmit thoughts.
- Listens to understand, not to refute.

Listening

First, what does "listening" mean? It is more than just hearing — that is only the first part of listening. Three other parts are equally important:

1. **Interpretation** — Interpreting what was heard leads to understanding or misunderstanding. Your brain absorbs and comprehends what you hear.

2. **Evaluation** — Weigh the information and decide how you will use it.

3. **Reaction** — Based on what you heard and how you evaluated, you act on it.

Listening is your primary communication activity. Studies show that you spend 80 percent of your waking hours communicating. About 45 percent of that time is spent listening. Your listening habits are not the result of training, but rather the result of the lack of it.

Listening is the number one communications activity:

- Through open ears, the mind can absorb an endless amount of new information and ideas.
- It has been said that there's at least one thing learned from everyone you meet, provided one bothers to listen.
- A listener loose in a world of talkers has one unbeatable edge: the flow of new ideas through the ears to the mind never stops.
- Listening is not a 9-to-5 job.
- The brain works four times faster than most people speak. It is easy to wander into distraction.[1, 3]

Listening Principles to Remember

People tend to agree with other people they like, not so much because of their ideas but because of the fact that they like them. People also tend to like other people who listen to them. A key factor in listening is the ability to deliberately over-estimate the value and importance of the other person's point of view.

Points for Good Listening

Is it any wonder things get garbled along the way? Communication at best is a messy process. Good communication requires at least two basic skills: listening and giving feedback.

Good listening takes a lot of serious practice. One way to practice is to try to concentrate for one minute out of every hour on one specific sound or on what any one person is saying. At the start, many will only be able to concentrate for a few seconds. Keep practicing until you can hold complete concentration for at least one minute. This will be harder than you think, but it can improve your listening proficiency.

Practicing improved concentration methods may not make you a perfect listener, but it can make you a good listener. The pay-off is in better understanding, increased efficiency, and closer friendships.

Good listening requires that you concentrate on the speaker.

- What is the speaker trying to say?
- What point is the person trying to make?
- Are the facts accurate, unbiased, and complete?
- Is the source reliable?
- Listen for ideas.
- Think while you listen. Learn to eliminate distractions by concentrating on the ideas the speaker is presenting rather than pretending to listen.

As a person is speaking, think about relationships between facts and you will find that the person may be using several facts to develop one or two main ideas.

If you take notes, write down just enough to let you recall the ideas. Avoid taking everything down word for word, or you may miss the ideas that are presented.

Control your responses. Listen without judging. Try not to argue with the speaker's words in your mind. Avoid dismissing the speakers' ideas in advance, or judging the speaker's appearance. You can judge later after you have heard the information the speaker is giving.

Listen carefully to topics that are hard for you to follow.

Ask questions. If you can't interrupt, make a note to ask when the speaker is finished.

List things that get in the way when you listen to someone else:

- Words or phrases that prejudice you against the speaker.
- Factors in the other person's appearance that may bias you.
- Emotions (fear of asking silly questions, feeling guilty because you think you should already know something, etc.) that prevent you from learning.

Active Listening

Active listening achieves several purposes:

1. Helps you check your understanding of what the person says and feels.

2. Generates further dialogue.

3. Helps you improve your empathetic listening.

4. Builds rapport.

5. Shows that you understand and care.

Active listening is not just refraining from talking, but actively trying to understand the other person's total communication.

- Listen for both content and feelings.
- Respond to the feelings expressed.
- Accept both positive and negative expressions and feelings.
- Listen between the lines for the nonverbal communication.
- Use the reflection technique.
- Use the pauses effectively.
- Summarize from time to time to indicate progress, to highlight major points, and to wrap up important sections of the interview.

Maintain careful attention to both content and feeling. Content refers to the meaning of a word. Feeling refers to the emotional state of the person. Feelings may include anger, frustration, fear, joy, sadness, domination, and affection.

- Try to anticipate what the speaker is getting at.
- Do not form conclusions or begin to construct your reply until you first understand the speaker's position.
- Listen between the lines — try to pick up both the content and how the speaker feels about his or her position.
- Pause and consider what you heard before replying.
- Assume you probably don't understand completely and ask for feedback on what you think you heard.

Reflect. Re-state in your own words what you understand the other person to have just said. Include both content and feeling.

Repeat. Do not judge, question, argue, or evaluate. At this stage, simply repeat your understanding and encourage the other to continue talking.

Behavior and Attitudes of the Good Listener

- Tries to see the world, the situation, the problem as the speaker sees them.
- Places understanding foremost.
- Shows interest in the speaker.
- Accepts the speaker as he or she is.
- Respects the speaker's opinion and attitude.
- Willing to take time to listen, and determined to listen attentively.
- Controls his or her emotions.
- Is open-minded, receptive, but analytical.
- Has a wide range of interests, and is curious about things.
- Is convinced of own responsibilities to the speaker and undertakes this responsibility.
- Stands ready to listen patiently.

Using Feedback

Feedback allows a listener to tell the speaker whether the message was understood. If it is done with care and consideration, it is an important tool for good communication. Feedback lets you describe your reaction instead of evaluating the other person's performance. It is helpful to be specific and address a behavior the listener can change.

Listening Undergoes Distortion

When you pass a message along through two or more persons, it often undergoes distortion each time it is repeated. Three different tendencies occur when the message is heard:

Leveling: Tendency to drop some details out of information you hear.

Sharpening: Tendency to make some details sound more important, and give them more emphasis than they had as you heard them.

Projection: Tendency to add data out of your own viewpoint or mental outlook to what you have heard from someone else.

How can you, as a listener, avoid such distortion?

Suggestions for Limiting Distortions

- Repeat what you hear to the satisfaction of the person who just told it to you. You might say, "Let's see if I've got this right."
- Put the key elements of an important message in writing.
- Don't assume that somebody is giving you a message exactly the way he or she heard it from someone else.
- If it's important, verify it with the speaker's source or the original source.
- Have your organization routinely check important information at each step as it is passed along through the chain of people.

Feedback allows the listener to relate information back to the speaker about the content or feelings conveyed. The person receiving the feedback is made aware of how his or her behavior affects himself or herself and others in the group.[1] This also serves as a check for understanding. Some examples of this are:

- The way I understand you is . . .
- Is this how you feel . . .?
- You sound as though . . .
- I get the feeling that . . .
- It sounds as if . . .

Ways to Give Feedback

Descriptive: Descriptive rather than evaluative. Describing your own reaction leaves the individual free to use it or not use it as he or she sees fit. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for the individual to react defensively. The main purpose is to understand the speaker, not to belittle, mimic, or antagonize.

