Anthem®
Employee Assistance Program

Communication in the Workplace

State of Indiana
Staff Training

This presentation is offered for informational purposes only. It is an overview, created and provided to stimulate a dialogue. It is not intended as a legal opinion or advice. Please contact your Legal Department for legal advice.

In Colorado: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc.
In Indiana: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.
In Kentucky: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky, Inc.
In Nevada: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc.
In Ohio: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Community Insurance Company.
In Virginia: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc.
Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.
®Registered marks Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Overview:

Communication in the Workplace

- Preparations
- Introductions

I. Understanding Communication: Grapevine Exercise

II. Key Components
   A. Listening
   B. Non-Verbal Messages
   C. Levels of Communication
      1. Building Relationship
      2. Levels
         a. Cliché
         b. Facts
         c. Opinions
         d. Feelings
         e. "Peak" Experience

III. Mechanisms and Styles

IV. Electronic Age
   A. E-Mail
   B. Voicemail

V. Barriers to Effective Communication

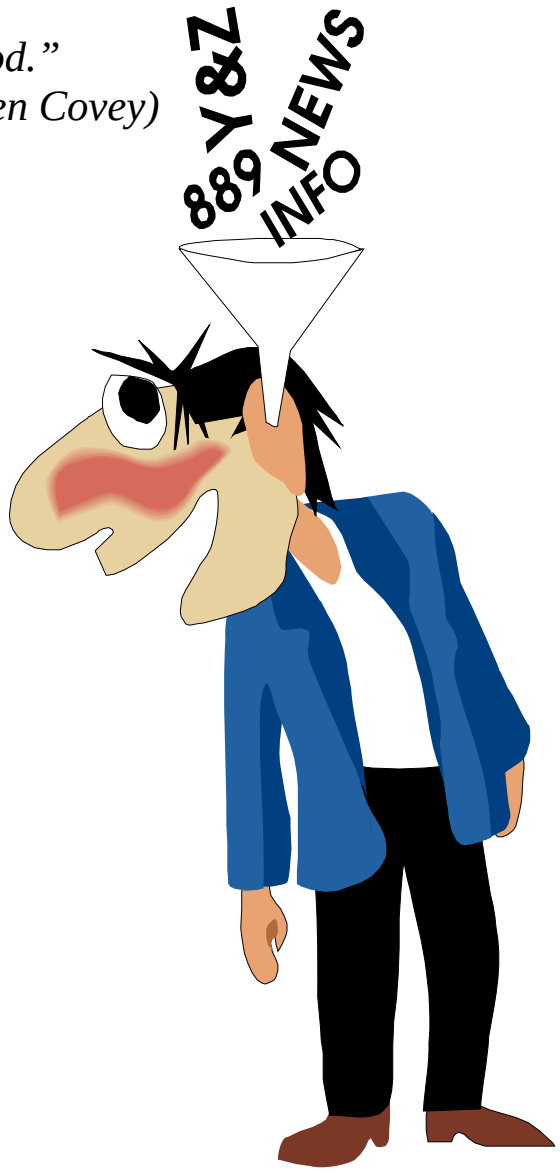
VI. Wrap-Up
   A. Questions and Answers (Discussion)
   B. Distribute EAP Business Cards

VII. Evaluations

Communication Skills

ACTIVE LISTENING

"Seek first to understand, then to be understood."
(Stephen Covey)



How well do you listen?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. How well do you pay attention to what others are saying?
2. How able are you to suspend judgment of others' stories?
3. How well are you able to not react from your feelings of fear, anger, etc.?
4. How able are you to really hear what others are trying to say to you?
5. How able are you to "feed back" what you heard to others?

Recognizing Non-Verbal Communication

	Passive/Manipulative	Assertive	Aggressive
General	Actions instead of words, hoping someone will guess what you need Looking as if you don't mean what you say	Attentive listening Assured manner Communicating caring and strength	Exaggerated show of strength Flippant, sarcastic style
Voice	Weak, hesitant, soft	Firm, warm, relaxed	Tense, shrill, loud, shaky, cold, "deadly quiet," demanding, superior, authoritative
Eyes	Averted, downcast, teary, pleading	Open, frank, direct Eye-to-eye contact, but not staring	Expressionless, narrowed, cold, staring, not really "seeing" you
Stance	Lean for support, twisted	Well balanced, straight on, "at ease"	Hands on hips, feet apart
Posture	Stooped, "shrunken," sagging, excessive head nodding	Facing others, standing straight, relaxed	Stiff and rigid, rude, invading someone else's space
Hands	Fidgety, fluttery, clammy	Relaxed, warm, smooth motions	Clenched, abrupt gestures, finger-pointing, fist pounding
Feet	Shuffling, restless motions, feet tucked under the chair, toed-in, swinging back and forth	Relaxed, comfortable position	Tapping, firmly planted

