

TEAM WELLNESS/MAINTENANCE

THE TEAM CONCEPT

One of the most critical factors in determining team success is the team's ability to manage group dynamics. Teams can not expect to be effective in helping students when they do not function as healthy work units. When people come together to work as a team, a dynamism is produced that can result in productivity, success, accomplishments, shared decision making, responsibility, good feelings, trust and a sense of identification and belonging. If the team is unable to channel this energy in a constructive manner, however, the outcomes are likely to be ineffectiveness, unresolved conflicts and power struggles, uneven participation, suspicion, lack of focus and goal attainment, deficits in leadership and purpose, general dissatisfaction among group members and disaffection among colleagues outside the group.

Teams should schedule maintenance meetings on a regular basis (i.e., at a minimum, every six months) to review how they are working together as a group. The information in this section is intended to provide some resources, perspectives, ideas and strategies that can be used among team members in general or during team maintenance meetings to support the development and maintenance of healthy I&RS teams.

Team Definition and Elements of Teams

Teams are more than collections of diverse people. A team is a group of individuals who must work interdependently in order to attain its goals. Not all working groups are teams. For example, a faculty is a working group, but does not necessarily work *interdependently* to attain common goals. The I&RS team must become more than a working group to reach its full potential. True team effort creates a synergy that can have far-reaching effects on the achievement and growth of students and the health of school and community members. Four essential elements of the team concept are described below:

- **Reason for Working Together** – Effective team members have a common understanding of and commitment to the shared mission, goals and functions of the team. It is generally understood that team members serve to help students who are at-risk for a variety of problems. Beyond this broad statement of purpose, however, team members should also agree on the philosophy, priorities, mission and functions of their program, as it relates to their school.

Team Definition and Elements of Teams, continued

- **Interdependent** – Effective team members believe that they need each other’s experience, ability, commitment and professional perspectives to arrive at mutual goals. This includes networking with other groups and constituencies in the school and the community.

Each team designates a team member to perform leadership functions and specified tasks. True group leadership, however, is not a function of a position, but is a situational characteristic of team membership. Leadership is shared on the I&RS team. Anything a member does to move the group forward is considered a leadership function.

In addition, all formal mantles of authority or professional “hats” are “left at the door” when conducting I&RS team business. Each member has an equal say as the team strives to reach consensus for decisions.

- **Group Effectiveness** – Effective team members are committed to the idea that working together as a group leads to more effective decisions and interventions than when working independently or in isolation. The team is comprised of staff members from diverse positions in the building to ensure a holistic view of students and their problems, as well as to endow the team with a wide spectrum of unique professional perspectives for effective problem solving.
- **Group Accountability** – The effective team is accountable as a functioning unit within the larger organizational context. This means that teams operate *within* the organization’s (i.e., board of education, school district, school building) procedures, climate, priorities, philosophies and culture. The effective team, however, also works within the organizational context to influence those factors that limit their ability to help students.

Why Groups Fail The results of a study sponsored by the Rand Corporation, as reported by Super Teams, Ltd., revealed a number of characteristics that contribute to the failure of work groups. The factors identified in the study, which are described below, can be used by teams to assess their own performance.

In general, the results of the study indicate that people need to feel that they are worthwhile contributors and that they have accomplished the tasks presented to them, rather than endlessly spinning their wheels.

Why Groups Fail, continued**Characteristics of Groups that Fail**

- **Lack of Understanding of a Problem** – This can result from collecting insufficient data or research about a problem prior to problem solving or an unwillingness to consider relevant professional perspectives. Some examples include thinking that one staff member can deal with a complex problem; not considering substance abuse as a primary factor in referrals for child study team evaluations; or treating chemical addiction as a secondary, rather than a primary problem.
- **Inability to Focus or Concentrate on the Problem** – Sometimes individual issues interfere with the team’s ability to focus their time and energy on the primary task at hand. As a result of unresolved relationship or group issues or individual’s skill levels, group members may diffuse matters or avoid important issues altogether.
- **Failure to Follow a Systematic and Comprehensive Procedure** – Some teams continue to meet and “discuss” cases, but are not as productive with their time; do not easily reach decisions and take action; or are not as effective in their interventions as they would like to be. These groups typically have not adopted or do not consistently adhere to a structured procedure for, at a minimum, implementing the entire *I&RS process* and in *problem-solving* requests for assistance.
- **Meetings Dominated by a Few Individuals** – Excessive input can be a control strategy and serve as a disincentive for representative participation.
- **Need for Change can be Interpreted by the Boss as Incompetence on His/Her Part, Resulting in Resistance** – Administrators may view a new innovation as a threat to their authority or their security and maintain a comfort zone by protecting the status quo.
- **Fear of Punishment for Talking Openly** – The organizational climate may not be conducive to an open exchange of ideas. There typically is little trust in situations where employees have experienced negative consequences for making suggestions or observations.
- **Competition vs. Cooperation** – Working at cross-purposes and protecting “turf,” rather than agreeing on mutual goals and commonalities and working in a collegial manner.

Why Groups Fail, continued

- **Inability to Work as a Team** – This typically occurs when group members function independently, rather than interdependently.

- **Negative Chain** – Unhealthy or ineffective communications follow the patterns described below:
 - **Put-downs** contribute to participant **Withdrawals**, which lead to **Counterattacks**.

 - ⇩
 - **Subgroups form**, with allies and adversaries attributed to each side.

 - ⇩
 - **Diversionsary Tactics** ensue, keeping the group from accomplishing its goals.

- **Too Much Knowledge of What Doesn't Work Often Prevents Exploration of Ideas** – Assertions such as: “We tried that before and it didn't work,” or “That won't work here because.....” tend to limit creativity and participation. Veteran staff have a wealth of knowledge and diverse experiences to contribute to the I&RS process. Sometimes, however, staff member's background can be an impediment to group effectiveness when it squelches consideration of ideas. There may be elements of all ideas that have application or can work, particularly when applied in a different context, or with a different population or when implemented by different people.

- **“Yeah Buts...” and “What Ifs...” Drain the Group** – These statements focus on the negative, or on what can not be accomplished, rather than the positive, or on what *can* be accomplished. This type of communication develops negative energy that drains the group and prevents hope, free exploration of ideas, participation and group effectiveness.

- **People Do Not Separate Their Ideas from Their Self-Concepts** – Basically, rejection of people's ideas are taken as rejection of themselves. When group members dismiss or ridicule an idea, they risk rejecting the individual, which can contribute to many of the negative forms of communication and unhealthy patterns of group behavior described above.

GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Many models describe the stages and characteristics of the development of healthy and unhealthy, effective and ineffective groups, two of which are described below. In addition to understanding how groups grow, teams should understand practical reasons for *why* it is important to apply group development theories and the benefits of applying these models to the workings of their teams.

Functions of Group Development Theories

Group development theories are helpful guides to complex issues that groups frequently find troublesome: dependency, authority, conflict, power and intimacy. They serve the following three helpful functions for managing the group process: descriptive, predictive and intervention.

DESCRIPTIVE FUNCTION

Group development models:

- Help organize perceptions of group activity.
- Aide in characterizing and measuring verbal behavior, interaction patterns, emotional climate or group content.
- Allow observers to compare and contrast group phenomena from a past or future session(s).



PREDICTIVE FUNCTION

Group development models:

- Help forecast the group's future, based on current observations.
- Describe what "should" be happening so that objectives for group growth can be set.
- Provide comfort in knowing that events will not always be as conflicted or sluggish as they appear.



INTERVENTION FUNCTION

Group development models:

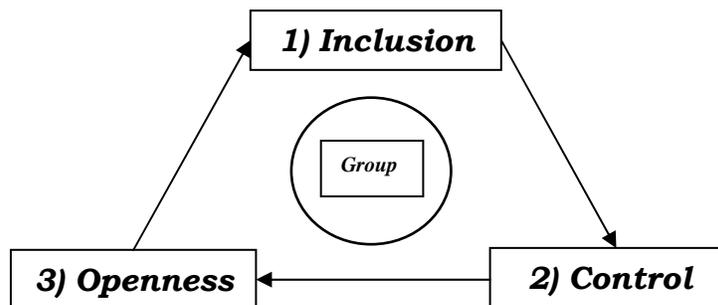
- Provide cues to accelerate, slow down, freeze or focus the process to ensure the group does not avoid opportunities to avoid pitfalls, remediate problems and facilitate growth and learning.

Models of Group Development

Not all models of group development apply to work groups and teams. Some models primarily describe the activity that takes place in encounter or personal growth groups. The various theories either characterize the life of a group as linear, cyclical or helical. Described below are two linear models, which most appropriately apply to the development of work teams: 1) *The Truth Option*, and 2) *Cog's Ladder*.

The Truth Option

According to this model, originally described by William Schutz in The Interpersonal Underworld and updated in The Truth Option, group growth unfolds in a linear process marked by the following three phases:



When the concerns of one phase are sufficiently resolved for the group to have energy and common ground for other things, it then moves on to the next phase, until the cycle starts over again at a different level of depth. The cycle can occur in the span of one meeting or over a longer period of time. Each phase of group development can be assessed as:

- ❑ **Adequate** – The group can function in ways that are satisfying to its members; or
- ❑ **Inadequate** – A lack of solution is impairing the ability of the group to function optimally.

