

Executive Training Programme on Leadership and Management of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services

Ezanne Swanepoel

2023/10/26



Welcome back

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Let's check-in and reconnect.....

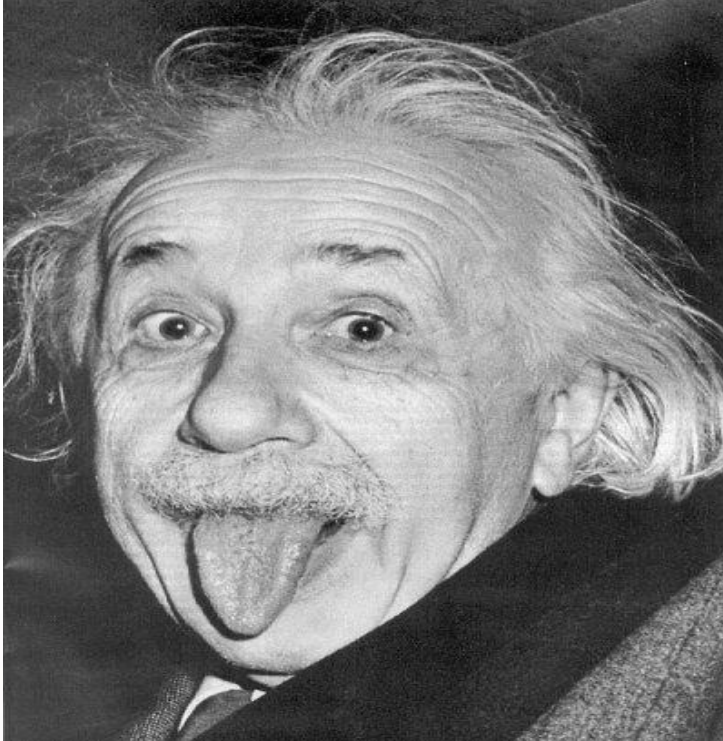




The Art of Decision Making and Communication



Introduction to key tools and models that drive communication and the art of decision making



“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them”

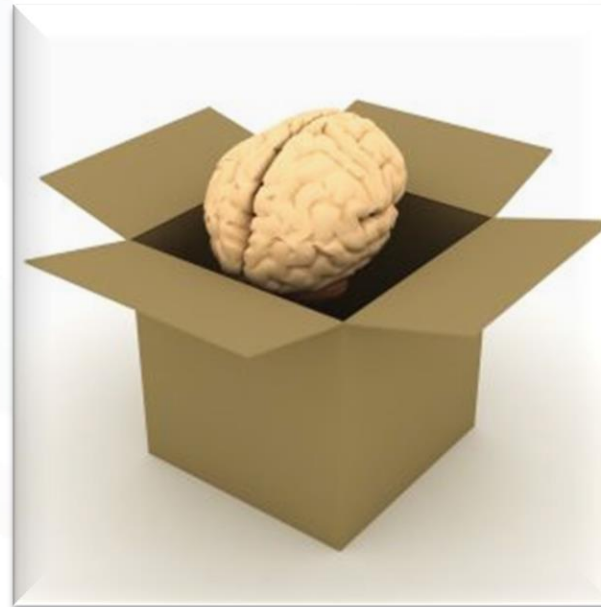
Albert Einstein



Opening the Mind

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Thinking outside of the box in order to expand the box



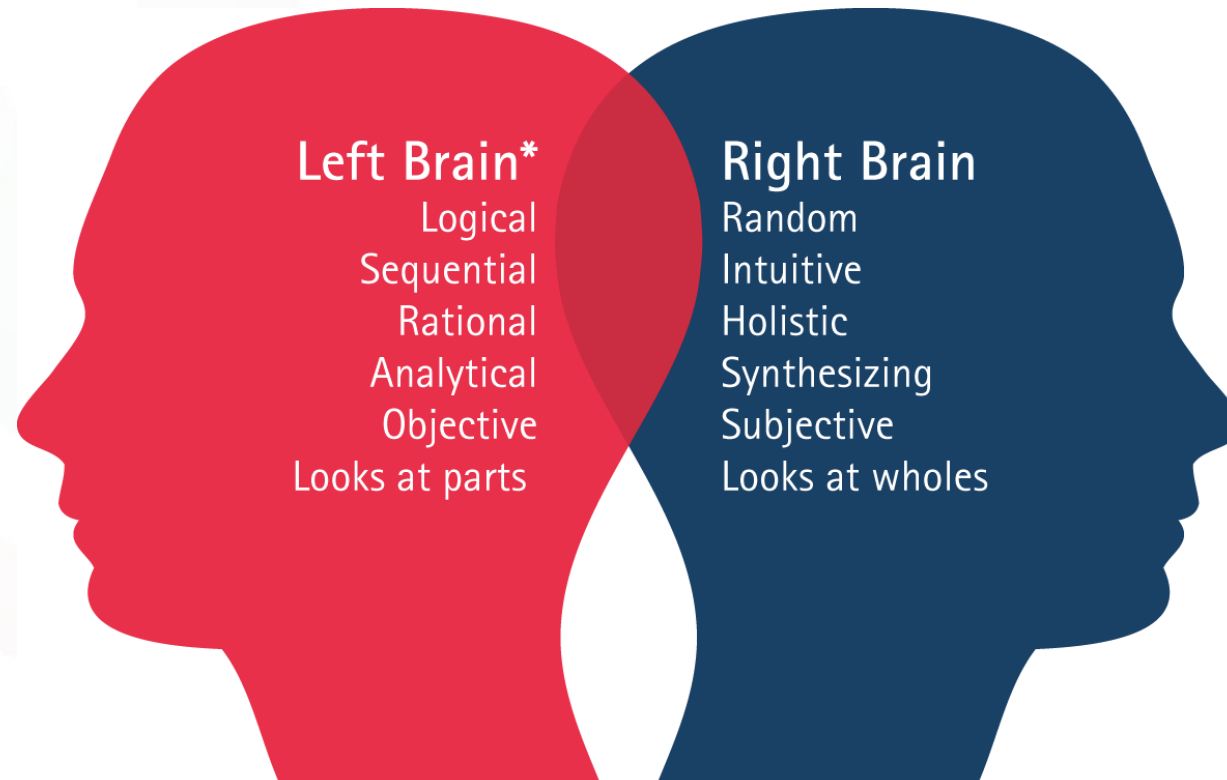


What does this suggest?