Specific:	Be specific rather than general. To be described as "dominating" will probably not be as effective as saying, "Just now when we were deciding the issue, you did not listen to what others said, and I felt forced to accept your arguments or face attack from you."
Consider Needs:	Take into account the needs of both the receiver and the giver of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only your own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person on the receiving end.
Realistic Request:	Direct feedback toward behavior the receiver can do something about. Frustration is only increased when a person is reminded of some shortcoming over which he or she has no control.
Solicited:	Feedback should be solicited, rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver has formulated the kind of questions those observing him or her can answer.
Well-Timed:	Consider timing. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending on the person's readiness to hear it, support available from others, etc.).
Clear:	Check to ensure clear communication. One way of doing this is to have the receiver try to rephrase the feedback he or she has received to see if it corresponds to what the sender had in mind.
Check for Accuracy:	When feedback is given in a training group, both the giver and receiver have the opportunity to check with others in the group on the accuracy of the feedback. Is this one person's impression or an impression shared by others?

Feedback is a way of giving help; it is a corrective mechanism for individuals who want to learn how well their behavior matches their intentions.[1, 4]

Influencing Others

Persuasion is simply the means of getting others to think and act the way you want them to. You persuade people by convincing them that your ideas, beliefs, opinions, and feelings should be accepted. Persuasion often involves appealing to listeners' feelings and/or interests and ideas. Persuasion begins from an information base. Your most important boundary is your ethical responsibility. Effective persuasive communication is ethical communication. Persuasion is likely to succeed when the following conditions are met:

S-M-C-R MODEL

The Source:	The source of the persuasion shows conviction about her or his subject, is trustworthy, credible, and competent — an expert or authority in the area of concern.
The Message:	The message is believable, reasonable, practical, probable, and supported by evidence and facts, as well as opinion.

The Channel: The way the message is delivered — by one-on-one conversation by the speaker, to a group, or through mass media or written methods — affects the way it is received and understood.

The Receiver: The receivers (audience) are not presently ego-involved with the issue and have a personal stake in the outcome. The goal should not be too far from the focus of the receivers' beliefs. The period of time must be sufficient for a carefully considered program or "campaign" to bring about later effects.[3]

If you want to change a person's attitude, you must first change her or his behavior to parallel the desired attitude. Working for changes in attitude, in hope of getting the desired behavior, is often met with frustration and failure. More information on persuasive strategies is provided in the module Influencing Policy Decisions.

Communication Difficulties

Individual differences are a major cause of misunderstandings in communication. People want different things to satisfy their needs because of the interests (things wanted or enjoyed), values (things important or believed in), and attitudes (thoughts or feelings about ideas, people, things) they have acquired.

To avoid communication misunderstandings, try to accept and understand individual differences. Examine your own reactions to people and situations so you can imagine how it would be to be someone else. Practice empathy.

There are many ways individuals can misunderstand each other. For example, a person may be preoccupied and not able to listen to what others have to say. Or, a person can be so interested in communicating his or her own message and formulating a response that he or she listens to others only to find an opening to communicate his or her own message. Sometimes individuals listen in order to evaluate and make judgments about the speaker. The speaker may then become defensive and end the interaction. A lack of trust may also be a cause of communication distortion. In a group or between two people, misunderstandings can cause a reduction in the information shared and an uncertainty concerning the information being communicated. It takes continued effort and attention to maintain effective communication.[4]

There may be cultural, language, or semantic differences. Sometimes people are blocked by their failure to understand clearly the words or terms used. There are the different connotations and meanings accorded words in various sections of the country, and by different racial, occupational, and other groups. Even within a single organization, these factors often blur understanding between occupational and professional groups.

Four responses or roles that often cause difficulty in communications, as well as in relationships and task activities, are the:

Placater

The Placater always talks in an ingratiating way, trying to please, apologizing, never disagreeing, no matter what.

- **With Words** the placater always agrees. For example: "Whatever you want is okay. I am just here to make you happy."

- **With Body** the placater indicates a sense of helplessness.
- **While on the Inside** the placater feels: "I feel like nothing: without him or her, I am dead. I am worthless."

Blamer

The Blamer is a fault-finder, a dictator, a boss, and always acts superior.

- **With Words** the blamer always disagrees, and says (or seems to say): "You never do anything right. What is the matter with you?" Or, "If it weren't for you, everything would be all right."
- **With Body** the blamer indicates: "I am the boss around here."
- **While Inside** the feeling is: "I am lonely and unsuccessful."

Computer

The Computer is very correct, very reasonable with no semblance of any feeling showing. He or she is calm, cool, and collected, and is almost totally disinterested and tries to sound intellectual. The computer uses big words.

- **With Words** the computer is ultra-reasonable. For example: "If one were to observe carefully, one might notice the work-worn hands of someone present here."
- **With Body** the computer is stoic like a machine and seems to be saying: "I'm calm, cool, and collected."
- **While on the Inside** the computer may really be saying: "I feel vulnerable."

Distracter

The Distracter never makes a direct response to anything. Anything he or she says is totally irrelevant to what anyone else is saying or doing.

- **With Words** the distracter makes no sense and is totally irrelevant.
- **With Body** the distracter is angular and off somewhere else.
- **While on the Inside** the distracter may be saying: "Nobody cares. There is no place for me."

Mutual trust and respect are the foundation for effective communication. When both of these exist, goals can be developed to which all individuals and groups are committed. Communication systems and procedures based on shared goals and developed cooperatively are those most supported, most adhered to, and consequently most efficient.

Write Like a Pro (Written Communications)

Crisp correct writing is essential to successful leadership communication. When a letter, report, or program flyer includes an error, readers are likely to remember the error rather than the message.

Better Letters

When you can't be present in person, make sure the letter that represents you will make the best impression possible:

- Date your letter correctly.
- Use the correct address with zip+four. Mailing lists should be updated on a regular basis, at least once a year. (Zip+four information is available at: *http://www.usps.gov/ncsc/lookups/lookup_zip+4.html.*)
- If you don't know the person to whom the letter is addressed, don't guess. A phone call may be all you need to obtain the correct information. If you can't determine to whom a letter should be addressed, use a job title rather than a generic Dear Sir.

Example:

Dear Project Director:

- Formal salutations require care: Pat Jones could be a man or a woman. To be safe, use Dear Pat Jones, rather than Mr. or Ms.
- Use block style (not indented); separate paragraphs by one line.
- Group thoughts or topics in paragraphs, but consider limiting paragraphs to no more than 11 lines. Longer paragraphs lose the reader.
- Get a letter off to a good start: Start with a positive.