When new members are added to the team, the group shifts to Phase One and the process continues in sequence. Teams should account for this change when adding new members. When a group ends, the final sequence of stages is reversed.

The information provided below on characteristics of each stage can be used as a checklist for individual observations or for discussion purposes during team maintenance meetings.

The Truth Option, continued**INCLUSION STAGE*****Inclusion Adequate******Inclusion Inadequate***

____ Attendance is high and steady.
 ____ Absent members are kept informed.

____ Members anticipate meetings and activities.
 ____ Individual needs are recognized and accepted.

____ Participation is general, with good interaction and attention.
 ____ Members have a fairly clear idea of group goals, and are committed to the shared goals and to working cooperatively to achieve them.

____ Group loyalty and a feeling of group belonging exists.
 ____ All members are accepted.

____ Attendance is poor or uneven.
 ____ Absent members are not informed about the next meeting or of events in the meeting(s) missed.

____ Members do not care whether the group meets.
 ____ Some members feel excluded.

____ Participation is uneven, with little interaction.

____ Unclear group goals, trouble cooperating, little action and lack of confidence.

____ Membership has little meaning.

____ Individual needs are not recognized.

CONTROL STAGE***Control Adequate******Control Inadequate***

____ Decision-making processes are clear.

____ Power is distributed.

____ Leadership is shared.
 ____ Structure for the sake of control is unnecessary.

____ Conflict is accepted and managed openly.

____ Much bargaining takes place; there is a high level of cooperation.

____ There is follow-through on decisions.

____ The group is productive and accepts responsibility for its actions.

____ Members respect each other.

____ Decision-making processes are unclear.

____ A few members tend to dominate; decisions are imposed.

____ Leadership is lacking.

____ The group tends to be excessively structured.

____ Power struggles reign and are constant; members are highly competitive and critical.

____ There is constant infighting and indiscriminate opposition.

____ The group often is blocked.

____ Individuals are irresponsible and dependent.

____ Some members are passive and restrained, with little will to achieve.

The Truth Option, continued

OPENNESS STAGE	
Openness Adequate	Openness Inadequate
___ Communication is open and honest.	___ Communication is limited.
___ Feelings are expressed.	___ Exposure is almost nonexistent.
___ Members trust each other and accept feedback.	___ Members do not trust each other and withhold feedback.
___ Members are receptive to new ideas and change.	___ Members are hostile toward new ideas.
___ Members share.	___ Selfishness and jealousy is open.
___ There is reciprocity and support.	___ Many feel rejected.
___ Members like each other and have the freedom to be different.	___ Deviance from the norm is objectionable.
___ Members have a feeling of closeness.	___ Social distance is evident.
___ Members gain satisfaction from belonging to the group, as well from group life inside and outside of meetings.	___ Members express much dissatisfaction with the group.
___ Members are friends.	___ Few members have close friends in the group.

Cog's Ladder

This model of group development describes five steps for group growth:

- 1) *polite*, 2) *why we are here*, 3) *bid for power*, 4) *constructive*, and 5) *esprit*.

STEP 1: POLITE

This stage is marked by getting acquainted, sharing values and establishing the basis for group structure. Characteristics of this stage are described below:

- Polite conversation and information sharing, which helps members anticipate other's future responses in the group.
- Some rely on stereotyping to help categorize other members.
- An emotional basis is established for future group structure.
- Cliques are formed (which will become important later in the group's life).

Cog's Ladder, continued**STEP 1: POLITE, continued**

- Member's hidden agendas remain concealed and do not usually affect behavior at this time.
- Need for group approval is strong, but group identity is low.
- Participation is active, though uneven.
- Conflict is usually absent. Members need to be liked.
- The rules of behavior: Keep ideas simple;
Say acceptable things;
Avoid controversy and serious topics;
If sharing feelings, keep feedback to a minimum; and
Avoid disclosure.

STEP 2: WHY WE ARE HERE

This stage is marked by defining group goals and objectives. Characteristics of this stage are described below:

- Agreement on goals is essential to group success; the easier it is to define objectives, the faster the group appears to reach agreement on other things.
- Some members demand a written agenda.
- Cliques start to wield influence and grow and merge as clique members find a common purpose.
- Hidden agendas are sensed as members verbalize group objectives that are most satisfying to themselves.
- Group identity is still low.
- There is a diminished need for approval as members begin to take risks and display commitment.
- There typically is active participation from all members.
- Even when the purpose for the group comes from outside the group, members still need to discuss it to gain understanding and to build commitment, because agreement on the purpose is the priority in this stage.

Cog's Ladder, continued**STEP 3: BID FOR POWER**

This stage is marked by competition for attention, recognition and influence. Characteristics of this stage are described below:

- Members try to rationalize their own positions and convince others to take action that they believe is appropriate.
- “Opponents” are considered close-minded and accused of not listening.
- Conflict rises to a higher level than any other stage.
- Leadership struggles occur, actively involving all cliques.
- Typical attempts to resolve these struggles include voting, compromise and seeking outside arbitration.
- Team spirit is weak and some members become uncomfortable as latent hostility is expressed.
- Some who had contributed freely, now remain silent. Others relish the opportunity to compete and attempt to dominate the group.
- Cliques take on the greatest importance; through cliques members find they can wield more power.
- Members become aware of previously concealed agendas.
- The need for group approval declines; members are willing to risk censure.
- Creative suggestions fall flat because the group feels that the author wants credit (power) for the suggestion.
- There still is no group identity.
- There is a greater difference between the speaking time of the least and most talkative members than in any other phase.
- There is a strong need for structure.
- Group-building and maintenance roles are important: the harmonizer, the compromiser and the follower try to maintain balance between individual and group needs. The harmonizer seeks to reduce conflict to offset the aggressor's tendency to raise conflict levels.
- Some groups never mature past the Bid for Power stage. Nevertheless, they can fulfill their tasks, even though solutions arising in this stage are not optimal; they never satisfy all members and, at best, are products of compromise.

Cog's Ladder, continued**STEP 4: CONSTRUCTIVE**

This stage is marked by cooperation. Characteristics of this stage are described below:

- Members give up control attempts, substitute active listening and actually ask questions of each other.
- Attitudes change; members become willing to change preconceived ideas or opinions on the basis of facts presented by other team members.
- Team spirit starts to build; cliques begin to dissolve and group identity becomes important.
- Real progress toward the group's goals becomes evident.
- Leadership is shared and the group is comfortable using the talents of any individual who can contribute effectively.
- Conflict, when it arises, is seen as a mutual problem, rather than a win-lose battle.
- It is often difficult to bring in a new group member(s).
- Practical creativity can be high because there is a willingness to accept, solicit, listen to, question, respond to and act on creative suggestions.
- Solutions or decisions are almost always better because they are developed by the group, rather than a single member (depending on the talents of group members and the problem to be solved).

STEP 5: ESPRIT

This stage is marked by unity and high spirits. Characteristics of this stage are described below:

- There is high group morale and intense group loyalty.
- Relationships between individuals are empathetic.
- The need for group approval is absent because each member approves of the others and accepts them as individuals. "We don't always agree on everything, but we respect each other's views and agree to disagree."

Cog's Ladder, continued**STEP 5: ESPRIT, continued**

- Cliques are absent.
- Both individuality and creativity are high; a non-possessive warmth and feeling of freedom result.
- Participation is as even as it will ever get.
- The group is strongly "closed." If a new member is introduced, the feelings of camaraderie and spirit will be destroyed, since the group must regress to an earlier stage, carrying the new member along.
- Hidden agendas are present, but do not detract from group spirit and loyalty.
- The group continues to be constructive and productive, usually achieving more than expected or can be explained by the apparent talents of members.

Interrelationships of Cog's Ladder Steps

Group cohesiveness depends on how well members can relate in the same step at the same time. A group will proceed through the five phases only as far as its members are willing to grow. Each member must be willing to give up something at each step in order to make the move to the next stage. The reasons prompting a group to move, or not move, from one phase to another vary:

➡ Moving from Step 1 to Step 2

- ❑ Seems to occur when any single group member desires it. For example, simply by saying, "Well, what's on the agenda today?"
- ❑ Each member must relinquish the comfort of non-threatening topics and risk the possibility of conflict.

➡ Moving from Step 2 to Step 3

- ❑ Each member must put aside the continued discussion of group purpose and commit to a purpose with which each might not completely agree.

Cog's Ladder, continued

- Each member must also risk personal attacks, which members know occur in Step 3.

➡ Moving from Step 3 to Step 4

- The ability to listen is the most important trait.
- Requires individuals to stop defending their own views and risk the possibility of being wrong.
- Groups have rejected members who stay stuck in the third step; or this transition can be permanently blocked by a strong competitive group member or clique.

➡ Moving from Step 4 to Step 5

- Seems to require unanimous agreement among members.
- Demands some humility.
- Demands that members trust themselves and other members. To trust is to risk a breach of trust.

**Team Member
Task and Maintenance
Roles**

Group members tend to exhibit patterns of behavior and/or preferred roles. Effective team members are able to identify the presence of behaviors that help and hinder team operations and provide and receive supportive feedback on their contributions to the group. Competent team members work to develop role diversity and flexibility in order to provide the behaviors that will regularly move the group forward. The roles below, which have been adapted from Learning to Work in Groups, by Matthew Miles, must be fulfilled, at appropriate times, for groups to effectively accomplish their respective missions.

