

Communicate With Confidence®

The Essential Skills to Build Rock-Solid Relationships



BOOHER CONSULTANTS

Increasing Productivity Through Effective Communication

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Self-Assessment: What Are Your Listening Habits?

Situation/Characteristic	Reaction		
	Excellent	Satisfactory	Need Improvement
I listen with an open mind even when I disagree with what's being said.			
I never let "unrelated events/situations" (like a complaint from a customer or an argument with my spouse) prey on my mind while I'm going through the motions of listening to someone.			
I never daydream while listening to someone.			
I never interrupt speakers before they finish.			
I ask probing questions when appropriate to help a speaker focus.			
I ask open questions when I want to gather more information before making a judgment or decision.			
I ask closed questions to lead a speaker to focus on an issue or to gain agreement.			
I let a speaker finish without defending myself against negative comments.			
I always separate fact from opinion when listening.			
I never silently criticize the speaker's appearance or annoying habits while he/she is speaking.			
I generally try to find ways to agree rather than disagree with speakers.			

Situation/Characteristic	Reaction		
	Excellent	Satisfactory	Need Improvement
I take adequate notes about what I'm hearing.			
I always listen to understand speaker's feelings.			
I listen for the main point of what someone says to me.			
My ability to listen is not affected by my mood.			
I listen with attentive body language (good eye contact, an alert posture, and without fidgeting).			
I clarify what speakers say to me if I'm in doubt.			
When speakers use unfamiliar terms, I ask questions rather than "tune out."			
I always receive clear instructions and have no difficulty following the instructions.			
I always listen discriminately to the persuasive "pitch" speakers use to sell their ideas, products, or services to me.			
I don't mind letting people "vent" while I listen.			
I listen calmly when someone tells me about a mistake I've made and do not feel insulted.			
I never let speakers "ramble on" in talking to me; instead I try to help them focus.			
I never distort what I hear, regardless of my own biases and experiences.			

Barriers to Effective Listening

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“Nothing makes you a better listener than having your name mentioned.” —Anonymous

Practice Good Listening Habits and Attitudes

Recognize “stoppers” before you deliver them.

When someone starts a serious conversation with you, your reaction will either encourage that person to keep talking or stop him or her cold. Stoppers: ordering, commanding, threatening, moralizing, advising, lecturing, criticizing, blaming, shaming, diagnosing, interrogating. If you doubt these tones and words will stop a conversation, recall the last ten unpleasant ones you’ve had.

Listen for feelings as well as facts.

Noted clinical psychologist Carl Rogers believed strongly that a patient’s healing could be greatly speeded up by the simple act of having an analyst who really cared. Far too many people pay an analyst for what friends should and could do if they practiced listening for emotions. Letting the other person know that you understand the emotion behind his or her words gives the satisfying sense of really being understood.

Play “what if” to encourage reflection.

Have you ever had a coworker come into your work area and say, “Hey, I got a problem. I need some help.” Then as she starts telling you the problem, she suddenly says, “Wait a minute. That’s an idea. Never mind,” and dashes out. She has solved her own problem by just hearing herself talk about it.

Having someone listen gives us an acceptable reason to talk to ourselves out loud. And talking about the problem as if you are explaining it to another person clarifies detail, identifies issues, and raises possible solutions.

On such occasions, help others think aloud by asking “what if” questions. It’s not that you have the answers—they do. Your helpfulness comes in listening to them and then helping them reflect or think differently about what they've said.

Invite people to talk by commenting on their body language.

Shy people may need encouragement to talk to you, particularly when they’re unsure if you’d be interested in what they have to say. A good way to communicate to them “Hey, it’s okay, I’m ready to listen” is to comment on their body language and then listen to their response: “You look puzzled.” “You look excited—your eyes are flashing.” “What a smile—what gives?” “Lost your best friend or your dog? You look down.” Although the person may not take your cue, he or she has had an open invitation to respond with meaningful conversation.

Use silence to encourage the talker.

Recruiters understand this as their best tool to find out more about a job applicant. Silence makes some people uncomfortable, and they will do anything to fill it. Whether making someone uncomfortable so they will chatter on with revealing information or inviting a friend to unload, silence encourages talk.

Make up for the listening-talking differential.

According to various researchers, we can listen about four to six times faster than we talk. Therefore, when someone talks to you—either formally in a presentation or in casual conversation—your mind may dawdle along the way and not miss much—or miss a great deal. The difference has to do with what you do with that extra time.