Example:

Thank you for agreeing to chair the county committee to evaluate services for the developmentally disabled.

- Close a letter with a specific request for action, a summary of ideas within the letter, or a statement of satisfaction or appreciation.
- When action is needed, be specific about deadlines.
- Close the letter in a professional manner.

Examples:

Sincerely or Cordially.

- Sign your name legibly over your title. The title may not be important to you, but is important to the recipient, he or she will know how to respond.
- Proofread your letter, and proofread it again. Professional writers read from the bottom up; if not anticipating the end of the sentence, they are more likely to catch errors.[5]

Tips From the Professional

Although there are occasions when, no matter how hard you try, you miss a mistake or wish you had chosen another phrase or expression, these tips from professional writers can help you sharpen your communication skills:[5]

- Never overlook the importance of proofreading, even for emails.

- Spell checks are not perfect; remain alert, with special attention to names and words that sound alike but do not have the same meaning: for example, stationary (one place); stationery (as in envelope).
- Try never to say "never."
- Avoid beginning a letter or program announcement with a question. The reader can answer the question with a "No" and stop reading the message.
- Choose your words carefully:

   a.   *Should* implies that someone ought to. *Will* says you are going to do it.

   b.   *Can* implies ability; *may* gives permission.

   c.   *Accept* means to agree with; *except* means to exclude.

   d.   A *capital* is a letter or a city in which government offices are grouped; a *capitol* is the building in which governing occurs.

   e.   That or which? That introduces a clause that is necessary to the meaning of the sentence. Example: The rain that caused the flooding has stopped.

   f.   Which introduces a clause that is not necessary to the meaning of the sentence. Example: The new car, which is red, is ready for the fast lane.

   g.   *Affect* is a verb that means to change or influence; *effect* is a verb that makes it happen.

   h.   Effect also can be used as a noun that describes the result.

- Do not begin a sentence with "However" or "Nevertheless."
- When a number is the first word in a sentence, spell it out. Example: Ten members attended.
- Use numerals in tables and when referring to 10 or more of anything. When referring to the numerals 1 to 9, spell them out.
- Use a comma to define quantities: 1,000 not 1000.
- Use *more than* 1,000 entries rather than *over* 1,000 entries. "Over" describes position, not a quantity. Example: The handouts are on the shelf over the desk.
- Percent means per hundred. A percentage describes a portion relative to the whole.
- When a sentence ends with an abbreviation, two periods are not necessary: The meeting will begin at 9 a.m.
- Skip slang and local expressions.
- Be specific to get the job done. Instead of: Please return the permission slip ASAP, try: Please return the permission slip by 4 p.m., Friday, November 15.
- Be kind. If you have a complaint, try phrasing it as an "I" message.

The K-State Research and Extension Style Guide is a handy resource for clear communication. Find it at http://www.communications.k-state.edu/communication-services/publishing/style-guide/.

Summary

Communication is simply an exchange of information — both giving and receiving. Talking, listening, reading, and understanding face and body movement are communication skills you use every day. But, communication also includes what you do and how you do it. Are you aware of the many ways you communicate each day?

Most people think of speaking before groups as an important leadership activity. There are many other communication skills just as important in your leadership roles.

Capable facilitators are excellent listeners, careful observers of nonverbal communication, skilled at conversing informally in small groups and on the telephone, able to obtain feedback from others, and skilled at writing. Learning activities in communicating will help you further expand these skills.

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Learning Activity:
Say What You Mean

Purpose: To recognize and reduce barriers to effective communication. Participants will develop trust and willingness to share thoughts and feelings, and realize that poor communication is often at the basis of many conflicts.

Items Needed: Cut the statements below into individual strips.

Procedure:
1. Ask participants to form small groups (two or four persons per group works well). Have one person from each group draw a statement. The group will then work together to decode the statement, which is actually a familiar saying.

2. When most of the groups are finished, have them share their statement and translation.

Statements: Decode the following messages to reveal familiar sayings.

A. Desiccated herbage submit to perturbation, while the radiant orb of day affords illumination.

B. A futile superfluity of culinary aid, destroys nutritious liquids from osseous issues made.

C. Your immediate environment submit to circumspection, e're you traverse some feet of space by muscular projection.

D. Inhabitants of domiciles of vitreous formation, with lapidary fragments should ne'er perform jactation.

E. Who counts, e're fractured are the shells, his bipeds gallinaceous, is apt to find his calculations utterly fallacious.

F. A feathered vertebrate enclosed in the grasping organ has an estimated worth that is higher than a duo encapsulated in the branched shrub.

G. It is sufficiently more tolerable to bestow upon than to come into possession.

H. The amatory feeling about medium of exchange is the origin or source of the whole amount of sorrow, distress, and calamity.

I. A monetary unit equal to 1/100 of a pound that is stored aside is a monetary unit equal to 1/100 of a pound that is brought in by way of returns.

Answers:
  A. Make hay while the sun shines.

  B. Too many cooks spoil the broth.

  C. Look before you leap.

  D. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

  E. Don't count your chickens before they hatch.

  F. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

  G. It is better to give than to receive.

  H. The love of money is the root of all evil.

  I. A penny saved is a penny earned.

Discussion:
  1. What type of communication barriers did your group experience?

  2. How does this apply to real life communication barriers?

  3. How can you improve your communication?

Summary: Recognize and reduce the barriers to effective communication.

Learning Activity:
Communication Patterns

Purpose: To be aware of personal patterns and expectations in communication.

Items Needed: Paper and pencils

Procedure:
1. Introduce this activity by discussing communication with the group:

   "Each of us communicates in certain ways with our friends, with our family, and with new acquaintances. As you talk with your friends and/or your family, think about how you may change or improve the way you communicate with certain people."

2. Give the following directions to the group:

   "On a sheet of paper, write several names of people you know, and then write a brief description of the most common way you communicate with them (openly, reservedly, on a first-name basis only, with respect, etc.)."

3. Ask group members to share in small groups how they communicate with others.

Discussion:
1. Were you able to detect any common patterns of communication within your group? What were they?

2. What is the expectation when we communicate with others?

Summary: Reflect on personal patterns of communication.

Learning Activity:
Reflective Listening

Purpose: Try out a new kind of listening.

Items Needed: None.

Procedure:

1. Discuss reflective listening with the group:

   Reflective listening is a very intense, caring, and interested listening in which you look for as many clues to meaning as possible. When you listen reflectively, you hear and see more than just words, and you give feedback.

   For example, when someone says, "I'm tired," and his or her body looks totally exhausted, you might reflectively reply, "You really do seem exhausted."