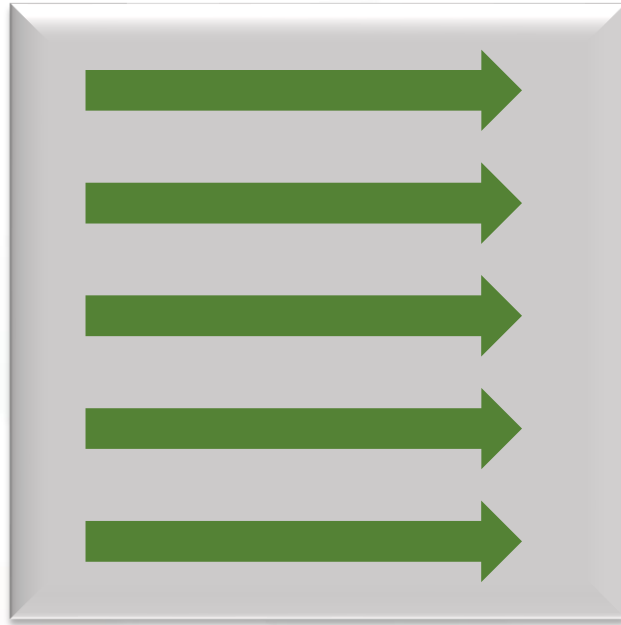
The Different Sides of the Brain

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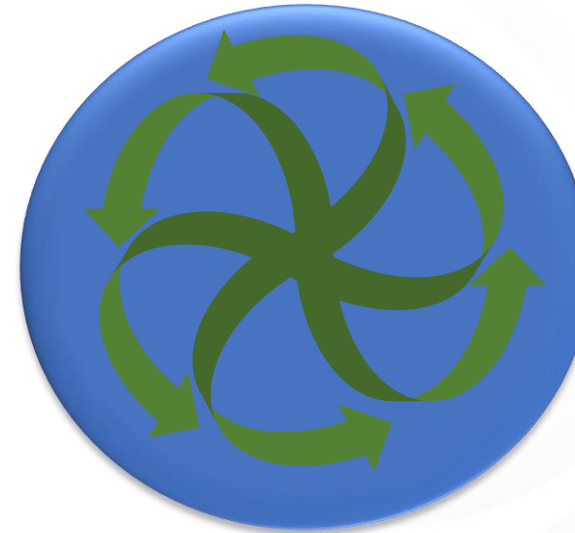


The Different Sides of the Brain

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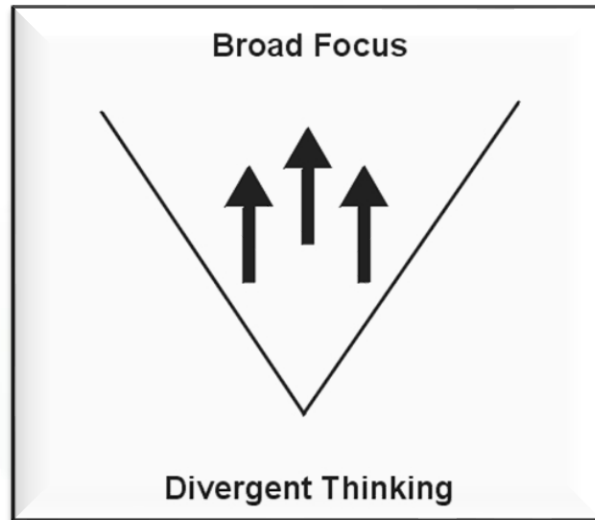
Linear Thinking



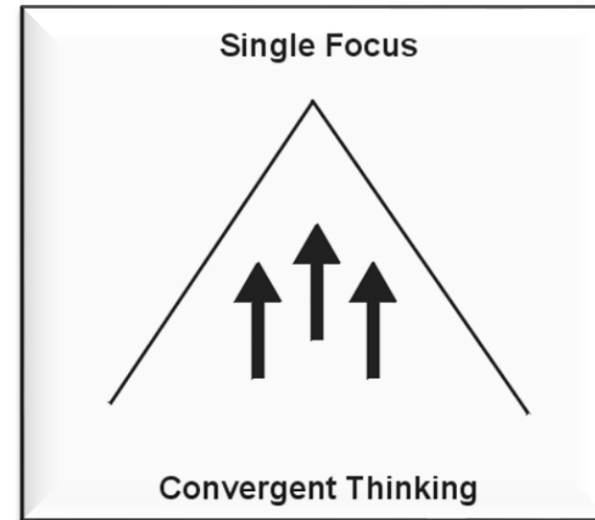
Circular Thinking

Types of Thinking

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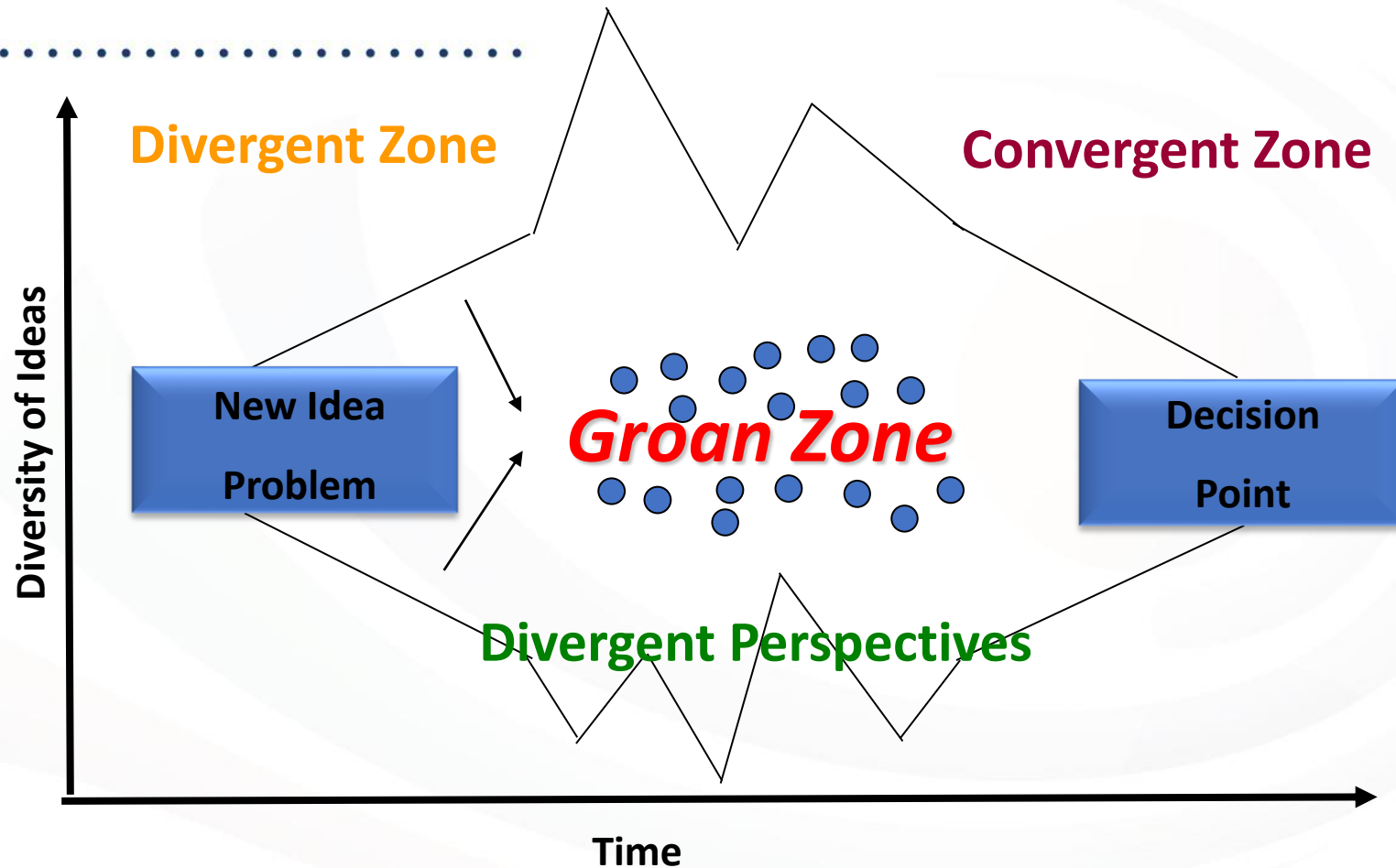


Collect Data
Suggest options
Explore possibilities



Select Data
Choose an option
Assess possibilities

The Process of Idea Generation



Idea Generation in Action

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Step 1: Identify 30 ways to use a paper clip apart from what it is designed for

3 minutes

Step 2: Suggest one new product that you can sell on the open market using a paper clip?