If the talker merits your attention, you can use the extra thinking speed to listen well. You can make notes. Or you can evaluate what you're hearing: Why is the person saying this? When is this true? Where is it true? Why is this true? How is this true? Why is this important to know? How can I use this information? How should I respond? That evaluation makes efficient use of your extra listening speed. Finally, you can use this extra time to fix what you're hearing into long-term memory. Chunk it into pieces, develop a mnemonic device, outline it with key words, or just repeat it to yourself—use any of these methods to fix the information in your mind so that it stays put.

Listen to difficult, complex information as it relates to you.

Seminars, symposiums, and staff meetings may all include information that you consider dull or even complex. During these times, you may give your mind permission to go on recess. But is that in your best interest? If so, be my guest. If not—if you really need to know the information, but you find listening a chore—practice discipline. Listening to things that require concentration takes effort.

Try jotting down key points. Not comprehensive note-taking, but key-word or key-point note-taking. It forces you to pay attention and look for the structure in the information you're receiving.

Also, look for personal application in what you're hearing. Always dig for the WIIFM (what's in it for me?). Why do I need to know this? How can I use this information? If you're a salesperson trying to learn new product specifications, visualize the paycheck because of your knowledgeable response to a customer's technical question. If you're hearing why management decided to set up a certain retirement plan, visualize yourself having to explain it to your spouse. Look for purpose. Whet your appetite.

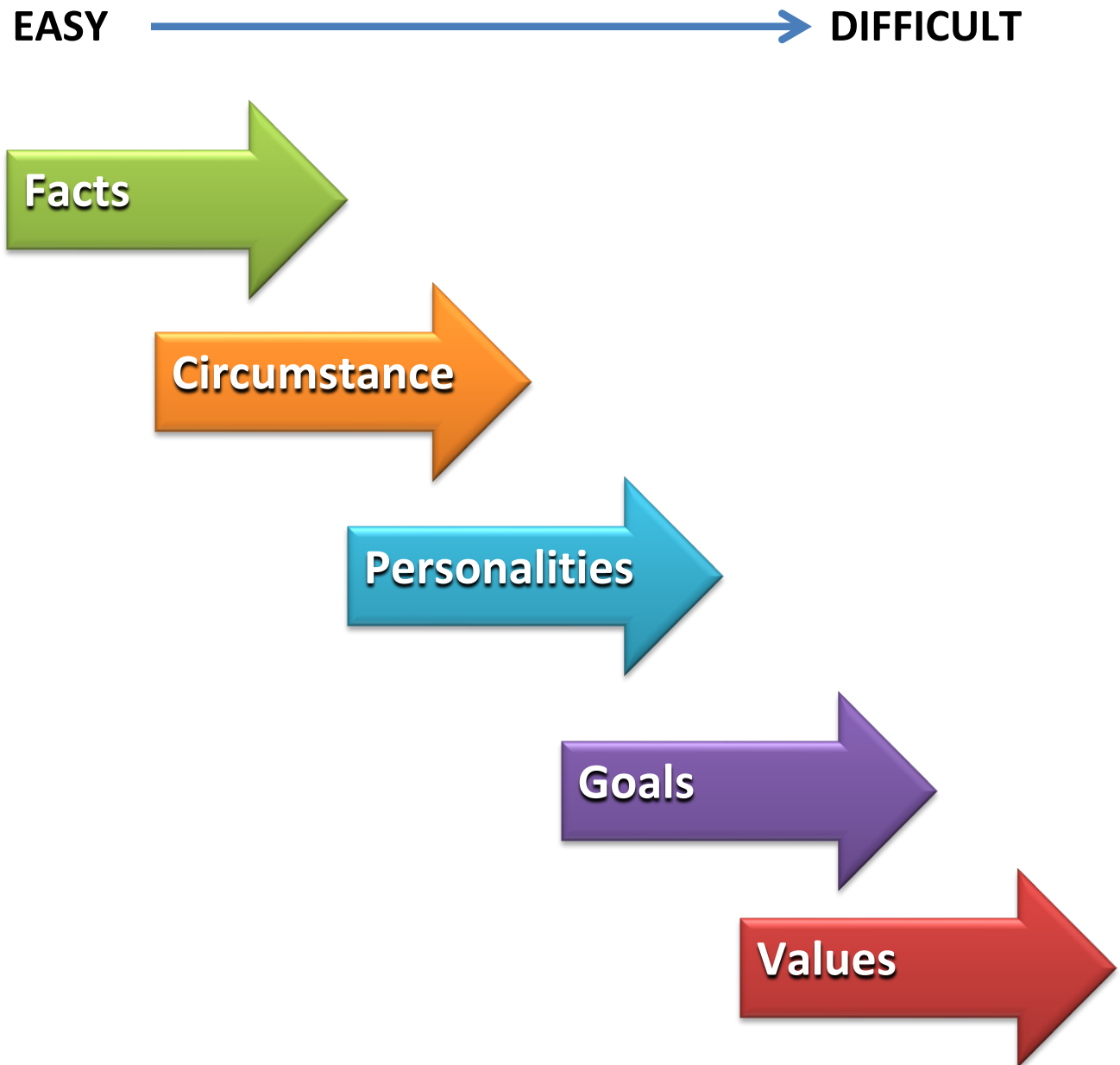
Summarize what you've heard after lengthy sessions.

