

A Roadmap to Effective Communication

ARTURO GAVILANES: My name is Arturo, I work for the outdoor recreation center and I've been working on campus for about three years at least since 2017 now.

I also did my undergrad here on campus,

wrapped up my degree back in 2015

and so I'm pretty familiar with the Pullman campus at least,

and very familiar with the WSU systems.

I do want to thank you everybody for making the time to sit through our workshop today.

One thing that I do want to ask folks throughout

this workshop is to engage as you see fit.

I'm a big fan of look engagements such as head nods,

thumbs up in the camera and things like that,

that really just helps me keep things going.

Alternatively, I might ask for folks to chime in in the chat,

but effectively you get what you put into this type of workshop.

I definitely have quite a bit of back and forth and I'm open for some dialogue,

so I might force the dialogue myself,

we might see how that bounces back and forth.

I also do need to acknowledge my Internet can be unstable at times to put it lightly,

and if my audio breaks up or my video starts lagging,

just let me know, start flailing your arms or something

and I have a backup in mind for that.

With that in mind, again,

our workshop is a roadmap to effective communication and navigating assumptions.

This is a topic that I really wanted to address it with you
all because it can really apply to most situations within our lives,
so let's dive in a little bit.

For a little bit of context,

I work with the Challenge Program here at

WSU through the outdoor recreation center and we do a lot of group dynamic work.

We work with groups such as sport clubs, athletic groups,

sorority, fraternity, and just student organizations of that capacity.

Some of my intended learning objectives for today

are identify different forms of communication.

Communication is a very very broad topic and I'm not going to pretend that I'm

the only individual who knows something about communication,

so I encourage anybody in here to chime in.

I also I'm not going to pretend that this is a one-hour topic,

so we could really dive [NOISE] down

so many different rabbit holes throughout the process of this workshop.

But I do want to start out with these key pieces.

So identifying forms of communication,

what can happen within communication itself?

Then understand our role as individuals,

either professionally or personally,

how we fit into the communication dynamics.

Then I want to connect communication to

our professional and personal roles and see how to navigate that structure.

With that said I want to toss out

the question to anybody who is willing, what is communication?

I do encourage contribution via chat,

I encourage you to unmute your mic and chime in as you see fit.

But the blanket question is what is

communication and I'm seeing right here from Aaron, thank you very much.

Communication is an exchange of ideas,

would you be willing to elaborate on that a little bit?

AARON: I was trying to think of a broad way of saying that

communication is the expression of an idea in any form of communication,

whether it be verbal or nonverbal,

so just communicating anything to anyone through a gesture or sound.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Absolutely and you hit something really important there,

there are verbal and nonverbal cues,

so I appreciate that.

Another thing that I want to emphasize

with communication is it's learned and practiced the skill.

We certainly have common understanding of what communication might be,

but it's not like five-year-old Arturo knew

exactly how to communicate to the degree that I currently do.

Over time, over exposure after reading social cues and getting feedback from folks,

I've developed my form of communication and that happens to everybody.

It's something that we learn and we practice as

a skill in any capacity and be professional and be a personal,

managing all the ships that exists like relationships, friendships, etc.

The other piece that I really want to emphasize here is communication

is an expression of wants versus needs versus

observations versus requests and the way

those inner play is something I do want to dive into it later during this workshop.

I do also want to emphasize within that there's direct and indirect communication.

One of the models of communication that I want to outline right

away is a linear model of communication.

With a linear model of communication on one axis,

you have the sender on the opposite axis, you have the receiver.

A linear model of communication means that information goes across those two individuals,

the sender and receiver,

and really leaves the sender and the receiver.

With that in mind, whenever we're looking at linear communication,

this involves things like e-mail or directives.

Can anybody in here think through where you might see

linear communication apply in our day-to-day lives.

AARON: I would say the technology,

it certainly enhances one-way communication,

so text, e-mail, Twitter, Facebook.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah, absolutely. Technology is

incredibly efficient in helping us navigate communication.

I can send an e-mail,

I can post on someone's picture a comment,

and it's a very direct line of communication.

The beauty and tragedies simultaneously as once I put that information out there, it's just gone and there is no interplay between that relationship.

Now, that linear communication,

like do a dot to dot to dot as you start to see the conversation form.

