

Breaking The Communication Barrier

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THE Academy For Lifelong Learning

Abe Wagner

Phone: (303) 668 8128
Email: abewagner@att.net
Web site: www.abewagner.com

How People Process Information

- 1) **People process information through the use of three channels. The most common situation is that we have one most used channel, and two least used channels.** However, people use all three channels relatively well. Channels are also called modalities or representational systems.
- 2) Essentially, we are talking about how people think. That is, take in, experience, process, store, recall and output information and experience.
- 3) This information can be used to communicate effectively; to improve listening, observing and experiencing skills; to develop rapport with people; to cope with stress and to visualize goals.

The Three Channels (Representational Systems / Modalities)

1) **Auditory channel**

- a) External auditory - listening to people, music, sounds, etc.
- b) Internal auditory - talking to ourselves, thinking thoughts with words, humming to ourselves, repeating internally what we read or hear someone say, e.g., if one hears a story describing thunder, the person actually hears the thunder. When listening to someone talk, a person will often comment to herself about what is heard.

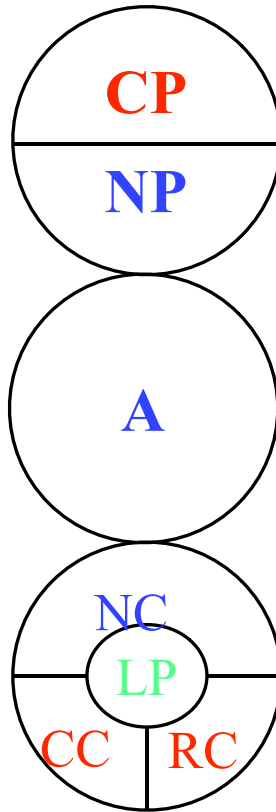
2) **Visual channel**

- a) External visual, what we see with our eyes.
- b) Internal visual is the imagery we create in our heads. When listening to a story, people will actually picture it in their minds. When they think about what they did yesterday, they actually see themselves doing something.

3) **Kinesthetic channel** - this refers to physical and emotional feelings. To simplify things, smelling and tasting, which are actually a fourth and fifth way we process, are lumped into kinesthetic.

- a) External kinesthetic is smelling, tasting, touching.
- b) Internal kinesthetic is how we feel, what we do with our body, how our breathing changes, what we feel in different parts of our body physically, emotional senses that we experience. When we hear a story about a rain storm, thunder and lightening, we actually feel the rain, the coldness, the wet, get a sense of fear when we see the lightening in our mind's eye. As we experience the fear, our breathing changes, our heartbeat increases,

