

THE COMMUNICATION MYSTERY: SOLVED



INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

FULL DAY COURSE

THE COMMUNICATION MYSTERY: SOLVED

Course timing

Chapter One: Communication basics



Reading



Written Exercise



Facilitation



Group Activity

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Introductions	10
	The story	15
	Communication tug of war	25
	Assumptions: Good or bad?	30

Chapter Two: Uncovering assertive speaking skills

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	The four paths of expression	35
	What is assertive speaking?	25



Reading



Written Exercise



Facilitation



Group Activity

Course timing (cont.)

Chapter Three: Discovering active listening

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	What is active listening	30
	Obstacles to active listening	35

Chapter Four: Problem solving and communication

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Understanding communication through problem solving	40
	Create your own conclusion	40
	Action plan	15

Training Objectives

The participants will be able to:

- Recognize common myths and facts related to communication
- Understand the value or destructiveness of assumptions in communication
- Distinguish among the four paths of expression
- Construct a tool kit of assertive-speaking techniques
- Practice using assertive, positive language when communicating with others
- Use active-listening skills to communicate with others in a group
- Practice effective listening techniques
- Become sensitive to behaviors that may or may not obstruct problem solving
- Practice successful problem solving techniques

Trainer Preparation

Trainer Materials Needed

Use this checklist before each workshop to assemble all the equipment and materials that you'll need. Be sure you have the following:

The story activity

- Pen or pencil
- Paper
- The story worksheet

Communication tug of war

For each group:

- Rope divided into segments
- Piece of masking tape
- Flash cards with myths and facts

The assumptions activity

For each participant:

- Copy of "What we know" case report
- Copy of "Possible assumptions" worksheet
- Copy of "What else we know" worksheet
- Flip chart

Confused evidence bag activity

For each group:

- "Evidence bags" labeled with each path of expression
- Each evidence bag will contain:
 - Traits relating to each area of expression
 - A quote that relates to each area of expression
 - A blank index card

Tools for success activity

- Script for Chief Cantankerous and DA
- Costume for DA

For each participant:

- Tool kit worksheet

Suspect What?

For each group:

- Set of “Suspect What?” flash cards for each group

Witness activity

- Costumes
- Ten techniques used in active listening

Broken squares activity

For each group:

- One set of broken squares instructions
- One set of broken squares

Create your own conclusion activity

For each group:

- “Case solved” cards
- “Case solved” worksheet

Worksheets

- The story
- The goal: Mutual understanding
- What we know
- Why is this happening?
- What else we know(HO)
- Making assumptions
- Cluing into your own assumptions
- The four puzzling paths of expression(HO)
- Tool kit worksheet
- Assertive speaking(HO)
- Loaded language (HO)
- Creating positive language
- Assertive success in communication
- Different languages of communication
- Seven signs of an active listener
- Obstacles to active listening
- Ten techniques used in active listening
- Undercover listening tactics
- Creating solutions for success
- A quick problem solving model
- Taking the high road or the low road
- Case solved worksheet
- Ah-Ha's action plan

Other materials

- Blank paper
- Pens and pencils
- Flip chart paper
- Index cards

How to Prepare

At least one week before the training...

1. Notify participants by sending the invitation to the training
2. Review the training materials to ensure that you have all materials needed to complete the training.
3. Read through all activities to make sure that you understand the flow of concepts throughout the training.

At least one hour before the training:

1. Arrange the tables in a circle throughout the room.
2. Choose one table to be the police chief table. Set this table up with files, evidence bags, magnifying glass, detective books and various toy weapons.
3. Dress up as police chief.

Icons and abbreviations

When you see these icons placed to the left of the text, you'll know it's time for you to use the indicated tool.



