

Developing Management Skills

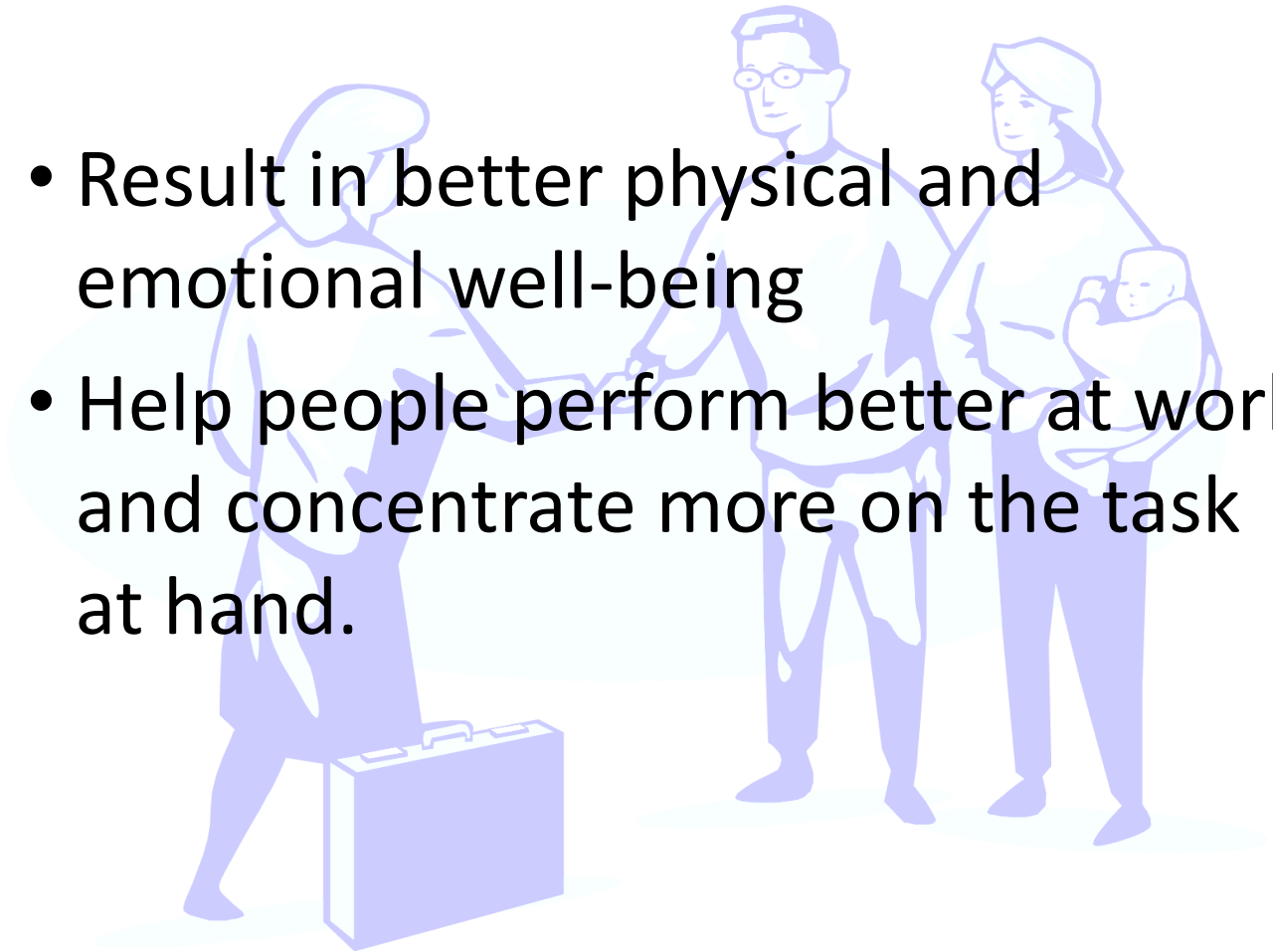
Chapter 4: Building Relationships by Communicating Supportively

Learning Objectives

- Build supportive relationships even when delivering negative feedback
- Avoid defensiveness and disconfirmation in interpersonal communication
- Improve ability to apply principles of supportive communication
- Improve relationships by using personal management interviews

Positive Relationships

- Result in better physical and emotional well-being
- Help people perform better at work and concentrate more on the task at hand.