But that is communication in its simplest form,

but it's not the only way that we see communication.

Now I want to introduce interactive communication as a model.

Interactive communication as a touch different in that rather than going from sender to receiver and it leaves one or the other, or one or the other has control over that information.

The sender and receiver tend to be on the same page at all times, it's a dialogue.

Most often we'll see this form of communication being a very much a back and forth between the two individuals who are communicating.

You might see this form of communication and feedback, and the individuals who aren't communicating the sender and receiver will have some form of shared perspective.

Andrea, I'm curious if you can think through some ways that feedback might play into this relationship between the sender and receiver as a communication method.

No wrong answers, just the scatter shot of information.

ANDREA: I don't know, I would have thought feedback, well, yeah, it's more of a one-way thing.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Fascinating. That's fair.

I think I can see where you're coming from with that

and which if I'm giving that feedback,

the individual receiving that feedback gets to do what they want with that.

But I think that also explores a point that

we had touched on earlier and which communication will be verbal and nonverbal.

Maybe I provide feedback,

but there is a relationship between the sender and receiver inherently,

and so my body language might respond in a way whenever I'm receiving that feedback,

I might ask questions whenever I'm receiving that feedback.

It's very much less, you put it out there and it's cast into the wind.

This third one that I want to introduce is transactional communication.

So transactional communication is going to be that next step in the sequence in

which not only do the sender and receiver interplay within the communication practice,

but they have multiple back and forths,

and this is what you really see in

most day-to-day situations in any form of communication.

Really when you see communication,

it can go in any number of directions,

is a very dynamic method of communication.

Now, with transactional communication,

we do find one notable feature of this model is the move from recurring

to people as senders and receivers

is referring to people as really effectively communicators,

and this implies that communication is achieved as both people send and receive a message.

This model also really emphasizes a field of experience between the two communicators.

So rather than having these typecasting sender versus receiver,

you can imagine that those words mold into

communicators because they're fulfilling mildly different role there.

With each communicator, we're going to have a unique experience.

My experiences are very different than your experiences Aaron.

But we're going to have a field where we have shared experiences.

Maybe it's certain likes,

maybe it's professional role.

That common ground is where we're going to be able to collaboratively

navigate and communicate whenever we're discussing a certain topic.

This model also recognizes that a message and that information

will influence the responses of subsequent messages.

This three models are a bit heady and I don't want to exclusively talk about models.

I want to dive in a little bit deeper.

We will touch back on these models.

With all that being said,

what does effective communication look like?

Communication at its finest.

In the perfect world,

how do you envision communication?

Again, feel free to unmute yourselves or type into the chat.

AARON: I suppose in communication there is potential for misinterpreting messages, so communication in its purest form, would be a sender transmitting a message to a receiver without any interference.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah, so no interference.

The communication is clear and direct.

Andrea, you mentioned there's no misunderstandings, communication would be perfect.

Some other things I think are critical to effective communication is, communication is a two-way street.

As an individual, I can do everything in my power to communicate with someone else.

But if they got the headphones and if they don't care about my message, they're never going to be bought into that communication.

It's no longer communication.

I'm talking at somebody.

Effective communication with that in mind also involves active listening.

What do I mean by that?

AARON: Suppose there is a lot of different ways you could listen to someone.

One is just waiting for your turn to talk.

Another would be trying to interpret meaning out of the message rather than just listening to the words themselves.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah, I love that statement, waiting for your turn to talk.

That's actually something I reference in this workshop and in another workshop.

Oftentimes people, whenever they engage in dialogue,

they are really not looking at the perspective of the opposite individual.

They're waiting for their opportunity to talk,

which I think is a normal interaction for most people.

Someone yesterday mentioned to me that they might do that

because they have an anxiety on what they're

going to say next and they don't want to be unprepared.

But that we do need to acknowledge does inhibit effective communication,

because no longer am I responding to what you're saying.

I'm responding with my point and what I think you're trying to say,

I don't really got the opportunity to digest what it's being expressed.

Another thing that was mentioned in the chat is things that you could do while listening.

Things like nodding to convey that you are actively listening.

You can give subtle gestures,

asking questions would be another step in that same direction.

Similarly, effective communication is going to include perspective sharing.

