THE ART AND SCIENCE OF COMMUNICATION

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

1-DAY COURSE

HRDQ

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Instructional design and learning philosophy

We are committed to providing the best core-skills content possible for Instructor-Led Training (ILT). The following principles are applied in the development of programs:

Sound Instructional Design

All course content is developed using a variety of research techniques. These include:

- Brainstorming sessions with target audience

- Library research

- Online research

- Customer research (focus groups, surveys, etc.)

- Subject Matter Experts (SME)

- Interviews with trainers

Expert instructional designers create imaginative and innovative solutions for your training needs through the development of powerful instructional elements. These include:

- Learning objectives — effective tools for managing, monitoring and evaluating training

- Meaningfulness — connects the topic to the students' past, present, and future

- Appropriate organization of essential ideas — helps students focus on what they need to know in order to learn

- Modeling techniques — demonstrate to students how to act and solve problems

- Active application — the cornerstone to learning — helps students immediately apply what they have learned to a real-life situation

- Consistency — creates consistent instructions and design to help students learn and retain new information

- Accelerated learning techniques — create interactive, hands-on involvement to accommodate different learning styles

Application of Adult Learning Styles

Adults learn best by incorporating their personal experiences with training and by applying what they learn to real-life situations. Our experienced instructional designers incorporate a variety of accelerated learning techniques, role-plays, simulations, discussions, and lectures within each course. This ensures that the learning will appeal to all learning styles and will be retained.

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Reading

Written
Exercise

Facilitate

Group
Activity

Course timing

Chapter One: Introduction to the Communication Model

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	What is communication?	25
	Three steps of communication	15
	Step 1: Prepare yourself and the other person	10
	Practice positive intent	10
	Understanding assumptions	15
	Self-talk	10
	Step 2: Send your message	10
	Rewriting muddled messages	10
	How assertive are you?	20

Course timing

Chapter One: Introduction to the Communication Model (cont.)

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Check your body language	10
	Step 3: Check for understanding	10
	Listen with compassion	15
	Paraphrasing statements	10

Chapter Two: Increasing the Effectiveness of Each Interaction

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Building rapport	10
	Encouragement	10
	Expressive and receptive body language	20
	Eight guidelines for expressing positive feedback	10

Course timing

Chapter Two: Increasing the Effectiveness of Each Interaction (cont.)

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Credibility	5
	Be direct without being rude	10
	Positive phrasing	10
	Telling a story	10

Chapter Three: Communicating in Difficult Situations

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Communicating in conflict	5
	"I" messages and positive intent	15
	De-escalate emotions	10
	Dealing with extreme anger	10
	Uncovering hidden agendas	15

Course timing

Chapter Three: Communicating in Difficult Situations (cont.)

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Giving negative feedback	20
	Receiving negative feedback	15

Reading

Written Exercise

Facilitate

Group Activity

Contents

Course objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your knowledge and ability to:

Recognize how assumptions contribute to miscommunication

Implement a three-step process for communicating effectively

Support your message with appropriate body language

Speak assertively without being aggressive

Build rapport and encourage open communication

Give positive and negative feedback effectively

De-escalate emotions when communicating in a conflict

Uncover hidden messages that may be interfering with clear communication

Deal with another person's anger

Chapter **One**

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNICATION MODEL

Different levels of meaning

- My definition of communication is:
- What is the purpose of communication?
- What are the main components of communication?

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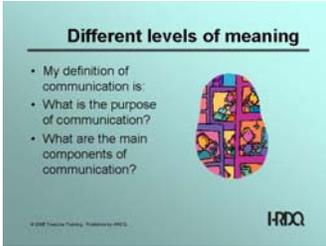
Begin a general discussion about why people are here and what they expect. Then talk about their successes and challenges with communication. Ask them to write their thoughts and then discuss the questions on this page.

Ask: If I speak and you do not understand, is it communication? Definition of communication: Shared understanding or meeting of meanings.

Typical answers to "Purpose activity" include: To reach agreement, to clarify, to gain knowledge, to impart information, to socialize, to develop relationships, to facilitate tasks, to show appreciation, to develop thoughts or ideas, to understand, to be understood, etc.

The main components of communication are: Speaker, receiver, message, and feedback.

The three steps of communication

1. Prepare yourself and the other person
2. Send your message
3. Check for understanding

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What is communication?

