

Bridging the Dialogue Gap in the Workplace



Have you ever found yourself in a meeting where: (check all that apply)

- Nothing new is put forth?
- Certain members monopolize the air time?
- Everyone goes away with a different understanding of what happen?
- Power plays prevented real conversation from taking place?

Objectives

- Make the distinction between the various forms of communication: Conversation, Debate, Discussion, and Dialogue.
- Learn the eight steps to effective dialogue.
- Understand “dialogue derailers” and how to overcome them.
- Develop a set of skills to make you more effective in holding a dialogue.

Your Best and Worse Meeting

The Best

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

The Worse

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Dialogue

- A person's ability to dialogue effectively will help him or her handle complexity at the speed it arises, harness the creative idea of people around him or her, co-create with others, and remain dexterous to deal with change.

Peter Nixon "The Dialogue Gap"

Dialogue

the missing component

- Greek roots of dialogue are *dia* (through) and *logos* (meaning)
- “Thinking together”



Dialogue v. Communications

- Dialogue = thinking together
- Communications = exchanging information

Dialogue v. Discussion/Debate

□ Dialogue

- Seeing the whole among the parts
- Seeing the connection between the parts
- Inquiring into assumptions
- Learning through inquiry and disclosure
- Creating shared meaning among many

□ Discussion/Debate

- Breaking issues/problems into *parts*
- Seeing distinctions between the parts
- Justifying/defending advocating, persuading, selling, telling
- Gaining agreement on one meaning

Qualities of Dialogue

- Suspension of judgment
- Release of the need for specific outcomes
- Authenticity
- A slower pace with silence between speakers
- Listening deeply to self, others and collective meaning
- An inquiry into an examination of underlying assumptions
- Less advocating for one's position

The Team Meeting

The team was called to a meeting scheduled for 9:00 am because the supervisor would be available starting on Monday and wants to lead the meetings. Tom, Jill, Sam, Jack, Lisa and Martha responded to the invitation and were expected to be there. Tom arrived before Jill because he tends to always be early and knew the boss wanted to start on time. Jill arrived after Sam to organize the presentation. Lisa and Martha arrived within minutes of each other. The supervisor instructed the new recruit to make sufficient copies of a presentation titled “The Pros and Cons of Telework”. She thought there was enough time before the meeting to make the copies. It usually only took 15 minutes. She did not make the meeting because of a problem with the copy machine.

Answer True, False or Unknown

The meeting started on time.

Jill was going to make a presentation.

There were 6 people scheduled to attend the meeting.

Martha and Lisa arrived after Tom and Jill.

The supervisor led the meeting.

The recruit made copies of the presentation.

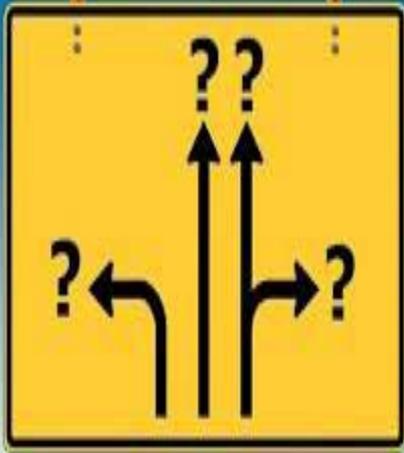
The presentation was advocating for more telework days.

The recruit did not make the meeting.

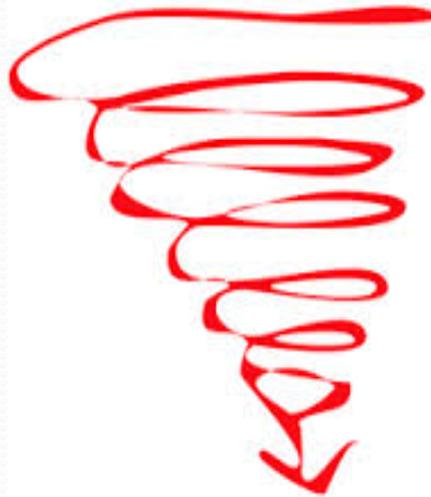
The boss was not happy with the outcome.