Group activity



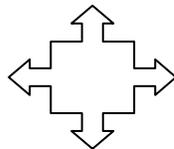
Written exercise



Handout



Facilitate



Transition

PWB = Participant Workbook

LP = Lesson Planner

THE COMMUNICATION MYSTERY: SOLVED

Chapter One – Communication basics



(PWB p. 1)

Communication basics

Activities and objectives:

The story
Objectives:
Following this activity the learner will

- Understand the events surrounding the murder mystery

Communication Tug of War
Objectives:
Following this activity the learner will

- Understand the cues and take needed for successful communication
- Recognize common myths and facts related to communication

Assumptions activity
Objectives:
Following this activity the learner will

- Understand the value of assumptions in communication
- Identify how assumptions can be destructive in communication
- Identify possible assumptions based on different communication scenarios
- Discover other possible solutions to personal assumptions
- Uncover ways to avoid damaging assumptions in communication

(PWB p. 2)

The story

"You have all received an invitation to be here because you are the best of the best in your work as detectives. As you can see, the victim in this case had some communication problems. Let the evidence to you what we found on the scene."

"First thing, my deputy walks in and there is a parrot screeching at the top of his lungs. In communication, no communication. The victim is slumped in the corner, parrot on shoulder, with a computer screen in front of them. The victim is writing some sort of e-mail, to whom we don't know, but only got as far as 'To whom it m...'

"At first my deputy thought the victim was just sitting there, still alive, but as he moved closer, he noticed there was something in the victim's mouth. What forensics found was a long string of typed words... just words. They made no sense to me. It looks like there was no struggle between the victim and the parrot and there was no other sign of force. No forced entry, broken furniture or anything like that. This is the mystery of it all."

"It seems that the parrot saw the whole thing go down. He was pretty shaken. We have him nearby right now, but he only says the one word. It must be relevant, but I don't know how. That is your job."

"That's what we have so far. We are all waiting for some results from forensics and the evidence room is storing what evidence was found on the scene... mostly documents, books and words. Until then I need you all to start getting ready for this case. Again, I want to stress that I picked your team to solve this because you are the only ones that could even come close to cracking this case without screwing it up. Be careful you don't jump to any conclusions here. The victim had some connections around town and I've mess this up during an election year, the mayor will have my head."

The Story

Ask participants to seat themselves at the tables around the room, trying to get five to six people at a table. Review the program objectives (Power Point), the agenda, and the program materials (workbook).

Explain to the group that throughout this entire training you will be playing two roles: the cantankerous police chief and the facilitator. As you change roles you will be changing outfits. Tell them that they will probably be able to guess which is which.

Tell them that this training is based on the techniques of experiential learning and that much of the learning process is "created" by the participants. In this type of learning they will get less direction and more guidance from the facilitator. Also, they will be conducting activities as detective teams and will be learning communication skills as they solve a "Who done it..." mystery. Have participants introduce themselves, while the facilitator changes into the police costume (behind the screen).

Begin "The Story" activity in the role of the police chief. Take on a tough, cantankerous persona with the group.

Activity objectives

- Introduce the setting and direction of the training

Activity procedures

1. Hand out paper and pencil and tell participants to take notes if they feel the urge.
2. Read "The Story" activity worksheet to

participants.

Worksheets: The Story (PWB p. 2)



The story

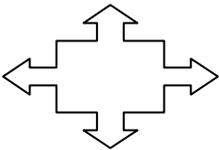
"You have all received an invitation to be here because you are the best of the best in your work as detectives. As you can see, the victim in this case had some communication problems. Let me explain to you what we found on the scene."

"First thing... my deputy walks in and there is a parrot screeching at the top of his lungs. 'Incommunication, miscommunication.' The victim is slumped in the corner, palm on forehead, with a computer screen in front of him. The victim is writing some sort of e-mail, to whom we don't know, but only got as far as 'To whom it m...'"

"At first my deputy thought the victim was just sitting there, still alive, but as he moved closer, he noticed there was something in the victim's mouth. What forensics found was a long string of typed words... just words. They made no sense to me. It looks like there was no struggle between the victim and the perp and there was no other sign of force. No forced entry, broken furniture or anything like that. This is the mystery of all."

"It seems that the parrot saw the whole thing go down. He was pretty shaken. We have him in custody right now, but he only says the one word. It must be relevant, but I don't know how. That is your job."