Frequent Organizational Problems

- Reliance on technology
- Dominance of e-mail
- Less face-to-face communication



Problems with Electronic Communication

- Too much information, low quality
- No content to information, lacks meaning
- Interpretation of information depends on relationships with sender

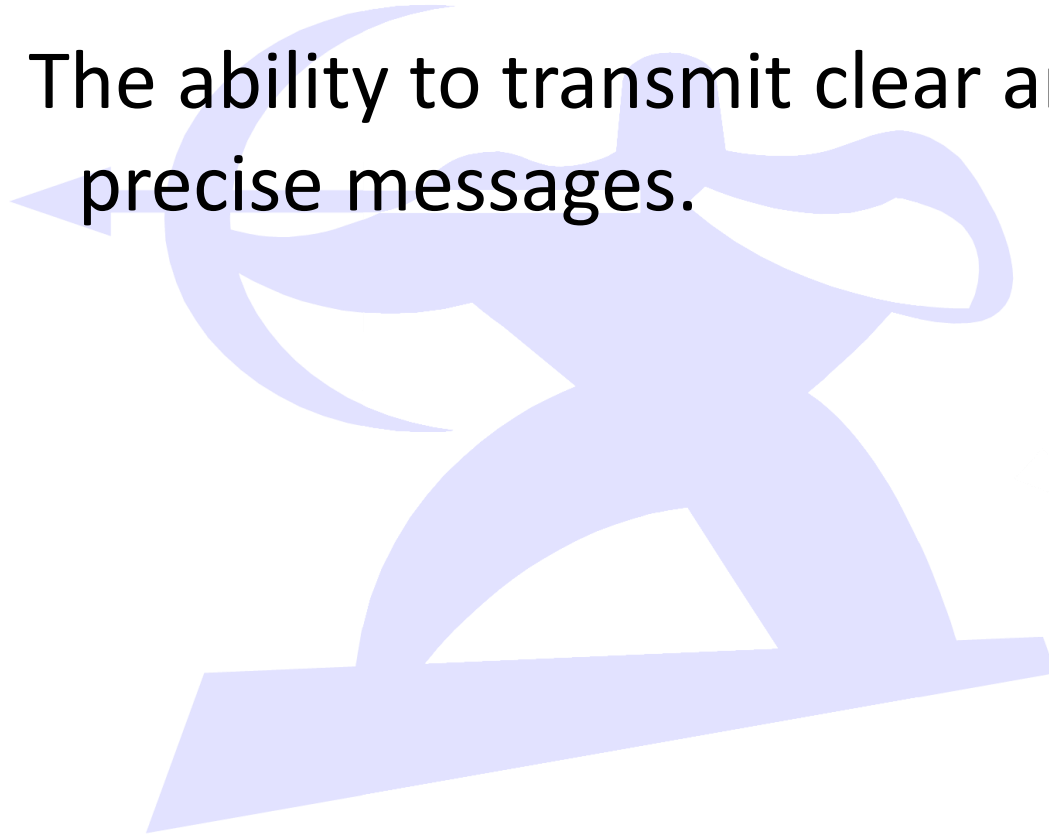
Communication Problems

“Most individuals don’t seem to feel a strong need to improve their own skill level”



Focus on Accuracy

The ability to transmit clear and precise messages.



Inconsistent Pronunciations

‘We polish Polish Furniture.’

‘He could lead if he would get the lead out.’

‘A farm can produce produce.’

‘The dump was so full it had to refuse refuse.’

‘The present is a good time to present a present.’

‘The dove dove into the bushes.’

Relationships Between Unskillful Communication and Interpersonal Relationships



Coaching and Counseling

- Coaching: giving advice, direction or information to improve performance.
- Counseling: helping someone understand and resolve a problem him/herself by displaying understanding

Coaching and Counseling

Coaching: focuses on abilities



Counseling:
focuses on
attitudes

When to Coach

- Lack of ability
- Insufficient information
- Incompetence
- Subordinate must understand the problem

When to Counsel

- Personality clashes
- Defensiveness
- Other factors tied to emotions
- “I can help you recognize that a problem exists.”

Obstacles to Supportive Communication

Defensiveness

- One individual feels threatened or attacked as a result of the communication
- Self-protection becomes paramount
- Energy is spent on constructing a defense rather than on listening
- Aggression, anger, competitiveness, and/or avoidance as a result of the communication

Obstacles to Supportive Communication

Disconfirmation

- Individual feels incompetent, unworthy, or insignificant as a result of the communication
- Attempts to reestablish self-worth take precedence
- Energy is spent trying to portray self-importance rather than on listening
- Showing off, self-centered behavior, withdrawal, and/or loss of motivation are common reactions

Supportive Communication

Helps the sender communicate accurately and honestly without jeopardizing interpersonal relationships.