We communicate in many ways: with our words, tone, eyes and gestures to name a few.

My definition of communication is:

_____

_____

_____

What is the purpose of communication?

_____

_____

_____

What are the main components of communication?
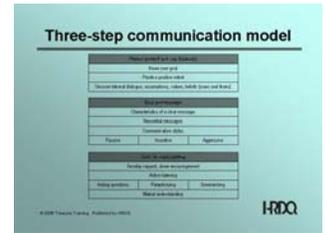
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_____

Three steps of communication

Communication is composed of three basic steps:

1. Prepare yourself and the other person.
2. Send your message.
3. Check for understanding.

Things that improve communication

_____
_____
_____

Things that create obstacles (what gets in the way of understanding another person?)

_____
_____
_____

Activity: Show the communication model PPT. Mention that in any face-to-face communication this preparation, sending and understanding cycle happens numerous times in a single interaction when facial expressions, dress, gestures, smells, vocal characteristics, verbiage and context are considered. Generate a discussion about what kinds of things improve communication, and what kinds of things create obstacles that get in the way of understanding another person.

Examples of things that improve communication: Building rapport, sharing a common goal, active listening, clarifying assumptions, using an assertive style, congruent words and body language, paraphrasing, summarizing, etc.
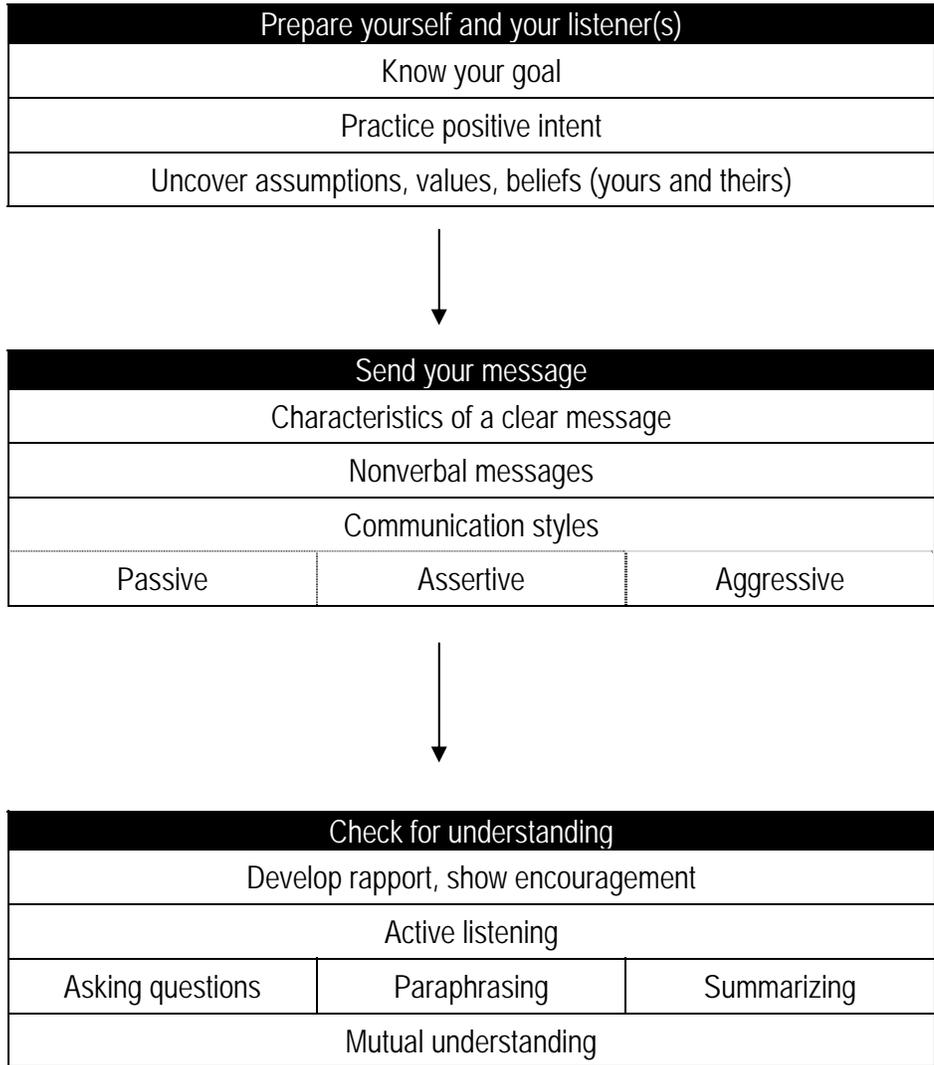
Examples of things that create obstacles: Making assumptions or judgments, conflicting values or beliefs, incongruent words and body language, using a passive or aggressive style, not listening, etc.