"That's what we have so far. We are still waiting for some results from forensics and the evidence room is doing what evidence was found on the scene... mostly documents, books and words. Until then I need you all to start getting ready for this case. Again, I want to stress that I picked your team to solve this because you are the only ones that could even come close to cracking this case without screwing it up. Be careful, you don't jump to any conclusions here. The victim had some connections around town and if we mess this up during an election year, the mayor will have my head!"



Transition

As the trainer, tell participants to hold any questions that they may have at this point. Let the group know that they will be remaining at their tables (offices) to complete the next activity. Say, "Sounds like our chief wants us to review some communication basics. At the same time we'll be covering three course objectives (show Power Point) for our first chapter."

Communication basics: Give and take



Communication Tug of War

Activity objectives

- Understand the give and take needed for successful communication
- Recognize common myths and facts related to communication

Activity procedures

1. Ask the teams to split into two groups of three people each, making sure they are sitting across the table from each other.
2. Place the piece of masking tape in between the two teams. Also, place the rope with the red centerline on the masking tape between the two teams. The ends of the rope should be facing the teams.
3. One person (the dealer) will “deal” the flash cards face down to each team of three, dividing the deck in half (five flashcards per mini-team).
4. Alternately, have the teams take turns asking the other team the questions on the flash cards. If the team gets the correct answer they can move the rope one segment toward them. If they get the answer wrong, the other team moves the rope one segment toward them.
5. The team with more of the rope on their side wins the tug of war game.
6. Facilitate the groups through the discussion guide

Tug of War flash cards (LP p. 6-10)

Tug of war flashcards

Q – For the most effective and comfortable communication, what amount of time should you keep eye contact with a listener?

- 3 seconds
- 15 – 20 seconds
- One minute
- 5 – 10 seconds

A – d 5-10 seconds

Q – What percentage do you use your body language to communicate your message in a business situation?

- 30%
- 55%
- 90%
- 12%

A – b 55%

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Q – The verbal message accounts for what percentage of message as a whole?

- 7%
- 75%
- 90%
- 30%

A – g 7%

Q – Which of the following are important elements of communication when trying to relay a specific message?

- Body language
- Tone of voice
- Weather
- Eye contact

A – a Body language, b. Tone of voice and d. Eye contact

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Q – How long does it take most people to form a first impression?

- 10 seconds
- 20 seconds
- 5 seconds
- 1 second

A – c 5 seconds

Q – What important item(s) cover ninety percent of our persons in communication?

- Clothing and jewelry
- Shoes
- Cologne or perfume
- Facial hair or makeup

A – Clothing and jewelry

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Your volume, pitch and tone of voice account for what percent of your message?

- 20%
- 90%
- 50%
- 39%

A – d 39%

Q – What is the most acceptable replacement for non-words (Umm, “You know,” “OK” etc.) in communication?

- “Well”
- A long pause
- A short pause
- “Oooo”

A – c A short pause

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Q – Speaking and _____ are the two most important aspects of communication

- Talking
- Gesturing
- Pausing
- Listening

A – d Listening

Q – It is important to stand at least _____ away from the person you are communicating with to avoid intimidation.

- Two feet
- 6 inches
- 18 inches
- One foot

A – g Two feet

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Discussion guide

- 1) Discuss the correct answers on each of the cards.
- 2) Did any of the answers to the questions surprise you?
- 3) How can communication be like a game of tug of war?
 - Communication is a give and take of ideas from speaker and listener. In order for the *whole* team to win there must be giving and receiving from the speaker and the listener. A tug of war in communication can be bad if one person or team is just looking to win the game rather than meet the other person/team halfway.
- 4) What are some of the communication factors that can contribute to this tug of war?

Some ideas include:

 - Varied personalities
 - Organizational culture
 - Time
 - Education and awareness
 - Stress, tension, competition
- 5) Discuss why communication is so important in the workplace.

