

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Positive Feedback Tool

Three Sentence Script ~

1. What they did
2. Why you appreciate it
3. How they made a difference

Constructive Feedback Tool

Five Sentence Script ~

1. Ask permission to give feedback
2. State what you've observed
3. Say how it makes you *feel*
4. State the result or outcome you want
5. Ask what they think and/or offer to help

(Cheri Baker, Emergence Consulting)

Body Language Tool

“GO S.O.L.E.R.!”

- S:** Face the Person SQUARELY
- O:** Have an OPEN Posture
- L:** LEAN Forward Slightly to Listen
- E:** Have Good EYE Contact
- R:** RELAX and be natural

(Gerard Egan, *The Skilled Helper*)

General Guidelines for Productive Conversations

FRAME OF MIND

- If you assume that you are obviously right and your job is to get others to realize what you already know, you will be unable to create mutual learning and respect. Therefore, assume you may be missing things others see, and seeing things others miss. If you start with this assumption, you will listen more intelligently and inquire more genuinely without downplaying your views.
- Assume others are acting in a way that makes sense to them and that they are seeking to act with integrity.
- Seek to understand what leads to behavior you find problematic. Are people caught in dilemmas? Are you contributing to the problem?

ADVOCACY

- Help others see what you see and how you think about it by giving examples of the data you select, state the meaning that you find in examples, and explain the steps in your thinking.
- Describe your understanding of the other person's reasoning.
- If you see negative consequences to what others are doing, identify the consequences without attributing intent to create those consequences. Distinguish between intent and impact.
- When you choose to disclose your emotions, do so without implying that the person is primarily responsible for creating your emotional reactions.

INQUIRY

- Find out how others see the situation by asking them to give examples of the data they select and to explain the steps in their thinking.
- Ask for help in finding out what you may be missing by encouraging others to identify possible gaps or errors in your thinking.
- When you have difficulty with how others are acting, ask them to explain what leads them to act as they do, in a tone that suggest they may have a reasonable answer.
- Inquire into other's emotions.
- Ask for help in exploring whether you are unknowingly contributing to the problem.

~ *BALANCE your ADVOCACY & INQUIRY for Effective Communication* ~

(Action Design. Based on the work of Chris Argyris)