



Listen Up!

Presented by
Jeremy King, SPHR
Business Development Manager
FlashPoint





Session Overview

Session Purpose

This session will provide participants with tools, resources, and guidelines to create more efficient and effective communication channels and to help minimize miscommunication.

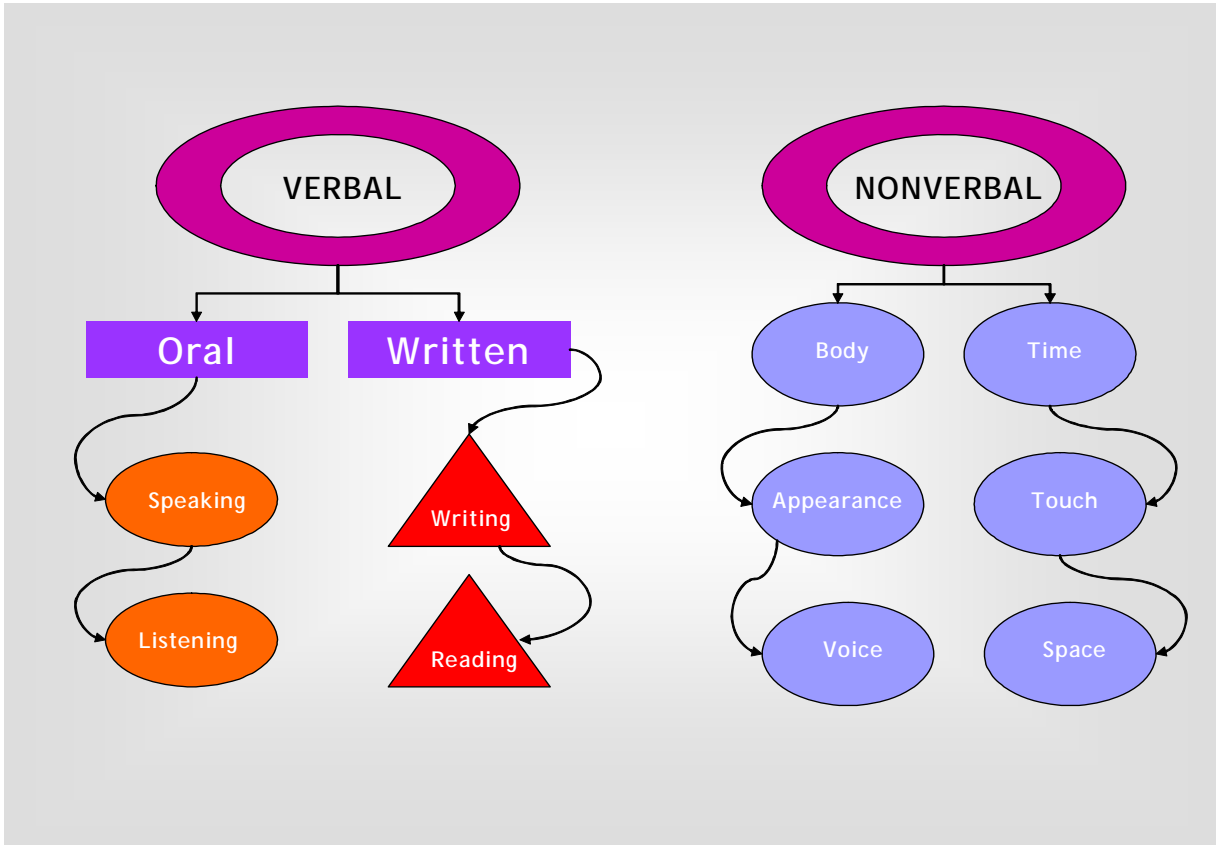
Session Goals

- Discover tips and techniques to improve overall communication skills.
- Discover ways to improve listening skills by using active techniques and mastering empathetic listening.
- Learn simple approaches to breaking through communication barriers.
- Discuss effective speaking techniques.
- Develop an action plan for improving current communication challenges.