Ego States



Effective (Blue) Ego States Ineffective (Red) Ego States

NP - Nurturing Parent

CP - Critical Parent

A - Adult

CC - Compliant Child

NC - Natural Child

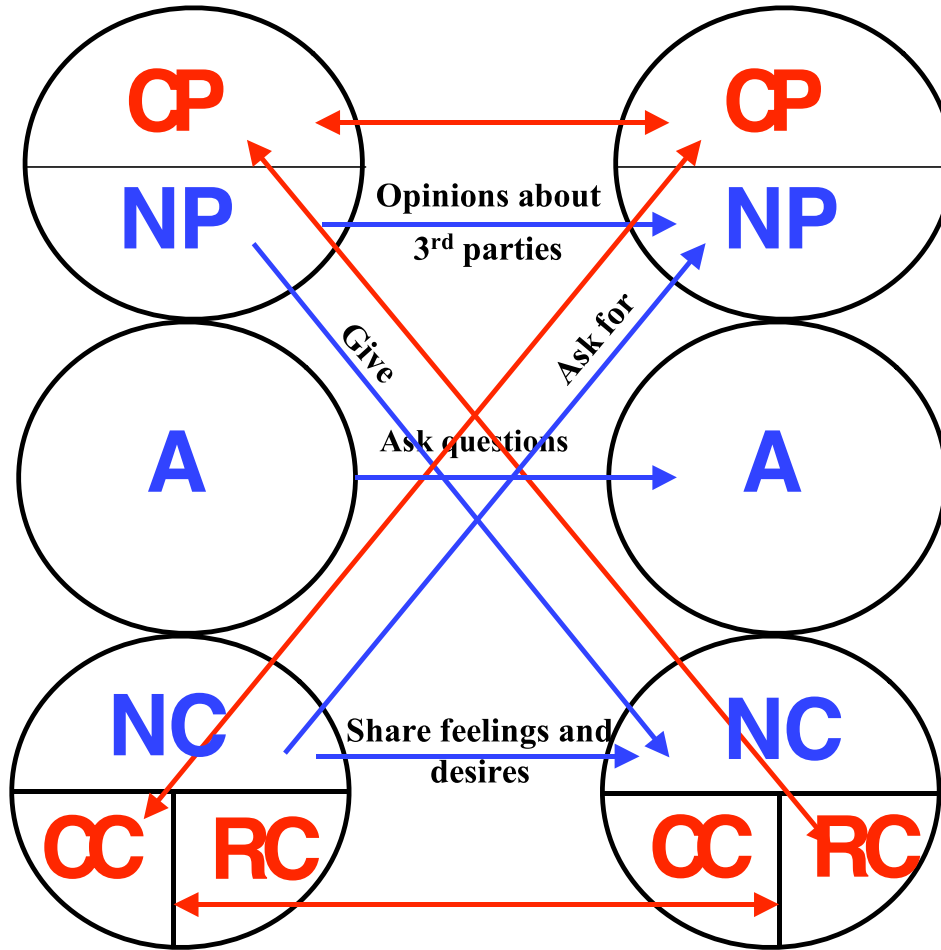
RC - Rebellious Child

LP - Little Professor

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OK
not OK

Complementary Transactions



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Ideas for Increasing Your Use of Effective Ego States

I. NATURAL CHILD

- A. Be a little kid. Play like a kid when you're around children, or even when you're alone.
- B. Gain eye contact and smile at people when talking.
- C. Review old pictures and remember childhood events, feelings and wants.
- D. Think about situations or places in which you are spontaneously in Natural Child. How do you feel and behave? Extend these feelings and behaviors to other situations, with other people.
- E. Watch and tune-in to other people who are in Natural Child and get a mental image of them. What do they do? Use this as a frame of reference for your Child behavior.
- F. Use the New Behavior Generator (Neuro Linguistic Programming Concept).

II. NURTURING PARENT

- A. Give hugs - When appropriate, a pat on the back and a sympathetic look are effective¹.
- B. Get into people's "map of the world" - Tune into people's feelings, wants, pain, and joy. Be sensitive to and understanding with others and yourself, as well.
- C. Give positive strokes - Let people know that you appreciate them and what they do. (At first you may feel phony or insecure, but after practicing this behavior, it will become natural and comfortable for you.) Give the same kinds of strokes to yourself.
- D. Cook for others².
- E. Note situations in which you have displayed Nurturing Parent behavior, e.g., your customers. Extend these skills into other situations with other people, including yourself.
- F. Ask yourself what you would like to hear when you are in pain, or have a concern or complaint. This may help you to know what to say to others in the same situation.

- G. Observe the behavior of nurturing people. Then, mentally see, hear and experience yourself doing the same thing.
- H. Use the New Behavior Generator.

II. **ADULT**

- A. Practice scientific thinking. This includes observation, hypothesis, and experimentation¹.
 - 1. Observation - Make mental observations about others: their ego states, types of transactions, games, etc.
 - 2. Hypothesis - Develop a tentative explanation for why things are happening. Hypotheses help you answer questions and predict results.
 - 3. Experimentation - This is the method for testing your hypothesis. This is checking things out. If one thing doesn't work, do something else.
- B. Writing stimulates Adult thinking.
- C. Take advantage of opportunities for formal learning. - Enroll in classes or programs to increase your knowledge.
- D. Think - In any conflict situation, simply think about what ego states you and the other person are in, and how to be effective in that situation. Reminding yourself of Transactional Analysis principles, or rules of communication, is another way of getting into Adult.
- E. Exercise your Adult with activities and questions that require thinking, (e.g., mathematics, puzzles, games such as chess or bridge, solution of complex problems).

Pacing and Leading

A. Introduction

1. All people pace. Outstanding communicators subconsciously pace and lead daily.
2. Pacing means to establish rapport with another person by imitating and getting into their “map of the world”. Rapport is the foundation for all successful communication. Rapport is a state in which comfort with one another has been established. People often feel safe, and trusting. Please remember to keep in mind what’s good for both of you, or you may be “manipulating”.