It took 15 minutes to make the copies of the presentation.

Dialogue Derailers



GO NOWHERE



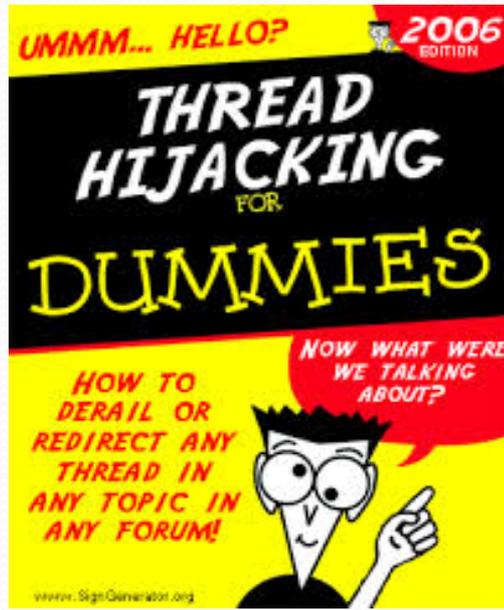
**DOWNWARD
SPIRAL**



**THE IDEA
FACTORY**



**ANALYSIS
PARALYSIS**



**THE
HIJACK**



STACKING



**AVOIDANCE
GAMES**



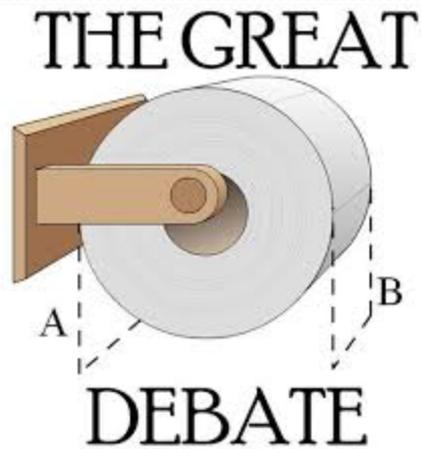
KINDERGARTEN



**UNITED
NATIONS**



**MONOLOGUES
FOREVER**



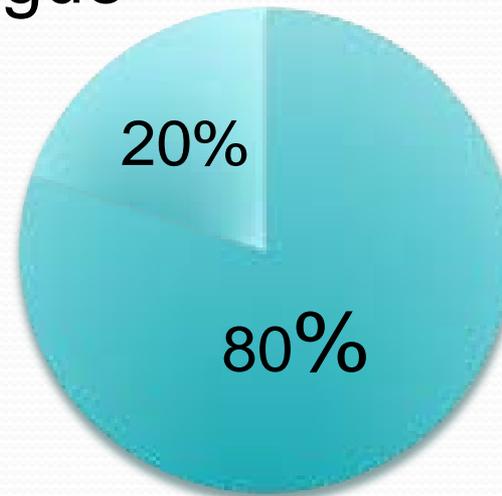
**DEBATE
CENTRAL**



THE STALEMATE

8 Steps to Dialogue

1. Prepare for dialogue



■ Preparation ■ Other

R X 6 = **right outcome** requires the **right people** on the **right issue**, in the **right way**, at the **right time**, and in the **right space**.