5 Minutes

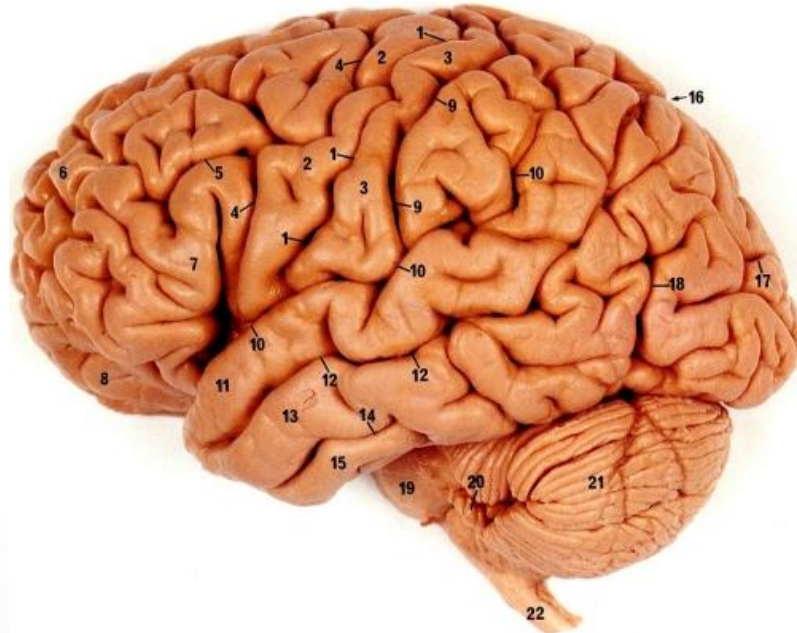


Think about the process of thought applied?

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The Brain at Work


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A Giant filing Cabinet

Creativity: Ways to Confuse the Brain

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Random links
Revolution
Related worlds



Related Worlds

A Case Study



Revolution

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John and Mike are on a raft, adrift in the ocean –with several other survivors from a shipwreck. One of them needs to swim to the island to see if they can try get help. However, there are sharks swimming all around them and the swim could be suicidal

In order to determine who has to do the swim, Mike takes out loose change from his pocket and puts 2 identical coins into a hat. He tells John that one penny is dated 1985 and the other 1990 and asks John to draw one from the hat. If John picks the older coin he must swim. However, John has seen that both coins are dated 1985, but is too scared to challenge Mike since he is twice his size

What can John do to win this draw and get Mike to swim to the island without exposing him as a fraud in front of the others?

Thinking Ahead

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Scenario Planning

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Scenario planning is a thinking tool that assumes that the future can differ greatly from what we know today.

Possible future events are posed and people are encouraged to:

“Think the unthinkable”

The key question to be addressed is: **What do we need to do now to be ready for possible scenarios in the future?**

Thinking Tool: SCAMPER

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Substitute
Combine
Adapt
Modify
Magnify
Minify
Put to other uses
Eliminate
Rearrange



Decision Making in Action (15 min)

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Based on what we have just reviewed, think back at examples in your business where you had to make decisions that did not turn out as favourable as you had hoped:

1. Why do you think your decision was not ideal?
2. Knowing what you know now, what would you have been more aware of?
3. How could you have improved your method of decision making?
4. If you had used some of these tools, what do you think your decision might have been?

Think again about the process of thought applied in your business example?

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“Most forms of organisational conversation, particularly around tough, complex or challenging issues, lapse into debate.

One side wins and another loses, both parties maintain their certainties, and both suppress deeper enquiry and solution-focused thinking”

David Bohm



Conversation Continuum

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 Mastering communication requires matching purpose / intention, approach and desired outcome.

Debate	Discussion	Conversation	Dialogue
Contention Reasoned Argument	Discourse Examination of pros and cons	Intentional exchange of ideas, thoughts and feelings with intended outcome	Collective explanation in which truth and meaning emerge among participants
Root – To beat down	Root – To shake apart	Root – To turn together	Root – Flow through of meaning

Source: Collaborative Change Works
 Based on the work of David Bohm



- Critical Conversations
- Learning Conversations
- Courageous Conversations
- Tough Conversations
- Difficult Conversations*
- Crucial Conversations*
- Crucial Confrontations*
- Fierce Conversations*
- Performance Conversations

* Copyrighted programmes and books in the market place



“Our lives begin to end
the day we become silent
about the things that
matter”

Martin Luther King Jnr

The Choice

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Choice

Contribute



Contaminate

The Impact of Negative Conversations from a Physiological Perspective

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Neuroscience research is revealing the social nature of the high performance workplace



The brain experiences the workplace first and foremost as a social system

David Rock

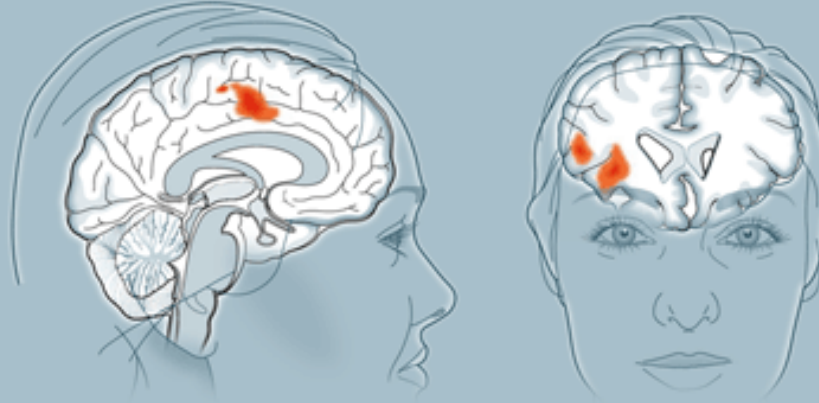
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A Physiological Perspective

Exhibit 1: Social and Physical Pain Produce Similar Brain Responses

Brain scans captured through functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) show the same areas associated with distress, whether caused by social rejection or physical pain. The dorsal anterior cingulate cortex (highlighted at left) is associated with the degree of distress; the right ventral prefrontal cortex (highlighted at right) is associated with regulating the distress.

Social Pain



Physical Pain



Illustration: Samuel Valasco

Source: Eisenberger, Lieberman, and Williams, Science, 2003 (social pain images); Lieberman et al., "The Neural Correlates of Placebo Effects: A Disruption Account," Neuroimage, May 2004 (physical pain images)

Critical Conversations

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Activity: View Clip



Delivering Hand Grenades

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“Delivering a difficult message is like throwing a hand grenade. Coated with sugar, thrown hard or soft, a hand grenade is still going to do damage... there’s no way to throw a hand grenade with tact or to outrun the consequences. And keeping it to yourself is no better. Choosing not to deliver a difficult message is like hanging on to a hand grenade once you have pulled the pin.”

