

Notes from Leadership Training

June 25, 2018

Leading Through Interpersonal Communication

Objectives of this session:

- Understanding the importance of interpersonal communication skills in community leadership
- Understanding the importance of building rapport
- Enhancing listening, speaking and feedback skills
- Considering appropriate use of various communication media

Discussion of the skills needed for effective leadership and activities to practice some of these skills.

Activity to build rapport – 5 minutes

- Meeting someone new
- How do you introduce yourself?
- What about eye contact?
- Don't forget cultural norms
- Read cues when face-to-face
- Voice inflection and pauses

What Does It Take To Be A Good Listener?

- What makes a good listener?
- What barriers interfere with being a good listener?
- What can a person do to be a better listener?

What Makes a Good Listener?

- Empathy
- Eye contact
- Attention
- Comprehension and acknowledgement
- Openness
- Selflessness
- Questions and clarity / checks for understanding
- Honesty

- Kindness
- Good hearing
- Open body language
- Patience
- Concentration
- Desire to understand
- Interest

Barriers

- Not giving attention
- Noise in the environment / interruptions
- Bias
- Hearing loss
- Personal distraction (lack of focus)
- Lack of understanding of cultural norms
- Failure to clarify
- Talking too much
- Mood / self-awareness
- Limited knowledge (disinterest)
- Ego / personality of speaker
- Physical characteristics
- Lack of patience
- Lack of eye contact
- Time
- Not understanding cultural norms
- Predisposition to bias

What You Can Do To Be a Better Listener

- Removing or awareness of bias
- Ask clarifying questions
- Be an open listener
- Be present / attending to the moment
- Know context
- Be empathetic / self-aware
- Be respectful
- Put your phone away
- Create the right environment

- Practice better listening
- Interrupt less / take turns
- Take notes, record conversations
- Practice
- Reflect or check for understanding

What Makes a Good Speaker?

- Enunciation
- Knowledge
- Being well prepared
- Tone and projection
- Passion
- Clear and appropriate speaking
- Good listener
- Relate to the audience
- Control of body language
- Confidence
- Eye contact
- Focus
- Experience / practice
- Attention
- Relevance
- Defining acronyms
- Gathering feedback
- Memorable

Barriers

- Lack of interest or knowledge
- Inappropriate vocabulary
- Chewing gum / physical distraction
- No interest in feedback
- Lack of focus or format
- Tone of voice
- Distracting speech patterns
- Know your audience
- Inappropriate attire
- Chewing gum

- No interest in feedback
- Lack of confidence
- Nerves / personality
- Inattentive audience

How to Be Better

- Honesty
- Know your topic
- Confidence
- Practice
- Admit your lack of knowledge
- Read aloud
- Ask for feedback
- Allow for silence

Activity with partner speaking for 3 minutes

- Shortest person of pair spoke first, introduced themselves
- Practice for speaking and listening skills

Activity to practice providing feedback in positive manor

- Groups had 5 different scenarios of working in a community manor and providing feedback to address an issue
- Goal was to preserve the relationship by using a thoughtful approach to a negative situation
- Suggestions from the leadership group were:
 - Attempt to prevent a negative situation by being prepared
 - Use group decision-making process
 - Provide constructive feedback / positive reinforcement (criticism Oreo)
 - Sometimes best provided in private
 - In some situations, negative feedback should be a group process as it builds bonds for the group
 - Weave the feedback in to 'housekeeping' announcements
 - Must be addressed at some point

Different Modes of Communication

- Face to face
 - Builds trust
 - Helps you know person
 - Best way to provide constructive criticism and feedback
 - Necessary in crisis or complex situation
 - Always best for first meeting
- Written
 - Can be valuable if very emotional subject
 - May help if face to face conversation isn't going anywhere
 - Provides clear understanding of what is being discussed
- Phone
 - Previously established relationship
 - More professional
 - As a follow-up to written communication
 - Prior to written communication
- Email
 - Can respond at leisure
 - More comprehensive
 - Provide documentation
 - Group response
 - If tone is important, should not use email
- Social media
 - Less formal event planning
 - Coordination
 - Inform a larger audience
 - Contains a visual aspect

There are so many forms of communication available to us. It is important to know which is best to use in a particular context. What is our audience using?