   When you do reflective listening, you may be able to tell feelings by looking at the body language. Often, a shrug of the shoulders or hand gestures convey more than the words they accompany. It may be a tone of voice or a change in attitude that is a clue. It is reflective listening that reads all the signs, reviews and interprets the feelings, and then shows that you have heard and listened by describing it back to the speaker.

   Here are some guidelines for giving feedback that may be helpful to you as you learn to do reflective listening:

   • Say the same thing in a different way, or say how you think the person feels.

   • Stick with where the person is coming from right now. Try not to suggest things or go back to ideas he or she had before.

   • Speak with the same amount of feeling he or she is showing; feel it with him or her.

   • Use reflective listening only when you feel like you can accept and care for the other person.

   • When you listen, you are saying to the other person, "You are important. I want to understand you."

2. Try having your group practice reflective listening. Ask group members to form pairs. Have one member per pair talk about a subject or topic that is important to him or her, one that they have feelings about. Ask the other to practice reflective listening skills.

Discussion:

1. Was it hard to truly listen and reflect the other person's feelings? Explain.

2. What went wrong when you tried to say the same thing the other person was saying but in a different way?

3. How would this experience help you as a leader?

Summary: Be more aware of how you listen to others.

Learning Activity: *Listening Habits*

Purpose: To assess personal listening habits.

Items Needed: Copy of worksheet *Listening Habits — Self-Assessment* for each participant.

Procedure:
1. Distribute worksheet to each participant.
2. Read out loud the directions written on the worksheet.

Discussion:
1. Did this activity help you learn something about yourself that will be helpful later? If so, what?
2. What can you do as a communicator to get the attention of those you are speaking to?
3. Did you learn something that could help to make your job as a leader easier?

Summary: Assessing personal listening habits can help a person to become a better listener.

Worksheet: *Listening Habits — A Self-Assessment*

Your answers to the following questions will help you discover where you may have developed listening habits that keep you from being a good listener. Read each question. Do not try to second guess the intent. Answer with yes or no, according to your usual behavior.

Listening Habits Checklist	Yes	No
1. Science says you think four times faster than a person usually talks to you. Do you use this time to turn your thoughts elsewhere while you're keeping general track of a conversation?		
2. If you feel it would take too much time and effort to understand something, do you go out of your way to avoid hearing about it?		
3. If you want to remember what someone is saying, do you think it is a good idea to write it down?		
4. Do your thoughts turn to other subjects when you believe a speaker will have nothing interesting to say?		
5. Can you tell by a person's appearance and delivery that he or she is not worth listening to?		
6. When you are puzzled or annoyed by what someone says, do you try to get the question straightened out immediately — either in your own mind or by interrupting the speaker?		
7. Do certain words, phrases, or ideas prejudice you against the speaker so you cannot listen objectively to what is being said?		
8. Do you listen primarily for facts, rather than ideas, when someone is speaking?		
9. When people are talking to you, do you try to make them think you are paying attention when you are not?		
10. When you are listening, are you easily distracted by sights and sounds?		

If you answered "no" to every question, you are a perfect listener. Each "yes" shows you a specific listening habit you should change if you want to improve your communication.

Learning Activity: *The Echo Game*

Purpose: To practice active listening.

Items Needed: None.

Procedure:
1. Find a partner and select a topic to discuss. Some examples are "My family," "How I chose my favorite 4-H project," or "Things I do with my friends."

2. The first person should begin talking for about one-half minute. Afterwards, the second person must try to repeat word for word what the first person said.

3. The second person may now talk for about one-half minute on the chosen topic. The first person must try to repeat word-for-word what the second person said.

4. The next step is to choose another topic. The first person should begin talking for about one minute. The second person must try to repeat, in his or her own words, what the first person said.

5. The second person may now talk for about one minute on the chosen topic. The first person must try to repeat in his or her own words, what the second person said.

Discussion: Discuss with your partner how you felt about playing the "Echo game."

- Was it hard to listen to the other person?

- How correct was your word-for-word version of what the other person said?

- Was it hard to repeat word-for-word what the other person said? Why?

- Did you really listen, or were you thinking about what you were going to say next?

- How was it different using your own words to explain the ideas?

Summary: Group members practice listening techniques.

Learning Activity:
*How Well Do You Listen?**

Purpose: To identify how well individuals listen.

Items Needed: Copy of worksheet, "Questions: How Well Do You Listen" for each participant.

Procedure: 1. Read the following story to group members — one time only.

Story: A 28-year-old Sunshine City woman remained in critical condition after she was shot in the chest at the Racing Robots Motorcycle Clubhouse, 1200 Main Street, Sunshine City, early Tuesday.

Police said Ms. Wanda Wheatly, 23, 701 Arbor Street, Sunshine City, was shot once in the chest.

Officers said that Bill Bolt, 21, Lincoln; Sue Smith, 35, Sunshine City; Arthur Armstrong, Sunshine City; and Jerry Jones, 43, Washington, said they were inside the clubhouse at the time of the shooting.

The four witnesses told police that they were all seated at a table and Ms. Wheatly was seated on a stool playing a video game when they heard what sounded like a firecracker. They said the door of the clubhouse was hit, and Ms. Wheatly said she was shot as she hit the floor.

Ms. Wheatly was rushed to Community General Hospital by the Sunshine City rescue squad and placed in the hospital's intensive care unit.

Investigating officers found five bullet holes in the clubhouse door. The holes appeared to be made by bullets fired from the outside. A 38-caliber slug was found inside the building.

Questions: 2. Regarding the facts in the story, ask participants to fill out the questionnaire on the following page.

Answers: 3. Following are the answers to the questions. The number of correct answers will determine how well the participant listened.

1. False
2. Unknown
3. False
4. Unknown
5. Unknown
6. Unknown
7. True
8. False

9. Unknown
10. Unknown
11. Unknown
12. False

Discussion: 1. What interfered with your ability to listen?

2. When you give messages to people does the message get lost?

3. How can this activity help you as a leader?

Summary: Identify how well individuals listen.

* Adapted from Interpersonal Communications, by Sue Bodkin and Dona Jo Chacon.
In: Family Community Leadership Resource Packet. Pullman: Washington State University, 1988.

Questions:
*How Well Do You Listen?**

Answer these questions after you hear the story. Please mark "T" for TRUE, "F" for FALSE, and "U" for UNKNOWN.