Stone, Patton and Heen



To get out of the hand grenade business...one needs to shift one’s mindset towards having a **learning conversation.**

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The Hand Grenade in Action

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What typically goes wrong?

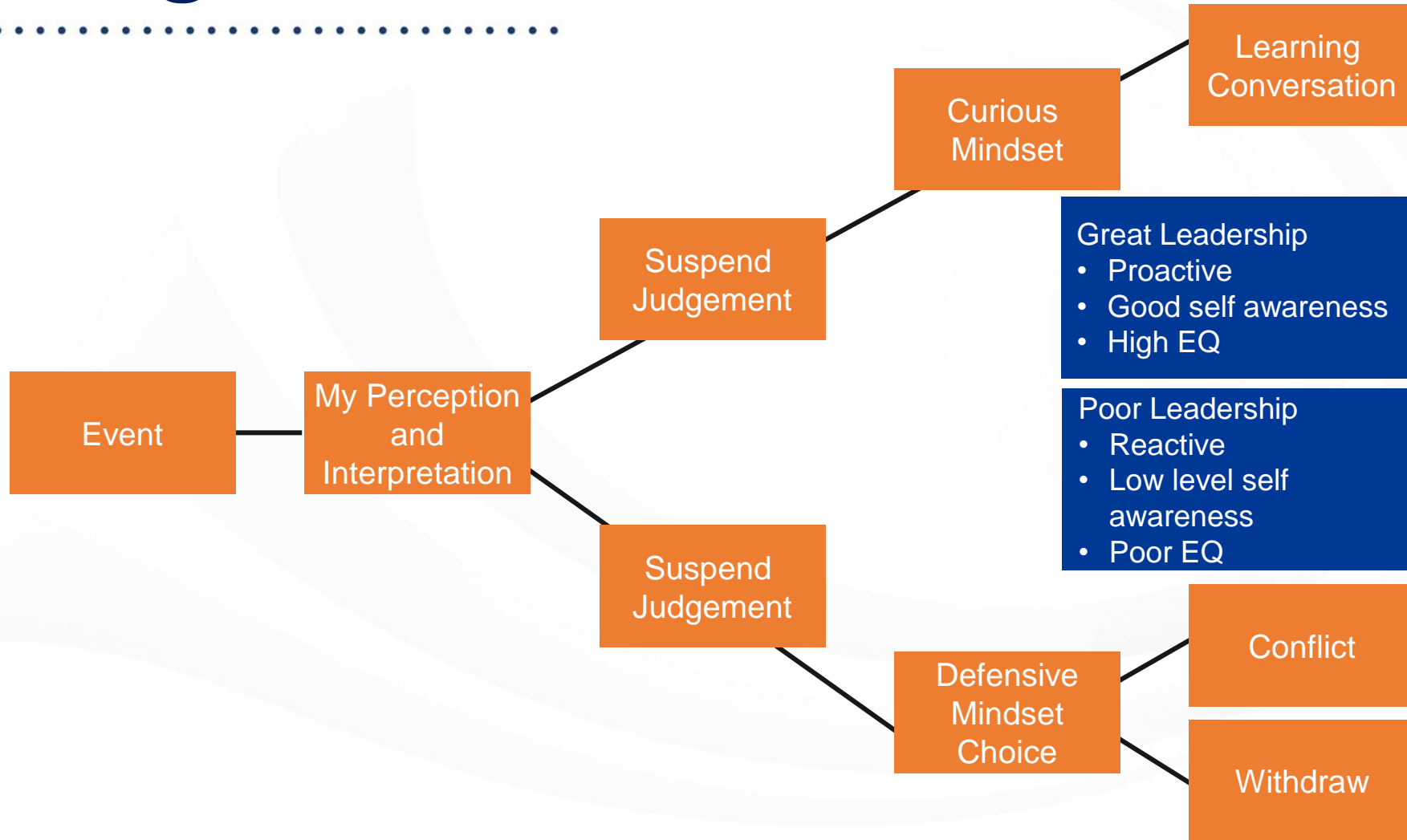
- We get stuck in debate
- We score debating points
- We misalign purpose of interaction with desired outcome
- We name, shame and blame
- We criticise
- We act aggressively
- We right fight (I'm right ; you're wrong)
- We look for someone to blame/punish
- We invent the other's intention
- We judge
- We argue perceptions not facts
- We don't listen – our inner voice gets in the way! We listen without hearing
- We start at different points
- We have a pet preoccupation
- We vent (aria singing)
- We prematurely move into action

What else?

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Shifting Mindset



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“The single most important thing [you can do] is to shift [your] internal stance from "I understand" to "Help me understand." Everything else follows from that. . . .”

“Anyone who thinks the art of conversation is dead ought to tell a child to go to bed?”

“The secret of success in conversation is to be able to disagree without being disagreeable”

Douglas Stone



Communication in Action (15 min)

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Based on what we have just reviewed about critical or difficult conversations, think back at examples in your business where you had to have a difficult conversation, and it did not turn out as favourable as you had hoped:

1. Why do you think the outcome was not ideal?
2. Knowing what you know now, what would you have been more aware of?
3. How could you have improved your method of having the conversation?
4. If you had used some of these tools, what do you think your approach might have been?

Think again about the process of thought applied in your business example?

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Simulation: Communication and Art of Decision Making

Simulation: Board Games R Us



"Congratulations! You've just been catapulted into the driver's seat of the world's most cutting-edge innovation team, proudly representing 'Board Games R Us.' Your mission? Nothing short of creating the next board game sensation that will redefine how we perceive board gaming in the face of formidable competitors like AI-based games and the mighty Play Station Consoles.

Picture this: You're seated at the epicenter of creativity, surrounded by anticipation and ambition. The stakes are high, and the thrill of pioneering a game-changer is electrifying. Your visionary leader, the globally renowned Executive Director, Ezzanne Swanepoel, has entrusted you with this extraordinary task. She expects you to harness the power of teamwork, engage in spirited discussions, and make bold decisions that will chart the course of your game's destiny.

In your arsenal, you have not swords and shields, but three enigmatic items thoughtfully placed on your table. These items are your creative catalysts, your fuel for innovation. They hold the potential to shape the future of board gaming as we know it.

Now, take a deep breath and dive into the adventure. With just **15 minutes** on the clock, it's time to embark on

STEP 1: Unlock the potential of these mysterious items. Together, as a dynamic team, you'll forge a path to design brilliance, ensuring your board game emerges as a fierce competitor in the arena of entertainment.

Get ready to revolutionize the world of board games and leave a legacy that will be remembered for generations to come!"



Simulation: Board Games R Us

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As the adrenaline-fueled innovation team at 'Board Games R Us,' you're already deep in the throes of designing a board game that promises to reshape the very fabric of the industry. And now, the plot thickens with a twist that could make or break your quest for board game glory.

Imagine this: A capital investment, shimmering like a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow, has been generously extended to your company. It's a game-changer, quite literally. The Advisory Board, those sages of strategic wisdom, have spoken, urging you to harness this financial windfall to supercharge your board game project. You now stand on the precipice of opportunity, armed with the resources to take your creation to unimaginable heights.

But here's the catch – you're about to send forth a lone champion, a representative from your ranks, into a remote and communication-barren wilderness. This solitary soul will bear the monumental responsibility of selecting two additional allocations of resources, plucked from a treasure chest teeming with possibilities. Time is your most elusive friend, and fierce competition lurks on the horizon. Swift decision-making is your champion's armor, for there will be no room for second-guessing once choices are made.