In addition to paraphrasing as a conversation unfolds, summarize at the end to make sure you have understood the key points covered and any next-action items. Writers add a summary paragraph or chapter at the end of their articles and books to make sure they've hammered home their theses. Meeting leaders recap major conclusions at the close of formal meetings. Telemarketers outline the next steps of action before they hang up. But for some reason, if people have talked one on one, face to face, they forget the need to do the same thing. Summaries provide one last chance for clarity.

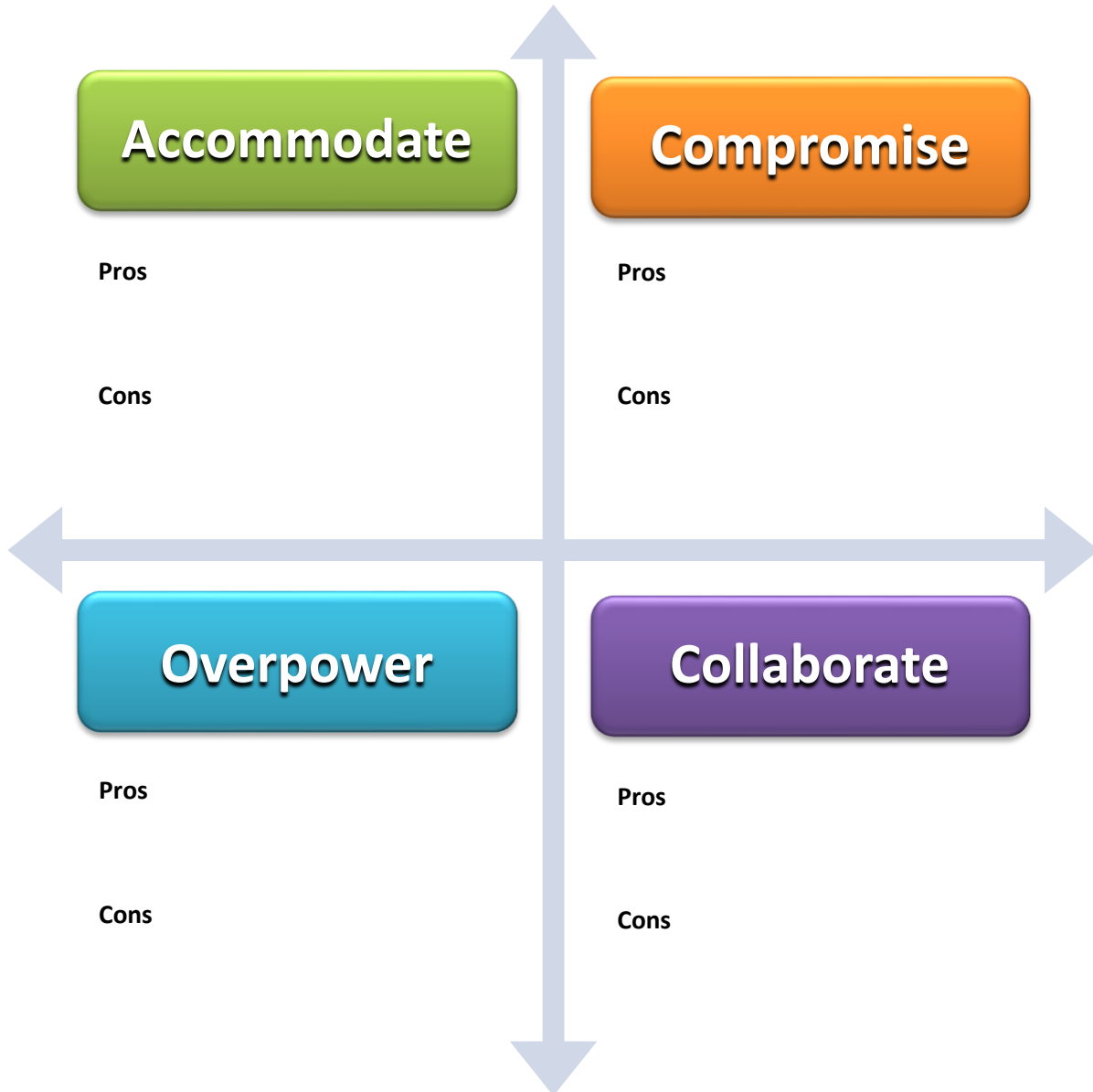
“Listening, not imitation, may be the sincerest form of flattery.... If you want to influence someone, listen to what he says....” —Joyce Brothers

