The Effective Communicator

Middlebury College Management Training
Winter 2012
What’s Sticking With You?

• Stimulus -> Choose -> Response
• Circle of Influence
• Aligned Organization
• Manager Definition & Responsibilities
• 8 Practices of Effective Managers
  – Priorities
  – Decisions
  – Communication
  – Managerial Professionalism
• Trust (The Emotional Bank Account)
Goals for Today

• Demonstrate and apply the behaviors of effective listening
• Know your own behavioral communication style
• Be able to identify the behavioral diversity of others and “step into” their style
• Tailor your verbal, non verbal, and written communication to improve relationships and results
Agenda

• Listening – the key to communication
• Explore diversity of identity and perspectives
• Review your DiSC behavioral style
• Learn how to communicate more effectively
What is Listening?

• What does it mean?
• What makes an effective listener?
• What behaviors do you see?
• What gets in the way in listening well?
Listening is being:

“I don’t know.”

Choosing to be in a state of not knowing

It’s being curious

It’s being willing to learn
Listening

• To Fix
• To Understand
“To *listen* well is as powerful a means of influence as to *talk* well, and is as essential to all true conversation.”

- Chinese Proverb
“Before speaking, consider whether it is an improvement upon silence.”

-- An Indian Yogi quoted by

Philip Simmons
Ladder of Inference

- What It Is
- How It Affects Us
- What We Need To Know
Ladder of Inference

I observe data and experiences (with my 5 senses)

I select data from what I observe

I add meanings (cultural and personal)

I make assumptions based on the meanings added

I draw conclusions based on the assumptions

I adopt beliefs about the world

I take actions based on my beliefs

Note:
Effective communication starts at the bottom and works up.
(adapted from Peter Senge-The Fifth Discipline)
We start seeing only that which confirms our beliefs, and the stories get bigger.
Our DiSC profile reflects the way we behave when we don’t think about it...

...and we can behave any way that we want if we choose to think about it first
This is important
This is fun and insightful and way too easy to dismiss
The Classical Profile Patterns
DiSC® Classic 2.0

Section III

Inspirational Pattern

- Emotions: accepts aggression; downplays need for affection
- Goal: control of their environment or audience
- Judges others by: projection of personal strength, character, and social power
- Influences others by: charm, direction, intimidation; use of rewards
- Value to the organization: acts as a "people mover"; initiates, demands, compliments, disciplines
- Overuses: attitude that "the ends justify the means"
- Under Pressure: becomes manipulative, quarrelsome, or belligerent
- Fears: weak behavior; loss of social status
- Would increase effectiveness with more: genuine sensitivity, willingness to help others succeed in their own personal development

Persons with the Inspirational Pattern consciously attempt to modify the thoughts and actions of others. They want to control their environment. They are astute at identifying and manipulating an individual’s existing motives in order to direct that person's behavior toward a predetermined end.

Inspirational persons are clear about the results they want, but they do not always immediately verbalize them. They introduce the results they want only after they have primed the other person, offering friendship to those who desire acceptance, authority to those who seek power, and security to those who want a predictable environment.

Inspirational persons can be charming in their interactions. They are persuasive when obtaining assistance for repetitive and time-consuming details. People often experience a conflicting sensation by feeling drawn to Inspirational people and yet being curiously distanced. Others may feel "used" by Inspirational persons' manipulation powers. While they sometimes inspire fear in others and override their decisions, Inspirational persons are generally well-liked by co-workers because they use their considerable verbal skills to persuade others whenever possible. Inspirational persons clearly prefer to accomplish goals through cooperation and persuasion, not domination.

These are detailed, helpful, and harder to use
High Ds Overcome Opposition to Get Results

Tendencies and Desires
• Get Immediate Results
• Make Quick Decisions
• Cause Action
• Take Authority
• Solve Problems

Others May See
• Intimidating
• Unapproachable
• Impatient
• Insensitive
How do High Ds Communicate?

**Verbal**
- Tells vs. Asks
- Asks What Questions
- Says I/You, not We
- Says Think, not Feel
- Talks about Goals
- What, Not Who
- Roles When Who
- Deadlines
- Disagrees
- Uses Acronyms
- Data and Facts

**Vocal**
- Faster
- Louder
- Shorter
- Interrupts
- Makes demands
- No Preamble
- No Stories

**Visual**
- Big Gestures
- Eye Contact
- Narrowed Eyes
- Less Smile
- Not Well Organized
- Status
- Distracted
- Stands Still
- Gets Close
High I’s Influence and Persuade Others

Tendencies and Desires
• Contacts/networks with others easily
• Inspires/motivates others
• Articulate
• Group Work

Others May See
• Not Detailed Enough
• Starts a Lot but Finishes Little
• Lack of Interest in Details – even Important Ones
• Lack of Organization
How do High I’s Communicate?

Verbal
- Tells vs. Asks
- Asks Who Questions
- Says I, I, I,
- Talks about Feelings
- Doesn’t Use Data
- Chats a Lot
- Who, not What
- Shares relationships
- Expects dialog
- Tangents!