Welcome to **STEP 2**, where you'll nominate your chosen envoy/representative. This emissary will need to be a paragon of your strategy, ready to make shrewd choices that align with your team's vision. Each selection they make is final, etched in the annals of your quest for board game supremacy. Help him/her to prepare for the mission. (15 min)

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Simulation: Board Games R Us

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As the tension rises, brace yourselves for **STEP 3**. Representatives, prepare to set forth on your perilous journey, armed with nothing but your wits and resolve. You'll confront the treasure chest and face the daunting task of choosing only two items from its wealth of possibilities (5 min).

Then, in **STEP 4**, return triumphant to your board game forge at head office, bearing the fruits of your resourceful expedition. With the new additions in hand, your team must hit the ground running, sculpting and honing your board game masterpiece. The competition looms large, and the stakes couldn't be higher. In only **30 minutes** you will have to be ready with a completed board game, that completely shatters the competition, and be ready to demonstrate how your board game works.

Get ready to carve your names into the annals of board gaming history. The adventure has just begun!

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Simulation: Board Games R Us

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As the sun begins to rise on the day of reckoning, the anticipation in the air is palpable. Rows of media cameras and eager press members have gathered, their lenses poised to capture every moment of this epic showdown. The world is watching, and the time has come to unveil your masterpiece, the showstopper that holds the fate of 'Board Games R Us' in its dice rolls and strategic moves.

Now, in the **final step**, with only **5 minutes** on the clock, you step onto the stage, clutching your demo model, the embodiment of countless hours of innovation, creativity, and determination. It's now a make-or-break moment, the crucible in which your board game will be put to the test.

As you begin your demonstration, the spotlight is firmly fixed on you. This is your moment to shine, to showcase how your board game transcends boundaries and elevates the gaming experience. The tension is thick, but so is your resolve.

Ladies and gentlemen, let the competition commence! In these precious minutes, you'll reveal the magic of your creation, leaving no doubt that your team has crafted a board game that will redefine an industry. The world awaits the verdict, and today, we will crown a winning team, whose vision and execution have set a new standard in the world of board games.

May your demonstration be nothing short of legendary, and may your board game shine as the true showstopper. The world is about to witness the birth of a gaming revolution!

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Simulation: Board Games R Us

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Reflection Exercise:

1. What did you do well?
2. What could you have done better in terms of decision making?
3. What could you have done better in terms of your communication as a team and when presenting your masterpiece?
4. What is your top take away from this experience?



Building capabilities to communicate effectively

**“The art of communication is the
language of leadership.”**

James Humes



What should be a leaders' objective with communication?

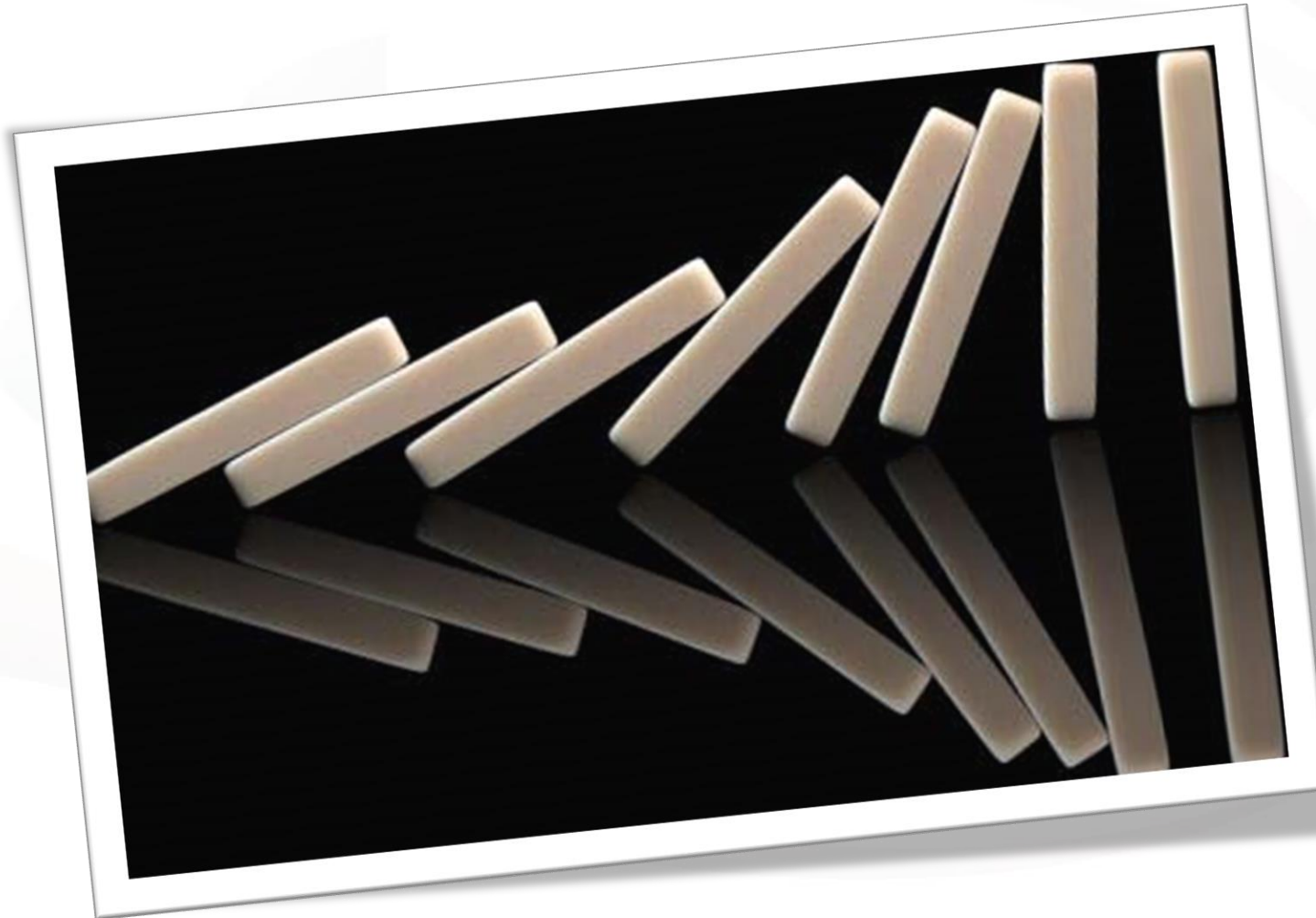
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To develop skills to influence and make an impact on others through effective communication



