“Communicate with Confidence”
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Congratulations on your decision to invest in you! This e-book will reveal to you thirty powerful and key communication concepts that could rock your business and personal relationships. Read them, think about them, and immediately apply them. After applying each of these lessons, you should see a vast improvement in your leadership skills, an increase in sales, and a greater sense of self-confidence, even in the most uncomfortable situations and in the stickiest relationships. Enjoy!

Lesson 1 - Not Going To Work

When placed in an awkward position, such as when someone

- asks you to do something,
- tells you their plans that include you,
- pressures you to join a group or take sides

and you'd prefer not doing any of those, the best response, spoken in your kindest tone, is

"I'm so sorry, but that's not going to work for me."

It's almost impossible to argue with that response. If they ask, "why not?," you can respond with a reason but make sure you end with, "so, as I'm sure you can understand, that's just not going to work for me."

Lesson 2 - Interrupting

Do you have someone in your life who talks non-stop? How about someone who is emotional, dramatic, or controlling? It's hard to communicate with someone who doesn't stop talking long enough to listen - in fact, it's almost impossible.

In order to be effective, communication must go both ways. To get the other person to stop talking long enough to hear what you have to say, very calmly and quietly

say their name, and repeat it every five seconds.
When someone hears their own name, they will usually stop talking and, in most cases, say "what?" You now have their attention.

Lesson 3 - Why?

When someone asks you a question that is too personal, none of their business, or simply one you'd prefer not to answer, respond with

"Hmm, that's an interesting question. Why do you ask?"

Any question that begins with the word "why" will put the other person on the defensive. They will feel the need to justify why they asked you the original question. It's kind of like a verbal volley - they throw a heavy medicine ball at you, and now you've just thrown it back at them. And you did it without compromising your power by answering a question that was too personal.

Lesson 4 - When You Forget a Name

More than likely, you've been in a situation where you run into someone you've met before, you think you should remember their name, but somehow just can't bring it to mind. You may have tried to fake your way through it ('Hi, how are youuuuuuu?') You may have even avoided the person in order not to embarrass yourself.

The two polite, authentic, and recommended approaches to handling the situation are as follows:

1. Reintroduce yourself by simply stating your name. This shows the other person that you are concerned for them, as you have provided them an "out" in case they can't remember your name as well.

"Hi. Ann Vertel. Good to see you again."

Most people will respond by reintroducing themselves as well. Now both of you can get reacquainted and neither of you need to feel embarrassed. You've even made them look good because they can say, "Of course I remember you, Ann!"

2. Simply say,

"Please tell me your name again."

Hardly anyone will be insulted by this direct and honest approach because they've all been in the situation themselves. In fact, they'll respect you for dealing with an uncomfortable situation in such a mature manner.

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**Lesson 5 - Statements vs. Questions**

If you have ever tried to have a conversation with a teenager, you have experienced maximum frustration. Not being prone to volunteer information, they usually wait for adults to initiate discussions. Unfortunately the way most adults go about this is by asking a series of questions. The more cryptic the answers, the more questions get asked. Frustrated, the adult begins to "quiz" the teenager using closed-ended questions (those that can be answered with "yes," "no," or "I don't know."). This often ends by spiraling downward until they both give up.

Questions, particularly the wrong questions (more on that later!), can put people on the defensive. We ask questions because we want to know information, which means the other person is in a vulnerable spot.

A more effective and "psychologically safe" way to have and hold a discussion with someone we truly want to engage is to make statements instead of asking questions.

"School seems to be giving you some stress."
"Your new job must be very challenging."
"It appears that you are looking forward to next week's presentation."

This gives the other person the option of responding or not. In most cases they will respond - and they can do so without feeling interrogated. If you make a habit of using this skill, they will learn that you respect them, their ideas, and their feelings. They will begin to trust you with sensitive information. They may even tell you more than you ever thought possible.

**Lesson 6 - Descriptive Feedback**

In a conversation where you want to ensure that the other person feels "psychologically safe," you will probably make more statements than you will ask questions. This allows the other person to state opinions and thoughts without feeling quizzed or interrogated.

One of the best types of statements to make is called "descriptive feedback." This is simply stating what you see, what you notice, without any value judgment (opinion, judgment, evaluation, criticism) attached.

A number of years ago I had an experience that was one of the most powerful examples of how effective descriptive feedback can be. A friend of mine had been having marital problems for some time. As we were talking I simply said,

"I notice that you are no longer wearing your wedding band."

