

Communication

Sending a Message

When you are talking to someone it is important that both the verbal and nonverbal communication send the same message. Keep the two things consistent when talking (sending a message) to someone so they can truly understand what you are saying. Nonverbal communication includes body language such as:

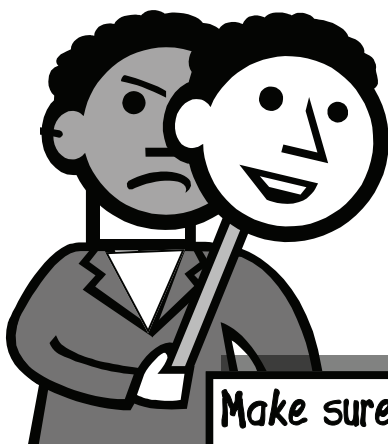
- ⇒ Eye contact
- ⇒ Facial expressions
- ⇒ Gestures
- ⇒ Posture and,
- ⇒ Vocal (the tone, pitch, rhythm, loudness of your voice)

How Important is Nonverbal Communication?

55% of communication is body language

38% is vocal (tone, pitch, rhythm, loudness of your voice)

7% is the words that you use



I am really stoked about going to school today.

Make sure that what you say and how you say it (body language, facial expression and voice) match so together they send the same message or people will be confused!

Receiving a Message

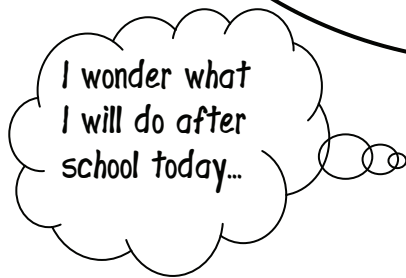


Another aspect of communication is receiving the message. Receiving is understanding the other person's ideas, beliefs, feelings and opinions. To understand a message that is being sent you must pay attention and listen carefully. This is called **ACTIVE LISTENING**.



Active Listening looks like:

- ⇒ Eye contact
- ⇒ Face toward speaker
- ⇒ Lean slightly forward
- ⇒ Smiles
- ⇒ Nods
- ⇒ Interested facial expressions
- ⇒ Provide verbal feedback such as, uh huh, yes, really



Non listening looks like:

- ⇒ No eye contact
- ⇒ Face away
- ⇒ No smile
- ⇒ No nodding
- ⇒ Bored facial expression
- ⇒ Inappropriate verbal feedback such as interrupting or laughing at the wrong time

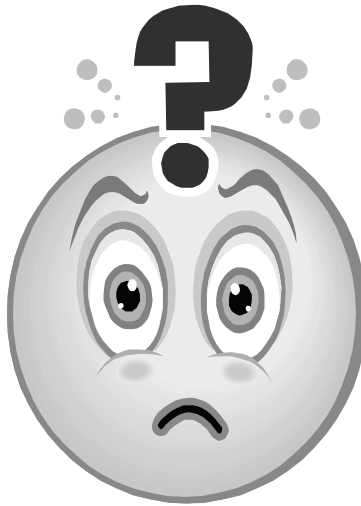
What Causes Misunderstandings

A misunderstanding is a failure to communicate clearly. Many personal problems are simply the result of a misunderstanding. They can be totally avoided if you are careful in your communications. Make sure that the other person knows what you mean when you tell him or her something.

Ways to Avoid Misunderstandings

- 1) Send the same message with your words and your body language.
- 2) Be Specific: Say exactly what you mean. Don't say things in a general way or the person you are speaking with will have to guess what you mean. For example, instead of saying "I'll see you Saturday afternoon," give a specific time and place. "I'll come to your house at 1 o'clock on Saturday".

3) Ask Questions: This is something that you can do whether you are the person sending a message or receiving it. Asking questions works well if you are telling someone how to do something or explaining something ask the other person