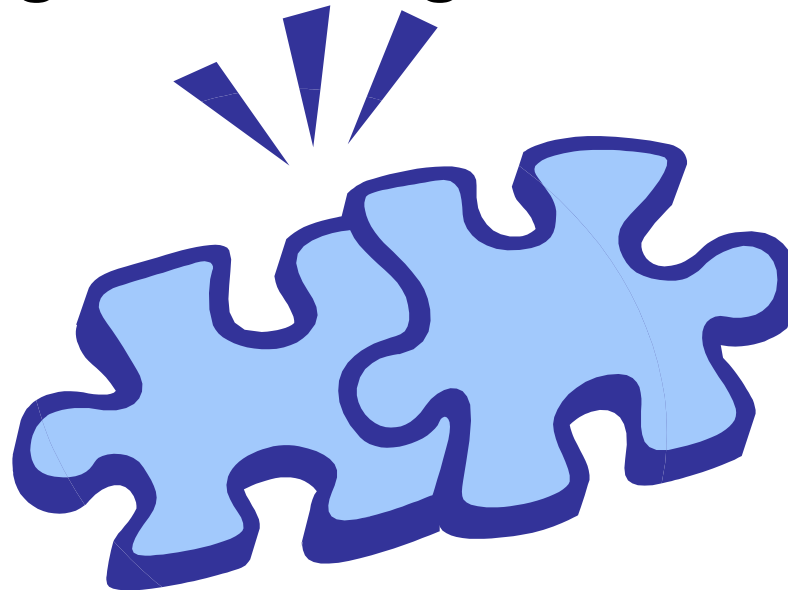


Attributes of Supportive Communication

- Congruent
- Descriptive
- Problem-Oriented
- Validating
- Specific
- Conjunctive
- Owned
- Supportive Listening

Supportive Communication

Based on *congruence*: a match between what an individual is thinking and feeling



Supportive Communication

Is *descriptive* and reduces the tendency to evaluate and cause defensiveness.

Descriptive Communication

1. Describes objectively the event, behavior, or circumstance
2. Focus on the behavior and your reaction
3. Focus on solutions

Supportive Communication

Is *problem-oriented* and does not focus on personal traits which cannot be changed.

Supportive Communication

Validates and helps others feel recognized, understood, accepted, and valued.

Invalidating Communication

Conveys

- Superiority
- Rigidity
- Indifference
- Imperviousness

Validating Communication

- Egalitarian
- Flexible
- Two-way
- Based on agreement

Supportive Communication

Is *specific* and identifies something that can be understood and acted upon.

Global Communication

Focuses on extremes and absolutes which deny any alternatives. “My way or the highway!”

Supportive Communication

Is *conjunctive* and joined to a previous message.