"Most of the time we don't communicate, we just take turns talking."
— Anonymous

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Three-step communication model

Prepare yourself and your listener(s)		
Know your goal		
Practice positive intent		
Uncover assumptions, values, beliefs (yours and theirs)		

Send your message		
Characteristics of a clear message		
Nonverbal messages		
Communication styles		
Passive	Assertive	Aggressive

Check for understanding		
Develop rapport, show encouragement		
Active listening		
Asking questions	Paraphrasing	Summarizing
Mutual understanding		

Step 1: Prepare yourself and the other person

Preparing yourself before communicating will make your message much more effective. Know in advance what you want to accomplish, what you want to say, and make sure that everyone who needs to know the information is involved.

Purpose and direction

Typical purposes

To inform or direct another person

"George, a busload of kids just pulled up, so please start making extra sandwiches."

To persuade someone

"Tyler, I think we could handle the lunch rush better if we starting prepping the salad kits earlier in the morning."

To inquire with a question or a statement

"Maria, how is your new schedule working out for you?"

Direction

Ask yourself these questions to help you decide what direction you want to take:

What reaction do you want from the other person?
What do you want them to remember?
What do you want them to do as a result of your conversation?

Make sure the receiver is ready to hear you

Be sure the person that you are talking to is ready to hear you. If you are unsure if the person is ready, ask questions like these:

Is this a good time for you to talk?
Can we discuss something that I've been thinking about?
Would now be a good time, or should I come back later?

Step 1: Prepare yourself
and the other person

- Know your purpose and direction
- Make sure the receiver is ready to hear you
- Practice positive intent
- Understand assumptions
- Use your self-talk to support you

"If you don't know where you're going, you'll never get there."

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Practice positive intent

Positive intent is an attitude that is reflected in your communication. It's assuming that other people have good reasons for doing and saying the things they do. When we assume others have negative intentions behind their actions, we set up a destructive environment. This makes it nearly impossible to work together in a cooperative way. So, practice positive intent yourself—use your communication for good intentions—and assume positive intent in others.

To practice positive intent, think about the following:

Behaviors or feelings you encounter, no matter how strange they seem, have some useful and important positive purpose.

Practice

1. Your manager has just called to inform you that he's taking you off your current project team and putting you on another one. You enjoy the project team you're on now and have no wish to change. Your knee-jerk reaction is to be upset and mad at your boss.

   Using positive intent, think of a reason why your boss would have done that.

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. You are in a meeting and offer a potential solution to a problem. A coworker says, "We shouldn't go in that direction. Let's look at other options."

   Using positive intent, think of a reason why your coworker would have said that.

   _____

   _____

   _____

"If your mind isn't open, keep your mouth shut too."

— Diogenes.

Understanding assumptions

Assumptions are present in everyone's communication system and have an impact on how messages are delivered and received. Our upbringing, life experiences, and current circumstances all contribute to the assumptions we make. The key is knowing when we are making an assumption and checking it out with the other person.

Exercise

Instructions: For each behavior, write down one negative and one positive or neutral assumption you could make.

Behavior:	What I assumed was:
Example: The person seems to be avoiding eye contact when I talk to him.	*Negative: He is hiding something and feels guilty.* *Neutral: He doesn't know me well and is shy.*
The person is using a loud voice to talk back to me.	
The person seems tired and uninterested in what I'm saying.	
The person is taking a long time to answer my questions	

How to avoid harmful assumptions

> Treat each person individually.
> Listen before you "jump" (into the conversation).
> Avoid sweeping statements.
> Talk it through before acting.
> Consider positive intent.

Assumptions that we do not check out affect our communication every day. Someone glances at his watch—you think he is bored, but he is really concerned about his next meeting. Without verifying motivation, people attribute motives and then look for more evidence to prove themselves correct. Sometimes assumptions are so ingrained that they become a "fact" to that person.