Some ideas include:

 - Mutual understanding
 - Pleasant working environment
 - Makes people feel wanted and important in the workplace
- 6) Discuss what kinds of things can happen if there is poor communication in the workplace.
 - Conflict
 - Unneeded stress

- Missed deadlines
- Lack of cohesion within work groups
- Lack of trust
- High employee turnover



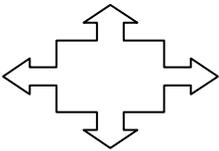
**Worksheets:
(PWB p. 3)**

Mutual understanding

The goal: Mutual understanding



Communication can be like a game of tug-of-war. If the goal is to win, then each side is focusing on winning rather than mutual understanding. Nobody wins in this scenario. There is a give and take that needs to happen. The goal of this tug of war should be to share the rope and meet in the middle. Through **assertive speaking** and **active listening** this can be accomplished.



Review: Summarize the activity objectives with the worksheet.

Transition

For the next activity, you will be the police chief (change into costume). Tell participants:
 “You have been brought together again to go over some of the evidence that has been gathered on the case. You will be given some testimonials from people that knew the victim and then you will have to answer some questions for me. Listen carefully, take notes and use your heads. There are some surprises in this next case. To be quite honest it is getting me quite confused.”

Making assumptions in communication



Assumptions: Good or bad

Activity objectives

The learner will be able to:

- Understand the value of assumptions in communication
- Realize how assumptions can be destructive in communication
- Identify possible assumptions based on different communication scenarios
- Discover other possible solutions to personal assumptions
- Uncover ways to avoid damaging assumptions in communication

Activity procedures

1. Participants will remain in their groups of six acting as a detective team.
2. The facilitator will read the “What we know” case report to the entire group.
3. Each group will then be given a copy of the “What we know” case report.
4. Each group will be given a copy of the “Why is this happening” worksheet.
5. As a group, have participants go through each of the communication behaviors and write down their assumptions. Do the first one together.
6. The detective teams will share their assumptions with the whole group. Write on a flip chart.
7. The facilitator will then read the “What else we know” worksheet and guide the groups through other possible solutions based on that information. Write the other possible solutions on the flip chart as they are introduced.
8. Facilitate the group through the discussion

Assumptions: Good or bad activity sheets

(LP p. 14 – 17 and PWB p. 4 – 6)

What we know
Quote sheet after interviewing acquaintances

Neighbor 1: “I haven’t seen that person they are with their family, and man, do they talk loud and aggressively to each other.”

Gas station attendant: “Other than that parent, I’ve never heard you talk. And you could hear I say ‘hey!’ pretty much looking down at the ground. I’d say you’re shy.”

Mailman: “I tried to have a conversation with that person once – I know that was a trip. Always looking tired and bored. I tried to give a hand to get over up the slippery sidewalk. Guess that was from the fact that some disease I was just trying to be friendly. Always with that parent, never with anybody else.”

Plumber: “Yeah, had to go to that apartment once for a leaky toilet. Gosh, what a weirdo! I asked what the problem was and could have gone to Toronto and back before I got a response. The parent just jabbering nonsense though. Then I said how I was getting in the hole and had I needed them to turn the main water switch off. I kept getting nods of agreement and understanding and then the question, ‘What is it you want me to do?’ Always said if you wanted something done, you had to do it yourself.”

Behavior	Possible assumption
Always looks tired when speaking to family or friends.	
The individual seems to avoid conversation you are speaking.	
The individual seems to be extremely interested.	
The individual seems to prefer to walk alone.	
The person often never or rarely makes eye contact.	
The individual looks better than you are and is wearing something that was made years after the last fashion.	
The individual seems to take a long time to answer a question or respond to something that has been said.	

What else we know

- The victim was a woman named Ms. Ann U. Lee
- The victim was from a large family with 10 children.
- The victim was the youngest of 10 children and had 6 brothers and 4 sisters.
- The victim was an FBI agent.
- The victim's last assignment involved investigating a serial killer going on an epidemic in a particular part of the country.
- Ms. Ann U. Lee has been having some difficulty at work with her boss and her co-workers.
- The victim has recently had a performance review in which she was given a hard pass because she needs to work on her communication skills.
- Due to her job, the victim does not have any close friends, though she would consider many of her acquaintances to be friends.

guide.

9. After the discussion, have the participants turn to the “Cluing into your own assumptions” worksheet and fill in the blanks as best as possible. Use the Power Point slide to go over the answers.