8 Steps to Dialogue

2. Engage the stakeholders

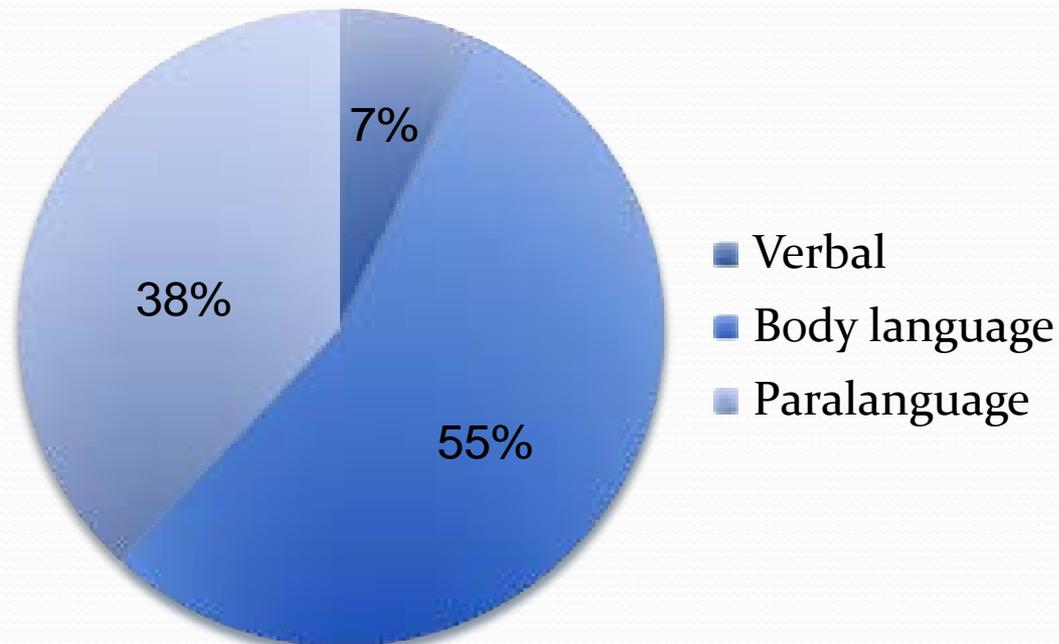
Get the right people to the table – and early



8 Steps to Dialogue

3. Observe

People need to see each other and preferably to be physically together.



8 Steps to Dialogue

4. Listen

Listen to know how your message has been received and how others respond.



8 Steps to Dialogue

5. Open Dialogue

It is not enough to send and receive information we need to stop sending messages and instead begin dialogue.



8 Steps to Dialogue

6. Converse

- a. Be open, curious and creative
- b. Notice and honor emotions
- c. Move from being right or wrong, winning and losing
- d. Be aware of blind spots

8 Steps to Dialogue

7. Close the dialogue
 - a. Reward the openness of the participants
 - b. Follow-up on action items
 - c. Hold one another accountable

8 Steps to Dialogue

8. Act

- a. act to achieve a quick win
- b. build on the quick wins and move forward.

The Power of Questions



Why are questions important?









Which is faster?

- Having all the right answers?
- Asking the right questions?



It's Your Choice



Anything that impacts us at any moment

thoughts feelings circumstances
thoughts feelings circumstances



START

Choose

Learner Path

Judger Path

React

What happened?
What's useful here?
What do I want?



What can I learn?
What is the other person thinking, feeling, needing, and wanting?



What's possible?
What are my choices?
What's best to do now?



LEARNER

- Thoughtful Choices
- Solution Focused
- Win-Win Relating

Who's to blame?



Switching Lane

SWITCH
Ask Learner Questions to avoid Judger Pit

What's wrong with me?
What's wrong with them?



JUDGER

- Automatic Reactions
- Blame Focused
- Win-Lose Relating

Why am I such a failure?
Why are they so stupid?

Judger Pit



Learner vs. Judger



Judger vs. Learner

Judger questions

- Lead to frustration
- Lead to narrow-minded thinking
- Lead to blame and regret

Learner questions

- Lead to discovery
- Lead to intimacy
- Lead to understanding
- Lead to accountability

Judger vs. Learner

Judger questions

- Tend to be automatic
- Tend to be unconscious
- Tend to be reactions
- Win – lose relating style

Learner questions

- Solution focused
- More thought full
- Build and solidify relationships
- Lead to Win-Win

Switching Questions

- “Am I in the judger mode right now?”
- “How else can I think about this?”
- “What assumptions am I making?”
- “How can I be more objective and honest?”
- “What am I missing or avoiding?”
- “What do I want to achieve / avoid?”

References:

- *Change Your Questions, Change Your Life, and The Choice Map*, Merilee Adams, (Berrett-Koehler Publisher, 1998)
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- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012)
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- *Dialogue Gap, Why Communications Isn't Enough and What We Can Do About it Fast.* Peter Nixon. (John Wiley and Sons, Inc, 2012)
- *Leadership and the Art of Conversation*, Kim Krisco. (Prima Publishing 1997)

Your Questions Please