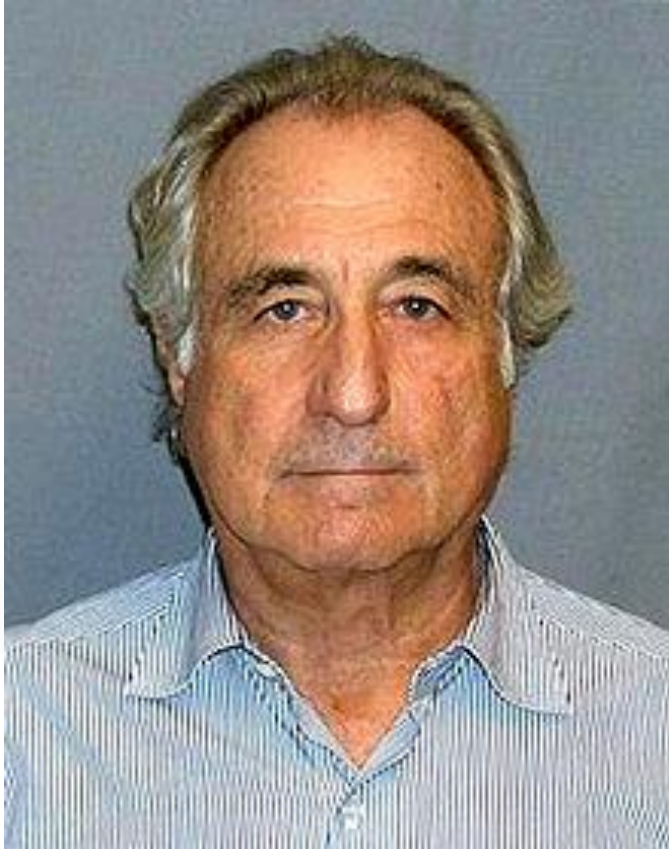
Stories of Influence and Impact

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Stories of Influence and Impact: Bernard Madoff

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Former stockbroker,
financial adviser, and
Chairman of NASDAQ

Largest Ponzi Scheme in
history



Influence and Positional Power

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Influence :

The action or process of producing effects on the actions, behaviour, opinions, etc., of another or others

Power :

The possession of control or command over others; authority; ascendancy: power over men's minds



Influence vs Positional Power: Nelson Mandela

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Think about the following:

- Did Nelson Mandela use his positional power?
- How did he influence people in the meetings?
- What does this tell us about influencing others?



Influencing through Impactful Communication

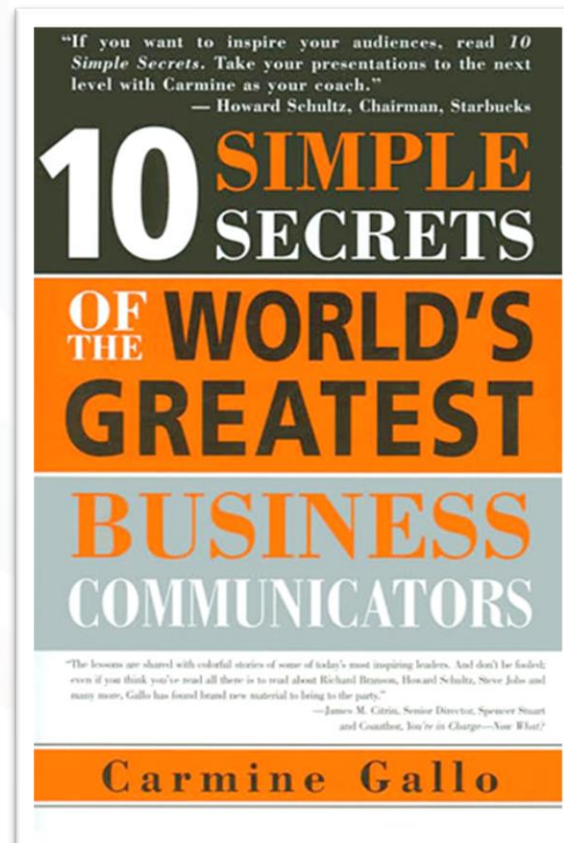
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Benchmarking Against the Greats

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Research shows an unavoidable correlation between communication skills and business success



Jack Welch: Cutting Out Corporate Lingo

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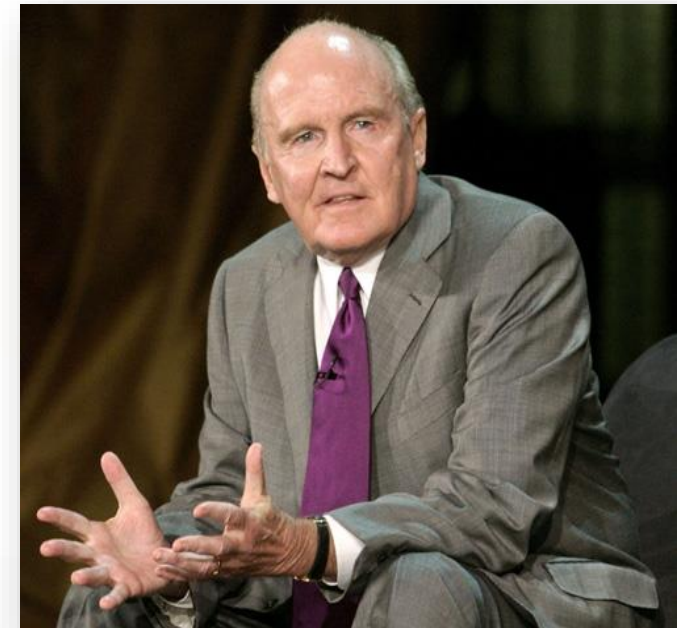
The former head of **General Electric** was legendary for demanding **simplicity** in written and verbal communications

"Insecure managers create complexity"

He was a master at articulating a vision in simple terms that everyone could buy into

Clutter and jargon had no place in a Welch business meeting. He would ask his managers to pretend they were talking to high school students -- to focus on the basics

Great business communicators speak in clear and simple terms



Best communication asset: Simplicity

Tip: Eliminate Jargon

Richard Branson: Being Generous with Praise

.....

Branson believes in lavishing **praise** on his employees

“People are just like **flowers**. They will grow if watered -but shrivel if left to dry”

Great business communicators go out of their way to make sure their employees feel **valuable**

Best communication asset: Generosity with praise

Tip: Lavish appropriate praise on employees, customers, and colleagues



Michelle Peluso: Communicating Personally

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Peluso understands that employees will care more about their work when they know their leaders **care** about them

She makes it a point to **respond personally within 24 hours** to every e-mail from one of her employees, even if she's traveling or on vacation

Great business communicators respond to employee concerns by answering e-mails, holding lunchtime chats, or sending out weekly companywide correspondence



**Best communication asset:
Responsiveness**

Tip: Be there for your employees

David Neeleman: Flying with Great Tales

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Neeleman dedicates himself to finding and keeping the most enthusiastic employees in the airline industry

He appears at nearly every first-day orientation for new hires likes to recount anecdotes about employees who have exceeded expectations

Great business communicators cultivate an enthusiastic staff passionately dedicated to providing exceptional customer service

Best communication asset: Talent for storytelling

Tip: Tell tales that inspire



Howard Schultz: Percolating Passion

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Schultz understands that Starbucks' competitive advantage lies in its people

To leverage this, the entire organisation communicates the Starbucks culture passionately, and Starbucks has subsequently built a reputation as one of the best places to work

"When you're around people who share a collective passion around a common purpose, there's no telling what you can do,"

Great business communicators identify their enthusiasms and convey that enthusiasm through all levels of the organization

Best communication asset: Passion

Tip: Identify and share what you're passionate about



Suze Orman: Making it Simple

.....

Financial guru Suze Orman stands out among the more than 650,000 financial planners in the U.S.

