



Communication and Cultural Sensitivity Concepts

- Communication Styles
- Intent vs. Impact
- Supportive Communication Climate
- Accommodation Theory
- Powerful vs. Powerless Communication



Intent versus Impact

“I didn’t mean it.” versus
“I feel/felt _____.”



Communication Styles

- Verbal
- Nonverbal
 - Voice
 - Gestures
 - Posture
 - Eye contact
 - Touch



Communication Climate

Based on Jack Gibb (1961). Defensive Communication. *The Journal of Communication*, 11, 141-148.

■ DEFENSIVE

- Evaluation
- Control
- Strategy
- Neutrality
- Superiority
- Certainty

■ SUPPORTIVE

- Description
- Problem Orientation
- Spontaneity
- Empathy
- Equality
- Provisionalism



Evaluation

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Description

- Speaker seems to evaluate or judge
 - Value terms
 - Patronizing
 - Condescending
 - "You" language

- Speaker seems to respect other(s)
 - Descriptive language
 - Affirming
 - Perception checks
 - "I" language



Control - Problem Orientation

- Attempts to manipulate others
 - Rigid agenda
 - Discursive closure
 - Limited information
 - Aggression
 - "I know what's good for you"
- Attempts to collaborate
 - Flexible agenda
 - Openness
 - Invitational
 - Mutual respect
 - "Let's work together"



Strategy

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Spontaneity

- Pre-planned goal;
hidden agenda
 - Suspicious motivations
 - Ambiguous goals
 - Deceptive behaviors
- Open to the situation
 - Straightforward
 - Honest expression of attitudes, beliefs, and feelings



Neutrality

- Empathy

- Indicates lack of concern
 - Apathetic
 - Impersonal
 - Dispassionate
 - Detached
 - Cold
 - Indifferent

- Seems genuinely involved
 - Empathetic
 - Personal
 - Passionate
 - Engaged
 - Warm
 - Interested



Superiority - Equality

- “One up” attitude
 - Paternalistic
 - Know-it-all
 - Discounts other(s)
 - Highlights status differences
 - “I’m OK; you’re not”
- Participative attitude
 - Inclusive
 - Equitable
 - Minimizes status differences
 - “I’m OK; you’re OK too”



Certainty - Provisionalism

- Dogmatic

- Always right
- Argumentative
- Rigid
- Desires to win
- Win-Lose attitude

- Open

- Willing to be tentative
- Collaborative
- Yielding
- Win-Win attitude



Accommodation Theory

- How communicator adjusts during interactions
- Based on perceptions of other person
- Types of accommodation
 - Convergence
 - Divergence (under- and over-accommodating)



Powerful vs. Powerful Communication

- Deferential
- Overly polite
- Question inflection for statements
- Hesitation forms
- Tag questions