



Communicate (Face to Face)

Why Communication Breaks Down

Interpretation

- We don't always say what we mean, or mean what we say and put our own meanings onto words that may not be what the other person meant.

Assumptions

- We fail to check understanding through questions, and our emotional state can lead to incorrect meanings being taken, and assumptions being made.

Lack of Concentration

- We 'selectively' hear what we want to hear or there may be physical barriers to listening such as background noise. In addition, trying to discuss something important when someone is running late, or pre-occupied with something else is likely to lead to misunderstandings or forgetfulness.

Mismatch

- Choosing the wrong method or style of communication can lead to misinterpretation, as can giving out conflicting signals between what you say and how you say it.

Language and Culture

- Language, nationality, ethnic origin and business culture can sometimes create barriers to communication due to people acting in a habitual way. Using technical words or jargon can be confusing, as can talking down to someone, or using complex words when simple ones will do.

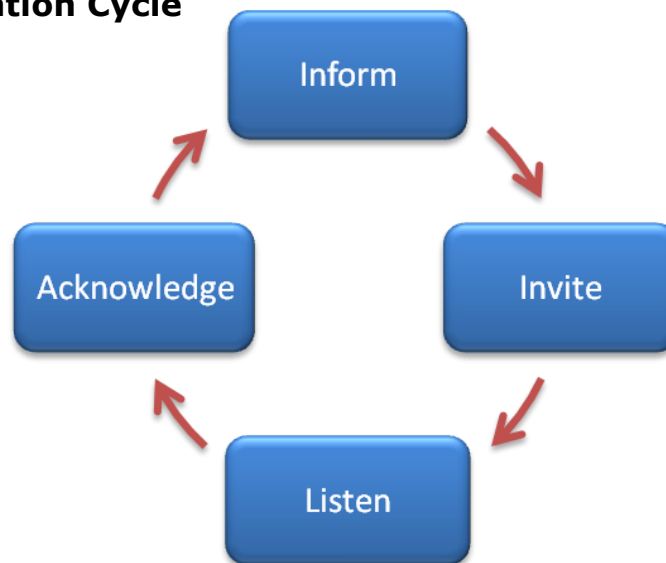


The Communication Model

When communication is unclear or emotional, people tend to interpret the message based on the following proportions:

This doesn't mean that words are not important. Instead, this research shows that when given **emotional** or **unclear** messages, it is our natural instinct to take meaning from the non-verbal messages that someone gives off. Our body language and tone must match the words being spoken for there to be understanding.

The Communication Cycle



Inform - Instigating discussion, such as giving feedback on performance.

Invite - Inviting a response by asking a question; open questions to get more information, and closed questions to get confirmation.

Listen - to understand. If you have asked a question, do the person the courtesy of listening to understand - not to assume and then interrupt.

Acknowledge - Accept what they have said, and check that you have received the message clearly.