_____ 1. Ms. Wheatly was shot five times in the chest.

_____ 2. The state headquarters of the Robot Racers Motorcycle Clubhouse is in Sunshine City.

_____ 3. Four men were in the clubhouse at the time of the shooting.

_____ 4. Two men were standing outside at the time of the shooting.

_____ 5. Ms. Wheatly's boyfriend called the police.

_____ 6. Ms. Wheatly lost a lot of blood.

_____ 7. Two of the people at the table were from Sunshine City.

_____ 8. A 45-caliber slug was found inside the building.

_____ 9. The men who fired the shots were going north on Main Street.

_____ 10. The car the assailants were driving had its lights off.

_____ 11. Ms. Wheatly's boyfriend shot her.

_____ 12. The witnesses said they heard what sounded like a cap gun.

** Adapted from Interpersonal Communications, by Sue Bodkin and Dona Jo Chacon. I
n: Family Community Leadership Resource Packet. Pullman: Washington State University, 1988.*

Learning Activity:
The Whisper Game

Purpose: To identify how well individuals listen and relay messages.

Items Needed: Prepare a written message of about 10 to 15 words.

Procedure:

1. Gather together the group who will be playing the "Whisper Game." It could be your family, a group of friends from school, or your club.

2. The first person should whisper the message to the next person, so that no one else can see or hear the message.

3. Each person repeats the message to the person next to him or her.

4. The last person should repeat the message aloud.

Discussion: Discuss the game with the group.

- How did the message change?

- What do you think caused the message to change?

- Can you think of times when messages get changed in daily life?

Summary: How well do individuals listen and relay messages?

Unit II: Interpersonal Leadership Skills

Module 3: Discussions and Presentations

Overview

Creative discussions promote good working relationships, effective decision-making, and goal achievements. Discussions often begin with one-on-one conversations, and gradually proceed to group discussions and presentations. Citizens also have many other opportunities to express their opinions and provide information — through informal discussions, presentations at public meetings or workshops, or through more formal lobbying or testifying.

Objectives

- Learn and use a variety of techniques to facilitate group discussions.
- Enhance skills in planning and giving presentations.
- Recognize barriers to effective presentations.
- Review knowledge of effective writing.

Teaching Tips

As you plan ways to use this module, refer back to the experiential learning, or "learning by doing," model in the introduction.

Experiential learning lets people learn from one another. Each person:

- experiences, performs, or is involved in an activity,
- reflects or looks back on what took place by sharing and processing, and
- applies the new information or ideas by generalizing about the results and using the new information in other ways.

Experiential learning provides opportunities for active involvement and offers a variety of activities and techniques.

The real learning comes from the thoughts and ideas created as a result of the experience. Include time to debrief or process. Let participants reflect and share what happened so everyone understands the point of the activity and how it relates to their leadership roles.

Discussions and Presentations

Facilitating a discussion meeting is different from leading an organization's monthly meeting using parliamentary procedure. The facilitator is a neutral person who gets the participants to talk about pieces of a problem and potential parts of a solution through a planned process. The neutral person is usually someone outside the group who has no vested interest in the outcome. If a group member serves as the facilitator, it's important that the role of facilitator be distinguished from that of a member.

Effective Discussions

Discussion in its context of leadership is not just talking. There is a purpose, usually related to solving a problem or initiating some action. Think about the group members and the topic as you plan your work as a facilitator or discussion leader. For example:

1. Present the problem in a positive way, without offering any suggestions for the solution to the problem. "We have been having a small attendance lately. What can we do about it?"

2. Choose familiar discussion topics. If a topic that needs to be discussed is unfamiliar, provide background when you present the problem.

3. If the group is often negative, use discussion methods that allow delaying judgments on suggestions until later in the decision-making process.

4. If the group is large, break into small groups or have people work individually. Allow time for people to respond. Sometimes you may need to postpone the discussion to a later meeting.

5. Arrange the group so eye contact is possible. If the group is small, a circle including the leader is best. If the group is large, make some decisions in small circles and then share with the whole group.

6. If the group tends to go along with decisions, but not want to work, set up the work plan in the same meeting. Decide who will do what and when. Then if no one wants to do it, it will be apparent right away that it was a poor group decision.

What Causes 'Lead Balloons' ?

The term "lead balloons" refers to statements and actions that cause discussions to go off track or even stop completely.[1] Examples include:

1. **Poor Presentation of the Topic**

   If the topic sounds boring, negative, or favors only one solution to a problem, people respond negatively. "We've been having such poor attendance, maybe we should not meet for a couple months."

2. **Lack of Knowledge**

   If no one knows enough about the subject, or there is little interest, it is hard to have a good discussion.

3. **Rejected Ideas**

   Some groups habitually reject ideas, often leading members to fear criticism. If you brainstorm a lot of ideas before beginning to judge them, group members feel more free to participate.

4. **Group Size**

   If the group is large, some members won't speak up. They may feel their ideas are silly, won't be welcome, or are shy about talking in front of people. Some people need time to think about how they feel and can't decide things immediately. This may mean that just a few people will dominate the discussion.

5. **Group Arrangement**

   How a group is arranged can make a difference. It is usually easier to discuss things if you can see the other members of the group. If the leader is standing behind a table and the group is seated in rows, it is more difficult for the group to freely discuss issues.

6. **Apathy**

   Sometimes people "go along" with what the group is discussing just to avoid problems. They don't like to see people upset, so they choose what they think they should favor. This can lead to the whole group continuing an unwanted project.

Active Discussion Techniques

Everyone will enjoy the group more if they take part. Active participation is essential for maximum productivity, and good group discussion can ensure this. There are many methods to help all members participate in the discussion and add to the alternatives the group can consider.[1,2]

Brainstorming is a method for producing a lot of ideas without judging them.

Brain Drain is similar to brainstorming, but a competition between two smaller groups to produce a lot more ideas.

Nominal Group Technique involves individuals giving ideas that are compiled and then rated by each person in the group, using a point system.

Quick Discussion Techniques allow for several discussions in a short time. These are often called buzz sessions.

The Futures Wheel helps group members think systematically about the consequences of a future situation.

Open-Ended Statements are unfinished sentences that group members complete and then share in a discussion.

Idea Search is a way for individuals to look over an idea carefully, trying to discover many different angles or ways to see it.

Ground Rules for the Facilitator

Facilitation is based on trust, caring, and communication skills. By providing non-directive guidance, the facilitator helps the group arrive at the understandings and decisions related to its task. The group works on consensus, using the nominal group process, with no formal votes taken. The facilitator focuses on the group and its work. The role is one of guidance and assistance, never control.[3]

A facilitator's work deals with the content and the process of the meeting. Content facilitation includes clarifying confusing statements, identifying common threads or themes in a discussion, summarizing and organizing the ideas given, and testing for consensus by expressing the decisions that emerge from the group process. In brief, it focuses on what the individuals are talking about and what they are deciding as a group.