Disjunctive Communication

Occurs when there is,

1. Lack of opportunity for others to speak
2. Extended pauses
3. Topic control

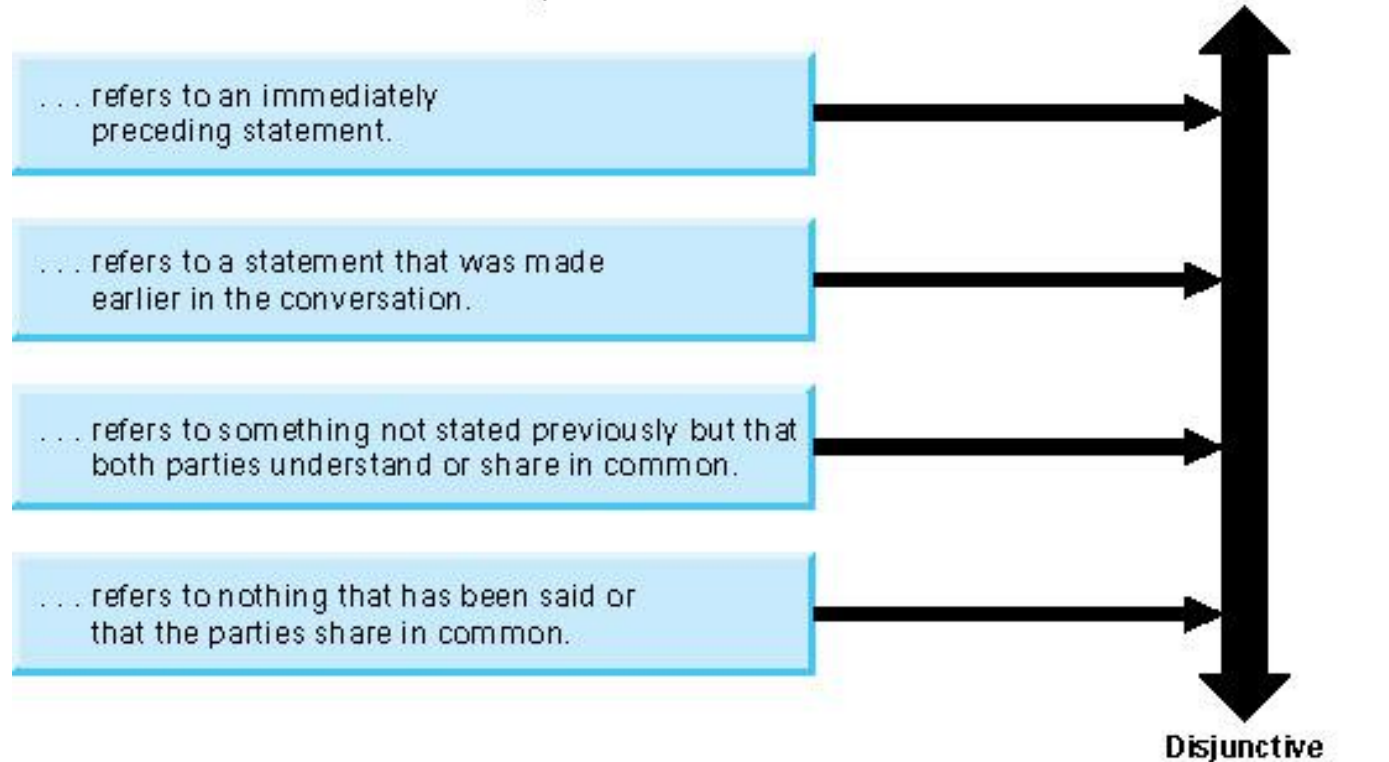
Interaction Management

Creates conjunction by:

1. Taking turns speaking
2. Management of timing
3. Topic Control

Continuum of Conjunctive Statements

The communicator's statement or question ...



Supportive Communication

Is *owned* and acknowledges the source of the idea. Ownership conveys responsibility.

Disowned Communication

Results in the listener never being sure of whose point of view the message represents.

Supportive Communication

Requires *active listening* and responding effectively to someone else's statements.

Effective Listening

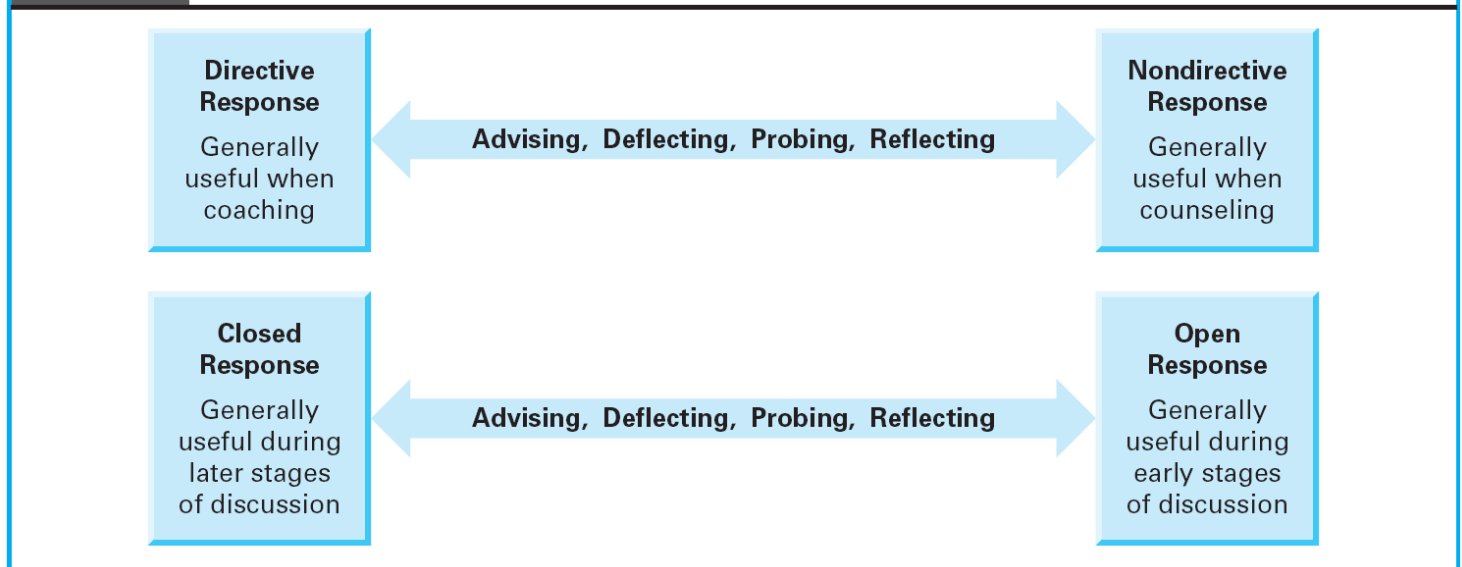
- In skills important for managers, effective listening was ranked highest.
- Individuals usually understand about a fourth of what is communicated.

