



The Art of Effective Communication

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Agenda

- What is active listening & why it matters
- How to effectively communicate your message
- Gender differences in communication

Why does listening matter?

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of high quality communication involves listening
- Good listeners = good managers/bosses
- Good listeners = advance more rapidly
- Most workers spend 35-40% of their time listening
- Most executives spend 60-70% of their time listening

What is active listening?

- Listening for the purpose of **understanding** the speaker and his/her perspective
- Requires conscious effort
- Asking for clarification when needed
- Communicating **YOUR** understanding of the speaker's message

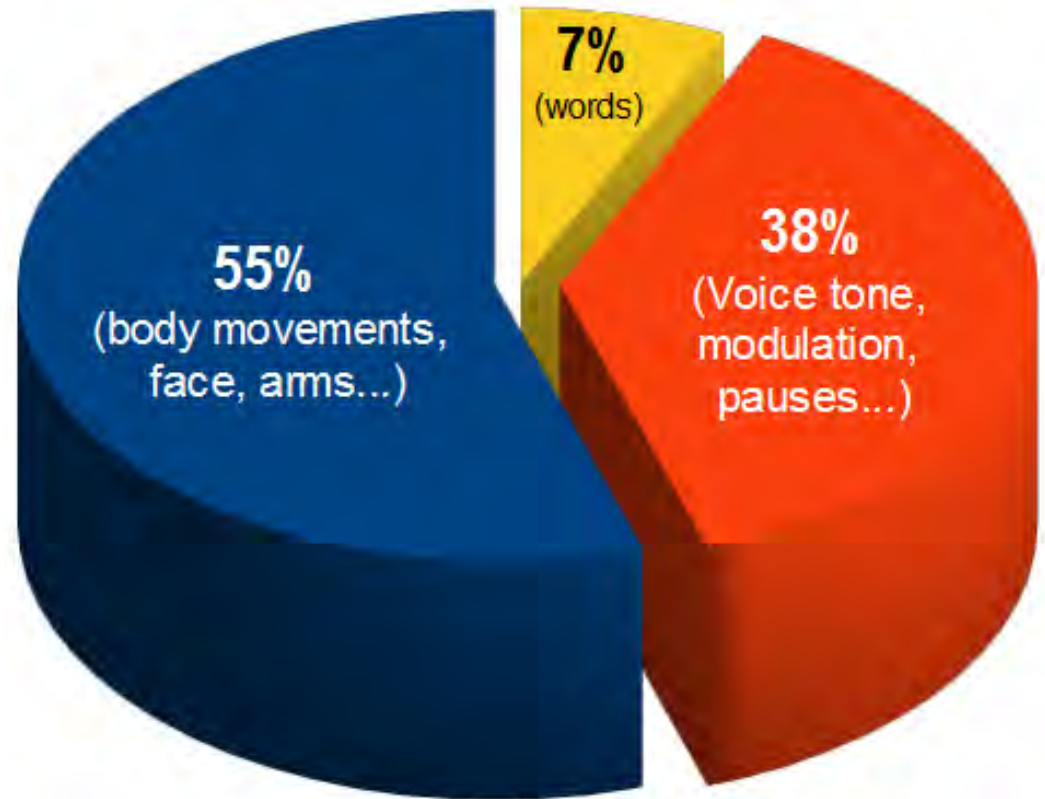