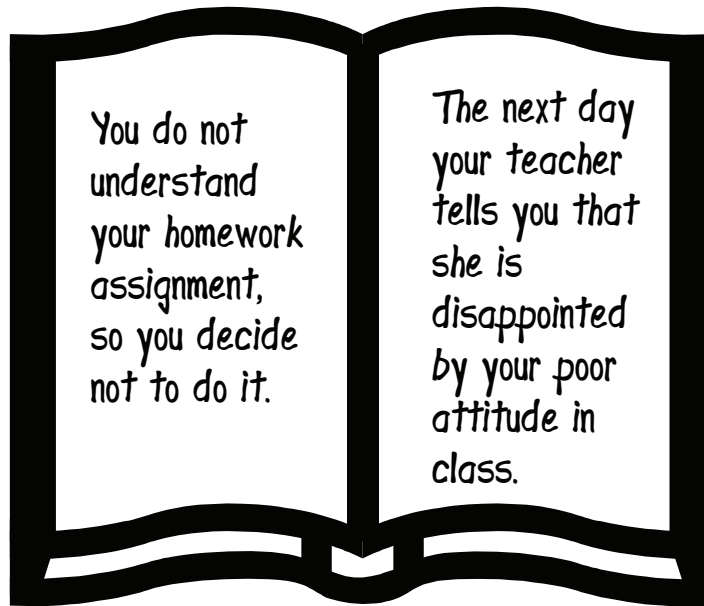
if they understand. On the other hand, if someone tells you something that isn't clear, you can ask that person questions as a way of getting more specific information. For example, you can say: "I don't understand, can you explain that again?"

- 4) Paraphrase: Another way of making sure that a message is clear is to use paraphrasing (repeating something back in your own words). Again, this works both ways. If you tell somebody something and you want to make sure they understand, ask them to repeat it back to you. If somebody tells you something and you want to make sure that you understand it correctly, the you can repeat it back to them. For example, you can say "Okay, let me make sure I understand what you mean." Then repeat back what the person told you in your own words.

From Misunderstanding to

Understanding

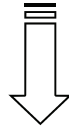
Directions: Read the following four situations and describe how a misunderstanding could have been avoided.



A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a thick grey border, intended for the student to write their response to the scenarios presented in the book illustration.



Your parents agree to pick up you and your friends from a concert. You tell your parents that you will be waiting in the front of the arena. Unfortunately, they end up having a lot of difficulty locating you since the front of the arena is a large area.

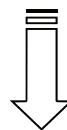


A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a drawing or response.

Your friend who you have plans with calls and tells you she will be coming over soon. She does not arrive for another two hours. In the meantime, you have been stuck at home waiting for her, unable to leave your house.

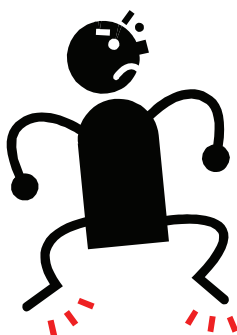


You come home from school and drop your knapsack in the hallway. Your mother asks you to pick it up before someone trips over it. Before you have a chance to pick it up, your mother falls over it. You apologize to her, but she doesn't think you mean it because you were laughing.



Resolving Conflicts

For some people conflict is something that they dislike and try to avoid. Parents might have told them, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." They may have thought this to mean that we ought to say nothing when we're upset, frustrated, or not in agreement with someone else.



Other people enjoy conflict and find that it is healthy and desirable. They might deliberately create conflicts to fuel thinking, feelings, or their nervous systems.

Many youth are caught up in conflicts every day that they do not know how to manage. In relationships, conflict is to be expected so we have reason to learn to manage it better.

How many conflicts have you had in the last two weeks? _____

On the list to the right, circle the behaviours you used to deal with these conflicts. Which of these behaviours do you use the most and why?

- Criticizing
- Postponing
- Interrupting
- Stereotyping
- Stating wants
- Stating feelings
- Listening
- Yelling
- Insulting
- Paraphrasing
- Being sarcastic
- Being defensive
- Apologizing
- Denying
- Stating needs
- Threatening
- Blaming
- Asking questions
- Changing the subject
- Walking away
- Judging

Is there ever a time when a person might want to use avoidance? Explain

Is there ever a time when a person might want to use confrontation? Explain

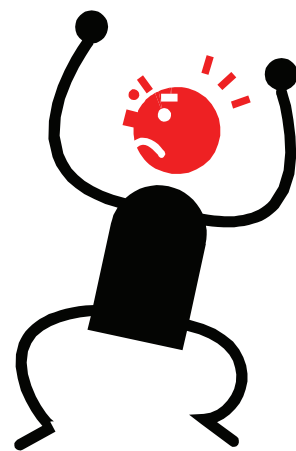
6 Steps to Resolving Conflict

It's us against the problem, not us against each other

The ideal solution to a conflict is to get your own needs met while also meeting the other persons needs. So how can we talk and listen with others so that we meet the needs of both parties?

