

## MODULE 3 | WEEK 05 - ACTIVITY 05

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Communication is a two-way process where the sender relays the information, feeling, or ideas that they want to communicate to the receiver, and the receiver acknowledges that they heard or saw the information.

The interpretation of the message by the receiver is linked to his/her internal world representation (attitudes, values, beliefs, perceptions, experiences), and may change the outcome the sender expects. In absence of clear instructions, the receiver may jump into conclusions, and build a coherent story that fits his/her own beliefs, not noticing that information may be missing.

It is thus essential that we engage in active listening during a communication process. The active listening implies making a conscious effort to pay complete attention to the other person, hearing all the words the other person is saying and observing the body language, without any judgement.

It is also important that the receiver gives feedback to the sender, to inform that the message was totally received. Feedback is a response from the receiver that includes an acknowledgment but also a recap of what they thought they understood from the sender. By recapping the thought, the sender has an opportunity to agree that the message was received correctly or be able to restate their original intentions for clarification.

This week's activity is about practicing active listening:

- a) Be totally present in the conversation, whenever you find yourself lost in your own thoughts, bring your attention back to the conversation (stop mental judgement or preparing a rebutal!);
- b) Observe body language;
- c) Show the other that you are listening by paraphrasing: "What I'm hearing is... "; "Sounds like you are saying... "
- d) Ask questions to clarify certain points: "What do you mean when you say... ." "Is this what you mean? Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions.

#### FOR CERTIFICATION ONLY

Send a report with your reflexions and experiences on active listening.

## MODULE 3 | WEEK 06 - ACTIVITY 06

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**Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.**

*Paul J. Meyer*

There are three main communication behaviours: assertive (I win, you win), aggressive (I win, you lose) and passive (I lose, you win).

In a passive behaviour, the person avoids conflict, he/she is afraid of not being appreciated when defends his/her rights. Frequently, his/her own necessities and feelings are neglected to satisfy others. Is not aware of his/her own value, allowing others to discard his/her rights.

An aggressive behaviour is characterized by hostility and judgement. The person is not cooperative, pursuing his/her goals attacking others. This person doubts his/her capacity in solving problems and thus believes that attack is the best defence.

The assertive person is aware of own value and considers others as equals. He/she defends own rights, or those of the group, without being hostile or harm others. He/she is flexible in different contexts and uses an "I" speech, instead of a judgement speech.

This week the challenge is to practice "I" speech in both personal and professional environments. Use the following steps to guide your speech:

a) Clearly describe the observed fact/action with no criticism or judgment attached:

- When (specific time or circumstance) I see, hear, say, do...
- When you saw, heard, said, did...

b) Express your feeling in this situation, and when appropriate, empathize with what the other person felt:

- I feel/ I feel that/ I feel as if...
- You felt...

Avoid “pointing finger”: you made me feel.../you make me.../ it’s your fault that...

c) Express your needs with no criticism implied/ ask what the other needs/how you can help:

- It is important to me that...
- The reason this is so important to me is....
- I would feel ...if I could ....
- What is important to you?
- How would you like it to be?

d) Ask what you want clearly without demanding:

- Could you please...
- I would like to...

#### FOR CERTIFICATION ONLY

Send a report with your reflexions and experiences on “I” speech.

## MODULE 3 | WEEK 07 - ACTIVITY 07



### NABC: A structure for pitching

The most important element of a pitch is the presentation of the offer in a way that stimulates the interest of the target audience. A simple, but powerful, tool to make sure the important parts are present within a pitch is the NABC structure. NABC was developed by the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) and is one of the cornerstones of their innovation process.

#### The pitch should address the following questions:

- What is the market's/ target audience's important **Need**?
- What is your **Approach** to addressing this need?
- What are the **Benefits** of your approach?
- How do those benefits compare with the **Competition** or alternatives (including doing nothing/status quo)?

When using the NABC for a pitch, you should add an opening **Hook**, to catch people's attention, and an **Offer**, that is a clear description of what you plan to do (and/or want to get).

When you have identified the **Need** you meet, the **Benefit** your **Approach** gives the recipient and what **Competition** is present, you have the whole foundation for your pitch. It is not necessary, or recommended, to spend equal time on each element of NABC in your pitch; all should be covered, but you must emphasise what is most relevant in your case.

The main reason to practice your pitch (repeatedly) is to give you the confidence to adapt your pitch to different settings (place, time, audience). If you get less time to pitch than the standard **four minutes** of NABC, then the main focus should be to get the audience's attention and make them sufficiently interested to ask for more information later. If you get more time to pitch, start with getting the audience's attention and use the time to go more in-depth. Always use the time you get!

Repeated practice is the key. Start with typing your pitch, read it out loud in front of a mirror and remember to time it. Keep on practising until you get a feel for how long the different parts of your pitch take to read.

## **Value Creation Forum (VCF): A structure for feedback**

To help you to improve both content and form in your pitch, you may use a structured way of giving critical feedback from a range of viewpoints – the Value Creation Forum (VCF), also developed by SRI.

The 'forum' in the VCF is a small-group pitching session. Each member takes their turn to pitch in four minutes, remembering first to give the setting (i.e. who are the audience meant to be?/ where is this pitch supposed to be taking place?). They can also use visual aids, such as slides or objects, if so desired. Once the pitch is concluded, four of the group will give feedback from particular viewpoints, while a fifth takes notes for the pitcher.

The four viewpoints are:

1. **Green**. What did you like about the presentation? What elements must stay in?
2. **Red**. What did you dislike? Are there elements which should go or be improved?
3. The **customer/ user**. Is this offer relevant/ useful? Would you buy/use it? Explain.
4. The **funder** (research/ business/ public sector). What would a funder need to hear to be convinced? Is this idea ready for funding/ a good investment?

The pitcher **must not** respond to those giving feedback or take notes while feedback is being given. Their full attention must be on receiving the feedback. Note-taking duty are allocated to others in the group.

## FOR CERTIFICATION ONLY

Think of a project that you would like to get funding and write down a pitch of 4 minutes. Then, write down the answers to the four feedback viewpoints. Rewrite your pitch and notice what changed.

Send the report with the first pitch, the feedback answers, and the rewritten pitch.