

COMMUNICATION

Core skills for growing leaders

Important and high stakes

- Calm, clear communication
 - Helps with problem solving
 - Builds healthy relationships
- Impulsive communication done thoughtlessly
 - Damages relationships
 - Can make difficult situations worse
- *What and how we communicate is a **choice***

Verbal versus nonverbal

- Communication is not just *what we say (verbal)*
- Communication includes *how we say (or don't say) things (nonverbal)*
 - Eye contact
 - Body language
 - Tone and volume
- Being aware of nonverbals can prevent miscommunication

Styles of communication

- **Assertive communication**
 - Speaking with clarity and confidence *without overpowering others*
 - Expressing ideas/needs/desires while respecting others' rights and beliefs
- **Aggressive communication**
 - Expressing ideas/needs/desires without considering others' rights and beliefs
 - Tone and content may be disrespectful or mean
- **Passive communication**
 - Not expressing ideas/needs/desires

Different settings

- We often use *different styles* in *different settings*
 - Small or large groups, one-on-one
 - Academic, professional, or personal settings
 - With peers versus authority figures
- **Code switching**
 - Changing communication styles to appropriately match settings and audience
 - Complex in settings with people from multiple groups
 - Important to effective, clear communication

Communicating in teams

- Good teamwork relies on clear, *assertive* communication
 - Express ideas respectfully, and check for understanding
 - Clarify and explain things patiently
 - Give *positive feedback* in a *genuine way* (be careful of non-verbals or a flat or sarcastic tone)
 - *Constructive feedback* is also important!
 - Should be given alongside positive feedback
 - Most effective when directed towards a specific goal
 - Avoid sarcasm, insults, or overly critical statements

Building healthy relationships

- Effective communication helps build healthy relationships
 - ▣ This takes *time* and *effort!*
 - ▣ Important to demonstrate interest (maintaining eye contact, being receptive, using *active listening*, etc.)
- Active listening - OARS
 - ▣ O - ask *open-ended questions*
 - ▣ A - use *affirmations*
 - ▣ R - *reflect* the other person's thoughts and feelings
 - ▣ S - *summarize* their statements