Active Listening Skills

- Attend
- Ask Questions
- Demonstrate Understanding
- Avoid Barriers

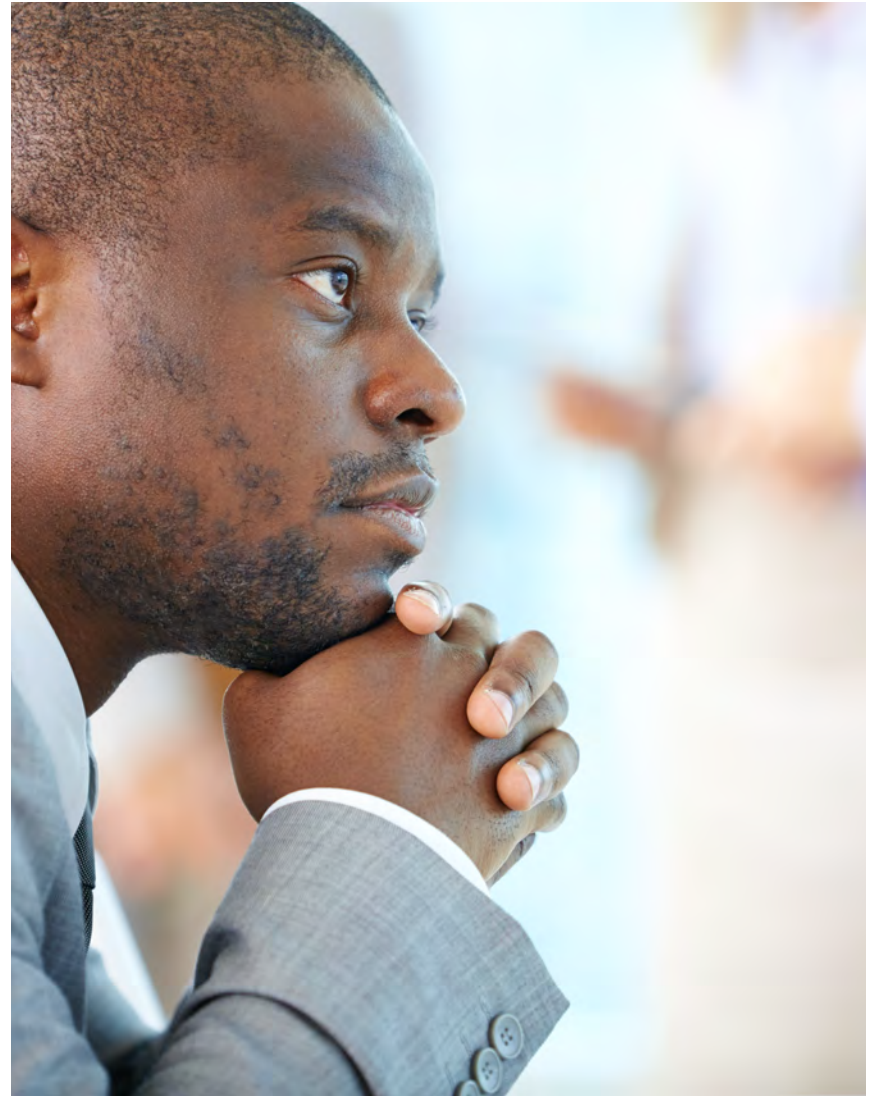


Attend

- Focus
- Distance
- Eye Contact
- Body Posture
- Environment



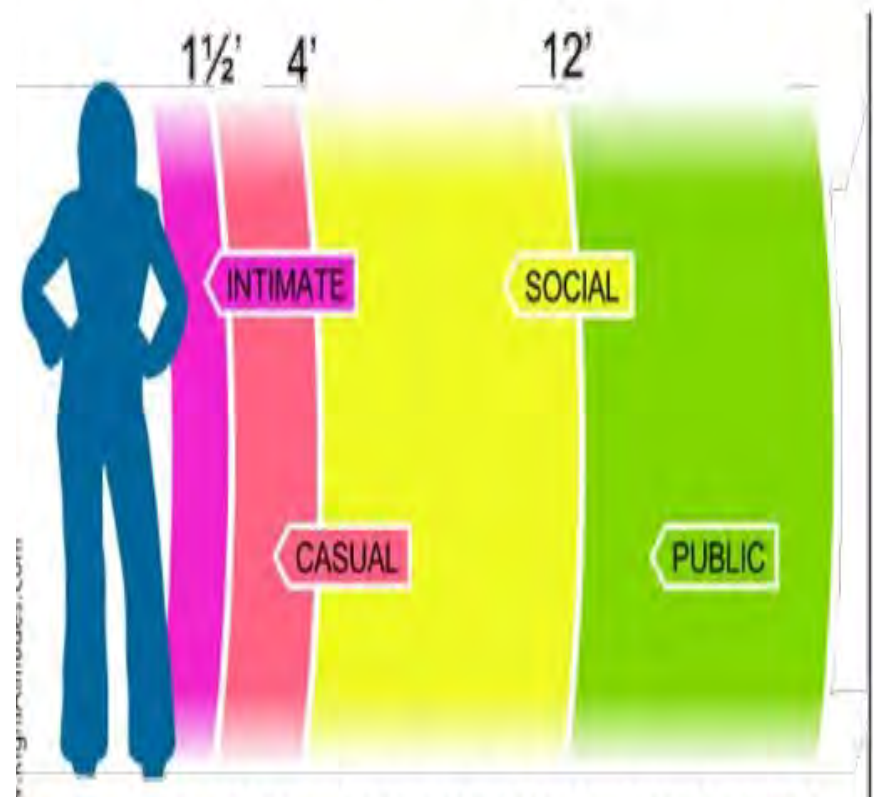
Focus



Distance – personal space

- Stand at least 2 feet apart
- Canadians tend to guard their personal space
- Quebecers tend to stand closer & kiss on both cheeks

Personal space in Canada



Look at the speaker







Defensive Body Posture



Lean In



Questions clarify & deepen understanding

- Could you say a little more about why you think the negotiations broke down?
- Perhaps you could elaborate as to why we are no longer recruiting Asian students?
- Can you describe exactly what your boss said when he informed you of your promotion?

