



DAIRY ADVISORY TEAMS

Advisory Team Training Program

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This program is designed to upgrade the participants' knowledge and skills so they become more effective as team players in agricultural outreach activities.

1A. The importance of team communication

1. Communication is important to all our careers; technical knowledge is only important if one can communicate it to others.
2. Education, persuasion, motivation, facilitation, and community development are directly related to one's communication knowledge and skills. These are central to community-based social development as well as technical extension.
3. Consider the saying: "Those who use the language well are thought to be bright, but those who use the language poorly are thought to be stupid." Those who communicate well vs. those who communicate poorly?
4. Your physical presence and your actions, along with your ability to communicate, are what you are perceived to be by others. People only know you by your actions, how you look and handle yourself, and how you communicate. That's what you are to others.
5. Most people that are successful in their careers owe more of their success to their communication/persuasion/motivation abilities than to their technical expertise. Abundant technical knowledge is of very limited use unless you can communicate it to others.
6. Attitude is basic to communication. Your attitude is reflected in many ways and influences how your communication is received.

1B. Contributing to a positive group environment

1. Group productivity and achievement are strongly influenced by the group environment. Along with the physical characteristics of the setting and external influences, the behavior of those present can contribute either positively or negatively to the discussions, the learning that takes place, everyone's attitude, and the quality of the group experience.
2. **DISCUSSION:** Ask participants to describe examples of positive and negative behavior. Have you participated in an educational program where someone dominated the conversation? Others who do not express themselves?
3. **Preface:** The following questions are intended as a way to look at yourself—to see yourself as others see you. These suggestions are intended to help you take responsibility for your actions in a group setting, considering the group's objectives before your own desires and/or agenda. Even when you're not "performing or presenting" you're building your professional reputation.

**Your attitudes show in a group:**

4. Are you on time; do you attend all sessions?
5. Are your posture and gestures attentive and affirmative?
6. Are your facial expressions friendly, pleasant, and positive?
7. Do you readily volunteer assistance; make positive contributions?
8. Do you try to understand others' ideas through active listening?
9. Do you give speakers your attention; avoid talking to others and disrupting?
10. Do you avoid dominating conversations and allow others to contribute?
11. Are you brief and to the point—the most needed information for the audience?
12. Do you contribute properly in discussions?
13. Do you avoid “proving your intelligence” and use a “sharing” tone?
14. Do you make others' ideas look valuable during group interaction?
15. Are you knowledgeable, but not a know-it-all?
16. Do you have good judgment and separate facts from emotion?
17. Are you honest, truthful as you see it; are you the same inside as outside?
18. Are you dependable, reliable; do you keep promises; do your share?
19. Are you stable, but not too “set in your ways?”

You can improve your popularity:

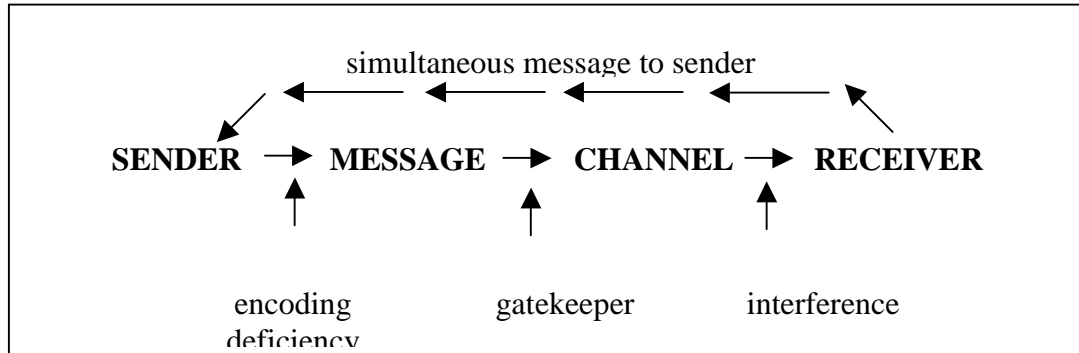
1. Do you talk about what's important to others or what's important to you?
2. Do you smile a lot; are you positive and fun to be around?
3. Look for what's going OK rather than what's “going wrong with the world.”
4. Do you try to like all kinds of people, to get to know and learn from them?