The impact was amazing. They immediately broke down in tears and collapsed onto the table where we were talking. I was stunned.
Take a look at the statement I used. It is simply a description of what I saw. I gave no opinion and I didn't ask a question. Why is "descriptive feedback" so powerful? Because in polite society we are trained not to mention things we notice if it makes either party uncomfortable. Remember the last time someone was standing in front of you with tears welling up in their eyes and you chose not to say anything to indicate you had noticed? When we notice, and we describe what we see, we acknowledge and validate the other person in a very powerful way. Imagine how quickly someone would connect with you, how profoundly you would feel "seen," if they noticed and said,

"I see you have tears in your eyes."
"Your hands are shaking and your lip is quivering."
"You were shaking your head while you were on the phone."
"Your mouth is smiling but your eyes are red."

Describe what you see and they will feel seen.

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**Lesson 7 - Reflecting Feelings**

Remember the last time you asked someone, "What's wrong?" In most cases, their response was probably, "nothing." Don't they know you care? Don't they know you're just trying to help? Well, maybe and maybe not. If there really is something bothering them, they are unlikely to open up to you if they feel interrogated.

Counselors use a powerful skill in getting their patients to talk about issues that are painful, scary, or deeply personal. It is called a "reflection of feeling." When you reflect back to someone what they are feeling, you meet them right where they are emotionally. You've connected with them, they don't feel quite so alone with this feeling, and they know that you have an understanding of what is going on with them.

To reflect what someone is feeling, simply state what you believe and observe the other person is feeling, and do this in the form of a statement, not a question.

"You seem frustrated."
"You appear to be disappointed."
"You look like you've had a tough day."

What if you get the feeling wrong? No problem. They will usually say something like, "no, not frustrated, just a little worried." In some cases they may not be able to put their finger on exactly what it is they are feeling but, if you get it right, there will be an instant connection. There are many different feelings out there - try to get it exactly right (scared, abandoned, humiliated, nervous, hopeful).

One word of caution. Only do this with someone you truly want to engage in conversation and only when you have the time to do so. If they open up to you, you'll need to be there to catch them. When I first learned this skill, I tried practicing it on a grocery store check-out lady with
disastrous results. She stopped everything she was doing, broke down in tears, and began to tell me every detail of her impending divorce. Use this skill wisely.

Lesson 8 - Anger

Anger is usually a cover for fear or pain. In fact, anger is not really a feeling at all. It is actually a behavioral reaction to a feeling. The underlying feeling is very often something a little subtler. We may actually feel hurt, abandoned, humiliated, shocked, disappointed, embarrassed, impatient, lonely, apprehensive, worried, anxious, scared, or helpless. All of those feelings, and many more, can lead us to react by being mad. The deeper the true feeling, the stronger the behavioral reaction.

For instance, you might appear mildly irritated if someone stands you up but you may explode into a rage if someone harms your child. The intensity of the reaction matches the intensity of the underlying feeling.

Unfortunately, many people never put their finger on the actual feeling. Reacting to deep-seated feelings with anger may just become a habit. The only "feelings" they know of are mad, sad, and glad. The next time you feel your blood boiling, see if you can identify the actual feeling being hidden by the anger. You will be far more able to respond to the true issue if you can look beyond the anger.

Lesson 9 - "I" Statements

In any discussion where there is conflict

- a disagreement with your spouse
- disciplining a teenager
- pointing out the behavior of a consultant that needs to change

you will always come from a position of strength when you use "I" statements because you are owning your own thoughts and feelings. The other person will feel less threatened and defensive. Because they don't need to expend mental energy on defending themselves, they will be more likely to listen to what you are saying. This means a better chance of resolving the issue for both of you.

So, what's an "I" statement? It is a statement that begins with "I feel..." followed by the actual feeling you are experiencing.

Now, a word of caution. If you follow any of those three openings with the word "that," it is no longer about you, it becomes your opinion about someone else. It's essentially the same as saying "You..." A big no-no. Look at the difference:
"You never listen to me." (about them)
or
"I feel that you never listen to me." (still about them)

"I feel ignored." (about you)

There is tremendous power in stating your case in a non-accusatory manner. You will be stunned at the response you get. Give it a try.

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Lesson 10 - Advice

We've all heard that we should not give advice unless someone asks for it. The follow-up is that, in almost every case, we should also not give advice when someone \emph{does} ask for it. "What do you mean? Someone just asked me for my advice, shouldn't I tell them what to do?" Not exactly.