Active Constructive Responding



- “That’s great news! You practiced so hard over the summer, and now it’s paying off. I can’t wait to see you play in your first game. Tell me more about it!”
- “I’m so glad to hear that you received a job offer. Tell me more! What is the best part about this position?”

Demonstrate Understanding



Paraphrase to ensure that you have an accurate understanding of what is being said:

- “You are saying that you’re frustrated because the department meetings take so much time?”
- “Do you mean that...”
- “If I’m hearing you correctly, you feel....”

Don't make it about you

- Put the focus on the other person
- Restate what you heard
- If the person said, “I don’t get enough resources to do what I want,” do not state:
- “None of us get enough resources to do what we want”
- Don’t judge or evaluate the other person’s comments

Validate & Empathize

Try to empathize or identify yourself with the speaker to experience what he or she feels

- If I were in your place, I wouldn't have handled the situation so well
- That must have been a satisfying experience
- If that had happened to me, I'd have been very upset

Avoid Barriers

- Interrupting, assuming & advice giving
- Rehearsing
- Competing Distractions
- Filtering
- Judging/Labeling
- Me-isms

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

Stephen R. Covey
(1932-2012)



Avoid Competing Distractions



FILTERING

JUDGING

- “I know that!”
- What can she possibly teach me!



It's All About

ME

- I know exactly how that feels
- That happened to me
- Oh my gd I was in the same situation



RECAP

- Attend
- Ask questions for the purpose of understanding & clarifying
- Demonstrate Understanding
- Avoid Barriers

Expressing Yourself: The Art of Being Heard



Plan your message



- Plan your Message
- Present Your Viewpoint
- Understand Differences
- Obtain Feedback

Plan your message

- Define your goal
- Practice your message
- Check the emotional climate
- Choose your environment



Present your
viewpoint using “I”

Behavior: I have a concern

Feeling: I feel

Effects: Because

Need: I need



1. **“When you...”**
“When you are late for team meetings,
2. **“I feel...”**
I get angry ...
3. **“Because I...”**
... because I think it is wasting the time of all the other team members and we are never able to get through all of the agenda items.”
4. **(Pause for discussion)**
5. **“I would like...”**
“I would like you to consider finding some way of planning your schedule that lets you get to these team meetings on time.”
6. **“Because...”**
“Because that way we can be more productive at the team meetings and we can all keep to our tight schedules.”
7. **“What do you think?...”**

Gender differences

- Based on stereotypes & generalizations
- Use the info to become a more effective communicator





Women

- Prefer to use conversation to build rapport
- Often want empathy not solutions
- Prefer to speak to others to solve problems
- More empathetic & emphasize politeness
- More likely to compliment the work of a co-worker
- More conciliatory when facing differences



Men

- Prefer to use talk to preserve independence & status by displaying knowledge & skill
- Prefer to deal with problems by themselves
- More likely to criticize
- More directive in conversation
- More interested in public recognition
- Tend to dominate discussions during meetings
- More intimidating



What are the implication of these communication differences in the workforce?



To start - understand
gender differences exist




Best practices

- If he withholds praise, it's likely not personal
- Speak up in meetings if you want to get noticed
- Don't take it personally if a man does not want to talk over a problem
- Express support by saying, “should you want to talk about what's on your mind, I am available to do so” (do not be defensive)



Best Practices

- Recognize that women seek support & recognition
- When women talk about problems they are unlikely seeking advice
- Withhold the burning desire to offer solutions



Generally speaking to improve
communication men need to become
more empathetic & women need to be
more directive

Understand Differences

- Background, life experiences
- Words can mean different thing to different people
- Know your audience



Observe verbal & non-verbal reactions

Ask open-ended questions

Is there something I can help you with?

Would you like to talk?



Recap: Self-expression skills



- Plan your Message
- Present Your Viewpoint
- Understand differences
- Understand gender differences
- Obtain Feedback

Recap workshop

- What is active listening & why it matters
- How to effectively communicate your message
- Gender differences in communication



Thank
you

Connect with me!

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