Step 1: Cool off.

Conflicts can't be solved when emotions are high. Take some time to cool off before trying to talk things out. Consider some of the following: deep breathing, clearing your desk or straightening up, splashing cold water on the face, writing in a journal, or taking a quick walk. Once you have cooled down then you'll be ready to go on to the next step.



Step 2: Tell what's bothering you using "I messages."

"I messages" are a way of expressing how we feel without attacking or blaming. This is a big difference from the "you messages" A statement like, "You've left the kitchen a mess again! Can't you ever clean up after yourself?" will create conflict. Now take a look at how differently an "I message comes across: "I'm annoyed because I thought we agreed you'd clean up the kitchen after using it. What happened?"

Step 3: Each person repeats what they heard the other person say.

Paraphrasing demonstrates that we care enough to hear the other person out, rather than just focusing on our own point of view. This step creates empathy and understanding.

Step 4: Take responsibility.

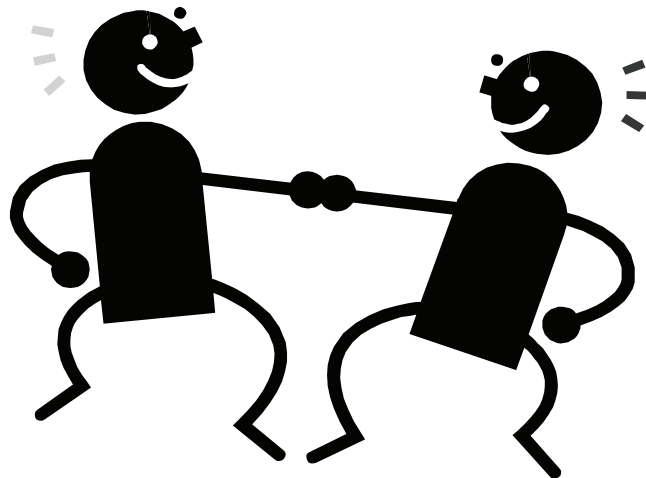
In the majority of conflicts, both parties have some degree of responsibility. However, most of us tend blame rather than looking at our own role in the problem. When we take responsibility we shift the conflict into one where resolution is possible.

Step 5: Brainstorm solutions and agree on one that meets the needs of both people.

Resolving conflicts is a creative act. There are many solutions to a single problem. The key is a willingness to seek compromises.

Step 6: Affirm, forgive, or thank.

A handshake, hug, or kind word gives closure to the resolution of conflicts. Just saying thank you at the end of a conflict, or acknowledging the person for working things out sends a message of gratitude. We protect our relationships this way and strengthen our connections for future conflicts that may arise.



Let's Resolve This!

You really want to go to a party but your parents won't let you stay out that late.

⇒ What are your needs... fun, freedom, love and belonging?

⇒ What are your parents needs survival
(keeping you safe)

Can you come up with a positive solution that could meet your needs and your parents needs?



Your friend wants you to skip school and hang out. You've already gotten in trouble with your parents this week but don't want your friend to think you are scared.

⇒ What are your needs... Love and belonging (acceptance from your friend and approval from your parents)

⇒ What are your friend's needs... fun, freedom

Can you come up with a positive solution that meets your needs and your friend's needs?

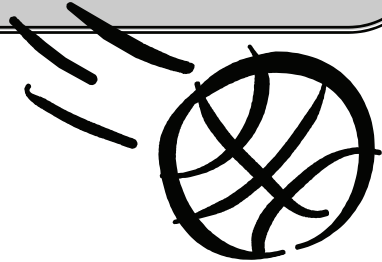


You and your friends play basketball after school. Another friend wants to join but he/she is not a very good player. Everyone likes this friend and you don't want to hurt his/her feelings.

⇒ What are your needs... love and belonging (acceptance from your friend and others that play basketball) power (to have a team that is capable and competitive)

⇒ What are our friends needs.... power (to learn how to be a better player) love and belonging (joining in with friends) fun (your friend really enjoys playing basketball)

Can you come up with a positive solution that meets your needs and your friends needs?



Action Plan for Improving my

Describe one situation at home, at school or with friends which involves communication, and write down how you can improve your communication in that situation.

The situation I would like to improve my communication in is:

- At school
- At home
- With friends

This is what I can do differently:

Communication