Recognizing Verbal Communication

Passive/Manipulative

- Apologetic Words
- Veiled meanings
- Hedging
- Failure to come to the point
- Rambling; disconnected
- At a loss for words
- Failure to say what you really mean
- “I mean…” “You know?…”

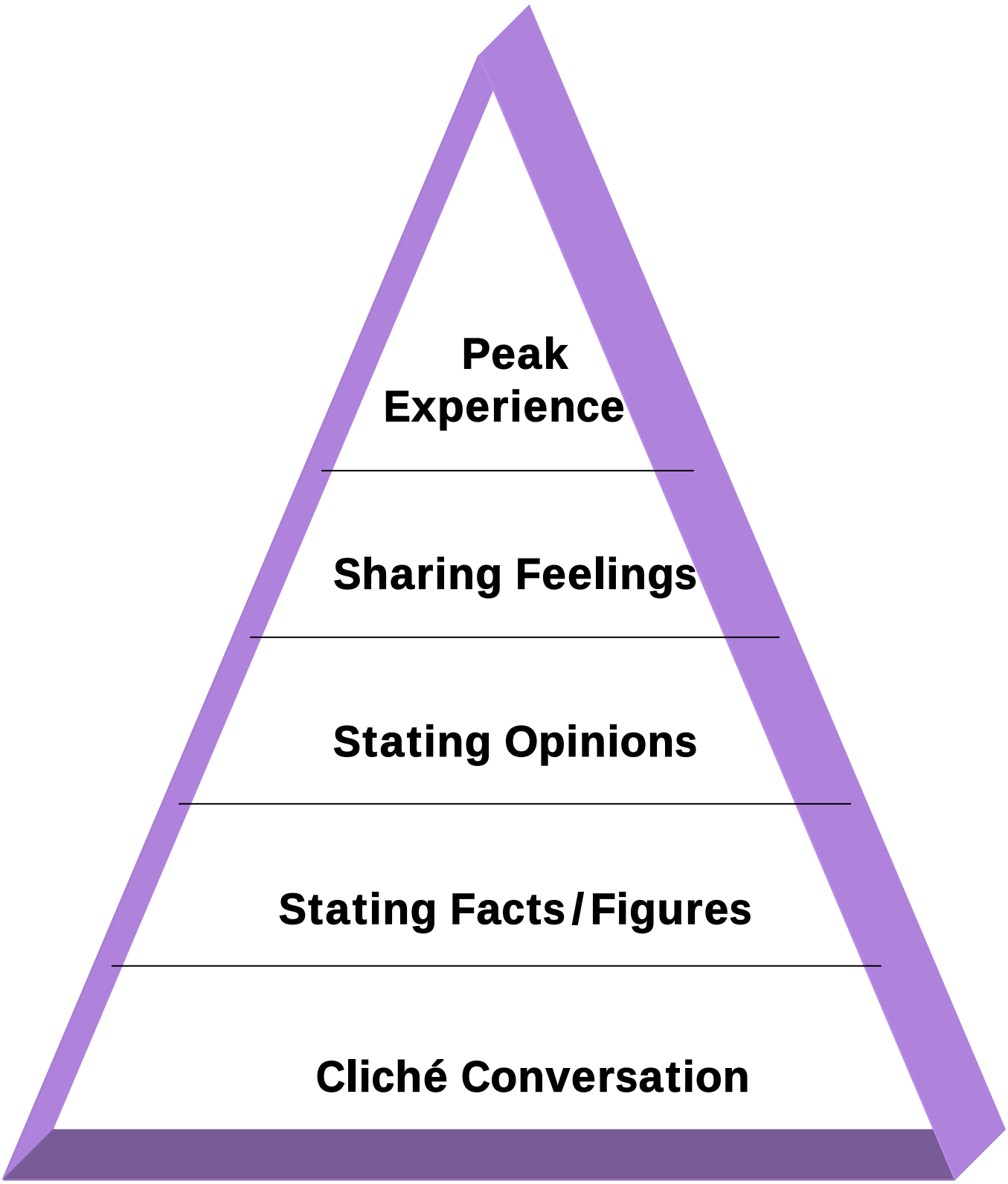
Assertive

- Statement of wants
- Honest statement of feelings
- Objective words
- Direct statements which say what you mean
- “I” messages

