

Communication Worksheet

This work will help prepare you for our conversation. You will eventually be asked to talk with the other person about each of these topics listed below. The better you prepare, the better your conversation will be.

1. What do you appreciate about the other person?

Robert Kegan, author of *How The Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Think*, writes that we put power into appreciation when we do three things: 1) talk directly to the person, 2) be specific about what they have done, and 3) state the impact that had on you.

2. What do you share in common? What is your mutual purpose?

3. What is your understanding of the expectations (of colleagues or your supervisors) of how you will work together?

4. What does your team need from both of you?

5. Describe the events and specific behaviors that you find concerning or that you object to. The key here is to be as specific as possible (i.e. not replying to emails; interrupting me before I finish my sentence or thought, etc.). State behaviors, not your conclusions or judgments about the behaviors. Focus on what the other person does, not what kind of person you think they are.

6. State how you are feeling after experiencing this behavior – use actual feelings, not judgments or analysis (i.e. I felt upset (angry, sad, confused, worried, etc.)).

7. Interpreting intent: in order for you to have the feelings listed above, you were interpreting the other person's intent in a specific way (i.e. he/she doesn't respect me; he/she doesn't value my contribution; he/she thinks I'm incompetent; etc.) Reflect on how you are interpreting the other person's intent.

8. Attribute positive intent: are there other possible explanations (positive explanations) that would help explain why the other person behaved the way they did.

9. Describe your role in this situation. What have you contributed to make the situation what it is? What have you done to make life more difficult for them?

10. What is it like to be in the other person's shoes? What are their stressors, constraints, concerns, challenges, fears?

11. State what is it that you are needing from the other person (i.e. I am needing a sign of respect; I am needing to know you think I'm competent; I need assurance that you value what I bring to this team, etc.).

12. State what you want to have happen in the future; in other words, what requests would you like to make of this other person so that your needs can be met in the future (i.e. "Would you please let me finish talking, and then tell me what you heard me say, before speaking yourself?").