Resolving Conflict Without Punching Someone Out

Five Causes of Conflict



Four Choices to Deal with Conflict



Remember: You Have Choices!

Conflict Discussions: Phrasing Is Paramount

▶ Describe; Don't Label

People can respond to statements like “your status reports are missing key information.” They can't respond to “You're evasive.” Descriptive: “You have taken off three Mondays in a row during a critical project.” Labeling: “You are inconsiderate of your coworkers.”

▶ Avoid “Hot Words” and “Phrases”

People don't like to be told that they must do anything. List your own hot words and phrases to avoid:

▶ Offer the Other Person Face-Saving Comments

If you expect the other person to take your side and come to agreement, make it easy on his or her pride! Face-saving comments that may come in handy at work and home:

▶ Let the Other Person Exercise Option

People must maintain some sense of power. Otherwise, they will figure out a way to sabotage your project or will end the relationship altogether. Provide others opportunities to choose and control.

▶ Shun Sarcasm

Sarcasm humiliates people. “Thanks a lot. That was a big help—to have these figures two days after the report has been turned in.” Nasty no-nos.

▶ Leave Exaggerations for TV Sitcoms

When you exaggerate, the other person will always ignore the bigger issue and prove your exaggeration incorrect. You'll wind up arguing about the misstatement rather than the issue.

▶ Don't Act Incredulous

The incredulous person greets the other person with a quizzical look of disbelief and shock at the “stupidity” of what's happened. Most people can tolerate disagreement when they have to, but most snap when it comes to humiliation. The amused grin, the mocking raised eyebrows, the outright laughter cut a person to the quick—even those who have right on their side.

▶ **Don't Question Someone's Integrity**

People can handle a comment about a mistake. But a stab at their integrity brings a denial and an angry outburst.

▶ **Avoid Reruns**

Memories are fallible. The context of earlier problems also becomes muddled. Stay current in the discussion.

▶ **Keep to One Issue**

Don't dump a decade's gripes into one discussion, or you'll never get to the bottom of the current issue. Past details and experiences, while possibly relevant to why one or the other person feels or believes a certain way, will only confuse the issue. Response is next to impossible. You simply can't remember and process all that's being said. One discussion, one issue.

▶ **Forget Verbal Ultimatums**

The person who issues the ultimatum may succeed in controlling but will fail in building understanding and repairing the relationship. Resentment will root out any good that may come from the resolution.

▶ **Don't Assume the Other Person Understands Your Point of View**

State the issues as you see them. What is obvious to you is not necessarily obvious to the other person.

Determine ...what happened...
...what you have concluded about what happened...
...and what you feel about what happened.

▶ **Remember That Both Sides Can Be Right!**

You don't have to discuss things until the other person agrees with you. You can stop the discussion when both people have stated their points of view.

“We judge others on their actions and results and want them to judge us on our intentions.” —Anonymous

Dealing with Difficult Personalities

The Hostile/Over-Reactor

Behavior

Over-reactors jump to conclusions before they know the facts. They let emotions such as anger, fear, or hurt feelings get out of control with behaviors such as shouting, obscene language, crying, and pouting.