Think about the last time you really didn't know what to do. I'm not talking about the last time you asked for help. I mean a time when you \emph{truly} had no idea what to do. There have probably been only several occasions in your life when that was the case. In most cases, when we ask others for their advice, what we are really looking for is their confirmation or permission or opposing opinion.

Most of us are fully capable of solving our own problems. And we usually know the right answer and know what we should do. (Knowing what to do and actually doing it are two different things. It's like ethics. Ethics are easy. It's the execution of ethics that is difficult.) Therapists have known for years that it is actually disrespectful to tell a patient what to do and it keeps their patients powerless over their own lives. So when someone asks for your advice or opinion, they probably already know the right answer. Perhaps they want to hear that you would do the same thing. Maybe they value your approval. Or maybe they asked you because they know you have a differing viewpoint and arguing the issue with you will help them solidify their own position.

In all of these cases, when someone asks you, "What do you think I should do?" your best response is one of the following:

\begin{quote}
"That's an interesting dilemma. What are you thinking of doing?"
"I'm not really sure. What do you think?"
\end{quote}

They will usually respond by telling you the solution to their problem. They already know it. If you can help them to express it by asking questions, you will have shown them an enormous amount of respect and helped them claim their own power.
Lesson 11 - Autobiographical Responses

When we listen to someone, especially someone very close to us, our response is based on our own reference points. We base this on our own experience, our opinions, our values, and our feelings. Imagine a business associate telling you that they are planning a particular strategy or a friend confiding something deeply personal. Your response will probably be from your frame of reference and not theirs.

However, the fastest way to discourage further communication with that person is to respond from your frame of reference. In other words, autobiographically:

"When I was in a similar situation..." (experience)
"That's not right..." (values)
"I think that..." (opinions)
"I'm afraid that..." (feelings)

Listen merely to understand. Hear them exactly where they are. Become aware of how you interpret, evaluate, and give advice. Ask open-ended questions and catch their perspective.

Lesson 12 - I Need

Telling someone what to do - a child, an employee, a friend, a spouse - can be met with resistance, stubbornness, defensiveness, and downright rebellion. Instead of giving an order, such as, "Put those things away" say,

"I need for you to put those things away."
or
"I would like for you to be back by noon."
or
"I would like for you to organize these files."
or
"I need for you to understand that..."

Instead of giving an order, you are expressing a need that you would like fulfilled. This makes the request about you, and not the other person. Because of that, they are less likely to feel defensive.

Phrasing requirements in the form of a need or desire is a subtle, yet extremely powerful shift in the way to communicate. It is also much more respectful. Those around you will be likely to comply willingly because they feel they have a choice - people are much less defensive when not backed into a corner.
Lesson 13 - How Do You Mean

When you are looking for amplifying information to what someone just said, one of the best responses is to ask the question,

"How do you mean?" or "How do you mean, exactly?"

Note that the first word is how and not what. The word "how" asks for further information while the word "what" can put the other person on the defensive. Asking, "How do you mean?" gives the person you are talking with the opportunity to explain, in further detail, their side of an issue. You now have the opportunity to listen even more effectively in order to understand their position. In communication, the desire to deeply understand the other person, and form a well thought-out position, is one of your most effective tools. Without it, you merely engage in debate over well staked-out positions.

This question, "How do you mean?" is powerful in personal relationships, in a sales situation, at social gatherings, in networking - anywhere you want to truly deepen your level of communication.

Lesson 14 - Their Opinion

Notice the next time someone asks you for your opinion on any given subject. After you have told them what you think, they will usually respond by telling you what they think about the topic. When they asked for your opinion, they were probably just being polite. Essentially, it gives them an excuse to tell you what's on their mind or engage you in a debate.

I have found it is much more efficient, and less frustrating for me, if when they ask for my opinion I simply say,

"Hmm, that's an interesting topic. What do you think?"

They will usually proceed to tell me their thoughts, happy for the opportunity to be heard on the subject, and I don't get pulled into a debate. The next time someone asks for your opinion, and you don't necessarily want to voice it, simply give them permission to tell you theirs.

Lesson 15 - How They Met

One of the best conversation starters is to ask a married woman,

"How did you get engaged?"

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In almost every case she will smile, look at her ring, and then tell you "It's a long story." But she'll go on to tell you all about it. We love remembering happy times in our lives and being proposed to usually ranks right up there in our top ten of happiest days on the planet!