Context is going to matter in almost all situations of life.

For me to say, I think that Toyota Camry's are a bad car,

I actually drive a Toyota Camry so that's why I'm picking on it.

Where's that coming from?

That doesn't really convey very much detail.

That's just a blanket statement.

So without that perspective,

it's really not communicating very much,

and so one thing that the opposing individual might ask is why?

Which is a crazy concept.

Like you're digging into that conversation,
but understanding that perspective of like, well,
here's why I think a Toyota Camry is not ideal.

No hit on Toyota Camry's.

I love my Toyota Camry. It's very reliable.

Then checking for understanding whenever we are communicating anything.

I think it's very critical to make sure that the person on
the receiving end is actually receiving it effectively,
and you might see this in different ways in your personal and professional lives.

I've seen supervisors who say,

"All right, now say that back to me."

That's a very micro managing way of checking for understanding.

But it is a method of checking for understanding.

Usually whenever I'm either doing a workshop or presenting to a committee,

I might say, "Hey, did that make sense,
or did I just ramble in the wrong direction?"

I want to get a sense for whether or not that landed.

That actually is also tethered back to what we
described earlier as with that feedback cycle.

Whenever we're having a conversation,
there'll be subtle bits of feedback that
will help me understand whether
or not I'm communicating effectively.

Another common check-in is,

do you know what I mean?

Yeah, just to make sure that they have

a general sense of what you're trying to communicate, absolutely.

Let's continue to unpack communication.

With that in mind, I want to explore nonviolent communication as a concept.

Nonviolent communication it's actually its own model of

communication in which it emphasizes on four key pieces.

I'm going to pop those up real quick.

The first one is observations.

With nonviolent communication, we have observations

that are a part of our communication process.

An observation is beautiful because it can be an objective process.

It doesn't have to be a long-winded process.

It is this is what I see, this is what I hear,

this is what I remember, and it's pretty straightforward in that sense.

What you observe, what I observe,

whether or not that contributes to effective communication.

The next one is feelings and feelings play into this

because whenever there is interaction between humans,

there is an empathetic response and feelings.

Whatever emotion that might be is something that we're trying to communicate.

My words might say something completely different than my feeling,

and sometimes that's something that we can

perceive as individuals in a communication process.

Someone's saying, are you okay?

Me walking away saying no.

That's totally me conveying my feeling in that process of communication.

What's really interesting about this is

those feelings can be observed through this process.

They do play into each other.

The next thing is needs.

Needs might be independent of feelings.

I feel hurt, for example,

might be something that I say.

It's an objective statement,

it's an observation that somebody might have,

and I need you to do this in the future.

Needs convey a different component of that spectrum in

communication on this is what I want you to do as we continue down this process.

The example I'm thinking of in my head is a supervisor to one other staff members.

Though my supervisor communicates they need something done on time,

I might feel a sense of pressure in that communication as it's communicated to me.

Without a request though,

that communication won't really be very effective.

If there isn't a specific request,

a specific want tethered to the needs and feelings all stemming from the observations,

then we really can't make the progress in effective communication.

Does that make sense? To some, yeah.

You see, that's checking for understanding.

[LAUGHTER] One thing that I wanted to pop up here

is the relationship between the communicator and

the listener is going to have an empathetic response and honest expression.

Empathetically listening and honestly expressing are going to

go hand in hand in this process of nonviolent communication.

By that, I mean I am expressing how I am without blaming or criticizing,

and the other person is empathetically receiving

how I am without hearing blame or criticizing.

For example, if I'm telling somebody that they're driving really aggressively,

my need is to feel safe.

My want is for them to drive a little safer.

I could very easily see somebody

who is hearing that bit of feedback, taking it personally.

No, I don't drive aggressively.

What are you talking about?

You saying I'm a bad driver?

Those can all be easy assumptions in the communication process.

I want to dig into this touch further.

With request, with communication,

we need to emphasize that clearly

requesting what would be effective in the communication process is going to be critical.

Empathetically receiving what would be

helpful in the communication process would be critical as well.

Let's practice these talking points here in a second,

because I think we can really dig into this a little bit further.

I want to go through a scenario.

Let's imagine we have a group project.

the three of us. I, as an individual,

I'm not carrying my weight.

A group member is not doing an enough work relative to the others.