Coping Techniques



The Super-Agreeable

Behavior

Superagreeables smile a lot, nod enthusiastically, confirm your every word, and promise whatever you want. The problem is that they often don't follow through with action; and worse, they try to manipulate you.

Coping Techniques



The Helpless Imposer

Behavior

Imposers always have excuses for non-productivity. They either don't want to learn a task or process or truly lack the necessary skills or knowledge. Either way, they wear out your patience asking for help.

Coping Techniques



The Know-It-All

Behavior

Know-It-Alls take on the tone of authority to let those around them know they have the final truth. Some know-it-alls simply convey their own intelligence and discount your ideas as inferior by shuffling papers, smiling condescendingly, or changing the subject after you speak. Others are less subtle; they simply tell you they know it all. Sometimes know-it-alls do know it all; others who pretend to be know-it-alls aren't.

Coping Techniques



The Staller

Behavior

Stallers never give you decisions until circumstances have dictated the outcome. They have no ulterior motives. They smile, listen, and nod but can't or won't deliver. They may stall because they are incompetent or powerless. Or if the information is "bad news," they may stall so as not to upset you.

Coping Techniques



The Perpetual Visitor

Behavior

Perpetual visitors always find an excuse to ask you job-related questions as well as to share job-related opinions with you. They also find the time to waste your time as well as their own with matters of personal interest.

Coping Techniques



The Worrier

Behavior

Worriers take worst-case thinking to the limit in that they waste time in checking, double checking, following up, clarifying, and smoothing others' feathers whether they're ruffled or not.

Coping Techniques



Deal with class and make the relationship last!

Building Rapport to Achieve More

More Credibility, More Sales, More Success

Use Supportive Statements

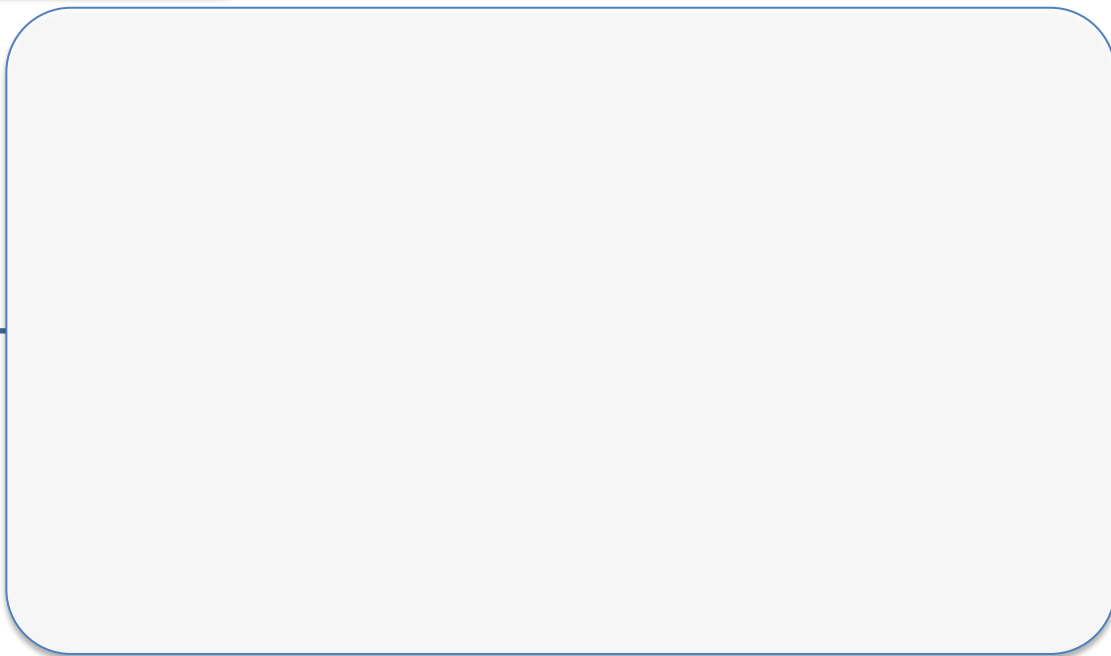
- “I’ve been there.”
- “I can appreciate where you’re coming from.”
- “That’s certainly a confusing situation. I can see how you came to that conclusion.”
- “I appreciate how patient you’ve been through all this.”
- “I know that must be so frustrating.”
- “No wonder you’re confused.”
- “What you’ve done has been very helpful.”
- “You must really feel under the gun with this project.”
- “I’m pleased you were able to give us this much information.”
- “I agree with you completely.”
- “That makes sense.”
- “That sounds logical.”
- “Your comments are always welcome.”
- “I understand your position.”
- “Thank you for such a complete overview of your situation.”
- “That’s an excellent suggestion. I’ll pass it along to the responsible person.”
- “I appreciate the details. They should be very helpful in investigating the situation.”
- “Thank you for calling this issue to our attention.”
- “I appreciate your being straightforward with me.”