Trainer example sheet

(LP p. 15)

Why is this happening? Facilitator's worksheet

Action	Possible assumption
A loud moan is heard when speaking to family or friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is upset. • There is some kind of problem.
The individual seems to avoid eye contact when talking to family or friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is hiding something. • The person is angry, embarrassed, or is ashamed. • The person is lying.
The individual seems tired and/or very interested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is tired. • The person is very interested.
The individual seems to prefer to work alone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is introverted. • The person is a loner.
The person often seems to be in a hurry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person has been treated badly or is being rushed. • The person is in a hurry.
The individual looks confused when you are explaining something, but later seems to understand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is confused. • The person is not listening. • The person is not understanding.
The individual seems to have a long time to answer a question or respond to something that has been said.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person is "slow". • The person is avoiding the question or just doesn't know the answer and is stalling.

Discussion guide

After filling out “Why is this happening” worksheet



- 1) Go through each behavioral communication item on the worksheet and have the teams volunteer their assumptions. Write these assumptions on the flip chart as they go along.
- 2) Most teams will automatically assume that the victim is a male. Ask, “How many people think that we have been talking about a male victim?” (Be careful of gender issues and talk more about how assumptions can be helpful or hurtful.)
- 3) Move onto the “What else we know” worksheet.

After hearing “What else we know” worksheet

- 1) Based on this new information, could there be other possible solutions to the communication behaviors of the individual?
- 2) Would you change or eliminate any of your previous assumptions? Write the changes on a flip chart.
- 3) Where do our assumptions come from?
Usually our assumptions come from past experiences. We form mindsets about specific behaviors, appearances or conversations and translate those mindsets to “fit” new experiences.
- 4) How can assumptions be helpful in communication?
 - Gathering information and determining a next step when you are stuck.
 - Anticipating obstacles or problems.
 - Aid in making educated guesses based on past experiences and applying them to new situations.
- 5) How can assumptions be harmful in communicating with others?
 - Jumping to conclusions
 - Assuming the worst
 - Stereotyping
- 6) Ask participants to form teams of two and discuss either a personal or professional assumption each person made in the last week.
- 7) How can one avoid harmful assumptions in communication?
 - Treat each person individually
 - Listen before you jump
 - Avoid sweeping statements
 - Talk before acting
 - Consider positive intent



Worksheets:
 Making assumptions
 Cluing into your own assumptions
 (PWB p. 7 & 8)

Making assumptions

"We are inclined to see things not as they are but as WE see"
 (Source unknown)

How can assumptions help?	How can assumptions hurt?
Gathering information and determining a next step when you are stuck	Jumping to conclusions based on past experience
Anticipating obstacles or problems	Assuming the worst
Making educated guesses based on past experience and applying them to new situations	Oversteering



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Cluing into your own assumptions

- 1) Treat each person _____
- 2) _____ before you jump.
- 3) _____ statements _____
- 4) _____ acting _____ before _____
- 5) Consider _____ intent _____



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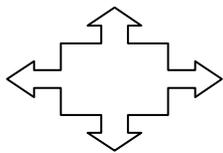
Review: Review the course objectives for Chapter One and take participants to the Ah-Ha's Action Plan. Then introduce Chapter Two and review the course objectives on the Point.

Prepare: Before moving into the transition, have a brief discussion on the four styles of expression; hostile, submissive, passive-aggressive and assertive. Explain the characteristics of each style so participants will have an understanding of the concepts before doing the activity.

Transition

For the next activity, you will be the police chief. Tell participants:

"We need to dig a little deeper into the evidence, folks. You have gotten a good start, but let's get down to the nitty-gritty. You're going to be looking at some evidence bags that deal with speaking. Each bag contains clues to the four paths of expression in communication. There may even be a few clues regarding Ms. Late's actions. Unfortunately, we have a nitwit working in the evidence room at this time and I've been told that the evidence bags have been mixed



up and do not contain the correct information. Sorry about the delay in the case here, but I don't think that this will slow you up too much. Let's get crackin'. We don't have much time."