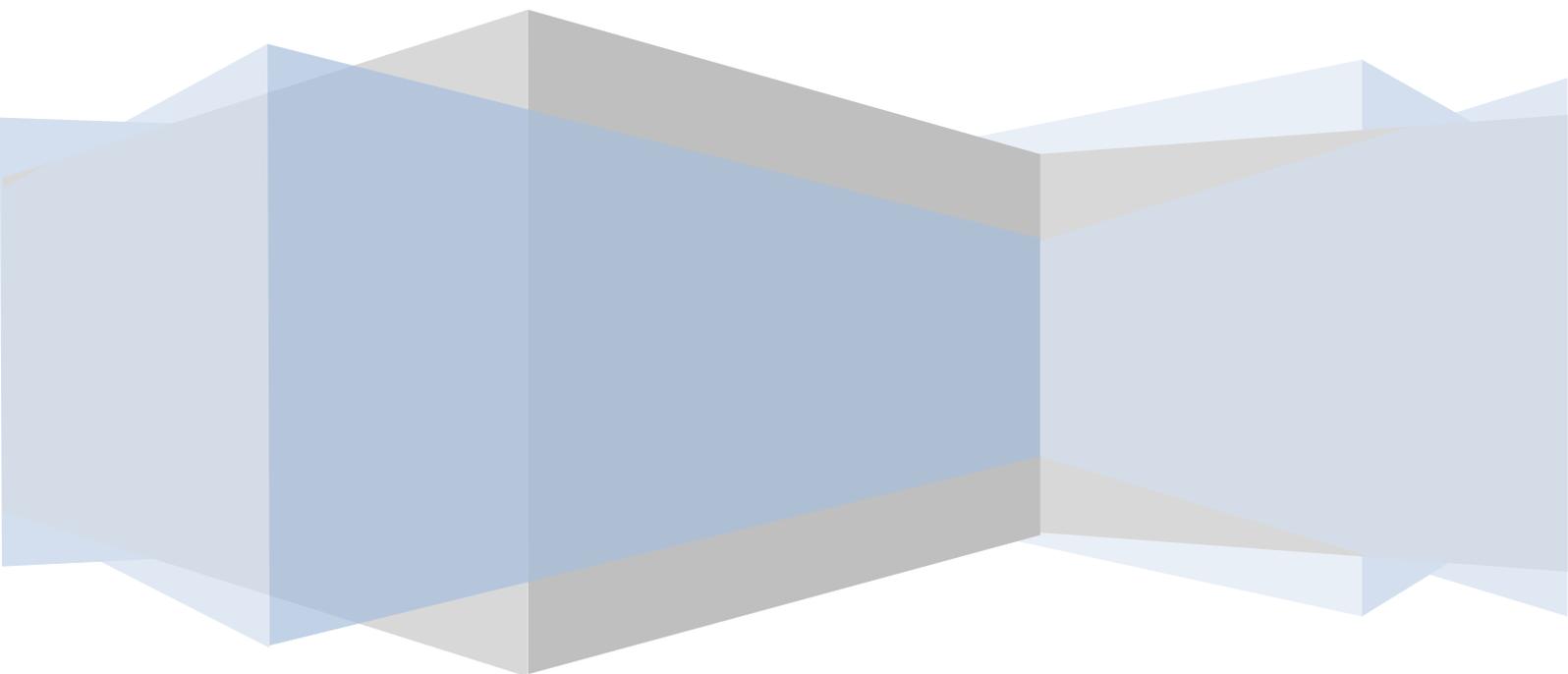


# Effective Communication Pack



## Effective Communication

In developing communication skills, the objective is for the student athlete to:

- Understand why effective communication is important;
- Understand the importance of active listening;
- Identify ways in which to communicate effectively.

Good communication refers not only to talking and verbalising ideas, but also listening effectively to others. An important skill in effective communication is active listening. Active listening requires an individual to listen and briefly restate what they have heard (especially thoughts and feelings) before expressing their own needs or position.

### Guidelines for active listening:

- Do not just repeat another person's exact words. Summarise their experience in your own words, however when people actually scream or shout something, you may want to repeat a few of their exact words in a calm tone of voice to let them know that you have heard it just as they said it.
- If the emotion is unclear, make a tentative guess, "**So it sounds like maybe you were a little unhappy about all that...**" The speaker will usually correct your guess if it needs correcting.
- Listening is an art and there are very few fixed rules. Pay attention to whether the person speaking accepts your summary by saying things such as "yeah!", "that's right," and similar responses.

People often communicate by leaving things unsaid, which means the listener must fill in the missing information. This can create problems as listeners may think of completely different things to those you intended, or they may not understand the importance of what you are saying (because you miss out some information). There are five main aspects of an experience that someone listening can use to recreate your experience inside their minds. The more of these you provide, the more likely it is that your listener's re-creation will match your experience. The examples below outline the five aspects.