Team Member Task and Maintenance Roles, continued

TASK ROLES		MAINTENANCE ROLES	
Behaviors that help a group accomplish its work.		Behaviors that help members of a group work well together.	
Initiating	Proposing tasks or goals. Defining a group problem. Suggesting a procedure or idea for solving a problem.	Encouraging	Being friendly, warm, responsive and accepting of others and their contributions.
Seeking Information	Requesting facts. Seeking relevant information about a group problem or concern. Making group members aware of a need for more information.	Expressing Feelings	Articulating one's own or feelings and reactions feelings present in the group. Calling the attention of the group to its reactions, ideas and suggestions.
Giving Information	Offering facts. Providing information with respect to a group concern.	Harmonizing	Attempting to reconcile disagreement. Reducing tension through humor. Getting people to explore their differences in a relaxed manner.
Seeking Options	Asking for expression of thoughts and feelings. Requesting statements or expressions of value. Seeking suggestions, ideas and alternatives.	Compromising	Offering middle ground or concessions. Yielding status or admitting error when one's own idea or status is involved in a conflict. Disciplining oneself to maintain group cohesion.
Giving Opinions	Stating a belief about a matter that is before the group. Giving suggestions and ideas.	Facilitating Communication	Attempting to keep communication channels open. Facilitating the participation of others. Suggesting procedures for discussing problems.
Clarifying	Interpreting ideas or suggestions. Clearing up confusion. Defining terms. Indicating alternatives and issues that are before the group.	Setting Standards	Expressing benchmarks or goals for the group to achieve. Helping the group become aware of direction and progress.
Elaborating	Giving examples. Making generalizations. Expounding upon alternatives and issues that are before the group.	Testing Agreement	Asking for opinions to determine whether the group is nearing a decision. Sending up a trial balloon to determine how near to agreement a group is. Rewarding progress.
Summarizing	Pulling together related issues. Restating suggestions after the group has discussed them. Offering decisions, applications or conclusions for the group to accept or reject.	Following	Going along with the movement of the group. Accepting others' ideas. Listening to and serving as an interested audience for others in the group.

EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION SKILLS

As described in The Team Handbook: How to Use Teams to Improve Quality, by Peter R. Scholtes, effective discussions are at the heart of successful meetings. The team leader should always use skills for effective discussions, but the team will be even more effective when every team member learns and practices skills that facilitate discussions. The following techniques are particularly useful in team discussions.

Discussion Skills

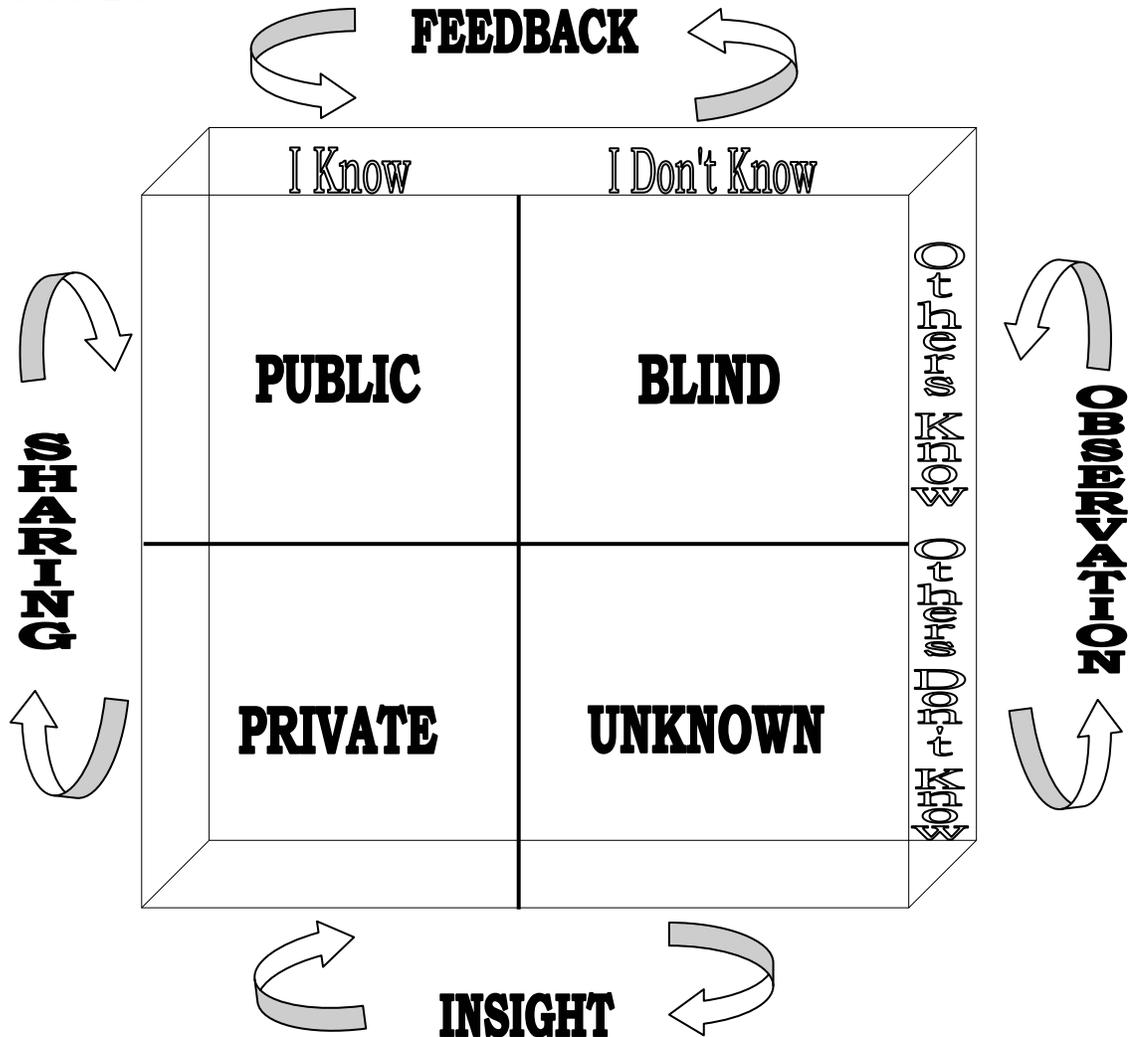
At appropriate times during a meeting, team members should:

- **Ask for Clarification** – If you are unclear about the topic being discussed or the logic in another person’s arguments, ask someone to define the purpose, focus or limits of the discussion. Ask members to repeat ideas in different ways. Ask for examples, pictures, diagrams, data, etc.
- **Act as Gatekeepers** – Encourage more-or-less equal participation among group members by “throttling” dominators. Make openings for less aggressive members by directly asking their opinions or making a general request for input.
- **Listen** – Actively explore one another’s ideas rather than debating or defending each idea that comes up.
- **Summarize** – Occasionally compile what has been said and restate it to the group in summary form. Follow a summary with a question to check for agreement.
- **Contain Digression** – Do not permit overlong examples or irrelevant discussion.
- **Manage Time** – If portions of the agenda take longer than expected, remind the team of deadlines and time allotments so work can either be accelerated or postponed, or so time can be re-budgeted appropriately.
- **End the Discussion** – Learn to tell when there is nothing to be gained from further discussion. Help the team close a discussion and decide the issue.
- **Test for Consensus** – Summarize the group’s position on an issue, state the decisions that seem to have been made and check whether the team agrees with the summary.
- **Constantly Evaluate the Meeting Process** – Throughout the meeting assess the quality of the discussion or what could be done differently to be more effective in the remaining time?

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

As is the case with most human enterprises, the degree to which team members openly and honestly communicate regarding both group task and maintenance concerns is the foundation of team effectiveness. Since communication is also at the heart of the team’s efforts with colleagues, parents and community members, on behalf of children, it is incumbent upon teams to faithfully monitor, evaluate, adapt and improve their communication patterns and skills. Described below are some skills and techniques that are essential for group cohesion and productivity.

Johari Window The Johari Window, described by Josph Luft in Of Human Interaction, is a model of interpersonal communication that team members can use as a basis for identifying behaviors and related information that will help maintain the group and improve interactions among colleagues, parents, community members and students.



Johari Window, continued**Applications of the Johari Window to I&RS Team Functioning**

The degree to which people reveal information about themselves is always a personal choice. While it is not suggested that team members share every detail of their lives to be effective team members, members should be aware that, as a rule, the smaller their public area the less effective their communications and relationships with others. As the public window increases in size, team members become more open, trusting and approachable; they are more willing to share information, receive feedback and learn from their experiences.

New relationships typically begin with people sharing superficial information about themselves, thereby moving in a limited manner from the private area to the public area. At first, information may be limited to facts such as: names, styles of dress, interests, preferences for entertainment and food, religious affiliations or favorite activities or events.

As comfort and trust are established, team members become more willing to give and receive feedback about how they are responding to one another, thereby further enlarging the public area by transferring information from the blind area. The result is even greater willingness to share meaningful information and confidences. For this to happen, there must be safety, confidentiality, respect, common goals and honesty. In the final analysis, *it is not necessary for team members to be social friends, but they must work in a friend-like manner.*

Applications of the Johari Window to the I&RS Process

The essence of the I&RS process, and the educational process in general, is manifest in the Johari Window, making it a very useful model of interpersonal communication.