Orman is on a mission to make financial issues clear and simple for families to understand

She admits that very little of her advice is groundbreaking. "It's not the material that I know, but how I communicate the material I know that sets me apart"

She delivers financial information using clear, concise, and direct language

Great business communicators use simple language to discuss complex issues

Best communication asset: Clarity of expression

Tip: Break down complex information into easy parts



Learning from the Greats

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- **Step 1: What makes a great communicator?**
 - Review the examples of great communicators and discuss your own examples of great communicators. Generate a “list of ingredients” to be a great communicator
- **Step 2: Select the top five qualities that you as a leader should exhibit?**
- **Step 3: Which of these top 5 qualities do you see expressed in your industry and/or organization currently?**



Learning from the Greats

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Observe the clip and answer the following question:

- **What is his secret to success**





Bringing the art of decision making and communication into Practice

Building Rapport with Others

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What is rapport?

Why is it important?



Rapport Matching

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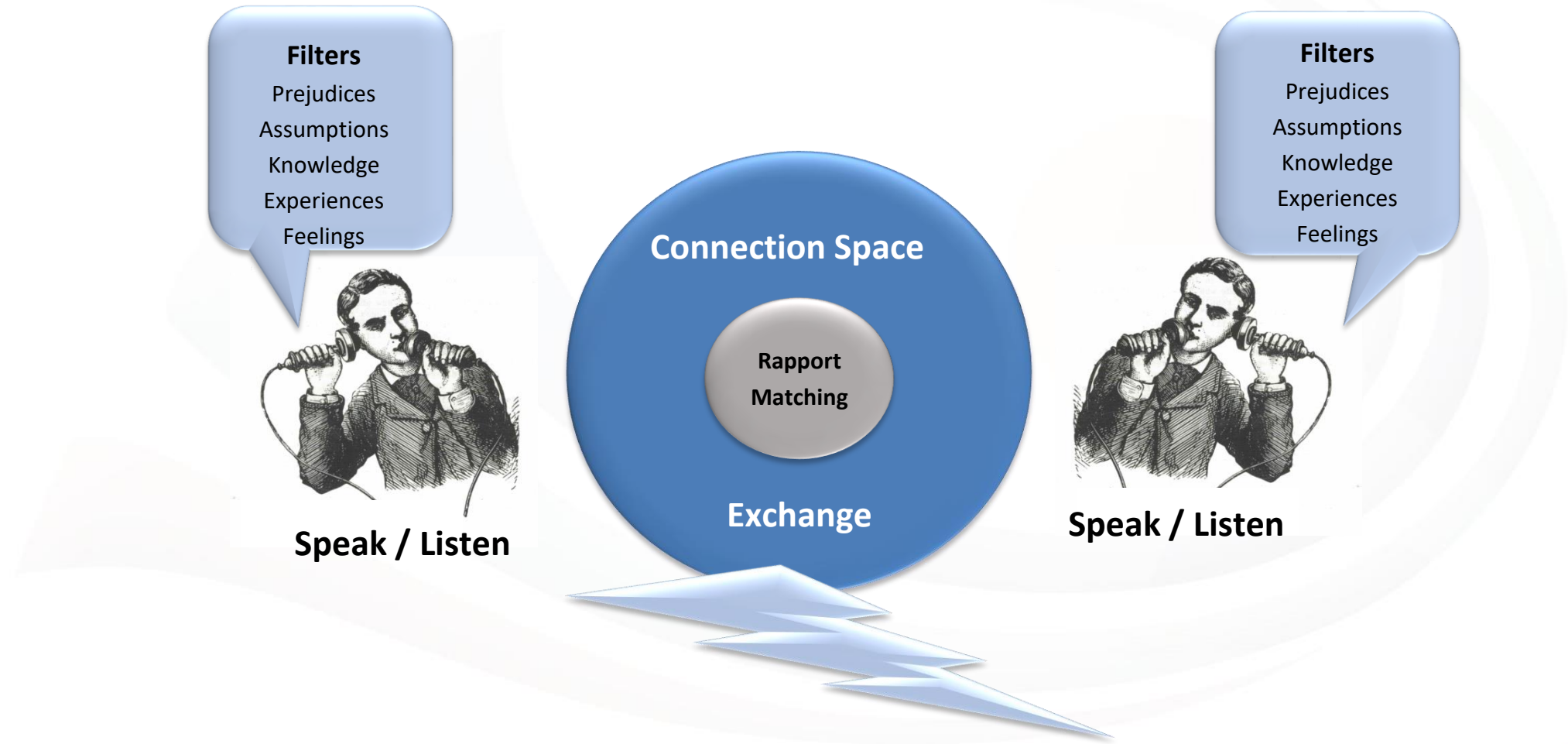
The ability to build rapport quickly depends on how well you can match the person you're relating to

Matching takes place on various levels:

- **Language**
 - Ability to listen accurately and demonstrate understanding by paraphrasing in language similar to that which they have used
 - **Metaphors**
 - Ability to use similar metaphors would make it more likely they feel understood e.g. sporting metaphors
 - **Body Posture**
 - Matching the formality and informality or appropriate distance
 - **Voice Level**
 - Volume, rhythm, pitch, tone, tempo of the voice
 - **Emotional Tone**
 - Ability to reflect the emotional tone or undertone of the other person
 - **Gesture and level of animation**
-



The Communication Process



Our Signal Set

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Tone

- Level of audience
- Volume
- Parent / adult / child
- Soft / hard



Our Signal Set

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Body Language

- Facial expression
- Eye movements
- Head movements
- Posture / stance
- Gestures
- Movement



Our Signal Set

Our Armour

- Brand Promise
- Building, rooms, tea, coffee
- Dress
- Collateral
- Equipment
- Expertise
- Rank



All Signals need to be **aligned** and pointing in the **same direction**

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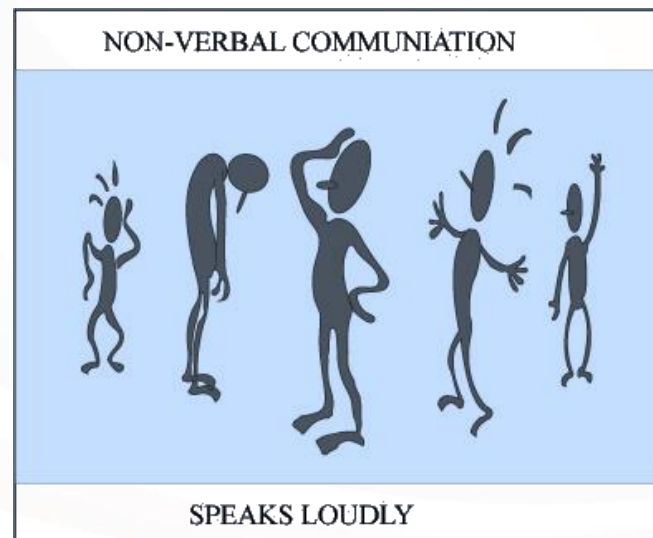