Imagine that we are in this scenario and you need to communicate to me.

Let's navigate what I need to do,

what you need to do in this whole communication scheme

to effectively get the result that you want.

Because you could very easily come up to me and say,

hey Arturo, you suck and you

don't know what you're doing and you're not working hard enough.

That is communicating something to me,

but I might have my feelings hurt.

I'll give you some time to think through what you might do.

Feel free to type into the chat and/or unmute

yourselves and chime in on how you might manage this.

[NOISE]

I do see some stuff coming through.

One piece says try to be empathetic and ask why they're not doing enough.

Andrea, would you be willing to elaborate a little bit?

[NOISE] The other piece

that I'm reading here is make an observation;

we noticed Arturo, that you aren't contributing as much as we are.

Then make a feeling;

we feel that your participation is key to our success.

State what's needed; we need you to make

more effort or provide more effort in this process.

Those are all very objective facts.

I might still have my feelings hurt,

but it's something that I can very clearly

see in the communication process, what you need.

You've expressed what you want,

how that might impact you,

and how you feel that might result in that process.

Going back to Andrea, your point,

not jumping to accusing the individual right away. Any point in life.

I think it can be very easy to point at somebody and be like,

hey, this is what you're doing wrong.

It can be very easy to be critical of other people,

and can be much harder to be critical of ourselves.

By intentionally not jumping to accusing us,

we can do ourselves a favor in getting by in the communication process.

I lost my train of thought,

and that was going to be a good point.

Not jumping to accusing them straight away.

What is the other piece I was going to reference?

Perspective sharing. What are some reasons I might not be doing enough work relative to you two?

I think that's going to be a critical piece in the communication process.

Maybe you have a team member who's new, they're not as familiar with your systems, your processes.

They're not carrying in their weight and you are picking up the slack and that is not a feel-good moment for most people.

I'm sure we can probably think there are a few times in our careers, professional, or personal lives when we run into this.

Perhaps we have different expectations of the project's workload.

Yeah, maybe I have a different timeline in mind.

Maybe to you, this project is something you want to get wrapped up by tomorrow, and to me it's an next week thing.

It's a future Arturo problem, and so I'm handling it in that method.

Perhaps we have different expectations of the workload. I just read that now.

[LAUGHTER] The other piece with perspective sharing is our perspective.

Perspective sharing is being mindful of the person's experiences.

Like I mentioned previously in the transactional communication piece,

I might come from a background where I'm just not savvy with Excel, and maybe we're working with that software.

To you, you might be very comfortable with Excel,

Microsoft Word and Office products,
but I might just not have the familiarity.

That might be inhibiting.

Once you know that context,
that really changes the way that you navigate this conversation.

You might shift the duties in this scenario itself.

Cool. Let's continue.

There's another scenario here.

These are going to build and get harder, intentionally so.

Your coworkers are discussing how much they dislike a fellow coworker.

You overhear words like lazy, rude, dumb.

Communication fits into this process at some point.

They're having their own back-and-forth communication,

you're not even a component of that communication,

but there is something being communicated in this scenario.

Let's dive into how might we navigate

using those nonviolent communication metrics that I pulled up earlier.

[NOISE]

I've run into this personally in one of

my previous positions where two co-workers were going back and forth about someone else.

I really loved this print

out from just plain texts that I sitting in the back room.

I'm going to butcher the quote,

but it really impacted me.

I think that the quote was simple.

People talk about others,
good people talk about things or events,
and great people talk about ideas.

That really connected with me whenever I saw that printed in the break room.

I remember having this interaction with these two people,
they were going back and forth,
speaking about another of their co-workers.

I chose to make that my communication method.

Not objectively telling them what they were doing was wrong,
but instead just sharing,
hey, here's some food for thought.

Do what you want with this information.

Going to the specific prompt here within this scenario,

Aaron you bring up a good point here.

Maybe we need a better understanding of the perspective of
the co-workers who are making these accusations.

There might be some truth to what they're saying, absolutely.

If I'm the supervisor and I'm hearing this interaction,

I would be remiss if I didn't think a little
critically about what's happening in that scenario.

Then we can assess the issues between the two and
possibly bridge the gap in communication.

Maybe the way that we have to handle this is I need to talk

to these two individuals and tell them why it's not okay.

