

# Communication Essentials

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# Introduction

- Communication is the mother's milk of partnerships.
- Why is it so challenging?

# Partnerships - Theory vs. Practice

## ■ Theory:

### ◆ Quality Programs attract Quality People

- ★ People have common interests and goals
- ★ They're knowledgeable, connected, articulate, and responsive to the needs of the organization
- ★ They have significant experience and success in collaborative efforts

# Partnerships - Theory vs. Practice

## ■ Practice

- ◆ People have widely different interests and goals
- ◆ Significant diversity in individuals, often with limited knowledge and skills
- ◆ Many people have difficulty translating prior experiences and successes to a partnership environment (e.g. they are “novices”)

# Communication Topics -- my goals

- Ensuring Good Communication
- Types of Communication
- Shared Decision Making
- 10 ways to say “No”
- Complaining w/o Blaming
- Facilitated Communications
- Have fun

# How can we ensure good communication?

- Structure, Frequency, and Quality
- Regularly scheduled meetings or conference calls
- Schedules/calendars reflect importance of the topic

# Good Communication

- Structure for “touching base”
- Association and agency liaisons demonstrate leadership, maintain the excitement of the collaboration, resolve issues, and advance the work
- How does this relate to you?

# Types of Communication

## Formal Communication

### ■ Verbal

- ◆ courteous,
- ◆ diplomatic and
- ◆ emphasizes the positive

# Types of Communication

## Formal Communication

- Written: Clear, not subject to interpretation
  - ◆ Governance documents, financials, roles & responsibilities
  - ◆ Mission, vision and values statements
  - ◆ Director meeting agendas, minutes, committee reports
  - ◆ Strategic and operating plans, insurance policies
  - ◆ Program descriptions and evaluation metrics
  - ◆ Web sites and marketing materials
  - ◆ Correspondence: internal & external
  
- How does this relate to you?

# Types of Communication

## Formal-Written

- **Vision:** Create an image of the future, the ideal future state
- **Mission:** Translate the vision into the specific tasks and purpose of the organization
- **Values:** Beliefs or judgments about what is worthy, important and desirable and reflected thru the organization's behavior
- How does this relate to you?

# Informal Communication

## Verbal

- Physical structures are key
- Shared facilities can help:
  - ◆ Parking Lots
  - ◆ Water Coolers
  - ◆ Break Rooms
  - ◆ Hallways
  - ◆ Offices
- Goal is “Face Time”
- How does this relate to you?

# Electronic Communication

- Voice Mail
- Email
- Text Messaging
- Fax
- Cell
- Others?

# Exercise: What is your preferred communication style?

Goal: Talking with a partner who you know, determine their preferred communication style

- Fill out all four quadrants on the sheet with what you think your partner's preferred communication style is
- Compare responses
  - ◆ Are your preferred styles the same as your partners?
  - ◆ Did you learn anything new?

# Shared Decision Making

- What? Consulting with partner on major decisions
- Why? Involving in the decision making process yields buy-in
- Looks like: inviting your partner to:
  - ★ be a member on a hiring panel
  - ★ staff meetings
  - ★ planning meetings
  - ★ budget planning sessions

■ How does this relate to you?

# Exercise: “It’s not what you said, it’s how you said it”

- 10 ways to say “No” (exercise)

# “Constructive” Criticism

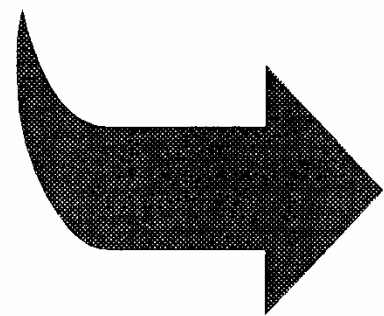
- Constructive criticism does not work
- Complaints
  - ◆ describes the problem-w/o pointing a finger
  - ◆ Labels your feelings
- Criticism = a complaint + accusation
  - ◆ Often include “You always...”, “You should ...” or “You never ...”
  - ◆ Disparaging and judgmental; damages self-worth and relationships

# “complaining w/o blaming”

- How to complain w/o blame
  1. Be calm and neutral in your tone when stating observations. Be non-judgmental.
  2. Focus on the situation. Do not draw in the past. Describe what you see. Express feelings in an unbiased manner.
  3. Identify the needs/problems that you see (not personal shortcomings) and connect solutions by providing resources, (not condemnation).
  4. Keep your mind open and flexible. Let go of your desire to have a particular outcome. (People resent having their behavior manipulated and directed by others.)

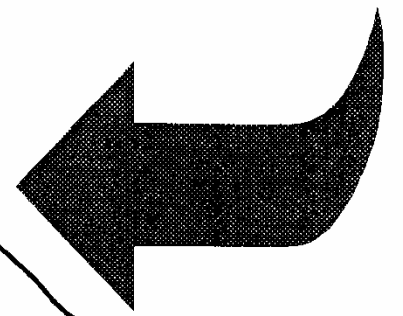
# COMMUNICATION IN THE MEDIATION PROCESS

WHAT YOU SEE ...



