SPOKE & WHEEL

Effective Communication Skills

Effective communication can transform conflict into an opportunity to discover and care for the things we value most. Life is an infinite dance between self and other, giving and receiving, speaking and listening. The world needs your active participation in that dance.

EFFECTIVE SPEAKING

How can you share your perspective and desires in a way that helps others understand you and inspires them to want to collaborate with you?

By speaking only from your own experience in a way that is inarguable, honest and non-judgmental.

Effective speaking includes four components:

1. an observation that puts the situation into context;
2. an expression of how you feel about the situation;
3. a sharing of your human needs in the situation; and
4. an authentic request that comes with an openness to hearing the other person's response.

Observations

Feelings

Needs

Requests
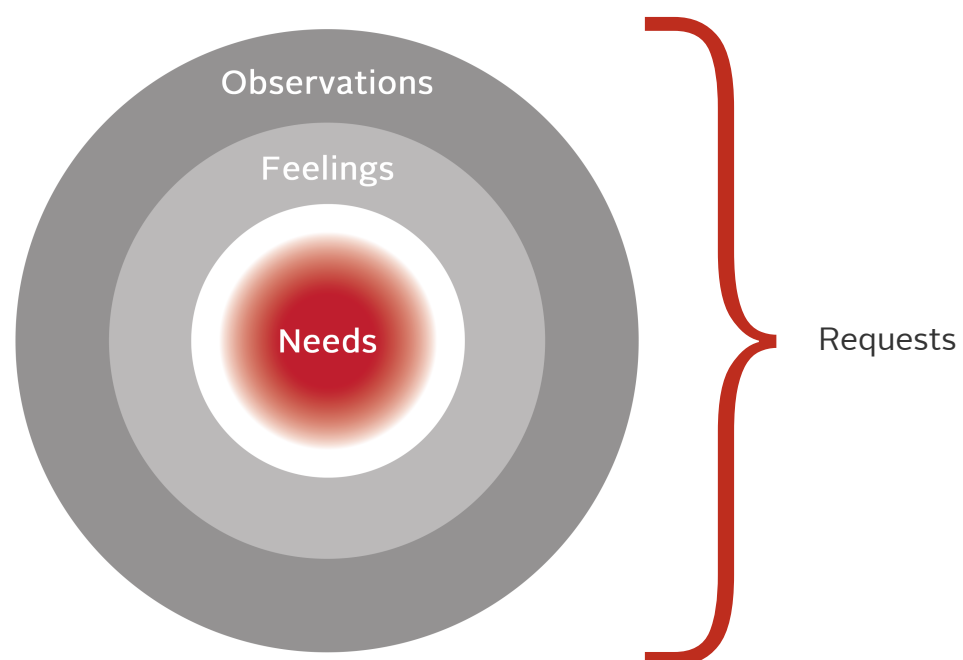
Observations

The goal is to get to a shared understanding of what you're talking about, in a way that everyone can agree with. Describe what you observe in a specific and neutral way - what you can saw, heard, and remember - from your perspective.

Feelings

Describe your body sensations and name your emotions. Expressing your feelings helps others understand how you are impacted by a situation.

Feelings are indicators about why a situation is important to you. Unpleasant feelings arise when your needs are unmet, while enjoyable feelings arise when your needs are being met.

> ### Warning
> - Focus on your own experience and your own feelings.
> - No one can "make you feel" anything.
> - Avoid hidden accusations like: "I feel ignored/attacked/left out."
> - Avoid descriptions of thoughts that begin with "I feel like…"

Needs

Identify and share why the issue is important to you. The goal here is to help the other person understand what is at the heart of the matter for you.

Your needs are things that everyone can recognize as a universal human longing.

Examples of needs include: safety, consistency, respect, belonging, reliability, autonomy, sense of purpose, beauty, generosity, authenticity, and trust.

Requests

The goal is to ask for what you would like to have happen, and to convey it as a proposal. Make a clear request that is positive, specific, and doable. Ask for what you want, not for what you don't want.

Remember that a request is not a demand, and be open to them saying "no". Listen openly to their response, and be prepared to explore new ideas and solutions based on their needs as well as yours.

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EFFECTIVE LISTENING

LISTENING FULLY AND DEEPLY TO OTHERS HELPS THEM OPEN UP, LEARN AND GROW

How can you use listening skills to understand others and show them that you care about their experience?

Use the ARC of the conversation to build a bridge between their experience and yours. development areas.

ACKNOWLEDGE

- Shift your attention to them and imagine what they're going through.
- Let the other person know that you recognize their human experience.
- Validate or guess their feelings and needs (even if you don't agree with their perspective).

Examples:
- Wow, it sounds like this is hard for you.
- It seems like you're feeling... because of .....
- Do you feel ... right now?
- Are you longing for...?
- It seems like you need.... Is that right?

REFLECT

- Repeat back what you hear them say.
- You can use the exact words, reframe them slightly or make a summary of the key points.
- Then, confirm if you got it right and keep trying.

Examples:
- So, if I got it right... X, Y and Z happened.
- I want to make sure that I'm hearing you correctly...
- You want to know ...
- If I understand, the way that you see the situation is ...

BE CURIOUS

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Try to understand what's most important to them.
- Show you care about their interests, priorities and needs.
- Help them articulate what they would like to see happen.

Examples:
- I'm curious about ...
- Tell me more about ...
- How long has this been happening?
- What would be a better way to do this?
- What would you like to have happen now?