Activity: If you have time, see how many different assumptions participants can come up with based on each behavior listed in the table. Record their answers on a flip chart. Debrief by asking participants how assumptions can be helpful in communication, and how they can be harmful.

Helpful: In gathering information and anticipating obstacles or problems, in making educated guesses based on past experiences and applying them to new situations.

Harmful: Jumping to (inaccurate) conclusions, assuming the worst, stereotyping.

Self-talk

Psychologists tell us that we talk to ourselves at a rate of 1,300 words per minute, and that most of our self-talk is negative. Without even being aware of it, we may be making a difficult situation even worse by thinking negative thoughts about it. What you tell yourself about situations and people frequently determines how you act or react. Thus, when you are preparing yourself for communication (Step 1), you must be aware of your self-talk.

Think of a recent difficult conversation you had. What did you say to yourself before the conversation?

_____
_____

How did your self-talk support or undermine your message in that conversation?

_____
_____

Ask what type of self-talk participants have. List the internal messages people give themselves. Sharing with others is not required. Just ask people to be aware of their messages and how they might change them.

Possible answers to "Practice activity" (Note: There are many possible answers): 1. This is a momentary problem that will soon pass. 2. My boss is having a bad day. 3. I can fix this situation. 4. This is only one project and it won't go on forever.

Practice: Change the following negative self-talk into positive statements.

Negative Thought	Positive Statement
1. I don't get paid enough to put up with this.	
2. My boss is a jerk.	
3. That's not my fault.	
4. This is the worst project ever.	

Practice

Instructions: Describe a conversation you need to have with an individual.

Circumstance_____

_____

Person involved_____

Instructions: Using the information from the first step in the model, prepare yourself for the conversation, and make sure the other person is prepared to hear what you are saying by answering the questions below.

1. What is the purpose of your conversation?

    _____
    _____

2. What do you want him or her to do as a result of the conversation?

    _____
    _____

3. How will you approach the other person? What will you say?

    _____
    _____

4. What questions can you ask to find out his or her assumptions about the situation?

    _____
    _____

We've learned about direction and purpose, positive intent, preparing the listener and uncovering assumptions. Now, let's begin to apply what we've learned to this point.

Practice: Have participants answer on their own. Then, debrief by asking for volunteers to share their answers.

Describe this picture

Describe this picture

Ask him or her to explain not only what they literally see, but also the "back story"—what he or she thinks is going on in the picture. Then have the rest of the participants open their eyes and see how their interpretation of the description they heard matches the actual picture. Debrief by discussing how difficult it can be to send a clear message. The tips on this page will help participants accomplish that.

Making assertive statements

I feel _____ when you (behavioral description) _____. I'd appreciate it if you'd _____ (behavioral description).

Step 2: Send your message

Characteristics of a clear message

Be assertive – Talk about what you need with confidence. Be careful not to back down too quickly if you are discussing something that is important to you. Be considerate of others' ideas, but don't hastily abandon your own.

Use direct language – Use clear-cut and specific statements to express your message.

Use a calm, noncritical tone of voice – If you are correcting another person's behavior, make sure that you are objective and composed.

Use "I" statements – State what you need or want in terms of yourself, rather than in terms of the other person.

Wrong way: "Don't you want a team party?" Right way: "I think that it would be a good idea to have a team party."

1. Describe the situation and how it affects you. Give just the facts.

2. Say how you feel (happy, sad, angry, afraid, etc.).

3. Say what you need. Describe the behavior you need to see and a promise or commitment that it will happen.

Use factual descriptions and details to clarify your point – Be able to back up your statements with facts that are clear and relevant.

Use repetition – Conversations can easily get off track. Don't be afraid to restate your purpose several times during an interaction.

Wrong way: "She's the slowest employee I've ever worked with." Right way: "She takes longer to complete her tasks than most other employees."

Practice

Instructions: Rewrite the following "muddled message" to make them more clear using the tips provided on the previous page.

1. I need the report ASAP.

   _____

   _____

2. Don't you think that's the dumbest idea you ever heard?

   _____

   _____

3. A new policy has been developed to cover those issues.

   _____

   _____

4. Stop acting like such a baby.

   _____

   _____

5. If you don't have the new software installed soon, the system may not be able to support the increased data, and might crash.

   _____

   _____

Using an assertive communication style is so important to effective communication that we're going to spend some time on this.