Non-Verbal Influence

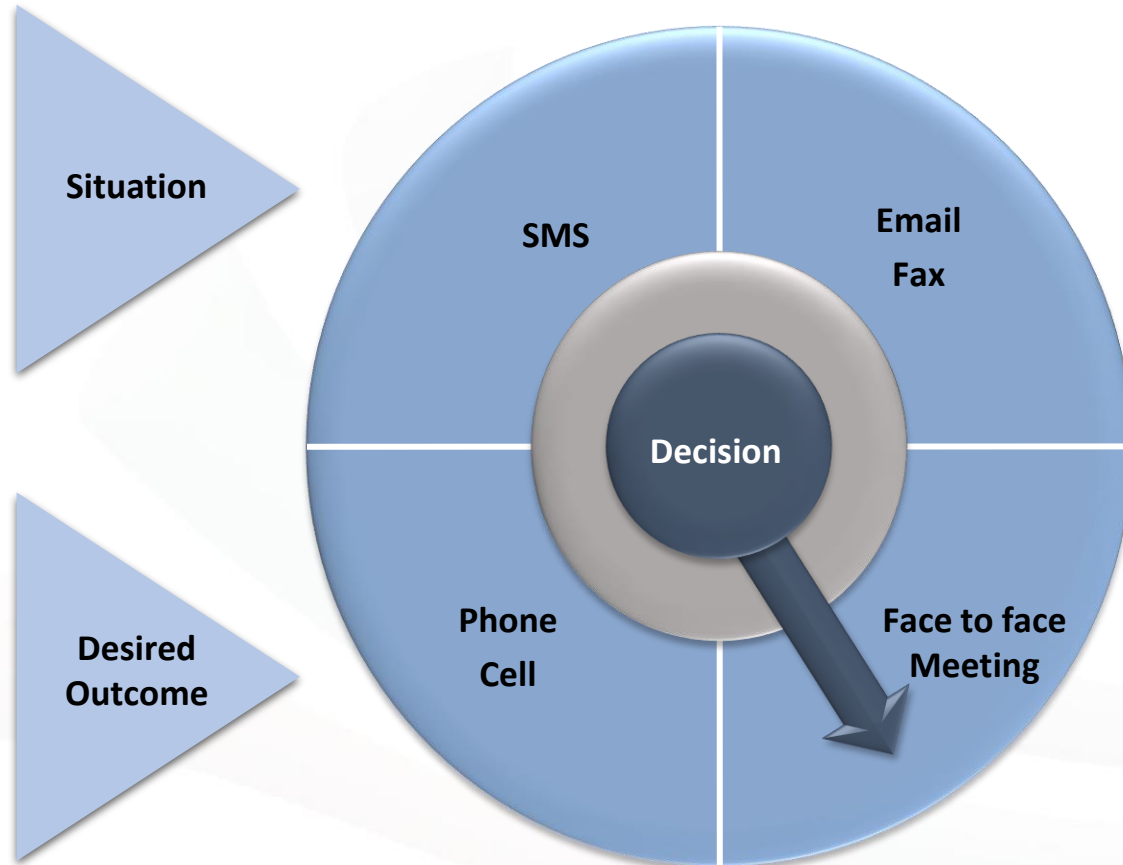
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Influencing is not only through highly verbal activities

Non-verbal conflict can also result in impact and influence



Communicating with Impact



Factors to consider

People

Client preference

Rank

Relationship

Stakes

Sensitivity

Need for confirmation

Past communication

Complexity

Crisis

Time pressure

Spread

Talking Stick



How can we more effectively influence others through impactful communication?

We have to be good communicators to negotiate well

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What is a negotiation?

What opportunities do you have to negotiate with others?

Negotiation Skills

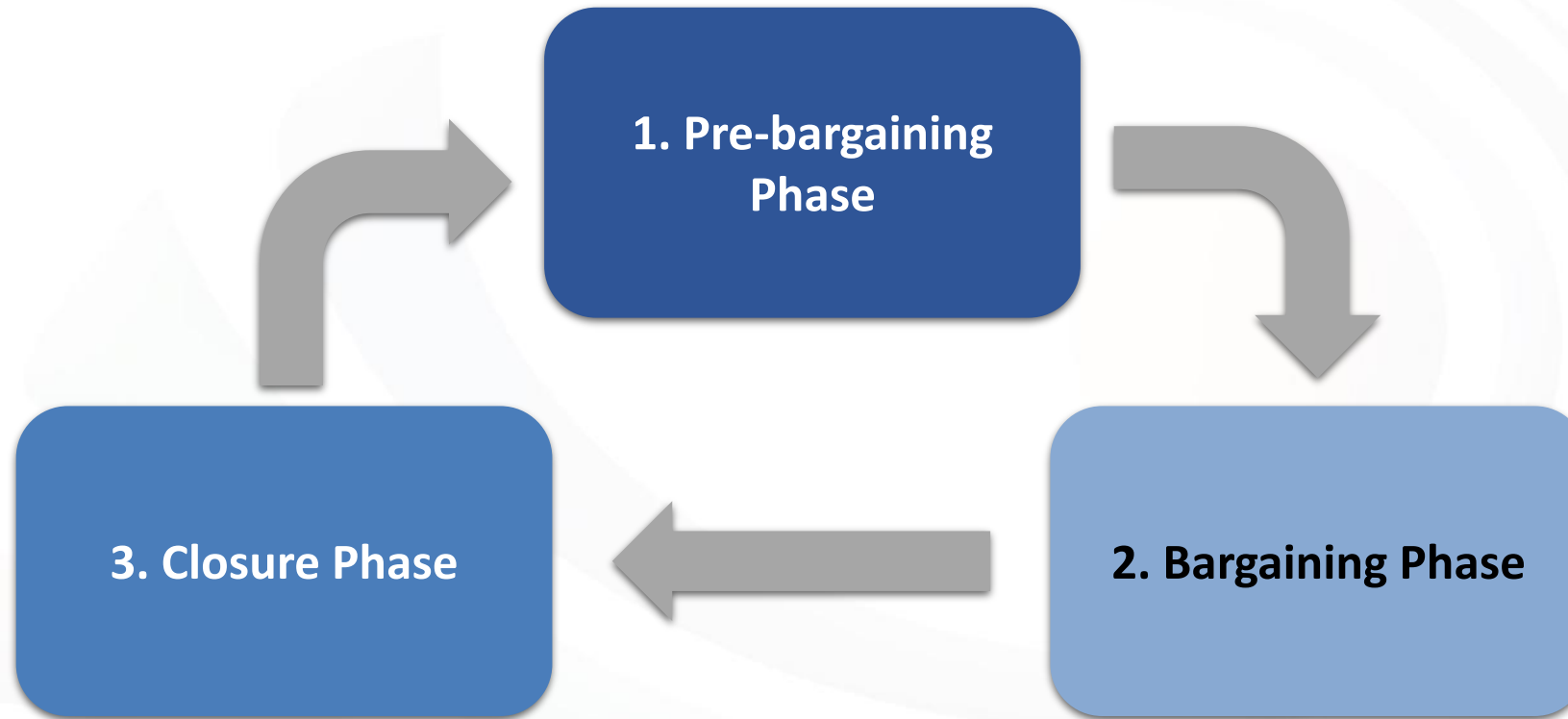
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“ A negotiation is an interactive communication process that may take place when you want something from someone else or another person wants something from you”



Stages of Negotiation

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Strategic Negotiations

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- **Exercise: Strategic negotiations**
- **The Red/Blue Game**



Rules for Negotiation (Tips Pack)

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Reflect and Share

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What changes are you planning to make in your Communication and Decision-Making Approach?

What do you want to STOP, START or CONTINUE doing in order to have more effective, authentic conversations, and make better decisions?

STOP	START	CONTINUE

THANK YOU

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**South African
Weather Service**