Unknown  **Private** Students or team members may have potential skills or creative reservoirs that remain unknown to them until they are exposed to opportunities for discovery and development, which would bring the unknown information into the private area. Examples of unknown information moving into the private area include the act of acquiring new information about a problem; having an “aha” experience, where a student or team member makes new connections; or when the psycho-dynamics of a situation create new awareness or *insight*.

Johari Window, continued

Private ⇨ **Public** It is the job of educators to systematically *share* information that is unknown to students. Students regularly *share* new learnings or *insights* through discussions, reports, tests or other means, thereby bringing the private information into the public area. Staff who request assistance for problems are sharing information with the I&RS team that was previously unknown to them. Students *share* background information and insights about their performance and concerns. Team members *share* insights about their preferred style of teamwork. Team members *share* limitations or preferences for the types of issues or cases with which they feel comfortable working. Team members *share* their insights about the team's process or a team member's behavior. Team member's also *share* insights they have about requests for assistance based on their assessment of the collected information.

Unknown ⇨ **Blind** School staff may *observe* or "intuit" a behavior or characteristic that suggests a particular talent, or may provide opportunities for students to participate in new activities, where talents and abilities are witnessed, thereby bringing the unknown information into the blind area. School staff who have requested assistance for behaviors of concern provide the team an opportunity to make observations not made by requestors. A classroom observation conducted by a team member may provide the observer with information that is not known to the observee. Team members may also *observe* either an effective or ineffective pattern in the team's operations or in a behavior of concern for another team member.

Blind ⇨ **Public** Teachers provide feedback to students on classroom performance, homework assignments and tests, bringing blind information into students' public arena. The I&RS team brings the information from a request for assistance (blind area) into the public area by providing *feedback* to the students parents, the student or possibly other staff and community agencies. A team member's observation of group behavior or the behavior of an individual is made public by providing *feedback* about the concern to the group or the individual with the "blind" spot on the matter.

Three Problems in Human Relationships and Related Skills

The application of the Johari Window to the I&RS process requires the use of three essential communication skills: 1) *feedback*, 2) *listening*, and 3) *conflict resolution or problem solving*. The application of these skills requires an understanding of the situations in which they are most appropriately applied.

As explained by Dr. Thomas Gordon, in Teacher Effectiveness Training, there are three types of problems that we all experience in human relationships: 1) *I own the problem*, 2) *The other person owns the problem*, or 3) *We own the problem*. The keys to Dr. Gordon's schema are in the identification of *ownership* for problems and in matching the appropriate skills and/or strategies for addressing or resolving them.

According to Dr. Gordon, "One of the chief stumbling blocks on the path toward good relationships is the failure to understand the concept of ownership of problems." Dr. Gordon asserts that it is absolutely imperative that we are able to distinguish between those problems that others have in their lives that cause *them* a problem, but not oneself; those that have a tangible and concrete effect on *oneself* by interfering with one's needs; and those where our needs conflict. The three problem areas are described below, as well as suggested skills or strategies for addressing them.

I Own The Problem

A problem is said to be "owned" by an individual when another person's behavior interferes with one's own needs or when one is disturbed by another's behavior. The problem belongs to the person who is experiencing difficulties with another person; it belongs to him; he owns it.

The clues that indicate that someone owns a problem are the *feelings* experienced (e.g., annoyance, frustration, resentment, anger, distraction, irritation, hurt, sadness, embarrassment). Another set of clues are the *physical manifestations* of one's feelings (e.g., tension, discomfort, upset stomach, headache, jumpiness, perspiration, hyperventilation, increased heart rate). Effective team members own, and take responsibility for, these feelings and reactions.

Some situations where a team member might own a problem with one or more team members' behavior follow:

Three Problem Areas in Human Relationships and Related Skills, continued

- ❑ A team member continues to be late for meetings, which interferes with the completion of the agenda.
- ❑ A team member does not follow through on assignments, causing delays in services to students, staff and parents.
- ❑ A team member regularly dominates discussions, does not share responsibility and does not compromise, making it difficult to reach consensus.
- ❑ The team does not follow through on decisions.
- ❑ The team is not following the agreed upon procedures.
- ❑ A team member repeatedly begins talking before you complete your thoughts.
- ❑ A team member regularly makes comments that offend you or interjects humor at times that detract from the group's ability to focus on the tasks at hand.
- ❑ You overhear a team member discussing the specifics of an I&RS case with a staff member who is not a member of the team.

There are three basic responses one can make when experiencing a problem with another person's behavior: 1) *Attempt to modify the environment*; 2) *Attempt to modify oneself*; or 3) *Attempt to modify the other person's behavior*.

**Attempt to
Modify the
Environment**

Sometimes a problem can be prevented or rectified by making changes in one's environment. For example, separating two team members who joke a lot can reduce diversions or make it easier to confront or control this behavior when it occurs. Setting time limits for portions of meetings can help those members who easily become distracted. Modifying operating procedures can sometimes alleviate problems that some group members find troublesome. Tardiness might be reduced by selecting a location that is easily accessible to all or by making schedule adjustments. Dr. Gordon refers to eight ways of thinking about making environmental changes:

- ❑ Enriching the environment.
- ❑ Impoverishing the environment
- ❑ Restricting the environment.
- ❑ Enlarging the environment.
- ❑ Rearranging the environment.
- ❑ Simplifying the environment.
- ❑ Systematizing the environment.
- ❑ Planning ahead for the environment.

Three Problem Areas in Human Relationships and Related Skills, continued**Attempt to Modify Oneself**

For many people, it is easier to accept new methods for modifying other people or the environment than it is to consider making changes in oneself. Self-modification, however, is the only method over which we have sole control.

It is normal for team members to allow for and make adjustments in their responses to other members' styles, preferences, strengths, credentials, positions of authority or their relationships with them. There are times when changing one's attitude, developing a little more acceptance of a colleague or understanding a team member's thoughts and motivations can markedly alter one's relationships with team members.

The relative significance of an issue or the ramifications of confrontation might influence a decision not to confront behaviors that interfere with our needs, if personal adjustments can be comfortably made. Self-modification, however, should be considered primarily when the change does not seriously compromise one's own ability to function in an effective manner, or in a custom that is not consistent with one's needs or personality.

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior

Behaviors that disturb us can be confronted in a supportive, but firm manner. Confrontation describes the act of standing up to another by telling him that his behavior is interfering with one's rights. It is an active posture, where one assumes responsibility for seeing that one's needs are met in a *caring* way.

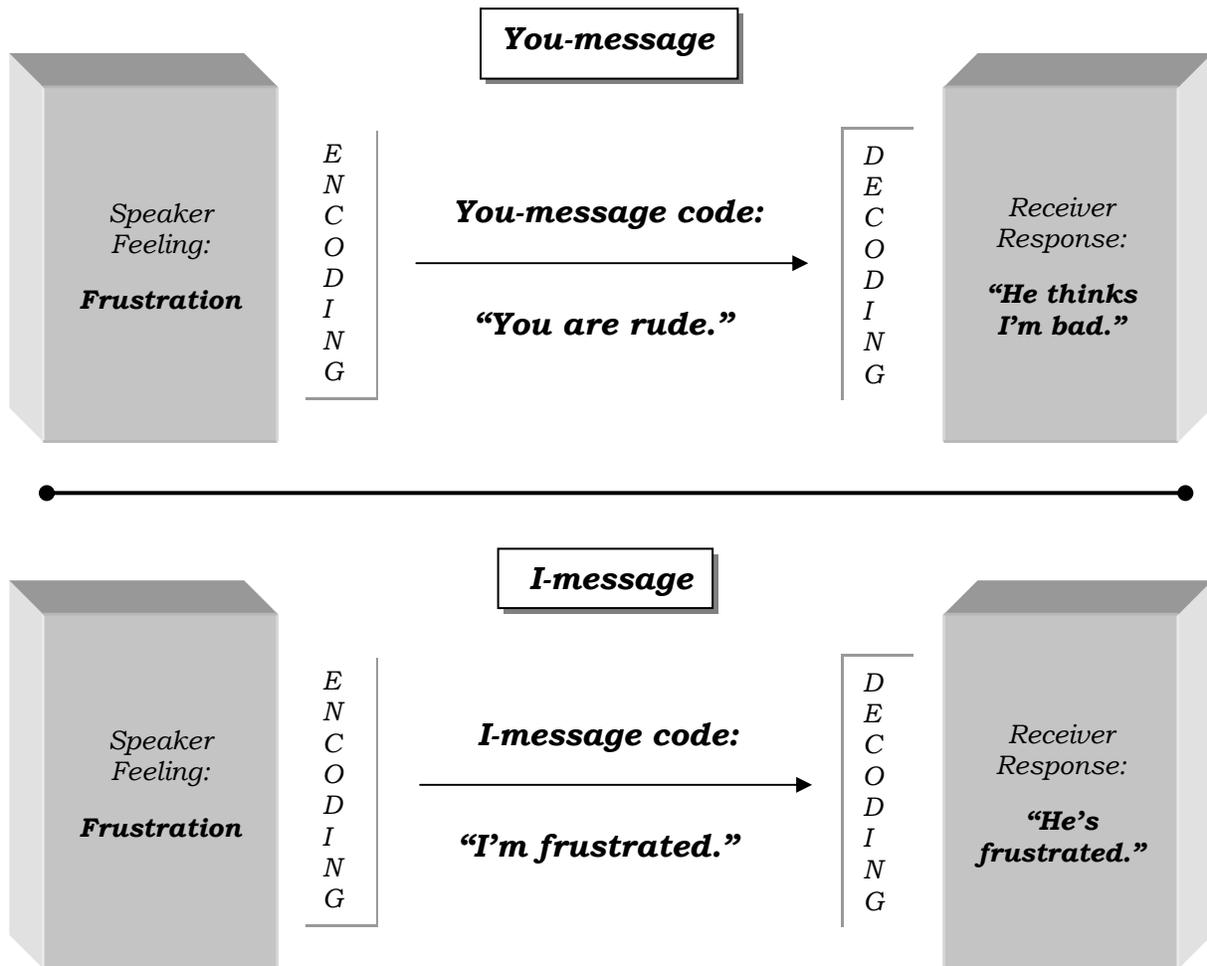
When encountering behaviors with which individuals have a problem, however, people have a tendency to confront with messages that have been shown to have a high probability of being ineffective or counterproductive, producing resistance, anger, guilt, shame, embarrassment, defensiveness, hopelessness or revenge. These ineffective messages typically fall into three categories: 1) *Solution messages*; 2) *Put-down messages*; and 3) *Indirect messages*.