Begin by having participants spend a few minutes completing the self-assessment on this page. Obviously, the more participants answer "always," the better.

The passive-assertive-aggressive continuum compares the three basic communication styles. Obviously, you want to use an assertive style for effective communication. Everyone can stick up for themselves in certain situations, yet find it difficult to do so in others. To be assertive, you need to feel good about yourself and be able to express your feelings.

Activity: Have participants work in groups of three. Each will act out a different style using the same situation (choose from either one): 1. You heard that a colleague said something negative about your team to a manager and you want to talk with that person about it. 2. A coworker has asked you to cover for her so she can go stand in line to get tickets to see her favorite performer.

The point is to see how the same situation looks depending on which style is used. Talk about which style was most effective (hopefully the assertive style) and why.

How assertive are you?

Statement	Self-rating
1. I am honest with myself about what I feel and need.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
2. I let others know what I am feeling.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
3. If someone pressures me to do something I don't want to do, I say no.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
4. I express my opinion if I disagree with someone.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
5. When a person is unfair, I point it out.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
6. If I think there is a problem developing in a relationship, I let the other person know what I think and how I feel.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
7. When I need help, I ask for it.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always
8. If a person asks a favor that is inconvenient, I say so.	Never Occasionally Frequently Always

The passive-assertive-aggressive continuum

	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
Definition	Communication style in which you put the rights of others before your own, minimizing your own self worth	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights while maintaining respect for the rights of others	Communication style in which you stand up for your rights but you violate the rights of others
Beliefs	My feelings are not important/don't express your true feelings Don't make waves Others have more rights than I do	We are both important I have rights and so do others I may not "win," but I have expressed my thoughts and feelings clearly	I'm more important than you are Everyone should be like me I'm never wrong
Verbal styles	Indirect Apologetic Always agrees Doesn't speak up	Uses "I" statements, expresses self directly and honestly	Makes "you" statements Dominates, monopolizes and interrupts

Verbal styles (cont.)	Overly soft or tentative voice	States expectations and observations without labels or judgments Effective listener Checks on others' feelings	Sarcastic and condescending Poor listener Has trouble seeing others' point of view
Verbal cues	"You should do it." "You have more experience than I do." "I'll try …" "This is probably wrong, but …"	"I choose to …" 'What options do we have?" "Here's what I think … how does that sound to you?"	"You should have …" "Why didn't you …" "Don't ask why. Just do it."
Nonverbal styles	Looking down or away Stooped posture, excessive head nodding Sighs a lot Low volume and energy, monotone	Firm voice Frequent but natural eye contact Attentive facial expression Relaxed and open posture, smooth and natural gestures Displays confidence but not arrogance	Loud voice Staring or glaring Tense, clenched fists, rigid posture Pointing fingers Gets in people's space Impatient
Confrontation and problem solving	Avoids, ignores Withdraws and is sullen Agrees externally, while disagreeing internally Spends too much time asking for advice	Confronts issues as they occur Doesn't let negative feelings build up Negotiates, compromises	Operates from win/lose position Must win arguments Threatens, attacks, shows hostility Wastes time micromanaging
Potential consequences	Doesn't get what he or she wants Lets others make choices Self-effacing/Lowered self esteem Complains instead of taking action Disrespect from others	Higher self-respect and self-confidence Feels motivated and understood Respect from others Others know where he/she stands	Poor relationships Anger and alienation from others Disrespect and fear from others Compliance with resentment

Body language practice: Have participants work in pairs. Put the following descriptions on slips of paper and hand out to participants. Make sure each member of a pair has a different slip. Then have them act out the description on their slip of paper and have their partner guess the message that their body language is sending.

Descriptions:

1. Tell your partner that you love your job, but use body language that conveys the opposite message.

2. Ask your partner to tell you about an exciting project that he or she is working on. Convey disinterest with your body language.

3. Tell your partner you just received a promotion, but use body language that shows you're worried about the new job.

4. Explain to your partner the details of a movie you've just seen or a book you've just read. Do so while looking excited or happy.

Debrief by asking participants whether it was easy or difficult to guess the body language messages. (It was probably pretty easy because we naturally tune into nonverbal messages.)

Check your body language

What is your body saying? What do you want it to say? People will believe the non-verbal message you send more than the words you say. Make your words and body language say the same thing so you don't send mixed messages.