The process function refers to how the group is working. This includes making sure everyone gets a chance to participate, pointing out feelings that are interfering with the group's work, and helping members express and deal with their conflicts. Content and process are both basic, vital elements for achieving the group's purpose. No attempt is made to separate these two functions since, in reality, they often overlap.

Guiding a group effectively calls for careful observation and attention. The facilitator should not only listen closely to what people are saying, but notice participants' faces and posture for non-verbal cues on how the process is working. Eye contact can be used to acknowledge people's desire to speak and to let them know their ideas are being heard. It is critical to pay full attention throughout the meeting in an attempt to understand what is going on.

The facilitator should abstain from participation in partisan discussions. Good facilitation is hard work but it is critical to the shared leadership process. It is difficult to attend to the group's dynamics and needs as well as to your personal desire to express a particular idea. Keeping your distance is important for having the whole picture in view and for guiding the group towards its goals.

A safe, friendly meeting environment can help leaders achieve the planned meeting goals and objectives. Establishing ground rules that respect individual rights and responsibilities can lead to a successful meeting experience. This builds trust among participants. It is frustrating and unproductive to the participants and facilitator when opinions are not respected, individuals are criticized on a personal basis, and many views are not expressed.[3, 4]

Here are some basic ground rules for leading a meeting addressing controversial issues. Other guidelines may be added by the group.

For the Group Member:

- One person speaks at a time.
- All will share ideas in order.
- Questions may be asked to clarify ideas.
- Persons do not criticize other persons.
- Ideas may be reviewed to look for themes.
- Feelings may be expressed. They are not to be sloughed off or denied but should not dominate the discussions.
- During discussions, people should talk about positions not personalities.

For the Facilitator:

- Make sure participants are physically comfortable.
- Share meeting ground rules with participants.
- Communicate with everyone at his or her level.
- Act as the neutral person — refrain from giving personal opinion.
- Maintain a positive group atmosphere.
- Allow think time.
- **AVOID:**   Lengthy comments.

    Giving verbal rewards for good answers.

    Asking questions such as, for example, Who should be in charge? How do you get the government to do it?

    Asking loaded questions using value words such as good, pretty, evident, population group (senior citizen, children, etc.).

    Using a "know it all" tone of voice.

Productive Presentations

When you have something important to say, you can use several methods to make your voice count. Clarity and sincerity are more important than high-sounding words. First of all, identify the problem and issues that concern you — do your homework on the facts.

Every presentation needs a purpose and a clear structure. Listeners like speeches that have a clear purpose. They prefer organized, easy-to-follow speeches, rather than ones that begin nowhere, ramble on, and end in a confused manner. Think through the information you wish to share with your audience.

Be direct and cover as much information as you can without being frantic and rushed. Talk in simple terms, use short sentences, and avoid extraneous information and digressions.

The basic organization is simple: An opening or introduction, the main body, and the summary or conclusion.

Introduction

The introduction needs to accomplish two things:

1. Grab the audience's attention.

2. Briefly set the stage for your presentation by telling the audience what your purpose is and what you are going to tell them.

A good opening technique will motivate your audience enough to listen. Challenging questions, quotations, or illustrations are often effective. Let your enthusiasm show.

The Main Body

- State the facts, and be as objective as possible.

- Support your information, and be specific in your explanations. Use concise examples that relate to the needs and interests of your audience.

- Acknowledge and refute any contrary views if appropriate.

- Keep your speech moving. Do not spend too much time on one topic.

- Use repetition to emphasize a point.

Conclusion

- End your presentation on a positive note.

- Restate your main ideas.

- Your goal is to motivate your audience to understand, to agree with, and to act on your proposal. Make it easy to respond — state what you want done.

Almost everyone feels some stress when speaking before a group — whether you're a first timer or a veteran with lots of experience. It often helps to prepare a written text, but don't read it word-for-word. Large index cards typed in capital letters work well for many people.

Many presentations end with question-and-answer sessions. If you are confronted with questions you can't answer, don't try to "wing it." Say you don't know and offer to find out. If you are confronted with hostile questioning, stay calm. Don't try to answer point-for-point. Try to answer briefly and move on to another question. After the last question, try to emphasize your most important points very quickly.

Practice in front of a mirror, smile at the audience, and speak clearly.

Developing the Content

Content is the "what" of the presentation, and answers and supports the "why" of your objectives. The following process is designed to help you develop the content for your presentation.

What to Say

Think of as many key issues or points as possible to support your objectives. This will create the framework for the presentation.

1. Review your presentation objectives and write down as many main ideas as possible on 3-by-5 cards, large sticky notes, or notepaper. Write down one idea per card and, at this point, don't try to edit or organize.

2. Narrow the objectives to three to five main points.

3. Build the sub-points on 3-by-5 cards.

   - List supporting ideas or statements.

   - Give explanations, data, or evidence.

   - Use enough sub-points to verify your main ideas.

   - Arrange cards to best suit your needs. Keep in mind your audience and objectives.

How to Say It

10 Deadly Sins for Presentations

1. **Appear unprepared.** Be prepared, but fumble enough times so it seems you are not.

2. **Be late.** Arrive about two minutes before your meeting. Take no time to assess your audience and develop rapport. Send the message that audience members aren't important — only the content is.

3. **Improperly handle questions.** Put them off until later. Look exasperated when the same person asks many questions. Do not clarify to be sure you answer the right question.

4. **Go overtime.** Pretend you are playing the Super Bowl or seventh game of the World Series and take the game into overtime. Running past the scheduled time limit makes audiences crazy!

5. **Be unfamiliar with available information.** Do not know the names of key people or upcoming events. Show no genuine interest and concern in the subject material and participants by ignoring fundamental information.

6. **Botch the use of audio-visuals, or don't use them at all.** Block the flipchart as you write on it, use colors that cannot be seen. Stand in front of video or projector screen, use too many words per slide so that viewers will read ahead instead of listening to you, and don't proofread the slideshow in advance.[5]

7. **Seem to be off-schedule.** Keep people guessing about how you can cover only two out of 10 items on your agenda by lunch, and still finish on time. Do not tell them that is the plan.

8. **Start late.** Start late and you subliminally train your audiences to show up late, and for a bonus, you also penalize people who are on time.

9. **Appear disorganized.** Fumble everything you handle and always put the most important things in the wrong place.