### Five Aspects of Communication

The Five Aspects	Describe/ express:	Example (a coach to their goal defence):
<i>Seeing, hearing...</i>	1. What are you seeing, hearing or otherwise sensing? (facts only)	<b>"Laura, when I see you not marking your opponent..."</b>
<i>and feeling...</i>	2. What emotions are you feeling?	<b>...I get really worried...</b>
<i>Because I...</i>	3. What interpretations, wants, needs, memories or anticipations of yours support those feelings?	<b>...because I think that they are going to score...</b>
<i>and now I want...</i>	4. What action, information or commitment do you want now?	<b>...so I want you to promise me that you will stay with your player...</b>
<i>So that...</i>	5. What positive results will that action, information or commitment lead to in the future? (no threats)	<b>...so that we can stop her from creating any scoring opportunities and improve our chances of winning the game."</b>

Here are some suggestions for expressing each of the Five aspects of communication more clearly:

Aspect One:	Suggestions for expressing more clearly:
What are you seeing, hearing or otherwise sensing? (facts only)	<p>A. Begin by stating what you actually see or hear rather than how you feel about it or what you think of it.</p> <p>B. Describe specific things you have observed, avoid generalising such as "you always..." or "you never..."</p> <p>C. Be specific about place, time, colour, texture, position and how often.</p> <p>D. Describe rather than diagnose. Avoid words that label or judge the actions you observe such as "poor," "neurotic," etc.</p>

Aspect Two:	Suggestions for expressing more clearly:
What emotions are you feeling?	<p>A. Use words that describe how you are feeling such as "I feel...": glad, angry, delighted, sad, afraid, resentful, embarrassed, calm, enthusiastic, fearful, depressed, happy, etc.</p> <p>B. Avoid feeling words that imply the action of another person: "I feel..., ignored, manipulated, mistreated, neglected, rejected, dominated, abandoned, used, cheated (etc.)" Instead so that your listener understands what you are feeling, change these "implied blame" words by specifically naming an emotion you are feeling and support these feelings as explained in aspect three.</p> <p>For example: <b>"I am feeling totally ignored by you"</b></p> <p>May mean: "I am feeling really sad (or angry) because I want you to pay more attention to me, (spend more time with me, etc.)..."</p>

<b>Aspect Three:</b>	<b>Suggestions for expressing more clearly:</b>
<p>What interpretations, wants, needs, memories or anticipations of yours support those feelings?</p>	<p>A. Express the interpretations, wants, hopes, understandings and associations that support your feelings:</p> <p><b>... because I imagine that... ... because I see that as...</b></p> <p>... because I remember how... ... because I take that to mean ...</p> <p>instead of <b>... because YOU ...(did, said, did not, etc.)</b></p> <p>Replace YOU with I</p> <p>B. Under our interpretations there are often unmet wants, hopes and needs. Explore and express the unmet wants that also support your feelings:</p> <p>... because I was hoping that... ... because I needed ...</p> <p>instead of <b>... because YOU ...(did, said, did not, etc.)</b></p>

<b>Aspect Four:</b>	<b>Suggestions for expressing more clearly:</b>
<p>What action, information or commitment do you want now?</p>	<p>A. Ask for action or information, a commitment to a future action or information giving. Because most people cannot produce emotions just because you ask them, it is generally not a good idea to ask a person for an emotion ("I want you to cheer up." "I want you to be angry about this issue." Etc.)</p> <p>B. If what you want is a general response, rather than saying things like, for "consideration, respect, help, understanding, support" etc., try identifying an action such as please "listen, sit, lift, carry, tell me, hold me," etc. This will give the listener a better idea of what it is you are looking for.</p> <p>C. State what it is you want in positive terms:</p> <p><b>"Please arrive at eight..."</b></p> <p>rather than <b>"Don't be late..."</b></p> <p>D. Include when, where, how. Including these details can help you to avoid misunderstandings, and makes a listener more confident that they know what you are asking.</p>

Aspect Five:	Suggestions for expressing more clearly:
What positive results will that action, information or commitment lead to in the future? (no threats)	In describing the specific positive results of your request, you allow the other person to become motivated by feeling capable of giving something worthwhile. This prepares the ground for later expressions of appreciation (from you), and points your relationship toward mutual appreciation (more enjoyable to live with), rather than guilt, duty, obedience or resentment (much less enjoyable to live with).

Working with these Five aspects can help:

- Increase your own (and others), awareness of your experiences
- Tell the truth about experiences
- Listening for the truth of your experience (listening for all five aspects)
- Encourage you to say more about what you are experiencing (if a listener asks questions about each message)
- Reflect back elements of what another person is experiencing (especially feelings, so that a person knows they've been understood)
- Summarise a big chunk of your own or others experience(s)
- Take responsibility for your emotional responses and encouraging others, by your example, do the same

**Practical Exercise: Exploring the Five aspects.** Re-tell the story of some of your experiences using the five-aspect format.

Elements of your experience:	...expressed as five different "I-messages":
1. What are you seeing, hearing or otherwise sensing? (the facts without evaluation)	(I saw, heard, etc., ...)
2. What emotions are you feeling?	(I felt...)
3. What interpretations or wants of yours support those feelings?	(because I...)
4. What action, information or commitment do you want now?	(and now I would like...)
5. What positive results will that action, information or commitment lead to in the future?	(so that...)