Common expressions and gestures that may cause inconsistency in your message

Leaning your head to the side
Inappropriate smiling
Poor eye contact
Speaking too softly or loudly
Unsuitable humor or lack of humor

Messages your body language conveys

Excitement	Bored
Smiling Eyes bright and shining Reaching gestures Forward movement Relaxed appearance Animated	Frowning Tilting head to one side Lack of eye contact Glazed-over look Leaning out of conversation Looking away from speaker Tapping finger Crossing legs Jiggling feet
Happiness	Resistant
Smiling Eyes wide open Leaning into conversation Open, welcoming gestures Relaxed appearance	Pursing lips Shaking head Crossing arms Crossing legs Turning away

Step 3: Check for understanding

Don't wait until the end of the conversation to make sure you and the other person understand each other. Be proactive by asking the following questions or statements:

"What do you think about what I just said?"
"Let's recap what we have said so far."
"Tell me what you're thinking."
"Let's make sure we're on the same page. Tell me what you've heard."
"Does that make sense?"
"Does anybody have any questions?"

Active listening

Active listening goes beyond passively letting a message register in your ears.

Is difficult, tiring work.

Does not involve giving answers, directions, or taking control of a conversation.

Requires proof of respect: You must let the other person know you take his or her views and/or opinions seriously.

Requires 100% attention: You must eliminate distractions in order to concentrate on the speaker.

Requires proof of understanding, not just proof of listening.

When the eyes say one thing, and the tongue another, a practiced man relies on the language of the first.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Listen with compassion

Poor Listeners	Skillful Listeners
Glance at watch, tap foot, drum fingers	Make eye contact, use occasional nodding, say words of encouragement
Finish people's sentences, make assumptions	Paraphrase speaker's words, clarify, summarize
Interrupt to disagree, rush in to correct the speaker	Are patient and calmly state views when appropriate
Focus on delivery or mannerisms	Focus on content
In a group, shut down participation	In a group, encourage participation in the conversation
React emotionally	Remain non-defensive
Ignore non-verbal cues	Pay attention to nonverbals
Get caught up with emotions	Take time out when needed
Dramatize reactions or feelings	Maintain open posture
Control others' feelings	Respect others' feelings
Talk more than they listen	Listen more than they talk

Exercise

Instructions: Break into groups of three. One person will listen, one will speak for about two minutes, and the third will observe and critique the active listening. The speaker should describe an event or a situation and the feelings associated with it. The listener should not interrupt or ask questions. Switch until every participant has had a chance to practice listening actively.

What did you learn from this?

_____
_____
_____

"The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."
— Peter F. Drucker

Paraphrasing statements

Paraphrasing or reflecting statements summarize the content and the feelings of what a speaker has said. The statements do not move the conversation along as much as they confirm what has been expressed. Most people in American culture are excellent at "probing" or questioning yet poor at reflecting.

Work with a partner to create reflecting statements for the following sentences.

1. This part is so messed up; I just don't know what to do.

   _____
   _____

2. I keep trying to talk to her, but when I do, she just gets angry.

   _____
   _____

3. If he gives that team one more project, I think they'll collapse.

   _____
   _____

4. They did such a good job with marketing, I don't know if we can keep up with delivery.

   _____
   _____

5. Just once I wish people around here would listen to the people who do the work.

   _____
   _____

6. It's unfair that some of the employees have Wednesday off and others of us don't.

   _____
   _____

This is very simple; don't over-engineer. People think it is unimportant because it is so simple. However, if it isn't done genuinely, it feels "technique-y." Emphasize that paraphrasing is NOT parroting. Remind participants that if they say something that doesn't quite reflect what the speaker meant, he/she will correct them— it doesn't have to be perfect as long as they are sincerely trying.

Suggested responses (Note: There are many possible answers):

1. Sounds like you're feeling frustrated. Do you want some help figuring out a solution?

2. It must feel discouraging to be misunderstood.

3. Sound like you're really overwhelmed.

4. You seem really concerned about not meeting your promises.

5. So you have some ideas about how to improve the way the work is done, and you want to know that someone is actually hearing your input?

6. I understand you have a question about perceived lack of equity.

It isn't necessary to summarize every sentence in a conversation, but doing so periodically allows the speaker to know you are with them. The other advantage of summarizing is that it helps people who ramble to stay on track. They know you "got it" and can stop talking.