Points to Consider

- We spend 75 percent of our waking hours participating in some form of communication; we spend 55 percent of that time listening and 30 percent of that time speaking.
- The typical speaker says 125 words per minute while the typical listener can receive 400 to 600 words per minute. **So about 75 percent of listening time is “free time.”**
- A speaker typically has less than 30 seconds to get the attention of the listener.
- The goal of the speaker is to articulate a message so that the listener understands it as the speaker intended.
- Personality, speaking style, reputation, grammar, accent, stereotypes, noise, interruptions, self-esteem, and views on the topic are just a few barriers that can impact how effectively the speaker delivers the message.
- Asking questions is the most effective way to engage an individual or audience.
 - It physiologically elicits a response.
 - It allows the speaker to gauge the audience’s knowledge.

Communication Basics



SENDER



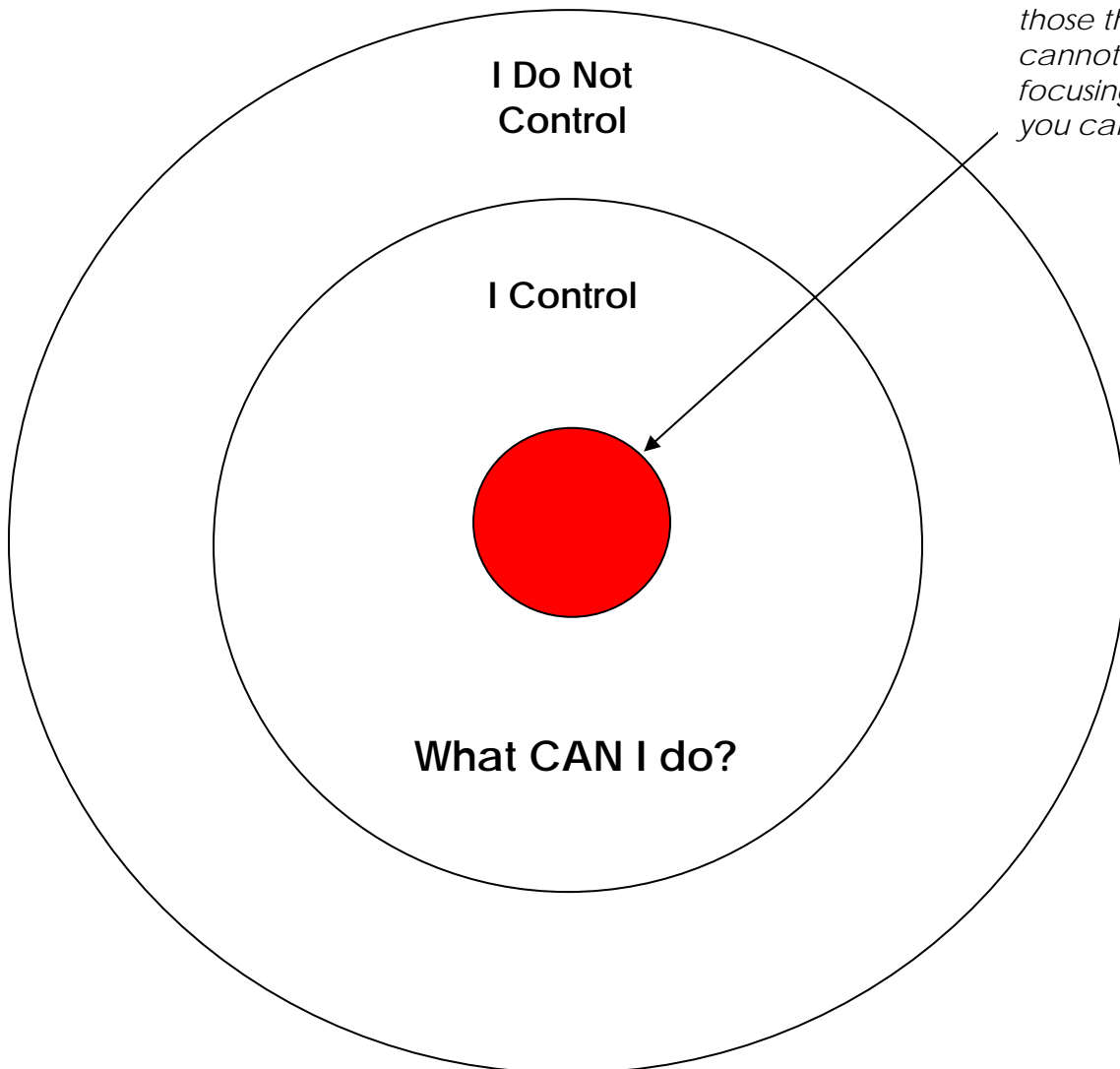
RECEIVER

- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Perceptions
- Experience
- Skills
- Culture
- Style

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Focus on Controlling the Controllables

Where are you focusing your energy?