Dr. Gordon explains that all three of the categories of ineffective messages tend to have the pronoun "you," or, due to the structure of the language, the "you" is implied, as in "Stop that," a message which carries the implied message, "You stop that." Examples of you-messages include

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior, continued

the following statements: "Leave me alone." "You're a jerk." "You're driving me crazy." "You should..." "You better..." "If you don't...then I'll..."

You-messages reveal nothing about the individual with the problem; the entire focus is on the person without the problem. The following diagrams, which are adapted from Dr. Gordon's work, illustrate the basis for developing more effective expressions of one's own concerns.



Dr. Gordon asserts that if the person with the problem describes how he felt about the behavior or how it tangibly affected him, the message would have to come out as an I-message, rather than a you-message. I-messages, put responsibility for what is happening where it belongs, inside the individual experiencing the problem. An I-message is essentially a *request* for change that allows the person who is affected by

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior, continued

another's behavior to express the impact it has on him; leaves the responsibility for changing the behavior or responding to one's request for change with the person who demonstrated it; and opens the door for constructive communication about mutual needs.

THE I-MESSAGE

To have the greatest impact, an I-message must have three parts:

1) Behavior, 2) Feeling, and 3) Effect.**1. The specific BEHAVIOR of concern.**

The person that is the source of the concern must find out from the sender of the I-message exactly *what* is creating a problem. A non-blaming, nonjudgmental description of the concern is a good place to begin. A good I-message is a factual report without editorial characterization. The pronoun *you* may appear; however, unlike you-messages, they contain no blame, evaluation, solution or moral judgment.

Examples:

- 1) "When you **arrived 15 minutes after the agreed upon meeting time...**"
- 2) "When **confidential files are left unattended on the table...**"
- 3) "When you **began speaking before I finished my sentences...**"

2. The TANGIBLE EFFECT of the behavior.

I-messages generally fail to have impact unless the claimed undesirable *effect* on the person appears real and solid in the eyes of the receiver. When someone understands that his behavior causes another a real problem, he is more likely to be motivated to change. Communicating concrete effects also makes it more difficult to put someone down because of one's ideas of what is "good" or bad, "right" or wrong," when he is in no way affected by the behaviors.

Examples:

- 1) "When you arrived 15 minutes after the agreed upon meeting time, we were **unable to complete the agenda** and were **delayed in providing assistance** for students in need."
- 2) "When confidential files are left unattended on the table, they can **get misplaced** or **viewed by unauthorized persons.**"
- 3) "When you began speaking before I finished my sentences, I **could not complete my thoughts** and was **not able to fully participate.**"

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior, continued**The I-Message, continued****3. The FEELING experienced as a result of the behavior.**

The third part of the I-message is a statement of the feelings generated within the person when he is tangibly affected. The sequence (behavior, effect, feeling) communicates that the feeling is being blamed on the effect of the behavior, rather than on the behavior, which minimizes defensiveness. It is likely that an individual is less concerned with being interrupted (which might be judged as rude) than he is with not being able to complete his thoughts or have a chance to fully participate.

- Examples:
- 1) *"When you arrived 15 minutes after the agreed upon meeting time, we were unable to complete the agenda and were delayed in providing assistance for students in need, and this really **frustrates, discourages and angers** me."*
 - 2) *"When confidential files are left unattended on the table, they can get misplaced or viewed by unauthorized persons, which could result in legal action, and this really **scares** me."*
 - 3) *"When you began speaking before I finished my sentences, I could not complete my thoughts, and became **frustrated, confused and hurt.**"*

Feedback

The I-message is one technique for giving feedback to another person about his behavior. Feedback is information that allows a person to learn where he is in relation to a specific objective or goal. Feedback provides a way of helping another person consider behavior changes. Feedback is always a device for someone to obtain information about the effect that his actions have on others.

Since the provision of feedback is at the heart of the I&RS process, it is important that team members master the skill of transmitting feedback in a helpful manner. The following lists, which have been adapted from A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training: Volume III, by J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, contains criteria for maximizing the benefits of feedback.

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior, continued**FEEDBACK CRITERIA****Usually Helpful****Usually Not Helpful****Descriptive****Evaluative**

Providing objective descriptions, rather than evaluations of one's observations and reactions to another's behavior, reduces defensiveness. The statement, *"This is a very poor article."* is an example of an evaluative comment. The statement, *"I am confused by this article."* Describes the speaker's feelings about the article, rather than the speaker's judgment of the article.

Specific**General**

General information is not useful to the receiver. For example telling someone that he is *"dominating,"* is not as useful as providing specific information such as: *"Just now, when we were deciding the issue, you did not respond to input from others, as requested. As a result, I felt forced to accept your arguments or face attack from you."*

Immediate**Delayed**

In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the occurrence of the behavior. Of course, this depends upon various factors, such as the person's readiness to hear the information; support available from others; and the caring and concern accompanying the feedback.

Measurable**Not Measurable**

In addition to describing the behavior in observable terms, it is helpful to quantify the observation. Hard evidence adds credibility to the observation; serves as a "reality check" for the observer; and minimizes defensiveness. An example of non-measurable feedback is: *"You always interrupt me."* An example of measurable feedback is: *"During the last meeting, on seven occasions you began speaking while I was talking."*

Solicited**Volunteered**

Feedback is most useful when the receiver poses the questions he wants answered.

Attempt to Modify the Other Person's Behavior, continued**Able to be Checked Out by Receiver****Not able to be Checked Out by Receiver**

Both the giver and the receiver should have the opportunity to check with each other and others, if possible, regarding the accuracy of the feedback for the following purposes: to determine whether this is one person's impression or an observation shared by others; to determine whether the feedback is understood; and to determine whether the giver completely understands the receiver's behavior. Have the receiver rephrase the feedback to see whether it corresponds to the giver's intentions.

Leaves Decision about What to do with the Information with the Receiver**Gives Advice or Solution**

Feedback is intended to allow a person to know where he is in relation to a goal or objective; it provides the opportunity for him to consider behavior changes. Therefore, the receiver has the responsibility and right to choose to use feedback, as appropriate for him. If the behavior continues to be of concern, first attempt to modify the environment or yourself, and second, problem solve with the person.

Possible to Change**Not Possible to Change**

Frustration, helplessness and disrespect, rather than caring, concern and empowerment, is increased when a person is reminded of some shortcoming over which he has no control (e.g. "You're short!")

New Information**Old Information**

It is not helpful or easy for the receiver to hear the same complaints over and over again. If there is no change in response to feedback, refer to the item, "Leaves Decision about What to do with the Information with the Receiver" for strategies.

Considers Receiver's and Giver's Needs**Does Not Consider Each Person's Needs**

It takes into account the needs of both the receiver and giver of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only the giver's needs and fails to consider he needs of the person on the receiving end.