**The  
EVENT**

WHAT YOU GET ...



**PERCEPTIONS**

ASSUMPTIONS

**VALUES**

COMMUNICATION STYLE

**ATTITUDES**

*FEELINGS*

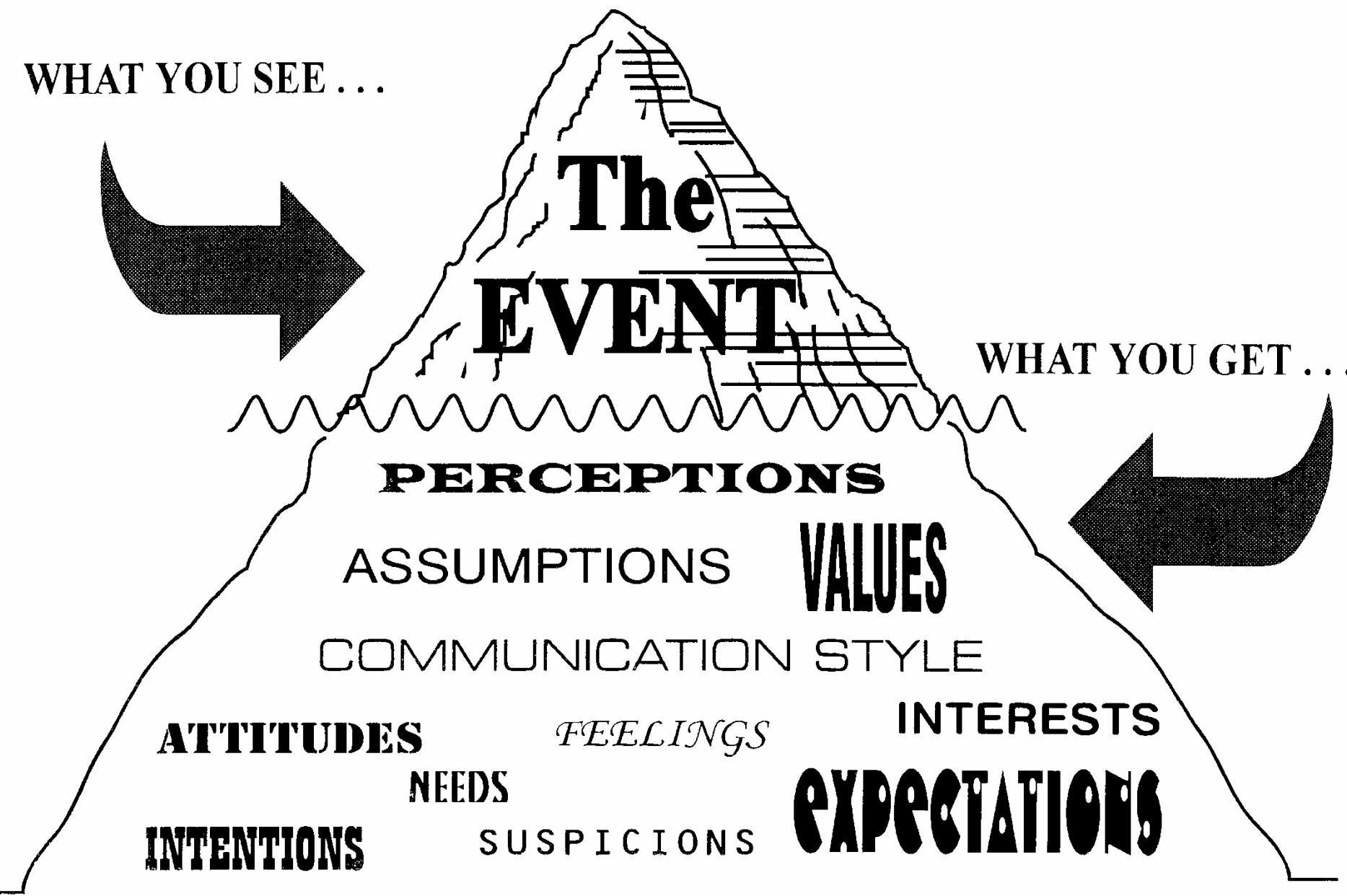
**INTERESTS**

NEEDS

**EXPECTATIONS**

**INTENTIONS**

SUSPICIONS



# What to remember from this?

- We are all imperfect people & miscommunication happens.
- When it does, what will be your response?
- Ensuring good communication takes effort. It is not automatic.
- Different communication types may be more appropriate at different times.
- Shared decision making can build support
- Remember the 10 ways to say “No”
- Strive to complain without blame
- Facilitated communication is useful for groups, emotional, or complex issues

# Next Steps

- What can you do to communicate more effectively with your partner?

Thank you for all that you are doing  
for the Oregon State Parks!