B. Pacing - There are two ways to establish rapport, or to pace; that is, imitate and get into the other person’s map of the world.

1. **Imitate the other person.** Imitation is natural, we start doing it from the time we are infants. When we are doing well with others we subconsciously imitate. When we are communicating poorly, we either imitate a negative tone or gesture, or nothing at all.

You may imitate tone of voice, pitch, speed, energy, body posture, body alignment, gestures, movements, breathing, AVK words.

It is helpful to imitate no more than one or two things, subtly, so that a person does not know that this is being done, or they will resist.

2. **Getting into the other person’s map of the world. This means seeing it from the other person’s point of view, wearing their shoes, being a good listener.** It means that you understand and communicate that you understand. In essence, you do the best possible job to be the other person, to see, hear and feel as he sees hears and feels. There are three ways to do this. Using only one repetitively will not be as effective as combining these.
 - a. **Paraphrasing, repeating back what you have just heard in your own words.** This communicates to the person that you really understand. For example, a customer says, “I’m unhappy because every time I come into your organization, I am treated like a stranger, and I always seem to have to fight to get a reasonable price.. Paraphrase: “It’s very unpleasant to be treated as though we don’t remember you and that you deserve a fair price.”
 - b. **Checking and paraphrasing.** In response to the above comment, you might say, “Are you saying that we don’t greet you properly nor treat you fairly in terms of price?”

c. Short response:

"I see what you mean." (NC)

"I know where you're coming from." (NC)

"You have every right to feel that way." (NP)

"You look unhappy." (NP)

"You sound scared." (NP)

"Please explain." (NP)

"I hear you." (NC)

"I wouldn't like that either." (NC)

"I'm sorry." (NC)

"You seem sad." (NP)

"Tell me more." (NP)

C. Check for rapport by changing something.

1. If you have established rapport, the person with whom you are communicating should respond to a change in your behavior by also making a change. It isn't necessarily the same change. You may lean backward, they may fold their arms, or they may lean backward. You may speed up your tone of voice, and they may do the same. If the other person does not follow, continue to pace a bit longer, and then check again for rapport.

D. Leading

When you have rapport with someone, you are in a position of leading, or of being led. Whoever leads first, the other is likely to follow. This is a time to ask for what you want. This is a time to make a sensitive confrontation. This is a time to give advice.



Strokes(Cont.)

+ *Do (conditional)*

+ *Being you (unconditional)*

Constructive – Do (conditional)

Destructive – Do (conditional)

- Being you (unconditional)

CAREFRONTATION

Constructive feedback techniques

A. Setting the stage to achieve your goal.

- B. This is a powerful tool for communicating effectively, and therefore enhancing personal and professional relationships. By consciously setting the stage before you confront, that is, by saying things in a tactful manner, you can disagree, get angry, give constructive feedback and handle sensitive issues effectively.
- C. You have been doing this all of your life. Do you remember when you were a child, wanting a cookie from your mother? What strategy did you use? People often answer this question by saying, “Well, I asked her”, or “I waited for the right time and then I told her she was a good cook”, or “I helped my mom first, knowing she would give me a cookie as a reward”. All of those strategies are examples of setting the stage. There was a desired goal, and you set the stage to achieve it. This is what effective communicators do all over the world.
- D. The key element when doing this is to be clear about your goal. You make your comments to achieve that desired outcome.

E. Carefrontation Techniques

The following are twelve effective carefrontation techniques. In essence, these concepts teach the art of giving constructive feedback.

1. The Golden Rule

The first framing technique, The Golden Rule, comes from the Bible. The Golden Rule states, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Before you confront someone about his behavior, ask yourself, “How would I want to be treated in this situation?”. Your answer to that question will be the way you proceed to deal with the other person, the way you frame your behavior. The person may not want to be confronted the way you do. The platinum rule, therefore, was created.

2. **The Platinum Rule**

The Platinum Rule says, “Do unto others as they would have it done unto them”. Treat people based upon the way you know they want to be treated. This requires, of course, that you know the person in question fairly well. Ask yourself, “How would she like to be communicated with?”