Vocal
- Faster
- Louder
- Longer
- Interrupts
- Ignores
- Exaggerates

Visual
- Big Gestures
- Eye Contact
- Smile
- Animated Face
- Sloppy
- Touching
- Moves a Lot
- Distracted
High S’s Cooperate with Others to get Things Done

Tendencies and Desires
• Great Team Player
• Empathetic and Sensitive to Needs of Others
• Methodical, Consistent, Predictable
• Good at Listening
• Patient and Loyal

Others May See
• Indecisive
• Indirect
• Resistant to Change
• Lack of Assertiveness
How do High S’s Communicate?

Verbal
- Asks vs Tells
- Asks Who Questions
- Says We and You
- Uses Names
- Talks about Feelings
- Chats a Lot
- Who, not What
- Shares Relationships

Vocal
- Slower
- Softer
- Longer
- Waits
- Agrees
- Shares
- Asks for Feedback

Visual
- Small Gestures
- Less Eye Contact
- Smiles
- Listens Attentively
- Furrowed Brow
- Faces You
- Focused on You
High C’s Plan to get Things Done

Tendencies and Desires
• Thorough
• Accurate
• Knowledgeable, even about Details
• Conscientious
• Diplomatic

Others May See
• Perfectionism
• Aloofness
• Lack of Creativity
How do High C’s Communicate

Verbal
- Asks vs. Tells
- Asks How Questions
- Says Think
- Doesn’t Chat
- Listens vs. Talk
- Writes vs. Speaks
- Uncommunicative
- Data vs. Feelings

Vocal
- Slower
- Quieter
- Longer
- Prepared
- Pauses
- Prove their Point
- Asks about Data

Visual
- Small Gestures
- Less Eye Contact
- Less Smile – Flat Affect
- Keeps Distance
- Stands Still
- Focused
What to Look and Listen For:

**Verbal**
- Think vs. Feel
- Tells vs. Asks
- Numbers vs. Names
- Tasks vs. People
- No vs. Yes

**Vocal**
- Fast vs. Slow
- Loud vs. Soft
- Short vs. Long
- Data vs. Stories
- What vs. Who
- Direct vs. Chat
- Interrupts vs. Pause

**Visual**
- Big vs. Small
- Eye Contact vs. Not
- Not vs. Smile
- Still vs. Animated
  (face)

(Look for A or R, T or P)
Practice & Learn

• Observing
• Analyzing
• Tailoring
Dear Chris,

We’ve gotten a challenge to our request for budget on the marketing plan. Several people in the meeting – Robert, Tara and Sam – expressed concerns that they did not have a clear sense of our needs (I think that this is understandable, considering the circumstances of our deadlines).

Would you please consider drafting a one pager on the project parameters and benefits? What I am hoping for is a document that we can use to prep for the next meeting and keeps us focused on the needs of our stakeholders.

Please let me know if this is possible.

Warm Regards,
Stan
From: Lynn Bridport
To: Chris Smith

You missed the deadline on the revenue project review. I need a plan for how you’re going to fix it.
From: Sue Weybridge
To: Chris Smith

Attached are a series of modified budgets that came out of my meeting with the leadership team. Please review them so we can discuss at our planning meeting tomorrow at 4:00 p.m. as we are on a tight deadline.

Here is additional information to help you prepare:

• There is evidence that we will lose 6-7% of our funding.
• I have been asked to have roll ups by the end of the day on Tuesday.
• Funding will be affected the effectiveness of our internal planning.

Please begin considering strategies, scenarios and business cases to support these budgeting challenges. Please note that the attached spreadsheets have macros.

Sue
Hey Chris

Hope you are doing great. I am feeling like we should get together on the new budget, it’s due pretty soon. Maybe we can catch up later today or early tomorrow to discuss it? Just let me know your schedule.

Thanks!

Joe,

Joe Bristol
Director of Special Ops
802-555-1212
Cell 555-4567
joe@specialops.com
High D Email Behavior

• Often no salutation
• Bottom Line up front
• Keep it short
• No Attachments
• Only a few questions
• Put questions up front
High I Email Behavior

- Salutation with Name
- Ask Me How I Am
- Tell Me How You Are
- Long is Fine – Though I May Not Read it All
- No Attachments
- You Might Want to Follow Up
High S Email Behavior

• Would You please start with my name?
• Please let me know how you are doing
• It means a lot to me when You ask how I am
• Please tell me the whole story - I appreciate it
• Reading attachments takes time - but for You, I’ll do it
• I work harder when You show you care about me
• Please finish with Your name and contact information
High C Email Behavior

- Scroll Bars mean you respect thoroughness
- More data is better
- Attachments mean you know the value of details and accuracy
- I take longer to respond but provide better answers
- I prefer email
- Bullets show preparation and organization
- Jokes are a waste of network resources
Verbal or Written...

- Observe the behavior
- Listen & analyze what you see
- Step toward the other person’s style (15% or so)
- Improve communication & relationships
It is not just about behavior

• Observing & listening provide insight
  – Values
  – Beliefs
  – Identity
  – Experiences

• Spend time getting to know the INDIVIDUAL
Stepping in...

What behaviors could you apply to step toward your opposite style to improve communication and relationships?
Putting DiSC Into Action

• Identify a direct report or colleague with whom you would like to improve communication
• When you think of your interactions how would you identify their behaviors? Assertive or reserved, people or task focused?
• How are your styles different?
• What is the impact?
• What might you do differently to step toward their style?
• What would you like them to do differently?
Case Study
Review

• Listening
• Ladder of Inference
• Getting to know others
• Your Disc Style
• Stepping toward other styles