10. **Avoid looking at the audience.** People want to feel connected. To prevent that from happening, look only at the walls, windows, ceiling, or equipment (nothing that has eyes or feelings). Individuals from some cultural backgrounds prefer not to make direct eye contact, while others like the feeling that you are speaking just to them.

The next step is to plan "how" you are going to say it — not only the style and approach you want to use, but also what visuals, handouts, and aides you will use.

Remember, "It's not what you say, but how you say it." The best content can be destroyed by poor delivery.

Tools to Use in an Introduction

*   **Anecdote:** A short story to illustrate a point.
*   **Humor:** A great ice-breaker, but use with caution.
*   **Rhetorical Question:** A question with an obvious answer. For example, "Would you like to make a lot of money with no risk?"
*   **Shocking Statement:** It captures audience attention, but use with caution.

Developing Audience Enthusiasm

In any talk, discussion, or workshop, enthusiasm is the magic ingredient. Enthusiasm is what convinces your audience to see the value of the information you are sharing. Enthusiasm helps overcome inertia, helps build audience acceptance, and creates a feeling of enjoyment and togetherness between the listener and the speaker. Every talk, presentation, or report should abound with enthusiasm. Remember, enthusiasm is contagious. Once you have it, it is not difficult to infect the audience with it.[6]

Speak from the heart. Let everyone know how you really feel about your material and your group members or audience.

Speaking Up — Your words are not being spoken for your benefit, but for benefit of all your listeners. Make sure everyone in the audience can hear you. Remember, they are there to listen to you — let them hear what you have to say.

Smiling — A smile is contagious. It lets everyone know you are a real person. A smile is the very essence of enthusiasm. It lets everyone know how you really feel deep inside. Don't fake it — be sincere.

Varying Your Volume — Use variance in volume to help your audience recognize important points when you come to them. Voice modulation is one of the most important parts of creating enthusiasm within your listener.

Pausing — Every listener must be given an occasional rest from the bombardment of your remarks. No matter how interesting your material and delivery might be, your audience requires an occasional rest. Give it to them in the form of a pause. While you are collecting thoughts, searching for the next point, etc., let your audience rest; don't fill up such time with "and uh," "er," or "ah."

Speed — Make sure your words flow at a 125- to 160-words-per-minute rate. However, don't speak the same speed throughout your presentation. Vary your speed as you vary the strength of your voice. Try to stay within the appropriate time frame, but vary your speed by occasionally speaking a dozen words or so more slowly than others.

Change of Pace — During your presentation, try to change your pace by injecting an amusing idea, story, or experience. Total abstract ideas leave an audience bored. Stories or experiences help build interest in, and an enthusiasm for, your material. Sprinkle your talk, presentation, or report with pertinent examples.

Gestures — Like a smile and voice modulation, gestures play an important part in creating enthusiasm within your listener. Avoid the "holding-onto-the-lectern-for-dear-life" position. Don't pay attention to your hands; let them react to your words naturally. If you really want to make a point, do it with gestures as well as voice modulation.

Summary

Whenever two or more people get together, discussion usually follows. In some groups, the discussions are lively and interesting, with everyone sharing ideas and having fun as well as accomplishing the task they are discussing. Other groups have discussions that are tedious and burdensome. These may be discussions to set and achieve goals or more formal presentations. Basic communication skills are combined with special techniques to fit the occasion.

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Learning Activity:
In the Eye of the Beholder

Purpose: To provide reflection on what an object can mean to a group/group experience.

Items Needed: Variety of objects or pictures.

Procedure:
1. Collect a variety of pictures, objects, words, and photos. Simple things can be used as well as more complicated images or items. These objects can be placed in a box, a bag, on the wall, or on a table.

   Examples:

Telephone	Boat	Cow	Book
Sun	Pencil	Paintbrush	Piece of jewelry

2. Ask the members to identify how the object has positive symbolism for the group, the group experience, or training. It could tie directly to a concept, or concluding concepts for an entire curriculum.

   Examples of some comments you might expect or try to develop from some of the above items could include:

   • Telephone — Important to stay in touch, networking, communication

   • Sun — A bright reminder of what our disposition could be like.

   • Boat — We can venture out into new waters.

   • Pencil — Collect your thoughts for reflection.

   • Cow — An animal always giving something.

   • Paintbrush — Something that gives color, art, design, and beautifies the world.

   • Book — A way of always learning — never too old to learn.

   • Jewelry — Like the experience, something to cherish.

Discussion:
1. What object(s) could we use to symbolize our group's purpose and goals?

2. What symbol could be used for our group's identification?

3. What symbol or object would best communicate to the group?

Summary: An object can symbolize different things to different groups.

Learning Activity:
What's Good About It?

Purpose: Some discussions are good, and some discussions are not so good. This activity explores reasons for good and not-so-good discussions.

Items Needed: Pencil and paper to take notes.
Flipchart pad and magic markers.

Procedure:
1. Divide into subgroups of six to 10 people.

2. Have each group designate a recorder (perhaps use flipchart pad).

3. Ask participants to list and then discuss their responses to the following three questions. The questions should be listed for all to see, or be distributed as a handout.

    a. What is effective facilitator behavior?

    b. What is effective participant behavior?

    c. What are some general characteristics of good discussion?

4. Give groups time to discuss. You may want to assist those groups that seem to get bogged down.

Discussion:
1. Draw the discussion back to the larger group.

2. Make a master list as you discuss each response. Rotate and take one idea from each group until all group lists are exhausted.

3. What are the common responses?

4. Why is good discussion important?

Summary: The facilitator and participants have a role in having good group discussion.

Learning Activity:
A Short Presentation

Purpose: This activity will help you organize your thoughts, practice your style, and receive feedback from others. It is designed as a light, fun type of activity. Everyone experiences nervousness when speaking before a group. Practicing in a safe environment of friends and trusted group members can help reduce nervousness, focus your thoughts, and improve your concentration.

Items Needed: Pencil and paper.

Procedure:
1. Each member should give a one- or two-minute talk on a topic from the list below or another topic.

    a. The importance of rainfall.

    b. The importance of regular exercise.

    c. The family vacation.

    d. My most enjoyable moment.

    e. Why ice cream melts.

    f. How to change a tire without a lug wrench.

    g. How to begin a conversation with a stranger.

    h. Training the pet dog.

    i. My favorite computer program.

    j. How to make the most of a bad day.

2. After each talk, group members should take just a couple of minutes to list three things the speaker did well and three things that could be improved upon. For example, too many "ands," "ahs," and other hesitations. All lists should be given to the speaker at the end of his or her presentation.

Discussion:
1. Were the suggestions given by the group helpful to you the speaker? Why? Why not?