What supportive statements can you use in your relationships?



Inject Energy and Enthusiasm Into Your Comments and Responses

How?



“Tact is something that if it is there, nobody notices it. But if it not there, everybody notices it.” —Anonymous

Gestures: Avoid Nervous Mannerisms

Gesture	What It Means to You?
Crossed arms	_____
Hands on hips	_____
Hands behind back	_____
Hands behind back of head	_____
Pointing index finger	_____
Karate chops in the air	_____
Open palms upward	_____
Removing glasses	_____
Leaning forward on toes	_____
Leaning back or slouching while seated	_____
Chin tilted to the side	_____
Biting fingernails biting lips	_____
Hands covering mouth	_____
Clenched fists	_____
No eye contact	_____
Prolonged eye contact	_____
Jingling keys or money in pocket	_____
Strumming fingers	_____
Twisting jewelry or other accessories	_____
Rocking back and forth or side to side	_____
Rubbing back of neck	_____
Lifted eyebrows	_____
Preening gestures	_____
Smokers' gestures	_____
Doodling on paper	_____
Continually opening/closing a drawer	_____
Pacing	_____



Establish a baseline for an individual's body language, and read gestures in clusters.

“Watch out for the man whose stomach doesn't move when he laughs.” —Cantonese Proverb

Meetings: What Goes Wrong in Meetings?

- ✓ _____
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- ✓ _____

“Many a good idea has been smothered to death by words.” —Anonymous

Meeting Mechanics

Know Your Purpose

Reasons TO meet

Reason NOT to meet

Set a Tell-All Agenda

Select Attendees Carefully

Criteria for who should attend

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Criteria for who should not attend

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Own the Setting

Encourage Participation

Be Versatile in Playing Several Positions in the Process

Summarize Frequently

Call for a Process Check Occasionally

Problem Personalities in Meetings

The Windbag

This individual talks just to fill up time; his comments “cover all the bases” past, present, and future. The talker often misguidedly thinks that he is doing the leader a favor by talking when no one else speaks up. A case in point: A small company was considering changing its name. When the group leader brought up the issue in a meeting, most nodded agreement and there was little discussion. Finally, one salesman took the floor and proceeded to give background for name changes of larger companies in the past decade, concluding 15 minutes later with the comment: “Well, I guess that about wraps it up. You seemed to be hurting for an opinion; that should open things up.” For some with less noble motives, to hold the floor is power. Still others keep the chatter going to avoid going back to work.

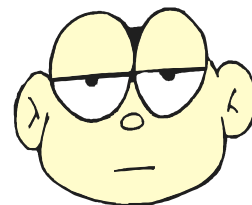
Coping Techniques



The Nonparticipant

This person may be present in body but not in spirit. She arrives late, leaves early, and brings paperwork to shuffle the rest of the time. If possible, she sits in a chair in the back or away from the others. If forced to join the group physically, she often singles out a kindred soul and carries on a whispering commentary on the proceedings. The less-offensive nonparticipant keeps quiet merely because she feels intimidated to speak rather than for lack of interest or as an act of defiance.

Coping Techniques



The Clown


























Often the clown romps in from another department looking for “what’s happening” as a means of avoiding his own work. He has all the time in the world to tell stories about what happened over the weekend when he ran into the CEO at a favorite bar or to express cynical opinions about company policy. He’s nonchalant about the budget expenditures—after all, “it’s not my money.” If the rest of the group is serious about the task at hand, the clown is a nuisance. If the group is tension-filled, he is the welcomed comic relief.
























