

- People from some cultural backgrounds believe it is disrespectful to offer opinions or suggestions to a superior (potentially quite frustrating to the manager who wants employee input).
- Workers from some cultural backgrounds are uncomfortable with being singled out in any way, even for praise.
- Workers from some backgrounds will point out their own successes with pride whereas others will remain silent no matter how successful; to them, self-praise or self-promotion is not acceptable behavior.
- In some cultures physical touching or entering another's close personal space is acceptable, but in some it is not.
- Some male workers from certain cultures may be extremely ill at ease reporting to a female supervisor.

These examples and more add up to numerous individual differences that a manager may have to account for in relating to each individual member of a work group.

In the Supervisor-Employee Relationship

All employees should be expected to adapt to the reasonable requirements of the job and the workplace as necessary, but they will always bring their individualism to the job as well. The effective manager will always remain aware of individual differences and respect these differences in the relationship with each employee.

It is also to the manager's advantage to become familiar with applicable aspects of antidiscrimination laws. In reacting to culturally based individual differences, it is sometimes possible to unintentionally enter into discriminatory practices out of ignorance of the law.

Every healthcare manager would stand to benefit by attending a sound cultural diversity program and making a determined effort to learn about the cultures prevalent in the department or organization. The manager must not only successfully relate to each employee but also manage the interactions between and among employees to ensure that equal treatment, opportunity, and respect exist for all.

Over the coming few decades the more effective organizations will be those that successfully manage workforce diversity and tap the maximum potential that each employee has to offer.

FOR EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

When You Are Doing the Talking

- Before speaking up, put some effort into structuring the communication you are about to deliver. First think out the what and the why of the communication, then when you know what you are going to say and what you are trying to accomplish, you can consider how best to communicate it.
- Consider your listener's needs, interests, and attitudes. Try to exercise empathy at all times, constantly judging what you are saying from your listener's point of view.

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- Pay attention
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- Return: iron out messages

THE OPEN

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- Deliver your comments in language properly suited to the level of knowledge, education, and experience of your listener. Never talk down to or over the head of the other person.
- Except in the direct of emergencies (and even in emergencies, when you are not convinced that your listener is prepared to respond appropriately) follow up your communication immediately with a request for feedback. Ask to have the message played back to you in the listener's own words. This could be as simple as: "How would you describe what I've just asked you to do?" Ideally, your approach should not be one that suggests you are trying to find out if the other person understood you—although that is a major purpose—but rather that you are trying to assure yourself that you communicated your thoughts clearly and fully.

When You Are Doing the Listening

- Pay attention. Really listen—your undivided attention conquers many potential obstacles.
- Listen always for meaning, striving constantly to determine what is being said and why it is being said.
- Consider the whole person, searching out attitudes and feelings as well as meanings. Keep in mind that words and other signs such as the nonverbal signals given out by the other person cannot be fully separated from attitudes and feelings.
- Be as patient as necessary to encourage the individual to try to communicate fully.
- Be prepared to compromise as necessary to achieve agreement or understanding, and consider yielding completely on minor points or unimportant details. Compromise is not the dirty word it is regarded to be by some; rather, reasonable compromise is often the most important step in establishing mutual understanding.
- Return the message to the speaker in your own words, using discussion to iron out differences until you both agree that the message sent and the message received are the same.

THE OPEN-DOOR ATTITUDE

Every manager has probably said at one time or another, "My door is always open." This is an easy statement to make, but it takes effort to ensure that these words reflect more of an honest attitude than a timeworn platitude. Your job is to help your employees get their work done. In addition to guiding and directing their overall efforts you must answer questions, deal with problems, silence rumors, and put fears and suspicions to rest. Remember that your employees do not work *for* you as much as they work *with* you and that a large part of your function is to "run interference" for your employees so that they can accomplish their work as efficiently as possible. To do all of this you must be visible and readily available to your employees, and you must have an always-growing one-to-one relationship with each employee. It is your responsibility to honestly consider the employee as a whole person, not simply as just

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a producer. To do so often requires you to be a person first and a manager second. Successful supervision requires human sensitivity. Without sensitivity, a supervisor has only rules, policies, and procedures, which are useful but which by themselves are grossly inadequate for the complete fulfillment of the supervisory role.

Effective one-to-one communication with each employee is the basis for mutual understanding between supervisor and employee. A healthy attitude for the supervisor assumes a Golden Rule approach to communication: Deal with others as you would wish to be dealt with yourself.

Your one-to-one relationship with each employee is critical to the institution as a whole. The way each employee sees you—available, friendly, caring, and helpful, or perhaps the opposite—so may he or she come to see the entire organization. As a member of management you represent the organization to the employee. The impression you create as a person will contribute, for good or ill, to the individual employee's impression of the organization as a whole.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Describe the essential difference between consultative leadership and participative leadership.
2. Can you think of circumstances under which autocratic leadership (although not exploitative) could be appropriate? Provide an example and your rationale.
3. Cite an example of a Theory X working environment and an example of a Theory Y environment, and cite two or three characteristics of a hypothetical environment midway between X and Y.
4. Describe the principal conditions or circumstances that encourage people to be one-way dispensers of information rather than true two-way communicators.
5. Explain the difference between the open-door policy and the open-door attitude.
6. Why might some managers whose leadership styles are largely consultative believe they are actually participative leaders?
7. If "leader" and "manager" are usually listed as synonyms for each other, why might "leader" carry a generally more favorable connotation than "manager"?
8. Can you describe any circumstances under which one-way communication is appropriate? Why might it be appropriate and why does it often work?
9. Why is so-called one-way communication actually not communication at all? What is the missing essential ingredient?
10. What are the more common results of the presence of negative emotions (anger, etc.) in interpersonal communication?
11. Explain the statement: The same words can mean different things to different people at the same time.

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12. Describe the communication.
13. Concerning writing, as 14. Do you believe in communication?
15. What would you call "spots" and