Effectiveness requires the integrity and discipline to act upon those things that are within your control and to accept those things that you cannot influence.



Communication Basics

You influence **every** interaction significantly by what you say and, even more so, by how you say it. The individual you are communicating with uses body language, tone of voice, and the words used to interpret your message.

How much do we use body language, tone of voice, and actual words used to interpret messages?

	Face-to-Face	Telephone	E-Mail
Body Language			
Tone of Voice			
Words Used			

What do we really HEAR?

Tone: Expression of feelings or emotions

Inflection: Emphasis of words and syllables to enhance the message

Pitch: How high or deep the voice sounds

Rate: The number of words spoken per minute

Volume: How loud or soft the voice sounds



Communication Basics

Instructions: In small groups, discuss the following questions. Select a member of your group to share with the others a summary of your responses.

Questions	Responses
<p>What types of communication do you use most throughout the day?</p>	
<p>What impact does this have on your interactions?</p>	
<p>What might your actual (or inferred) body language and tone of voice say to others?</p>	



Communication Barriers

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ambiguity of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differences in individual perceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Muddled messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor listening skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nonverbal messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stereotyping
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication overload	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time pressures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noise/interruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personalities

Which barriers do you think get in your way the most?



Breaking Down the Barriers

1. Ask Questions

Advantages:

2. Check Perception

Checking perception is one way to see if your interpretation is in line with the sender's intent. It is easy to do and prevents lots of miscommunication and misunderstanding.

- State your observation.
- State your interpretation.
- Ask for clarification/verification.

3. Listen Actively

Advantages:

The Three B Speaking Method

1. Be Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't beat around the bush.• Don't break the ice with fluff.• Remember that you have 30 seconds to get to the point.
2. Be Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use objective language.• Don't judge the situation; observe it.• Use facts.
3. Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check: How would you want others to treat your family?

Notes



Is There a Better Way to Say It?

Reword these statements to achieve more positive results.

1. You always frustrate me when . . .
2. You didn't do this right.
3. You fail to see what I mean.
4. You misinterpreted me.
5. You always seem to . . .
6. You are wrong about . . .

Is There a Better Way to Say It?

Phrases to Avoid

- *"Calm down."*
- *"You wouldn't [or don't] understand."*
- *"That was actually . . ."*
- *"With all due respect . . ."*
- *"In other words, you mean . . ."*
- *"No offense, but . . ."*
- *"To be honest . . ."*
- *"I don't mean to interrupt, but . . ."*
- *"I don't mean to be rude, but . . ."*
- *"I'm sorry, but . . ."*
- *"What's your problem?"*
- *"Let's agree to disagree . . ."*
- Buzz words (from the last book you read)
- Anything with "big words"

Notes



What Message Are You Sending?

Think of two people whom you know well and with whom you are comfortable—one individual from your personal life and one from your professional world. Seek feedback from these individuals on your body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

Focus on not getting defensive while they are providing feedback—just listen to what they have to say and use the information to make your communication better!

Element of Communication	What impact do you WANT it to have on your communication?	What is it that others see?	What impact does this have on the effectiveness of your communication (from their perspective)?
<u>Body Language:</u> The unspoken communication that goes on in every face-to-face encounter			
<u>Facial Expressions:</u> The messages that your facial expressions send			
<u>Tone of Voice:</u> The feelings or emotions you express in your speech			

Now that you have identified the impact that your body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice have, think about the elements of communication that you would like to change. What are they?