2. What are other ways group members could practice their public speaking skills?

Summary: Practice giving a presentation can reduce nervousness, focus your thoughts, and improve your concentration.

Learning Activity: *Brainstorming*

Purpose: Brainstorming is a fast-paced technique designed to stimulate creative ideas. It is nonjudgmental, so all ideas are initially accepted.

Items Needed: Flipchart pad, magic markers, pencils and paper.

Procedure:

1. Divide into subgroups of three to seven if your group is larger than eight.

2. Select a problem facing the whole group. Ask each subgroup to brainstorm about it. One person in the group should act as a recorder, and one should act as a spokesperson.

   (Optional) Present this problem: After six long months, your group has finally been granted an interview with the director of the Triple X Foundation. You have three minutes (she is a very busy person) to convince her that your group deserves a $50,000 award to encourage the "efficient" use of time. What will be your approach? Alternative approaches?

3. Allow the groups 15 minutes to generate answers, then ask for feedback. If you have subgroups, rotate among them, allowing each group to give one answer at a time so that a majority of answers aren't given by the first group.

4. *(Optional)* Use two easels with flipchart pads and two recorders. Record the first answer on the first easel, the second answer on the second easel, the third answer back on the first easel.

Discussion:

1. How does brainstorming allow for creativity?

2. Why is brainstorming a nonjudgmental activity?

Summary: Brainstorming stimulates creative ideas in a fast paced manner.

Learning Activity: *Future Wheels*

Purpose: This activity helps group members assess the consequences of a future event or situation. It is especially useful in sharing a common understanding of what may be a preferable future.

Items Needed: Paper, pencils, flipchart pad, magic markers, and masking tape.

Procedure:
1. Discuss the need to understand the implications of a future event.

2. Ask the group to select an image, trend, idea, or event, and write the word in the center of the flipchart pad page.

3. Use brainstorming to generate primary consequences directly associated with the event. Write them at the end of lines drawn outward from the center.

4. Continue brainstorming and list current consequences of the primary events.

5. Identify consequences of the secondary events.

6. Display the future wheel(s) and report to the large group if applicable.

Discussion:
a. Which of these events are preferable?

b. Which secondary consequences are undesirable?

c. How could undesirable outcomes be avoided?

Summary: Using this technique helps groups see the consequences of a future event.

Learning Activity:
Open-Ended Statements

Purpose: Open-ended statements are unfinished sentences that help individuals reveal and explore their attitudes, beliefs, actions, convictions, interests, goals, and purposes.

Items Needed: Paper, pencils, flipchart pad, magic markers, and masking tape.

Procedure:

1. Develop a list of unfinished sentences that relate to the goals and values of the topic under study. Eight to 12 statements work well. Statements can often be in pairs — what you like and don't like — but the last statement or two on the page should be in a positive note.

2. Give each participant a copy to fill out silently, without sharing ideas with others.

3. After each person has completed a copy, lead a discussion of the sentences, encouraging people to share their answers.

Discussion:

1. Did all members participate?

2. Were new ideas or attitudes brought before the group?

3. How can this method be used in groups you work with?

   SAMPLE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

   a. When I'm in a group, I like to . . .

   b. When I'm alone, I like to . . .

   c. The hardest thing about being a group officer is . . .

   d. The easiest thing about being a group officer is . . .

   e. When I'm in charge I . . .

   f. When someone else is in charge I . . .

   g. Group members like to . . .

   h. I like group members to . . .

   i. Our group doesn't go well when . . .

   j. Our group goes well when . . .

Summary: Open-ended statements help individuals reveal and explore their attitudes, beliefs, actions, convictions, interests, goals, and purposes.

Learning Activity: *Idea Search*

Purpose: To help people look at ideas in depth and from different perspectives. To increase the number of ideas and broaden understanding.

Items Needed: Pencils and idea search form.

Procedure:
1. Give each person the form. Explain the categories.

    Idea, Trend, Problem. This column should have a short description of the social or cultural problem and the way the person views the problem. This can be an individual problem, or the whole group can work on the same problem.

    Cultural. This should have the person's views of how society sees the problem.

    Emotional. What are the feelings society has about this idea? Does society have strong rules or taboos about this idea?

    The Broad Picture. Look at the problem in as large a sense as you can. Use any method to think big — more people, other countries, multiplying the impact.

    The Narrow Picture. This is an attempt to see the problem, trend, or idea in a small sense. Taking it apart, looking at it in just the opposite way that was used in The Broad Picture. Think of it under a microscope.

    How Do You Feel? What emotions do you have about it? Would you want others to know how you feel?

2. Have each person fill in the form individually, thinking about the questions in each column. Use the last section to fill in their own idea, trend, or problem.

3. After they have finished, have group member discuss each column, sharing their thoughts as they wish.

Discussion:
a. Did all members participate?

b. Were new ideas generated that would not have been proposed or accepted in traditional discussion?

c. With what kinds of ideas or situations would this method be most helpful?

Summary: An idea search can help people look at ideas in depth and from different perspectives.

Worksheet: *Idea Search*

Idea, trend, problem	Cultural	Emotional	The broad picture	The narrow picture	How do you feel?
State your idea or problem. Then ask yourself the quesions in each column. Write down your thoughts.	What do people think about this? Any taboos or problems? Is it good or bad?	How does it make you feel? Any risks? Who does it affect? Is it worth the feelings you have?	What can you add? Can it be stronger, bigger, more valuable, multiplied? Can more people, places or things be involved?	Can you take something away? Do it differently? Try the opposite? Divide up?	Is it important to you? Would you want others to know how you feel? How does it use your time and other resources?

Learning Activity:
Case Study/Role Play

Purpose: This activity focuses on several problem behaviors. Can you help the frustrated chair deal with problems?

Items Needed: A copy of the case study for each participant.

Procedure:
1. Give each participant a copy of the case study.

2. If your group is larger than eight, divide into subgroups of three to seven.

3. Following the case study, have each subgroup discuss the questions and report their answers back to the larger group.

Case Study: Spouse, upon arriving home after chairing a meeting:

"I don't know what to do. It takes all my energy just to deal with Jan and Carl. Anyone who sits by Carl hears the entire family history. It's a distraction for the entire meeting. Jan is just as bad. She talks constantly, but she usually doesn't stay with the topic being discussed. Lately I've noticed Bob taking issue with everything Jan says, and other group members are beginning to find fault with proposals."

Discussion:
1. What would you tell this meeting chair?

2. What are the problems the chair is facing?

3. Is it all up to the chair? Can others help? How?

Summary: Explore ways to help a chairperson be a better facilitator.