Coping Techniques



“Meetings are rather like cocktail parties. You don’t want to go, but you’re cross not to be asked.” —Jilly Cooper

Tips for Contributing Ideas in Meetings

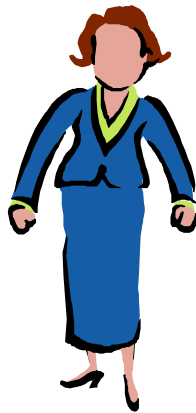
-  Use the “What a baby!” response.
-  Don’t digress, ramble, or side-track.
-  Omit war stories.
-  Support, explain, or reject only one idea at a time.
-  Stop a filibuster.
-  Use a prop to tag the motor mouth.
-  If you don’t have something to say, don’t say it.
-  Don’t ask a question simply to ask a question.
-  Avoid answering questions that nobody has asked.
-  Don’t assume the role of translator.
-  Avoid letting others put words in your mouth.
-  Don’t set a pattern of expressing the “downside.”
-  Know the difference between being realistic and being gloomy.
-  Apply the “you break it, you buy it” principle.
-  Disagree without being disagreeable.
-  Strip ownership from views.
-  Use positive questioning to allay your reservations.
-  Avoid invalidating others’ feelings.
-  Legitimize others’ feelings without agreeing.
-  Lighten up; the point doesn’t have to be perfect.
-  Don’t engage in a one-on-one battle.
-  Don’t harpoon the idea because it’s a poor swimmer.
-  Use another’s question as your platform.
-  Be flexible on the issues.
-  Listen to what’s going on.
-  Don’t derail others’ proposals while they’re still on the track.

-  Remain seated to emphasize that you're tossing out ideas "off-the-cuff."
-  Stand to convey authority and/or underscore the importance of an issue.
-  Grab 'em fast; forget the warm-up drill.
-  Try being obscure.
-  Set yourself up to keep the floor until you finish.
-  Be conversational; don't move into "meeting mode."
-  Talk *with*, not *to* the group.
-  Remember that people are most interested in what's on their own mind.
-  Make abstractions "hit the gut."
-  Don't plead with puppy-dog eyes.
-  Don't build your case—for or against—on second-hand information.
-  Present your proposal only one way and be specific.
-  Listen to the counters to your proposal rather than planning your rebuttal.
-  Don't withdraw your proposal simply for the sake of harmony.
-  If you can't manage a touchdown, try for a first down.
-  End with impact; don't just fade away.
-  Don't sound like a broken record.
-  Build support for your ideas behind the scenes.
-  Don't surprise your boss.
-  Ask for input and approval from your leader/manager.
-  Withhold your ideas until last if you want to encourage others' input.
-  To shorten the decision-making process, call for a vote.
-  To shorten the decision-making process, abdicate your right to make a decision.

The Gender Communication Gap

*All Communication Differences Between the Genders
Are Only a Matter of Degree*

Female Communication Tendencies	Male Communication Tendencies
---------------------------------	-------------------------------



1 2 3 4 5 6 7

*Where Do You Fall on the Continuum in Any Given
Conversation or Misunderstanding?*

Profile of Gender Communication Differences

Plot yourself on this 1-7 scale with regard to each of the following communication issues. All differences are a matter of degree, as expressed by the continuum scale. There are no right or wrong, good or bad responses.								
Female Communication Tendencies							Male Communication Tendencies	
Question or Objection?								
Questions?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Objections?
Indirect Language?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Direct Language?
Details or Big Picture?								
Details	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Big Picture
Small Talk or Big Talk?								
Small Talk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Big Talk
Facts or Feelings?								
Feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Facts
Empathy or Solution?								
Empathy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Solutions
Help or Humiliation?								
Help	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Humiliation
Sympathy or Support?								
Sympathy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Support
To Be Liked or Respected?								
Value Relationship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Value Respect

Opinions								
Valued/Seek Often	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Give Often/Seek Rarely
Air Time (Speaking Up, Listening, Overlapping/Interrupting)								
Small-Group Conversations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Large group/Air Time
Listen Actively	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Talk More Than Listen
Joke-Telling and Humor								
Seldom When Stressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Often When Stressed
Accomplishments								
Accomplishments Externalized	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Accomplishments Internalized
Emotion/Affection								
Most Expressive?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Least Expressive?
Body Language								
Circular/Inward?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Angular/Outward?

Remember: All differences are only a matter of degree!

Tips for Your Own Cross-Gender Communications

Question or Objection?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Details or Big Picture?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Small Talk or Big Talk?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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-
-

Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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-
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Facts or Feelings?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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-
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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Questions: Supportive or Intrusive?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Empathy or Solution?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Help or Humiliation?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Sympathy or Support?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Liked or Respected?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Opinions: Take ‘Em or Leave ‘Em?