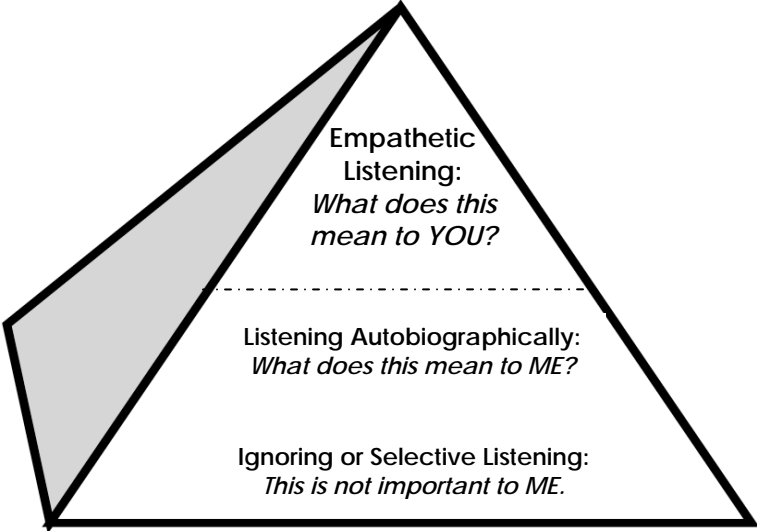
Be an ACTIVE Listener

Consider the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the proper distance/personal space. • Assess the room arrangement. • Minimize distractions: phones, computers, people, etc.
Consider Mental Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear the mind for listening. • Understand the speed of listening vs. talking. • Recognize short-term memory limitations.
Listen with Your Eyes and Ears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze body posture. • Interpret gestures. • Look for vocal cues. • Maintain eye contact.
Focus on Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize. • Paraphrase. • Ask for clarification. • Take notes.
Focus on Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen for ideas and concepts, not just facts. • Acknowledge emotion. • Avoid making judgments or jumping to conclusions. • Avoid becoming too emotional or challenging.
Ask Good Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask open- and closed-ended questions. • Ask empathetic questions. • Probe for deeper understanding.

Empathetic Listening

One of the biggest obstacles to effective communication is the tendency to respond to an individual from your own frame of reference. Typically, the response to something that someone says is autobiographical and falls into one of the categories below.

Recommendation	A response that offers advice, tells the talker what to do or what not to do, solves the problem, or does the thinking for the talker.
Probe	A response that asks for additional information in order to get a clear understanding before responding. Used to excess, the talker may feel "grilled."
Criticism	A response that results from a natural tendency to judge, approve, or disapprove of a message received.



Listening to *Understand*

Skill	Value	Possible Approaches
Acknowledging	When we acknowledge others, we let them know that we have really listened and care about what they are saying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "What you're saying is . . ." "I'm hearing you say . . ." "Let me give that back to you so we can make sure I got it."
Validating	When we validate other people, we let them know that they have the right to feel the way they do. Validating is NOT a judgment to say they are right or wrong for feeling that way, just that we can see things from their perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "You have every right to feel that way because . . ." "That's perfectly normal. It can be very upsetting when something like that happens." "I can see how you would feel that way." "It's okay to feel how you are feeling."



Empathetic Listening

Empathy (em' pe thee) *n.* identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another person.

Phrases that convey empathy:

- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
-
- **Be Open-Minded:** Let go of your assumptions, biases, and expectations.
 - **Think:** Mentally interact with the speaker's ideas or information.
 - **Clarify:** Ask questions to get more information and settle points that aren't clear for you.
 - **Confirm:** Offer summaries to check your understanding.



Communicating for Success . . . Identify Actions

Given the key messages of this session, how will you address your communication challenges . . .

. . . with your friends?	
. . . with your peers?	
. . . with your manager?	

About the Facilitator



Jeremy King, SPHR
Business Development Manager, FlashPoint
jking@FlashPointHR.com
317.221.2617

Jeremy King's human resource experience, primarily in training and development, spans more than ten years. He began his career in recruiting and supported various organizations in a seven-state territory. He also developed and launched a successful training and development service for PMI.

For five years Jeremy managed 26.2 Dynamics, Inc., his own customized training and development firm, serving clients throughout the United States and in Canada and Mexico. He has worked with many groups ranging from entry-level employees to Fortune 500 executives.

Jeremy has presented at various state conferences and Society for Human Resource Management chapters throughout Indiana, and he has facilitated training for several Indiana county leadership programs. His strong desire to help others fuels his passion for human resources.

Jeremy holds a bachelor's degree in management from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University–Indianapolis and is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). He is a member of the Kiwanis Club of Indianapolis, where he serves as chair for the Builders Club and co-chair of the Young Professionals; the Human Resource Association of Central Indiana; the Central Indiana chapter of the American Society for Training and Development; and the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce's ChamberAction. He is a former Big Brothers Big Sisters mentor and currently serves on the special events support team for Special Olympics Indiana. In recognition of Jeremy's services, the city of Greenwood presented him with the Outstanding Community Service Award.