The Other Person Owns the Problem

When we perceive that another person has a problem and wish to help, it is in everyone's best interests to avoid barriers to communication. Some of the cues people send that indicate there is some discomfort include: frowning, wringing of hands, pacing, avoiding eye contact, voice changes, shouting, crying, banging on tables, slamming doors, throwing things, changing routines, attacking someone, talking less or more than normal. Several helpful responses to make when trying to assist someone with a problem that he is experiencing are described below:

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Listen Silently</i> <i>(Passive listening. Not speaking, but being physically attentive)</i></p> <p>Let your body show that you are listening, using nonverbal cues, such as leaning forward and maintaining eye contact. Do not allow yourself to be distracted. Silence communicates acceptance and support, and gives the speaker time and space to feel and think.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Use Door Openers</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Something going on with you?"</i> <i>"Man, looks bad."</i> <i>"Would you like to talk about it?"</i></p> <p>Make inquiries to invite the person to talk, if he chooses. Door openers communicate that you are available <i>if</i> he needs you. He now knows that someone is available to him, and has experienced the empathy, support and concern implied in the question.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Use Simple Acknowledgements</i></p> <p>Noncommittal responses, such as <i>"Oh," "Really," "Ah," "Mmm," "Hmm," "Mm Hm," "I see,"</i> allow the other person to know he has been heard, while allowing him to continue uninterrupted, and by our inflections can communicate that we understand the feeling content (e.g., excited, frustrated, bored, angry) of his messages. Haim Ginnott refers to these as <i>"empathic grunts."</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Use Reflective Listening</i></p> <p>Paraphrase or provide a summary of the <i>content</i> of the person's messages. This skill allows the person with the problem to hear his own message as you perceive it, and communicates that you understand, without interrupting the flow of communication by imposing judgments or offering opinions. Paraphrasing is also a check for understanding.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Observe Verbal and Nonverbal Behavior</i></p> <p>Pay attention to and point out inconsistencies in verbal and nonverbal behavior. Some nonverbal cues that indicate one's feelings include: facial expressions, posture, eye contact, touch, gestures and spatial distance.</p>	

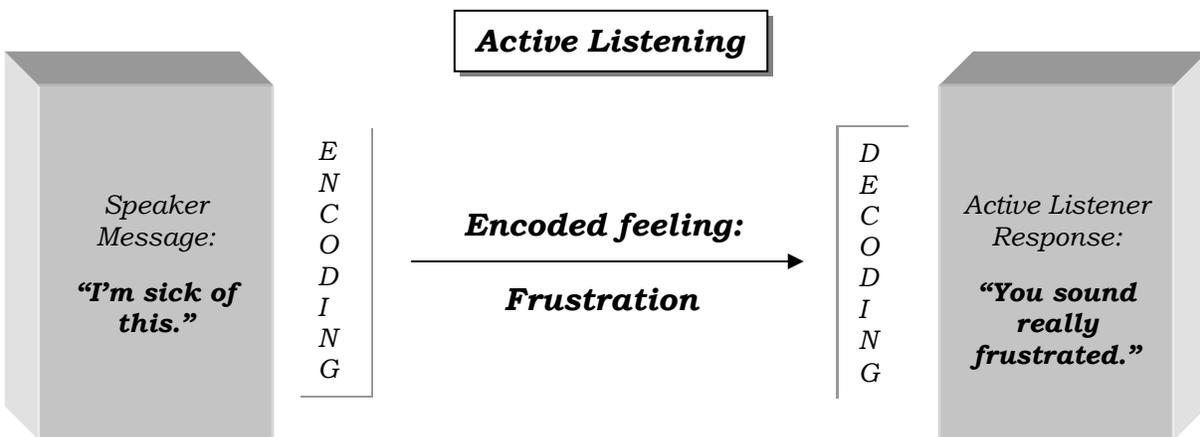
The Other Person Owns the Problem, continued**Active Listening**

Active listening is another essential skill for helping individuals with problems that *they* own. Active listening is similar to reflective listening in that the listener reflects back what the listener understands to have been said. The active listener, however, also reflects back the *feelings* underlying the speaker's content.

The reflective listener allows the person with the problem to hear his own message, as the listener perceives it, and sends the message that "I heard and understand the content of your message," without imposing opinions or judgment. The active listener sends the message that, "I not only heard what you said, but I understand and empathize with your *feelings* about what you said, too."

For a variety of reasons, individuals who are experiencing problems often do not fully express themselves. The job of the active listener is to *decode* the messages, and reflect back the feeling content in an effort to lower their "emotional temperature" and aide in helping the individual to more clearly identify the basic issues. Once the emotional content and intensity has been reduced, problems can be discussed in a more rational manner. This technique also allows the individual the opportunity to comprehend and resolve his own problems.

Active listening can be framed with sentence stems, such as: "You sound (*feeling*)" or "You look (*feeling*).". The following diagram, which is adapted from Dr. Gordon's work, illustrates how listeners can decode messages to identify the feeling content.



WE OWN THE PROBLEM

Conflict is a daily reality for the human condition. Individuals' needs, opinions, preferences, styles and values invariably come into opposition, particularly in situations where there is a high degree of collaboration (e.g., I&RS teams). Therefore, the ability to resolve or manage conflict successfully is probably one of the most important social skills that an individual can possess.

Conflict resolution consists of a number of separate, but interdependent sub-skills. Each of the following steps should be considered in sequence, unless a step has already been verbalized and completed to the satisfaction of all involved.

Guidelines for Conflict Resolution

Step One: Identify and Define the Problem

When negotiated problem solving fails, it is often due to deficiencies in this step. Problems should be described in terms of the *needs* of each party, rather than thinly disguised *solutions*. The I-message and active listening skills are essential tools in conducting this dialogue, and in clarifying the needs to be addressed.

Step Two: Generate Possible Solutions

After a problem has been accurately defined, the parties suggest solutions. The following points will help successful completion of this step:

- 1) *Do not evaluate proposed solutions.*
- 2) *Encourage equal participation.*
- 3) *Write down each solution.*
- 4) *Do not require parties to justify their ideas.*

Step Three: Evaluate the Solutions

Now is the time to determine which solutions you do and do not like. Cross off the list any solution that produces a negative rating from anyone for whatever reason. Use active listening to ensure accurate understanding of the opinions and feelings expressed. Use I-messages to state one's own feelings. Next, advocate supported proposals; tell the parties why their ideas have merit. Do not rush.

We Own the Problem, continued**Guidelines for Conflict Resolution, continued****Step Four:
Make the Decision**

When steps one, two and three have been carefully followed, step four is typically not as difficult as it may seem. When *everyone* agrees, step four is completed. Some suggestions for successfully making the decision:

- **Do not vote!** *Voting produces winners and losers, unless the vote is unanimous. Work toward consensus. Grudging submission is not consensus. Do not adopt a solution until everyone agrees to at least try it.*
- *Test proposed solutions. Imagine how each solution would work if chosen.*
- *Write down the agreed-upon solution.*

**Step Five:
Determine How
to Implement
the Decision**

Potentially productive problem-solving efforts often end in frustration because decisions never get implemented. This often happens because it was not determined who would do what by when.

**Step Six:
Assess the Success
of the Solution**

Step six is important, but need not always be formalized. The idea is to check the effectiveness of the problem-solving efforts. Keep in mind that it is all right to fail; that if things do not work out as expected, it most often means that only the decisions were bad, rather than the participants in decision making.

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard, in Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources, set forth research-based principles and measurement tools regarding leadership effectiveness and adaptability. Previous theories of leadership were one-dimensional (e.g., Blake and Mouton) and maintained that there was one ideal style for addressing task and maintenance issues. Hersey and Blanchard, however, have shown that there is no ideal leadership style for all situations; rather, the “perfect” leader owns four styles. The “ideal” leader accurately diagnoses situations and adopts the appropriate style of leadership (i.e., the appropriate combination of task and relationship behaviors) according to the needs of each individual and group.

The situational theory of leadership has numerous applications to the work of the I&RS team. *First*, situational leadership theory asserts that anyone who attempts to move the group forward is engaging in leadership behavior. This idea is consistent with the collaborative methods of the I&RS team and provides empowerment and encouragement for members to participate in a variety of capacities that will help the group achieve its goals.

Second, any team member who is assigned leadership responsibilities (e.g., team leader, case coordinator) can apply the principles of situational leadership. Since the individuals and the nature of the tasks at hand will change with each request for assistance, I&RS team members who perform leadership roles should be readily able to adopt behaviors that will be most effective in producing positive results.

Third, the theory has applications to the maintenance of the team’s group process and operations. The behaviors team members choose to modify and the strategies used to change them can be based on the degrees of maturity demonstrated by group members, as explained below. Team members' expectations of member behavior and strategies for addressing behaviors that detract from group success can be guided by the tenets of the theory.

Fourth, the theory provides a framework for the development of I&RS action plans that address the circumstances and issues involved with requests for assistance. The theory provides a basis for determining the needs inherent in requests for assistance, as well as in designing and selecting the types of behaviors/strategies team members should embrace or avoid, consistent with the unique needs of each situation.

Situational Leadership, continued

Fifth, it provides a framework for making decisions on the most appropriate application of various human relations and other leadership skills. For example, as previously discussed active listening is an important skill to use when another person has a problem. It is an extremely important skill, however, in the third area described below: when a person has the knowledge and ability to perform a task, but is not motivated to take the initiative. Conflict management is also an essential skill, but might be best applied to the second and third areas described below.

Situational Leadership Theory

Hersey and Blanchard define leadership as the application of an appropriate mix of *task* and *relationship* behavior of the leader, given the level of *maturity* of the target individual or group. The terms of the theory are defined below:

- ❑ ***Task Behavior*** = The behavior a leader exhibits that helps another person get the task done. This behavior entails more directing kinds of activities than anything else.
- ❑ ***Relationship Behavior*** = The behavior a leader exhibits that gives another person support and understanding.
- ❑ ***Maturity*** = 1) Knowledge to do the task; 2) History of success, and 3) Initiative or motivation to start things. Level of maturity is only assessed on an individual's *specific behavior*, rather than on the individual.

As the maturity level of an individual or group increases or decreases, the leader adjusts his behavior according to the chart below. The leadership styles are presented in sequence according to their applications to situations where low maturity (Area 1) through high maturity (Area 4) are exhibited.