3. **Presume People Have Virtuous Motives**

Presume People Have Virtuous Motives is a Dale Carnegie technique. In the vast majority of situations in which an unpleasant or unacceptable behavior is exhibited, the perpetrator has an acceptable motivation.

Understanding that people basically mean well, although their behavior is unappealing, is a starting point for change. It will help you to be more accepting of people who exhibit unpleasant behavior, including yourself.

If you presume that people have virtuous motives, this will influence how you confront a particular behavior. When framing your comment, start by telling them that you know they meant well. Communicating that message invites the person into a positive state of mind, so they will be much more likely listen to whatever constructive feedback you are about to present.

An example of using the Virtuous Motives technique comes from a workshop participant who asked, “How would you confront my boss? His name is Collins and he rarely delegates responsibility to any of us because he doesn’t trust us.” We suggested that he say, “Mr. Collins, I know how important this organization is to you. You want to see it succeed. That’s why you work long hours and that’s why you are carrying two or three peoples’ loads.” (Essentially, Mr. Collins has been told he has virtuous motives. With the stage set, it was then the time to confront him.) “I think it’s time to delegate to us. We can handle it. And we’d like to help you out.”

4. **Ask For What You Want**

Ask For What You Want is effective because the speaker asks directly for what he wants. Amazingly, few people actually use this technique in their working environment.

How many organizations could survive if they didn't ask their employees, customers, and suppliers for what they wanted? How many managers fail because they don't say what they expect or want because they assumed their employees would know?

Asking for what you want may be difficult if you don't have a good self-image. Perhaps you feel rejected if somebody says "no" to you. Without a good self-image you are likely to ignore your needs and desires.

Suppose you expect assistance from a colleague who is not forthcoming. You can directly ask, "Lee, please help me get this project finished. I would really appreciate it."

5. **Give People A Face-Saving Device**

Another helpful idea is Give People A Face-Saving Device. Losing face, in any situation, is very unpleasant.

There are other people who are unaware of and/or are insensitive to the idea of losing face. They have a tendency to back people into a corner, or invite public embarrassment.

Giving people a face-saving device essentially means that you set the stage for the person to have an excuse or rationale for their inappropriate behavior. Unfortunately, this also sets the stage for someone not to be held accountable for his behavior. For this reason, this technique generally belongs more in the workplace with clients, than in the world of personal relations.

The following example of giving a face-saving device is common in the organizational world. A manager says to a normally productive employee, "I know how busy you have been lately. I do need your report as soon as possible. Please take care of this as soon as you can."

6. **Ask For Their Advice About How To Approach Him**

Ask For Their Advice is a technique credited to Harvey MacKay. This particular technique is extremely useful with people who easily get defensive or feel hurt when confronted.

The speaker begins with a statement such as, “I really need some advice from you. I don’t know how to best approach you when I have an issue to discuss with you. Any help you can give me would be greatly appreciated.” The recipient might respond angrily saying, “What do you mean you don’t know how to approach me”? In such a case, you might respond by saying, “You sound angry. I must have said something wrong, or you wouldn’t be angry. How would you like me to approach you so that you won’t feel that way?”

Ideally, the result of this exchange would be that the recipient might become aware of how difficult he or she is to approach. Another possible result might be that they give you feedback about when and how you might best approach them, so that you could do it differently next time.

7. **Share Your Apprehensions**

Share Your Apprehensions is based on the premise that each of us has had time in our lives when we have been afraid, concerned, or apprehensive about discussing something with someone.

Stating your apprehensions up front invites others to listen.

If you are apprehensive that someone might be hurt, you might start with, “I want to discuss something with you, but I’m concerned that you might feel hurt.” Almost always, the person is much more likely to be receptive, and to respond, “I think I can listen objectively. What do you want to discuss?” Once you do discuss the issue at hand, if the recipient gets angry or their feelings are hurt, you can get into their Map of the World.

8. **Pair An Authentic Negative With An Authentic Positive**

Still, another framing technique involves starting with a criticism and ending with a compliment. This is referred to as, Pair An Authentic Negative With An Authentic Positive. Both the negative and the positive must be authentic, and must be true.

This technique often raises the question of manipulation. No strategy in and of itself is manipulative. It is the motivation of the initiator which determines if a strategy is to be used for mutual benefit of both participants, or for the selfish needs of one. The motivation of the latter creates a potentially manipulative situation; the former does not.