When she tells you the story, listen carefully. She is letting you in to a very special and personal part of her world. You will learn more about her from her answer than from just about any other question you could ask.

This is a powerful technique when talking with a couple, either at a social function (my favorite party question!) or in a business negotiation. Ask them,

"How did you two meet?"

Once again, in almost every case, they will each smile, look at each other, and one of them (or both!) will tell you the story. Just sit back and listen. It's a powerful insight into the people you are with - a window to their heart!

Lesson 16 - Compassionate Communication

Mature communication means being both direct and compassionate. Direct in order to respect your needs and desires and compassionate in order to respect the needs and desires of others. There are four steps to doing this effectively:

(1) State the behavior you actually observe. This would be something you saw, noticed, heard, or imagined.

"When I noticed..."

(2) Express your true feelings.

"I felt..."

Be careful not to follow "I felt..." with like, that, it, as if, you, he, she, they, or I. If you do, what tends to follow are not your feelings, but thoughts, evaluations, judgments, or criticism.

(3) State your unmet need or want.

"Because I was... (hoping, wishing, wanting, needing)"

(4) Make a request the other person can do or take action on.
"Now I would like you to tell me...(what you heard me say, what you wish had happened, how you feel about looking for a solution, if this sounds reasonable, your thoughts and feelings on this.)

Lesson 17 - You Understand

Follow up any statement you make, when you don't want to debate a point or get into an argument, with the phrase,

"...you understand."

For instance, if the person you are talking to wants you to volunteer on a committee and you would prefer not to do so, you would say,

"No thank you. I'm already involved in a number of things so I won't be able to dedicate the time it deserves. You understand."

It's almost impossible for the other person to argue this point as they certainly aren't going to say that no, they don't understand. They may, however, continue to try and convince you - "It'll be so much fun you just have to do it" - but your response is simply to restate your position,

"Yes I'm sure it would be, but I just won't be able to. I'm sure you understand and respect my position.

Lesson 18 – Reacting vs. Responding

There is a world of difference between "reacting" and "responding." Fundamentally it means where we place power - external to us or within us.

When we react to another person, a situation, or circumstance, our behavior is based entirely on our feelings. It is best not to run a business or a household or a friendship based on how we feel at that very moment.

Reacting means we are at the mercy of circumstances. We don't think, we just "blow up." Our behavior is driven by those around us, and that means we have given up our power.

- someone cuts us off in traffic
- someone says something rude or untrue
- our child breaks a dish or spills a drink
- a consultant doesn't do what she promised
**Responding** means choice. We still *feel* the same way we do when we react, but our behavior is not based on our feelings. It is based on how we *choose* to deal with the situation based on what we know will be the most effective in the long run. Choice gives us power. Choice gives us control. React and lose it. Respond and claim it!

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**Lesson 19 - How to Get Off the Phone**

The best way to end a conversation with someone on the phone is to say,

"It has been so wonderful talking with you."

You can go on to say "Thanks so much for calling me today!" if they were the one who called. This effectively ends the conversation and is a subtle signal to the caller that the call is coming to a close.

You can do the same thing when you want to end a conversation with someone in person.

"It has been so wonderful seeing you today."
or
"I'm so glad we ran into each other, it's been great catching up."
and
"Tell Bob and the kids hello for me."

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**Lesson 20 - Remembering Names**

Think of the last time you were introduced to someone new, and within a matter of seconds completely forgot his or her name. More than likely you will say that you are "no good at remembering names." Few people will say they are very good at it. But those who are have figured out the *true* skill required.

Lots of people have tried memory aids such as acronyms or thinking of an object that sounds like the person's name. These "tricks" work only sometimes and only for certain names.

We are capable of remember huge amounts of information - if it is important to us. Think of long mathematical equations, phone numbers, addresses, and statistical data. The problem in remembering names is not the name itself. The issue is not one of memory but one of focus.

When we meet someone for the first time, we tend to be wrapped up in our own thoughts - will they like me? am I dressed right? do I sound smart? what do they think of me? - The *true* skill to remembering anything is to completely focus on what you are hearing. That means you must suspend your ego, get out of your own head, and become incredibly fascinated with the person.
you are meeting. Each person you meet is a like opening a new door. Focus on *them* and you will have no trouble remembering their name.

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**Lesson 21 - Repeat**

When someone wants you to do something on their time schedule, and it doesn't fit with yours, explain to them what will for you, be firm in your position, and repeat your position as long as necessary.