Situational Leadership, continued

Leadership Style	Description
<p data-bbox="337 443 435 470">Area 1</p> <p data-bbox="302 501 477 529">“TELLING”</p> <p data-bbox="250 573 522 638">High Task, Low Relationship</p>	<p data-bbox="561 443 1380 678">An example of the application of situational leadership theory involves a person who comes to a new group. The person may have some skills, but not a lot of knowledge about how the group functions or how it gets things done. You can assume he has some knowledge about the group’s work, but there is no history of success with you, and you do not know whether he can take initiative.</p> <p data-bbox="561 709 1380 978">Hersey and Blanchard would say for new members, or for people who have not shown the maturity, we have to assume a HIGH TASK, LOW RELATIONSHIP position in which we do more directing or “telling” than anything else. In the beginning, the person is supervised closely and given tasks. The person is told what to do, how to do it, when to do it and to check back. Practically no responsibility is given.</p>
<p data-bbox="329 1062 443 1089">AREA 2</p> <p data-bbox="302 1121 477 1148">“SELLING”</p> <p data-bbox="250 1192 522 1257">High Task, High Relationship</p>	<p data-bbox="561 1037 1380 1241">If the assignment comes back according to the schedule and is completed in the manner requested, the next time the person is given a little bit more responsibility, because he demonstrated the knowledge to do the assignment, did the task well, and is beginning to develop a history of success.</p> <p data-bbox="561 1272 1380 1640">After a few similar incidents, the person is moved up to HIGH TASK, HIGH RELATIONSHIP. The difference is that although structure is maintained, the person’s involvement and inclusion is increased. “Here is the assignment to be completed by the end of the week. I’d like you to look it over, and then let’s get back together and decide the method by which it is to be done, and identify any problems you might have. Let me know whether you need any help.” The different message is that the person is trusted to handle some possible problems, as well as to seek help when needed.</p>

Situational Leadership, continued

<p style="text-align: center;">AREA 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“PARTICIPATING”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low Task, High Relationship</p>	<p>Assuming the person does a series of things like this well, and the goal is to develop his independence, he is moved to LOW TASK, HIGH RELATIONSHIP. This combination now applies because the person has shown the knowledge, responded well to direction and accepted a little bit of responsibility; now, there is participation.</p> <p>“Here is the assignment, which needs to be completed by the end of the week. Bring it to me for final approval. Let me know if there are any problems.” There no longer is a need to check to ensure a desirable approach is taken. There is a history of success. Initiative has been taken. Concerns for task fulfillment have been greatly reduced. The leader merely makes himself available and encourages, if necessary.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AREA 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“DELEGATING”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low Task, Low Relationship</p>	<p>After the person has performed successfully in this manner, the leader might simply delegate tasks, saying: “Here is your project.” A deadline might be given by necessity, or the person might also be asked how long it might take or when it might be expected. Otherwise, the person is on his own. The person no longer requires much discussion because there are no concerns for tasks that are his responsibility. In fact, the person might refer others to him as their resource person.</p>

Strengths and Applications of the Model

A strength of Hersey and Blanchard’s model is that it provides a goal for individuals (e.g., team member, student, requesting teacher, parent, human or health service agency representative). No matter which leadership behavior is used first, the goal is to develop independence (i.e., move to the delegating area). The ideal situation according to Hersey and Blanchard is when leaders utilize low task and low relationship behavior, since the application of this combination indicates that individuals are highly motivated and highly capable of independently performing required tasks.

This model enables leaders to be less reactive. It provides direction for responding to various situations and gives a longer term perspective: to help individuals reach the delegating, or at a minimum, the participating

Situational Leadership, continued

area of leadership (i.e., task and relationship behavior) and maturity (i.e., knowledge, history, motivation).

Another strength of the model is that it gives direction for instances when problems develop. For example, in the case of a student who has been performing in the delegating area but begins to experience a decrease in performance and increased problems at home, the performance change is not considered a complete failure, only that the same quality is not there.

The danger in this type of situation is to immediately go back to the high task, low relationship or high task, high relationship areas with the student. Since the student has developed a success record with the teacher, going all the way back to the telling area is undeserved. With this model, not only do individuals move up through the areas in sequence, but when there is a problem the leader moves the individual back *only* one area.

For example, if a student has been in the low task, low relationship area, and there is a problem, the leader merely moves to the low task, high relationship area to increase the amount of support and understanding. The movement from one area to another progresses sequentially, both forward and backward.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Everyone experiences stress as a part of every day life. Running late for work, a particularly difficult student case, a disruptive class, a conflict with a colleague, non-productive I&RS team meetings, a tight timeline, receiving a promotion, being assigned or volunteering for additional duties, receiving an award, going on vacation, having a child, hosting a party, moving, buying a house, being stuck in traffic, losing a loved one, living with divorce can all be stressful events.

As explained in Kicking Your Stress Habits: A Do-it-yourself Guide for Coping with Stress, by Donald A. Tubesing, contrary to popular belief, stress is not pressure from the outside. The tough case, the disruptive class, the demanding schedule are *stressors*. Your response to those situations constitutes *stress*.

Stress Management, continued

The distinction is important. *Stressors* are the abundance of daily occurrences to which we all have to adapt. *Stress* is your *response* to these events as you attempt to make the adjustment.

Eustress, or positive stress, can be energizing. It can stimulate, animate, invigorate and fortify you and supply the zest for life, work and play. *Distress*, or negative stress, whether it comes from significant or relatively minor traumas, can become insidious, destructive and wear you out.

Once your personal signals (e.g., tight throat, sweaty palms, aching head, fatigue, indigestion, nausea, diarrhea, aching shoulders or back) let you know that the stress in your life needs attention, the management decisions are up to you. As explained by Mr. Tubesing, “stress management doesn’t mean getting rid of all stress. Rather, it means making thoughtful choices about which stress to keep and which to let go.” The latest medical literature suggests that either stress overload or underload may be hazardous to your health. The key is finding the right balance.

Mr. Tubesing advises that most stress is not caused by the great tragedies of life, but from the accumulation of minor irritants that steadily grind us down over the years. Teams and team members who ignore their stress, their reactions to annoyances and inconveniences over a period of time, tend to become more stressful, and therefore, less effective in helping colleagues, students and families.

Teams probably do not set out to become unhealthy units nor do their members desire to become ill from stress or overload. But they may bring on these results by the choices they make. The amount of wear and tear that team members experience in their day-to-day pressures are caused by their viewpoints, by their attitudes and by the choices they make.

Effective team members remain cognizant of their stressors; manage their individual responses to it in healthy ways; and stay vigilant about preventing and reducing the effects of stressors on the I&RS program. The effective team will utilize the information described in the Team Wellness/Maintenance section of the manual to help understand and manage the stress and stressors that can limit I&RS team effectiveness.

PERSONALITY/LEARNING STYLES

Many of the theories and strategies discussed in the Innovative Strategies section of the manual have direct application to the maintenance of the I&RS team. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which is described more fully in the section of this manual titled “Innovative Strategies,” can be a particularly useful tool for I&RS teams because it provides insight into how team members learn best, as well as how their learning preferences might complement or conflict with other team members’ styles of processing information.

Sometimes groups get “stuck” because members think alike, producing little of the diversity or tension that can drive innovation. Therefore, MBTI is a useful tool for determining whether there is a fair representation of styles on the team and for providing insight into group member behavior. MBTI also highlights members’ strengths and suggests the types of tasks and activities that would be best suited for each member. Described below are two additional schemas for assessing and addressing team members’ personality and learning preferences:

- 1) *True Colors, and*
- 2) *The Enneagram.*

True Colors

Dr. David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates in their book, Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types, describes the True Colors model, which is based on four personality types. According to the authors, True Colors translates personality and learning theory into practical information and tools that are easy to use and understand.

The model provides insights into the characteristics of each style; the different factors that tend to create stress for each style; the strategies for improving personal relationships among people with different styles; and strategies for improving work and learning climates. Keirsey and Bates use a color scheme to represent each personality type:

True Colors, continued

TRUE COLOR PERSONALITY TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People with blue in their character as their brightest color are persons of peace and love. ➤ They are the natural romantics in life, idealizing the perfect moment and gestures of love. ➤ They are most satisfied when nurturing the potential in others. ➤ Authenticity and honesty are valued above all other characteristics.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Be prepared” is the motto of those with gold as their brightest color. They enjoy the status and security that being prepared represents. ➤ They have an instinct for keeping the product in production, for maintaining the structure and for supporting the rules. ➤ They have a strong awareness of right and wrong, with respect for the “shoulds” and “should nots.” ➤ They value order and cherish the traditions of home and family. ➤ Steadfastness, predictability, the work ethic and loyalty are some of their trademarks. ➤ Generous and parental by nature, they show they care by making everyone do the right thing.
Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People with green as their brightest color have curious minds. They explore every facet of a problem or an idea to control the realities of life. ➤ They are global by nature, always seeking universal truth. ➤ They acquire skills and perfect any product or system on which they choose to focus. They express themselves through their ability to be an expert in everything. ➤ They are symbolized by the abstract thinker, the unknown challenge of outer space, the complexity and simplicity in design and the symmetry of forms. ➤ They feel best about themselves when they are solving problems and when their ideas are recognized. ➤ They do not express emotions openly, but do experience deep feelings.
Orange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ People with orange as their brightest color see life as one big party to enjoy. They live in the here and now, for who knows what tomorrow may bring? ➤ They are always ready for a business deal or a deal of any sort, loving competition and never missing an opportunity. They are master negotiators. ➤ Their impulsiveness drives everything they do. They are adventurous and test limits. ➤ They need freedom to take action. ➤ They take pride in being highly skilled in a variety of fields.