Aggressive

- “Loaded” words
- Accusations
- Descriptive, subjective
- Imperious words
- Superior words
- “You” messages

Levels of Communication



Effective Voice Mail

How to leave a message that is sure to be heard

Sample Script:

Hello, this is *(your name)* with *(company)*, at *(your phone number).*

I am calling about *(briefly name topic).*

I need *(specific request for action, piece of information, etc.)*, and I will need that by *(give specific deadline).*

I can be reached *(give 2 or 3 specific windows of time when you can be reached in person, or instructions on how you can be paged)*, at *(your phone number, again).*

Tips:

1. Listeners often "scan" the first 3 seconds of the message before skipping on to the next. Get to the point quickly!

2. If you develop a reputation for leaving long-winded messages, you may discover that people begin to skip over your message as soon as they hear your voice!

3. Be sure to mention your company, especially if you have a common first name. Although it may be a blow to your ego, the listener may have difficulty discerning which "Chris" left a message.

4. Always leave your phone number; this is greatly appreciated by listeners who are retrieving messages when they are away from their phone books.

5. Be very specific with your request. If you are unsure, ask yourself why you are bothering to call.

6. Leave all the information the listener needs in order to take action; there's no reason to play phone tag when voicemail can hold very detailed instructions.

7. Be sure to mention how the listener can contact you in person; leaving specific windows of opportunity cuts down on time-wasting phone tag.

8. If you took the time to dial the number, take the time to leave a brief message (if only your name and phone number).

E-mail Etiquette at Work

It's more than just a memo

Tips:

1. Remember, more than 94% of communication is **non-verbal**. Your e-mail message lacks key communication components, no matter how well it is written!

2. Be **brief**!

3. Watch your wording. Is it **simple**, **direct** and **clear**?

4. Name the exact nature of the message in the **subject line** and avoid "cutsie" phrases. Your reader is probably inundated with e-mails and will appreciate this directness.

5. Who is your audience? It is easy to click on an entire **distribution list** when only a few people are in need of the information. If you drown people unnecessarily in a deluge of messages, they may start to ignore your messages altogether.

6. Be **professional** at all times! Remember that e-mail is quickly and easily forwarded on to "unintended" eyes.

7. Beware of using e-mail as an **avoidance** or **distancing** tactic. People need face-to-face or telephonic interaction in order to maintain an effective working relationship.

8. **Attachments** don't work on all systems. If you are communicating with someone outside of your immediate system interface, consider using the "cut and paste" method (places information directly in the body of the email, without using attachments).

9. Take a minute to **read your message** and **use spellchecker**. You may be very comfortable with your "creative" spelling technique, but sloppy messages reflect poorly on you.

10. Do not send frequent **humorous notes** to a distribution list of names. You may think you are brightening others' day, but the recipients may not appreciate this clutter.

Communication Killers

Interrupting	You interrupt your subordinate because what you have to say is more important …besides, you are the boss.
Mind Reading	You just know what your co-worker is thinking. Just look at the way he's acting!
Monopolizing	You barely pause for a breath and enchant the audience with your fascinating thoughts. If you pause, someone may interrupt.
Dishonesty	Your mask is trying to relate to others' masks. Let's all pretend.
Being an Authoritarian	You have no use for others' input; you have to be demanding and bossy, or nothing will get done!
Playing Know-it-All	There is nothing you can learn from others. In fact, you always have a story that tops all others.
Needing to be Right	You justify yourself at all costs; if you don't defend yourself, you'll be eaten alive by other corporate climbers.
Withholding	You don't share your observations, opinions, or feelings. If the boss really cared, she would ask directly!
Rehearsing	You practice what you're about to say in your mind while others are babbling…you've got something brilliant to say to this committee.
Filtering	You selectively ignore what your boss says. The urgent deadlines were the really important things, anyway.
Judging	You selectively ignore what your co-worker has to say. She's clueless about this project, and her opinions are worthless.
Dreaming	You can just smell that fresh sea air and the feel the sunshine on your face. How many days before vacation, anyway?
Advising	You know exactly what your teammates need to do, how they should do it and why. They are lucky to have you on board.
Whimping Out	You sheepishly back down and agree with the clerk in the other department. It's never that important, anyway.
Psychoanalyzing	You know your co-worker is persistently late with your assignments because he secretly resents your resemblance to his mother.