Responding to Others

- Four Types of Responses
 - Advising
 - Deflecting
 - Probing
 - Reflecting

Response Types

Figure 4.3 Response Types in Supportive Listening



Advising

- Provides direction, evaluation, personal opinion, or instruction
- Creates listener control over the topic
- Can produce dependence

Deflecting

- Switches the focus from communicator's problem to one selected by the listener
- Appropriate if reassurance is needed
- Imply that the communicator's issues are not important

Probing

- Asks questions about what the communicator said
- Used to gather information
- Can appear that the communicator must justify what is happening

Four Types of Probes

1. Elaboration
2. Clarification
3. Repetition
4. Reflection



Reflecting

- Mirror back to the communicator the message that was heard
- Involves paraphrasing and clarifying
- Could appear that the listener isn't listening

Personal Management Interview

A regularly scheduled, one-on-one meeting between management and subordinates



Personal Management Interview

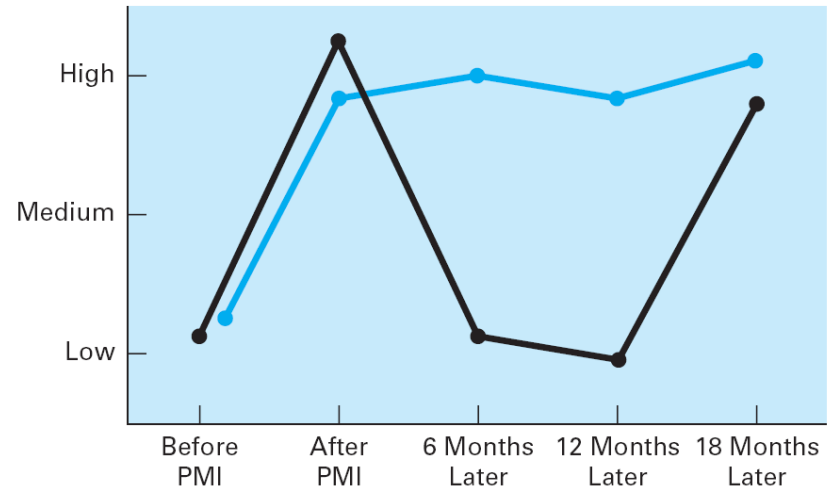
Step 1: A role-negotiation session which sets expectations' of employees and managers.

Step 2: A set of on-going one on one meetings to development and improvement.

Effects of Personal Management Interview

Figure 4.4 Effects of an Ongoing Personal Management Interview Program

Combined measures of team effectiveness, including productivity, leader-subordinate relations, participation and teamwork, trust, and meeting effectiveness.



●—● A Teams (N = 5) held regular PMIs with the managers.

●—● B Teams (N = 5) discontinued PMIs after initial training, then reinstated them.

Source: Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, *Online*.

Culture and Communication

- Language pattern and structures are dramatically different across cultures
- There are, however, universal principles that apply to interpersonal problems

Behavioral Guidelines


- Differentiate between coaching situations and counseling situations
- Use problem-oriented statements rather than person-oriented statements
- Communicate congruently by acknowledging your true feelings without acting them out in destructive ways

Behavioral Guidelines

- Use descriptive, not evaluative, statements
- Use validating statements that acknowledge the other person's importance and uniqueness
- Use specific rather than global statements when correcting behavior
- Use conjunctive statements that flow smoothly from what was said previously

Behavioral Guidelines

- Own your statements, and encourage the other person to do likewise
- Demonstrate supportive listening
- Implement a personal management interview program characterized by supportive communication



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