

The Communication Mystery: Solved

Making Assumptions

How can assumptions help?	How can assumptions hurt?
Gathering information and determining a next step when you are stuck	<i>Jumping to conclusions based on past experiences</i>
Anticipating obstacles or problems	Assuming the worst
Making educated guesses based on past experiences and applying them to new situations	Stereotyping

The Four Puzzling Paths of Expression

Hostile expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaming Intimidating Ordering Harsh, abrasive words Raised voice Confrontative tone 	Submissive expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft, quiet voice Overly agreeable No clear opinion Avoidant Withdrawn body language Helpless tone of voice Talk around issues
Passive-aggressive expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appears to agree, but really does not Talks to others about issues, not the source Sarcastic tone/ remarks Tallies score Sets conditions, but doesn't let you know what they are Criticizes after the fact Nonverbal message contradicts verbal 	Assertive expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes responsibility Takes initiative Listens actively Is direct and constructive Is solutions-focused Confident voice and body language Addresses concerns directly

Loaded Language

Trigger words

- Always, never, and constantly
- Should, must and need to
- Not, can't, won't and don't
- Try, maybe, perhaps and may

Loaded Language (Continued)

Trigger phrases

- "I promise..."
- "That's our policy."
- "To be honest with you..."
- "You know what I mean?"
- "Trust me on this one."

Qualifier statements

- "I don't want to tell you this..."
- "You may not like this, but..."
- "Don't take this the wrong way..."
- "I hope this doesn't surprise you..."

Crating Solutions for Success

Crisis-focused behaviors	Solution-focused behaviors
Dwelling on everything that is wrong.	Creating a positive outcome that you are working toward.
Avoiding the face-to-face talk, discussing problems through others or e-mail.	Using facts, not emotions, when problem solving.
Playing the guilt card waiting for someone else to take the blame.	Defining solutions that meet the needs of all parties involved.
Debating every detail, no matter how irrelevant.	Offering your assistance in the problem solving process.
Blaming others.	Being specific about what you need to solve the problem.
Taking sides and talking with groups that will only agree with your ideas.	Treating problem solving as a process that involves all interested parties.

Taking the High Road or the Low Road

The High Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to the source Stay in control of emotions Focus on the issues Listen actively Be honest Strive for a solution Assume positive intent 	The Low Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yelling Blaming Getting defensive Focusing on negative intentions Avoiding the situation Making sarcastic remarks Making personal insults Complaining to others about the conflict Issuing ultimatums
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