For example, someone wants you to complete a project for them by Tuesday. You've carefully assessed your schedule and have determined that the earliest you can complete the project is Wednesday at noon. You would say,

"I can't have it done by Tuesday but I can have it for you by noon on Wednesday."

They may press their need for Tuesday but your response is always a repeat of the same statements. No matter how many times they demand, implore, cajole, bargain or plead with you, if you truly can't have it done until noon on Wednesday, then you would continue to repeat the statements.

With this communication technique, you maintain your personal power and show respect for both the other person and for yourself. You recognize that to bend to their demands, would be disrespectful to yours.

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**Lesson 22 - Hecklers**

As your leadership grows, so will your opportunities to speak in front of a group - large or small. At some point along the way, you will meet with someone in your audience who is actually trying to disrupt, distract, or destroy your talk - a heckler. You can use your body very effectively to deal with individuals who are disruptive in a group, meeting, classroom, or audience setting. And it won't even look like you were bothered at all!

When standing and talking in a group, if someone is talking on the side, making rude comments, or otherwise being a distraction, continue with what you are saying as if you don't even notice. As you are talking, walk slowly near them, all the while not looking at them. As you get closer, you will notice that they tend to quiet down.

In some cases, you may need to stand directly next to them as you continue to talk to the group. In one case, I even had to lean on an individual's chair before they got the hint!
After they are quiet, you can then move away. The nice thing about this technique is that the rest of the group, as well as the individual, never even realize that this person disturbed you. You prevented a confrontation with them. And you handled the situation in a way that honored and respected the dignity of everyone involved.

Lesson 23 - Territory

When we hear the term body language, most of us immediately think of things like eye contact, posture, and gestures. In this case, we are looking at how to use our body to convey a power position. These techniques convey your position as a power player in any room:

- when given the choice between sitting on a sofa or a chair, always choose the chair. If the chair is an upright one, versus a deep, soft one, all the better.

- if given the option, sit to the right of the host or person of highest "rank" in a group. The position on the right is where VIPs would sit in a formal setting.

- if you are in a negotiation with someone, place a personal article, like a purse, cell phone, or planner, on that person's desk or over the center line of the table that separates you.

- when listening, place your hands together in front of you with just your fingertips touching. The higher you place your hand, even up in front of your chin, the greater position of power you will appear to have.

- when listening, don't nod your head or show a lot of facial expressions.

Watch others in group and negotiation settings (business lunches, meetings, etc.) and notice which of the people you assume has the most power. You should observe that they are the ones who seem unruffled, calm, quiet, and poised. They don't fidget, shuffle papers, or try to please. They are in control of themselves and because of that, are often in control of the entire situation.

Lesson 24 - Feel, Felt, Found

You have found yourself in a conversation with someone whose opinion is different than yours. When it is your turn to speak, following this format will help keep the conversation mature, professional, and productive. This format is called:

"Feel, Felt, Found"

As an example, it would go something like this.
"I can certainly understand that you must feel disappointed and upset that you weren't selected for that position. I felt that same way several years ago when I didn't receive my bonus. What I found is that if I gave myself a limited time to be sad, like 48 hours, I was able to be productive again at the end of the deadline."

It is a way to acknowledge and validate the other person's feelings. They will be much more likely to listen to you when they feel you have heard them. It lets them know that you have been in a similar situation and can relate. And then it reorients them toward a solution - something you found to have worked - in order to move forward from a place where they may be stuck.

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**Lesson 25 - Silence**

Have you ever been in a meeting or a group and noticed one person who is not talking but merely sitting and listening? There is a point at which the energy shifts and someone invariably says,

"So, Ann, what do you think?"

At this point, everyone turns to listen to what that person says.

The power of silence cannot be overemphasized. You've seen it for yourself. The person who talks least appears wise, thoughtful, intelligent, and powerful. If you are usually the first to talk, be quiet at your next meeting. Sit and listen. You'll be fascinated at the dynamics of the group. You'll take in more information. Restrain yourself from jumping into the conversation. Wait for that turning point when someone asks for your thoughts. Smile and pause. Then state your ideas calmly. You'll be amazed at the effect.

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**Lesson 26 - Group Dynamics**

When in a group of five or less, most people with continue to state their own opinions and beliefs, even if the rest of the group disagrees. However, as the number increases to six or more, people are more willing to subjugate their personal beliefs to that of the group as a collective whole. Why? Because they believe the group must be right or that the group must know something the individual doesn't know.