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Accomplishments

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Emotions/Showing Affection

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Humor

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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Body Language

Suggestions to Accommodate Female Tendencies

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Suggestions to Accommodate Male Tendencies

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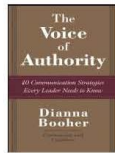
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Educational Resources by Dianna Booher

Ordering information and a complete list of resources are available at www.booherdirect.com.
Or call 1-800-342-6621 to order.

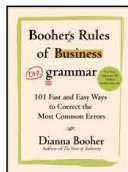
Books (Select Titles)



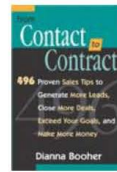
The Voice of Authority: 10 Communication Strategies Every Leader Needs to Know (McGraw-Hill; 202 pages; \$19.95; hardcover)



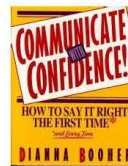
E-Writing: 21st-Century Tools for Effective Communication (Simon & Schuster/Pocket Books; 387 pages; \$16.00; paperback)



Booher's Rules of Business Grammar: 101 Fast and Easy Ways to Correct the Most Common Grammar Errors (McGraw-Hill; 284 pages; \$16.95; paperback)



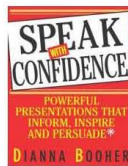
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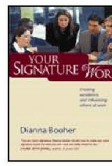
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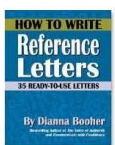


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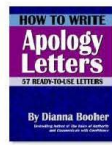


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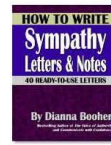
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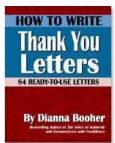
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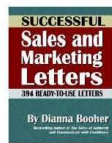
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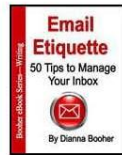
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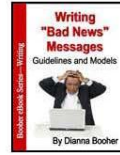
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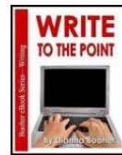
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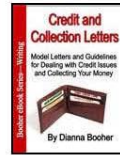
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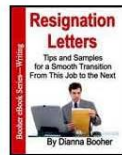
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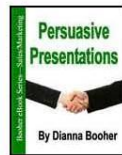
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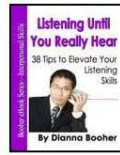
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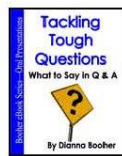
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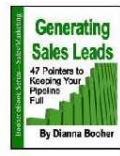
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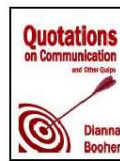
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Dianna Booher, MA, CSP, CPAE

Dianna Booher works with organizations to increase their productivity and effectiveness through better oral, written, interpersonal, and cross-functional communication.

As the author of 44 books, published in 23 countries, in 16 languages, she has published with Simon & Schuster/Pocket Books, Warner, Random House, and McGraw-Hill. Her latest titles include:

Booher's Rules of Business Grammar: 101 Fast and Easy Ways to Correct the Most Common Errors
The Voice of Authority: 10 Communication Strategies Every Leader Needs to Know
Speak with Confidence: Powerful Presentations That Inform, Inspire, and Persuade
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Several have been selections by major book clubs. Encyclopaedia Britannica, SkillSoft/Thomson, Nightingale Conant, The Success Training Network (TSTN), American Media, and InterCom have produced e-learning programs, videos, and audio series on her works.

Major Media: Good Morning America, CNN, NPR, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes.com*, *Investor's Business Daily*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, Fox, and Bloomberg have interviewed her for opinions on critical workplace communication issues.

Clients: Clients of Booher Consultants, her communication training and consulting firm, include IBM, MCI, Dell, AMR, Siemens Medical, Bayer, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Novartis, Alcatel-Lucent, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, JCPenney, Merrill Lynch, JPMorgan Chase, Principal Financial Group, Northwestern Mutual Insurance, Verizon, BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, NASA, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Senate.

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National Awards as a Speaker: In addition to national awards on training products, Dianna has received the highest awards in the professional speaking industry, including induction into the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame®. She has also been named one of the "21 Top Speakers for the 21st Century" by *Successful Meetings* magazine. Executive Excellence Publishing named Dianna to their "Top 100 Thought Leaders" and "Top 100 Minds on Personal Development."

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