1C. Communication theory

1. The S-M-C-R Model – a sender sends a message through one or more channels to a receiver.
2. Sender is the source of information such as a teacher, preacher, photographer, writer, friend, or yourself. All communication is indirect; senders express their thoughts through the human senses —mostly sight and sound. They encode and send messages based upon their experience. Their success depends on:
 - good communications skills: how to teach, write, speak, draw, etc.
 - their knowledge of and ability to relate to the audience (social/cultural); to speak in terms they understand



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- having a good attitude towards the audience, the topic, the current situation,
 - their knowledge of the audience, the subject, and the present situation
3. Message is the idea/concept and how it's presented.
- The actual idea or subject content is called hard data.
 - Soft data is communicated through facial expressions, eye movement, body movement, posture, dress, gestures, voice variations and inflections. Numerous studies show that the soft data often has more impact upon the audience than the hard data (how something is said often has more influence on an audience than what is said).
 - With printed materials, soft data is communicated by the publication design, paper choice, type style, color, etc.
4. Channels are sometimes referred to as being related to the human senses—sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Different topics require different channels and/or media. In the USA, for example, studies show people learn with:
- sight (70+%), sound (10-20%), touch, taste, smell (10%)
 - other definition of channels—voice, expressions, gestures, real items, models, visuals, speech, AV presentations, print, radio, TV, computer, displays, photographs, music, dance, acting, etc.
5. Receiver is the one who acquires a message. Messages are interpreted by receivers based on, and related to, their past experience (i.e., received through their perceptions screen). Message reception is influenced by a receiver's:
- ease of obtaining the message
 - communication skills such as the ability to read, listen, interpret symbols; motivation to receive information and to learn
 - attitude toward the sender, the sender's organization, the topic, him or herself, the present situation
 - knowledge of the subject (prior experience), the present situation, if one can relate to the information (relate the message to reality)
6. All communication is indirect. Senders must encode a message and send it by using words, gestures, visual aids, etc. Receivers must then decode the message. Since the sender and receiver have different backgrounds and experiences, there is almost always some level of encoding-decoding deficiency.



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7. It is not currently possible to attach a wire between the brains of the sender and receiver and download information exactly as it is intended by the sender. This is what makes communicating such an ongoing challenge. And why it's so important to understand your audience (receivers).
8. A sender is usually receiving some message while sending a message. For example, a speaker sees a positive or affirmative reaction by the audience during the delivery of a speech. That tells the speaker that the message is being well received. Positive non-verbal participant communication may take the form of confirming head nods, note taking, eye contact with the speaker, positive facial expressions, etc.
9. Many times the sender sends a message and swaps roles with the receiver. For instance, you say, "How are you?" to someone and the receiver replies "I'm fine, thank you." Or a teacher says "Your assignment today is to write an essay on what you did during the holiday." Some students might groan because they don't want to think and write. They're sending the teacher a message. One of them might ask "How long do we have to complete the assignment?" The teacher responds "You have 30 minutes." Thus the sender and receiver roles have changed several times. So another theory is that of an exchanging of sender-receiver roles; often many times.
10. Encoding deficiency, gatekeepers, and interference are terms used with the S-M-C-R Model to describe some basic problem areas that are inherent in communications.
11. Encoding deficiency relates mostly to the sender's lack of communication skills and knowledge of the audience. This may involve the choice of words or examples the receivers don't understand. For example, a sender might refer to apiculture (unknown by some receivers), when beekeeping would have been understood. A sender might also use a large drawing of a honeybee that would be misunderstood by receivers due to its small size in real life. Also, a sender might speak with a nasty, scolding tone that confuses the audience.
12. Gatekeepers are people that control the media or other access to communication channels. For instance, an extension worker might have an important message about a livestock disease that threatens his district, but a warning message can only be broadcast on the radio if the radio station programmer allows it. Similarly, newspaper editors control what's published in their newspaper.
13. Interference is often a more physical problem of reaching a target audience. For example, if an extension agent is allowed to voice an announcement over a local radio station, the receiver may not receive the message due to radio interference. Another example is when a baby is crying is so loud that a farmer can't hear the message.