



Communication Roadblocks

Principles of Communication

- The message sent is not always the message received.
- It is impossible to NOT communicate.
- Non-verbal cues are often more believable than verbal cues.
- Every message has content and feeling.

12 Communication Roadblocks

Roadblock	Definition	Example	Tip
Judging			
Criticizing	Giving negative judgments or evaluations of another person. Many think they must be critical in order for others to improve. Contributes to feeling “never good enough”.	<i>You didn't do it right. It's your fault.</i>	
Name Calling or Labeling	Attaching a name or label to a person – good or bad, stereotyping and categorizing. Diverts focus to a type instead of an individual.	<i>You are being a perfectionist.</i>	
Diagnosing	Informing a person what his or her motives are, that you have him or her figured out or psyched out, or that you have diagnosed his or her behavior. Thwarts communication, can lead to defensiveness	<i>You are being paranoid.</i>	
Evaluative Praise	Giving positive judgments or evaluations of another person with the intent of controlling or manipulating behavior. Causes people to feel manipulated or possibly become guarded and defensive.	<i>You are usually very good at solving this type of problem.</i>	
Sending Solutions			
Ordering	Telling another person to do something, giving him/her an order or command. Solution sent coercively and backed by force. Implies the other's judgment is unsound; undermines self-esteem.	<i>This is your responsibility/duty. You must do this now.</i>	
Threatening	Warning another person about the dire consequences of an action or alluding to the use of force. Solution sent with emphasis on the punishment. Contributes to defensiveness and stifles personal growth.	<i>Just do it. If you don't do what I want...</i>	
Moralizing	Telling another person why he/she ought to do something. Fosters anxiety/resentment, dissuades honest self-expression, and invites pretense.	<i>You should do it.</i>	



Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

For Those Who Serve and Those Who SupportSM

Roadblock	Definition	Example	Tip
Sending Solutions (cont.)			
Excessive/ Inappropriate Questioning	Trying to find reasons, facts, motives, causes, or information to help you solve another person's problem. Invite defensive reactions and resistance. Often an indirect means of manipulating.	<i>Why can't you do it this way...</i>	
Advising	Telling another person how to solve his or her problem. Can be insulting, may imply a lack of confidence in the person's ability to solve the problem.	<i>Let me suggest...</i>	
Avoiding Others' Concerns			
Diverting	Trying to get another person away from his or her problem, getting away from it yourself, or trying to change the focus by joking, offering other things to do, or pushing the problem away. May signal a lack of good listening skills, attention seeking behavior, or uncomfortableness with the topic of discussion.	<i>Here is the right way.</i>	
Logical Argument	Trying to influence another person with facts, arguments, logic, information, or an expert opinion that happen to agree with your own. Focuses on facts and avoids feelings. Often used to avoid emotional involvement.	<i>Experience tells us that ...</i>	
Reassuring	Trying to make another person feel better, talking him or her out of the feelings or trying to make them go away, or trying to deny the strength or significance of his or her feelings. Used to provide comfort or make things better without getting emotionally involved.	<i>It's not that bad.</i>	

NOTES:



12 Tips for Effective Communication

1. **Put your friendship first** – Put the other person’s needs first instead of your needs or the relationship.
2. **First know what you DO want** – before you try to communicate be as clear as possible about the result you want. Don’t use drama as a means to connect or get attention.
3. **Say precisely what you mean** – be very specific and frame statements and questions in a way that doesn’t “pre-judge” the other’s feelings or actions.
4. **Practice active listening** – listen precisely, parrot or paraphrase the feeling and content back to the other person.
5. **I messages** – State what is happening, how you are feeling and why you are feeling that way.
6. **Reply, don’t react** – Reacting is doing something in responses to something said or done. When you react, you let another’s actions control or influence your behavior. To reply is to verbalize directly your thoughts and feelings.
7. **Emotions are never wrong** – it is how you choose to react or respond to them that causes conflict.
8. **Make an effort to hear the “PLEASE” behind the words** – Underneath every argument is a frustrated desire for something; try to find out what it is.
9. **100% honest 100% of the time** – you need honesty to have trust, trust to have a friendship, and friendship to enjoy a lasting relationship.
10. **Don’t be a mind reader** – assuming you know what the other is thinking or why he/she is doing something invites problems. It is better to ask and risk embarrassment than to continue with false assumptions.
11. **Keep the prime directive** – putting the love and feelings you have for another human being should take priority over all positions and issues that arise in the relationship.

12. Practice clear communication

To express yourself:

When _____ happens, I feel (an emotion). What I would like from you now is _____.
In the future I would like for you to _____.

To understand the other person:

When _____ happens, how do you feel? What would you like from me now? In the future, what would you like from me?

Source: From 20 Communication Tips for Couples by Doyle Barnett Mediator, NLP