Maybe I need to hear these people out.

What we're really stumbling into here is context is going to matter within how we choose to communicate within this scenario.

How about this, what are some things not to do in this scenario?

What are some red flag approaches where you could certainly do X, Y, Z, but what are some things you wouldn't approach doing within two co-workers discussing how much they dislike one other person?

Fire all parties involved.

Because that is a moment of learning that can be taken away from what would be three people in this scenario, and it makes my job easier, especially if I'm the supervisor and this position.

But it really doesn't do any favorites to those individuals who are in this scenario.

Other things that I wouldn't do is just tell them to stop without giving them a reason why.

Even if the reason is hey, it's policy, I think it's unprofessional.

Telling people to stop without giving context and sharing a perspective is something that's not going to help in the long run of communicating.

I think something we explored earlier in this conversation on what is good communication was communication is a two-way street, so really making sure that the people on the receiving end are understanding of where we're coming from with this interaction.

We can take the lens of unprofessional,
whether or not this is professional behavior.

We could take the lens of whether or not it's fair to the person.

Would you connect with the person who is being discussed is,
I guess, my next curiosity.

Suppose that folks are talking about me,
you overhear someone talking about me like this and you're like, wow, that's shady.
Would you come directly to me in the communication process,
because where does that individual fit into this?

AARON: I think that's an interesting angle that you bring up.

If I first went to the parties who are discussing the co-worker and
found that they had maybe an insights about the third co-worker that I,
as a supervisor or fellow co-worker didn't have prior knowledge of,
maybe there is something to discuss with the person that they were gossiping about.

Obviously, it's very rare that that person did anything to deserve the gossip.

But perhaps in getting more information about the situation,
something gets illuminated that could use your attention.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah. This is reminding me of that potential invisible problem.

The problem right now that I'm witnessing
is that gossip and that back and forth between them.

There might be a bigger issue at play,
so if I don't dive in,

I'm really just kicking the can down the road.

Andrea, you bring up a really good point here.

It depends on the level of trust with the person, absolutely.

I'd love if you could elaborate a little bit there.

ANDREA: If it's someone that I don't really know,

I'm not going to really get involved.

Maybe that's just because I'm non-confrontational.

It would depend on the level of trust, and again,

if it's a supervisor versus just another co-worker,

that would be different too.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Absolutely. I absolutely appreciate that you bring up your

non-confrontational because that really helps us stumble

into another communication barrier.

We're going to have barriers in most of our interactions,

and so you just described a barrier that you're going to run into.

Let's not pretend that we're not going to have barriers in some of these scenarios.

It's easy to say in a Zoom room what I would do, what would you do?

But in the moment, how do you respond?

I think that might shake out a little bit differently.

I think we've hit that one well enough,

let's explore this third one.

Like I said, it's just going to keep getting tougher.

What do you do if you overhear

your boss saying something that's incredibly inappropriate?

I encourage you to use your imaginations.

Because now there is an element of communication

where you really don't have to do anything,

and there's a power dynamic at play.

Andrea, you just brought up a really good point about barriers,

and I think we're probably thinking through an existing barrier in this scenario.

What do we do to effectively

communicate to this person that what they're saying is not okay,

while actually getting them bought into our opinion,

and not having them disregard us,

shut us out, whatever it be?

Depends on what it is.

You're absolutely right.

Context is always going to matter.

Let's imagine it is directed to someone specific.

I can give you a scenario in which I ran into

a couple of years back that really irked me.

But before I do that, I do want to read through Aaron's point here.

I'd speak to the boss privately,

let them know that their comment may have been taken as inappropriate.

That's absolutely fair.

Actually, now I have two scenarios based off of this or two examples.

The first one, speaking to Andrea's point,

is I had the president of a private company I worked for two years ago tell me I

should shave because he didn't want clients to think that looked like a terrorist.

Mentally, I was like, "Whoa, that's not okay,

you can't do this," but it's the president of the company
and I was a lowly trainer who was working
for him under his under his "race."

It was incredibly inappropriate.

I didn't say a word about it because I chose not to.

I had my barrier there.

In that scenario, I could have explicitly told,

"Hey, Jim, this is why I don't think that's appropriate."

