



Leaders as Communicators

Session 3 – Part 3



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

School of
Information
Studies

**Note: the slides appearing
in the version of this
presentation may differ
from the actual slides used
during the Institute**

Ultimately leadership is about **COMMUNICATION!**

- Understanding between and among people;
- An interdependent process;
- Not necessarily agreement;
- Constant. You cannot NOT communicate. We constantly communicate, and we constantly receive communication from others.
- The question is have you sent the “right” message and what others have said not heard what you want others to say

Basic principles of communication

- A basic principle of communication in general: People are not mind readers
- People judge you by your behavior, not your intent
- A Russian proverb says, "Once a word goes out of your mouth, you can never swallow it again."

To be an effective communicator...

- Understand how communication occurs
- Understand your own communication behavior style
- Learn to diagnose the communication needs of others
- Develop listening skills
- Communicate with others in a way that is sensitive to and aware of their needs

Wouldn't it be great if you could...

- Understand how your *preferred* style of working comes across to other people
- “Read” other people’s behavior so you’ll know the best way to work with them
- Find common ground with people while maintaining your individuality and integrity
- Adjust your behavior in small ways that dramatically improve results among different styles
- Relate effectively—no matter how others react to you
- From: *People Styles at Work: Making Bad Relationships Good and Good Relationships Better*. Robert Bolton and Dorothy Grover Bolton.

Matching styles to build communication effectiveness

“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.”

Mark Twain

“Style flex”



- Versatility is the ability to communicate with someone else based upon the other person’s comfort zone, the way in which the other person wants to communicate.
 - Style flex involves tailoring your behavior so the way you work fits better with the other person’s style – like a baseball player swinging at different pitches...
 - Style flex is a temporary adjustment of a few behaviors at key times.

Source: *People Styles at Work: Making Bad Relationships Good and Good Relationships Better*, Robert Bolton and Dorothy Grover Bolton.

Effective communication techniques

- Use feedback
- Use multiple (appropriate) channels
 - Email, phone, one-on-one?
 - Amount of information and timing?
- Be sensitive to the receiver
- Be aware of symbolic meanings
- Use simple language
- Use repetition

Source: *How to Speak and Listen Effectively*, Harvey A. Robbins.

Philosophy of a good communicator

- Assume 100% of the responsibility for understanding what the other person *means*.
- Assume 100% of the responsibility for making sure that the person you are communicating with understands you.

Listen well – not just politely

- When someone else talks, really try to understand not only what is said, but why.
- Don't give the impression that "her or his mind is already made up" when asking for input.
- "You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time."
 - M. Scott Peck
- Practice!