When looking for feedback and participation from individuals in a group setting, break the large group into smaller groups of five or less people. The energy and volume in the room will increase. Approach the smaller groups one at a time or have someone from each group report back to the larger group. This technique works especially well when you are in the classroom, making a presentation, doing training, or holding a meeting.
Lesson 27 - Public Speaking

Most people place Speaking in Public as #1 on their list of stressful things to do. The reason is because we are absolutely and completely "in our own head" as we get up to speak.

"Am I dressed right?"
"What if I forget my speech?"
"How will I remember to smile enough?"
"What if they don't like me?"...

Before I speak in public, I take several deep breaths. This allows me to become aware of how strong my heart is beating! I exhale slowly and picture a sign floating above the head of everyone in the audience that says,

"What's in it for me?"

You see, the truth is that your audience is not concerned about how you look, how you're dressed, or whether you stumble over your words. Your audience simply wants to benefit from having listened to you. Give them value. Concentrate on what they need, what would delight them, on a tool they can walk away with and improve their life with that very day. Pay attention to them, not on what you think that they think of you. Serve them, not your ego.

Lesson 28 - We Haven't Met Yet

Walking up to a complete stranger and beginning a conversation can cause even the most confident person to feel a little queasy. The most simple, direct, and comfortable thing to say is,

"Hello, we haven't met yet. My name is (Ann Vertel)."

The person to whom you have just introduced yourself will then say hello and introduce themselves as well, usually grateful that someone else did it first. Invariably, because you took the risk to start the conversation, they will feel the need to keep it going and will begin with small talk or will ask you a question. The conversation is off and running.

This technique works with everyone, and is best appreciated by those people who are most timid in social or business gatherings.

Lesson 29 - Alternative to Punishment

When someone does something to frustrate, anger, or disappoint you, making them feel wrong will be non-productive. Your goal would be to ensure that they don't repeat the behavior, not to punish them. This is best done in a 3-step process:

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1. Express how you feel without attacking them.
2. State what you expect.
3. Give them a way to "make it right."

Examples:

"I'm disappointed that you are late. When we agree on an appointment time, I expect you to arrive on time. In the future, please call me at least an hour ahead of time so that I can reschedule or make other plans."

"I'm angry that you left the windows down in the car and it got soaked in the rain. I expect my car to be returned in the same condition as when you borrowed it. What the car seats need now is a good wipe down with a thick towel."

Lesson 30 - Praise

Try this little experiment. Consider your reaction to hearing these comments:

1. You always dress so nicely.
2. You are always so organized.
3. Wow, you really are a good runner.
4. You are such a good director.

While each of these statements of praise are meant well, you probably discovered as you were reading them that they also brought up some uncomfortable reactions. You may not believe the person giving you the praise. You may have immediately denied or dismissed the comment as untrue. You may have even doubted your own abilities and focused on your weaknesses. (What would she think if she saw how I was dressed yesterday? What if she saw how messy my office is?) So what is going on here?

Words that evaluate - such as good, beautiful, nice, smart, wonderful - can actually make the other person uncomfortable. For praise to be effective as well as appreciated, it must describe instead of evaluate or offer a value judgment. My 5- year-old daughter asked me what I thought of her most recent art project. My first reaction was to say, "It's wonderful!" However, I decided to test the lesson above and said, "I see you used the color yellow quite a bit and glued on lots of feathers." To my delight, she said, "I know, that's because I'm really good at art!" Here's how it works:

1. Describe what you see.
2. Describe how this makes you feel.
3. Use a one-word description to sum up the behavior.
Examples:

"I see you spent two solid hours a day getting new leads. I feel pleased that you took your business and your weekly goals so seriously. You took some risks even though you felt uncomfortable - that's what I call discipline!"

"I see a table set for dinner, a swept floor and an empty dishwasher. It's a pleasure to walk into this kitchen. You cleaned the breakfast dishes, wiped down the counters and took out the trash - that's initiative."

After hearing this type of description, the person can then praise them self! Think of it this way. If someone evaluates what you've done you can disagree with them. If they describe it, you can be the one to evaluate it!

Congratulations! By now, you have learned that mature communication, built on a foundation of mutual respect, is best when both direct AND compassionate. Use this information wisely and remember that knowledge is only potential power. Knowledge and action are power. Apply what you've learned here, set personal boundaries in your relationships, and watch your communication skills blossom! Wishing you the best of success!

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