

How to Help Your Clients Improve Their Communication in Organizations

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Communication problems are one of the top reasons coaches are engaged. Strengthening communication skills is one of the most important improvements a person can make to improve their success in their work and personal life.

In an organization what are signs that there are communication problems?

1. People are not working together well—conflict, anger, and disengagement are symptoms.
2. People are unaware of upcoming changes
3. Messages are not received or are misunderstood
4. Mistakes are increasing
5. Criticism and blame are rampant
6. Morale is decreasing
7. Complaints are accelerating

How can coaches help individuals and groups improve their communication? Here are six practical ideas:

1. As coach, listen carefully to the people involved and who or what may have caused the communication problem in the first place. This will allow you to uncover the depth, nature and assumptions that contributed to the communication difficulties.

2. As a coach you are able to explore the situation more thoroughly than an insider because when communication complications arise, the group involved may choose to clam up or point fingers rather than admit to their role in creating the problem.
3. To maintain confidentiality, surveys are often used as an early step to resolve communication difficulties. People generally feel safer providing information through surveys in many situations.
4. Help the client utilize the nine suggestions to enhance communication on the Myers Briggs Indicator Step II Interpretive report.
5. Utilize the Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode assessment to help people understand and manage their natural conflict management styles and understand other people's styles also.
6. After you have uncovered some of the causes of the communication difficulties help the group focus on solutions and strengths—and help them talk more about what is actually going well. Don't focus on just one person. You want to avoid and discourage finger-pointing. "United we stand, divided we fall" is a useful attitude for the group to adopt.



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