The Enneagram: Personality Types

The Enneagram is a system for understanding personalities and complex dynamic systems. The nine personality types of the Enneagram each represent a motivating need for an individual, and are characterized by a basic desire and a basic fear. In the healthy state, the dynamics of each type is controlled by the basic desire. In the average state, there is relative balance between motivating desires and fears. In the unhealthy state, the dynamics of the trait are controlled by the basic fear. It is important to note that no type is considered better than another one; they are merely descriptions of categories of observed types.

As described in the text developed by the Life Skills Institute titled Focus on Change: New Strategies for Education Professionals, all people tend to go through most of the personality types, described below, throughout their lives, but spend most of their time in their “intelligence center” and their “actual type.” Each type indicates the specific imbalance among three “intelligence centers:” feeling, thinking and moving. The personality types are grouped into “triads:” Feeling Triad, Thinking Triad and Moving Triad.

PERSONALITY TYPE

DESCRIPTION

FEELING TRIAD:

The Helper, The Motivator, The Artist

The Helper

*“I must help
others.”*

Basic Fear: Being unwanted; unworthy of being loved.

Basic Desire: To be unconditionally loved.

General Characteristics: Caring and nurturing type: concerned, generous, possessive, manipulative.

Healthy: Empathetic, compassionate, feeling with and for others, generous, giving, helpful, highly value service.

Average: More talking than helping, emotionally demonstrative, overly friendly, “good intentions,” want others to depend on them, giving, but expect a return, send double messages, enveloping, possessive.

Unhealthy: Manipulative and self-serving; instill guilt by telling others how much they suffer; they excuse and rationalize what they do, since they feel abused and victimized and are bitterly angry and resentful; internalization of aggressions results in psychosomatic problems.

The Enneagram: Personality Types, continued**The
Motivator/
Performer**

*"I need to
succeed."*

Basic Fear: Being worthless.

Basic Desire: To be accepted and affirmed by others.

General Characteristics: Success-oriented type: pragmatic, adaptable, ambitious, image-oriented, hostile.

Healthy: Self-assured, desirable, high self-esteem, confident in themselves and their own value, ambitious, embodies widely admired cultural qualities.

Average: Competitive, concerned with being superior and rising above others, image-conscious, narcissistic, appear pretentious, emphasize style over substance, a chameleon: packaging themselves according to the expectations of others.

Unhealthy: Exploitive and opportunistic, untrustworthy: maliciously betray and sabotage people, delusionally jealous of others: becomes vindictive and attempts to ruin them and their happiness, diabolically sadistic and psychopathic tendencies, capable of sabotage, mutilation and murder.

**The
Artist/
Romantic**

"I am unique."

Basic Fear: There is no permanent, fixed self.

Basic Desire: To find out whom they are.

General Characteristics: Sensitive, withdrawn type, intuitive, individualistic, self-absorbed, depressive.

Healthy: Aware of self, feelings and inner impulses, introspective, "search for self, sensitive and intuitive both to self and others, gentle, tactful, compassionate.

Average: Artistic, romantic orientation, expresses feelings through aesthetics, hypersensitive, feels different from others, and exempt from living as they do, impractical, unproductive, self-pity, self-indulgent, melancholic dreamers, decadent, living in a fantasy world.

Unhealthy: Angry at self and depressed, self-inhibiting, alienated from self and others, blocked and paralyzed, tormented by delusional self-contempt and morbid thoughts, feel despair and hopeless, become self-destructive, possibly by abusing alcohol or other drugs to escape.

**Thinking Triad:
The Thinker, The Loyalist, The Generalist****The
Thinker/
Observer**

*"I need to figure
it out."*

Basic Fear: Being overwhelmed or engulfed.

Basic Desire: To feel safe (mastery of something).

General Characteristics: Intellectual, analytic type, perceptive, original, provocative, eccentric.

Healthy: Extraordinarily perceptive and insightful, mentally alert, curious, independent, innovative, inventive, original ideas.

Average: Analytic, specialized, make a science of things, research, scholarship, the scientific method, empirical data, building theories, become detached: a disembodied mind, although high strung and intense, speculative about highly abstract ideas.

Unhealthy: Become eccentric, reclusive and isolated from reality; get obsessed yet frightened by threatening ideas; paranoid, prey to gross distortions and phobias. Lose touch with reality: insanity with schizophrenic tendencies common.

The Enneagram: Personality Types, continued**The Loyalist/Loyal Skeptic***"I am always dutiful."***Basic Fear:** Being unable to survive on their own.**Basic Desire:** To have security by belonging**General Characteristics:** Committed, traditionalistic type: engaging, responsible, defensive, anxious.**Healthy:** Elicit strong emotional responses from others: very appealing and endearing. Trust, permanent relationships, family and friends very important; reliable and responsible behavior.**Average:** Fear taking responsibility for themselves: identify with an authority figure (or group); join men or women "organizations." Obedient, evasive, indecisive, procrastinate, ambivalent, belligerent, "tough guy/gal" stance, partisan, defensive, looks for threats, mean-spirited, bigoted.**Unhealthy:** Fear rejection by authority, become clinging, dependent and self-disparaging with acute inferiority feelings, feel hopeless, worthless, incompetent and persecuted, overreact to anxiety: act irrationally and may bring about what they fear, masochism, self-punishment.**The Generalist/Epicure***"I must help others."***Basic Fear:** Pain and deprivation.**Basic Desire:** To be happy, satisfied, with their needs fulfilled.**General Characteristics:** Hyperactive, uninhibited type: enthusiastic, accomplished, excessive, manic.**Healthy:** Excitable, enthusiastic about sensation; most extraverted type: stimuli brings immediate response; accomplished achievers; they do different things very well.**Average:** Appetites increase, they want to have more; acquisitive and materialistic consumer; constantly amusing themselves with new experiences; sophisticated, connoisseur; uninhibited, flamboyant exaggerations, wise-cracking, performing, fears being bored or becoming superficial, demanding, self-centered yet unsatisfied, addictive, hardened, insensitive.**Unhealthy:** Offensive and abusive in going after what they want; debauched, depraved, dissident escapists, their addictions and excesses can take their toll, in flight from self: manic-depression and panic reactions arise when defenses fail.**Moving Triad:****The Leader, The Peacemaker, The Reformer****The Leader/Boss***"I must be strong."***Basic Fear:** Being harmed or controlled by others.**Basic Desire:** To be independent and strong.**General Characteristics:** Powerful, dominating type: self-confident, decisive, aggressive, combative**Healthy:** Self-assertive, self-confident and strong, the natural leader: decisive, authoritative and commanding, passionate, champion of the people: providers, protectors and honorable.

The Enneagram: Personality Types, continued**The Leader/
Boss,
continued**

Average: Enterprising, “rugged individualists,” wheeler-dealers, entrepreneurs, risk-takers, forceful, aggressive, dominating; mix sex and aggression with exhibitionism and toughness, belligerent: creates adversarial relationships, others feel insecure and oppressed and fear and resent them.

Unhealthy: Ruthless, dictatorial, tyrannical, “might makes right,” immoral, delusional ideas about themselves: megalomania, feeling omnipotent and invulnerable, may virtually destroy everything that has not conformed to their will, violent, vengeful, barbaric, murderous.

**The Peacemaker/
Mediator**

“I am
complacent.”

Basic Fear: Losing their stable sense of self.

Basic Desire: To maintain their inner stability (“peace of mind”).

General Characteristics: Easy-going, calm type: receptive, optimistic, complacent, disengaged.

Healthy: Deeply receptive, accepting, unselfconscious, emotionally stable and serene, innocence and simplicity, trusting of self and others, at ease with self and life, patient and supportive.

Average: Self-effacing, accommodating, living with others, naively accept conventional roles and expectations, fear changes and conflicts and become passive, disengaged, unreflective, unresponsive and complacent, become fatalistic and resigned, into wishful thinking and magical solutions.

Unhealthy: Can be too repressed, undeveloped and ineffectual, do not want to deal with problems, become obstinate, dissociating self from all conflicts, neglectful and dangerous to others, become severely disoriented, depersonalized, catatonic or develop multiple personalities.

**The Reformer/
Perfectionist**

“I must be
perfect.”

Basic Fear: Becoming corrupted, evil.

Basic Desire: To be good, righteous and in balance with everything.

General Characteristics: Rational, idealistic type: Principled, orderly, perfectionistic, self-righteous.

Healthy: Conscientious, strong sense of right and wrong, rational, reasonable, self-disciplined, mature, moderate, principled, fair and objective, ethical, truth and justice are the primary values.

Average: Idealists, reformers, advocates, critics, impersonal and inflexible, thinking s black or white, right or wrong, very critical of self and others, picky, judgmental, perfectionist, badger people to do the right thing, as they see it, moralizing, scolding and becoming abrasive and indignantly angry toward others, impatient: never settle for anything less than perfect in self or others, workaholics.

Unhealthy: Intolerant, highly dogmatic: they alone know the truth, become obsessive about the wrong-doing of others, fall into contradictory, hypocritical actions: doing the opposite of what they preach, being cruel toward others, condemning them, nervous breakdown and severe depression.