

THE BASICS OF COMMUNICATION - EXERCISE

CONNECTING TO EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNICATION

Part 1: Individual Reflection

Individually, recall two communication interactions you have recently been in: an example of a successful communication and another example of a difficult communication. To keep things simple, think of examples with one individual only.

- List the factors that made the first experience pleasant and effective.
- In another column, list the factors that made the second experience challenging and difficult.

Part 2: Sharing in groups

Share your insights with your group or a partner and listen to their own experiences.

Part 3: Read the Input section and discuss the following questions in pairs

- Think of a miscommunication with your colleague, boss, partner (a situation when you gave a presentation or preached a homily and had a person come to you and said, "I didn't appreciate what you said...", or "this didn't make much sense to me...")
- How does the communication process described in the input help you make sense of situations where communication failed?
- Taking the concept of "noise" to your personal experience, brainstorm in pairs the variety of ways we misunderstand each other. What could have distorted your message and stood in the way of an effective communication?
- How did these communication barriers impact your ability to respond? How were these barriers dealt with?

FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

Reflection : In the "Practices and Exercises" section, go to Keys for Effective Communication and Listening.

- You can use the list as a reminder of some behaviors that support effective communication and listening. You can also choose to silently contemplate it and use it as an assessment.
- What three insights have you learned about yourself following this reflection?
- To which extent are you integrating these practices in your interaction with others?

Action: Choose one area to experiment with during the week.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

You may also find helpful the exercises outlined in the worksheet on Listening and The Four Parts of Speech also found in the section "Practices and Exercises".