But I didn't do any of that, unfortunately,

and I'm not proud of it, but that's where we landed.

Similarly, speaking to your point,

Aaron, pull them away privately.

I worked for the ropes course, for what it's worth,

and I used to be a ropes course trainer for a company.

I was working with this group of clients down in Texas where

the supervisor of this group of staff members

was making fun of his employees for being scared of being at height,

they're 30 feet in the air, wearing a harness,

and he's calling them babies and he's calling them chicken.

He was telling them, "Just do it," that whole thing.

I was like, "Hey, that's a great example of

something that I don't want you to do throughout today,

because it's really going to," whatever, you can imagine.

Later on I went up to him and I apologized.

I said, "hey, sorry for calling you out.

I just really want to avoid saying that tone during training," and he went off.

He was very much,

"You don't talk to me like that in front of my staff."

So speaking to your point here,

Aaron, I could have pulled him away privately.

If I think of non-violent communication,

I did not abide by any of what's on that slide previously,

I just directly addressed it.

Yeah, it was assertive, but it really also cost me a lot

of capital and the ability to communicate effectively,

and have him buy into what I was trying to communicate and why I wanted to make my point.

For this prompt, there's a lot of things that we

can do when it comes to communicating effectively.

I think one of the things that I really wanted to outline here is that naturally,

we're going to run into barriers through this process.

I think I want to explore that in our next slide.

Barriers, I planned this.

The first step is going to be acknowledging barriers.

We have them and we might not know what our barriers are until we are faced with them.

You don't really see that wall until you run right up to it and you're like,

wow, I am having a hard time overcoming this barrier.

I want you to take a moment to think through a time where you ran

into a barrier of your own and to communicating effectively.

It stopped your ability to tell somebody,
give somebody a piece of feedback,
tell a co-worker what your opinion was.

A barrier to communication that you might run into,
be it a family member, be it a coworker,
be it a supervisor,
a subordinate staff, a five-year-old,
whatever it be. [NOISE]

AARON: I was going to type out my response,
but a little longer,
so I'll just unmute me.

I actually had a situation where I had a good relationship with a co-worker of mine
and it was a friendly bantery situation the majority of the time.

We got into a situation where we were in a event where we
co-hosted a training and the co-worker was actually my senior,
they had been with the company longer.

But with this joking attitude,

I thought it was okay to give some harsh critical feedback because

I thought we were on such a friendly level that they would have accepted it with ease.

But then when it came pushed to shove and the jokes were about a professional setting,
they leaned on their professional seniority and said,

"That's not okay to give me that type of feedback.

I've been with the company longer.

You need to take a backseat to me."

ARTURO GAVILANES: I'd say yikes.

That's a big yikes.

I'm curious, what was the response after the fact that you just, you got it?

AARON: Perhaps in the context of this setting,

I'm making it sound a little bit more dramatic than it was real time.

They just said,

"Let's actually do it my way," and I just adhered to their lead at that point,

because it was their training that I was co-hosting and they were main hosting.

ARTURO GAVILANES: That's absolutely fair. Thank you for sharing that. Other barriers.

Andrea, you mentioned in here,

you worry about coming off as rude or cold.

There's a lot to unpack in there. But I totally feel that.

I think that's a very common sentiment for a lot of people.

I don't want to have them think that I'm overly critical of their work.

I don't want them to not like me,

and so I might choose not to communicate something.

Sorry. There's a drawback to when we hit that barrier,

we keep ourselves from

continuing to move forward in whatever we're trying to communicate.

The other thing that I want to acknowledge there is letting those barriers come into

effect can also snowball bad habits or bad interactions with an individual.

This scenario I'm thinking of in particular here is,

if I don't tell a colleague that what they said was unprofessional,

or the presentation needed a tweak,

or that they shouldn't do XYZ,
then there are going to continue to do that and continue to develop that habit,
where if I nip it in the butt right away,
I'm just throwing out
that one time piece of feedback on letting them do what they want with it.
I was going to refer back to something within non violent communication,
but I lost my train of thought there,
so I guess I won't do that.

With barriers, I did list a few here and I think we touched on them for the majority.

Aaron, you mentioned power dynamics.

There is a time and place where you know what?

Your communication is just going to come to a halt because of the power dynamics.

Whether or not that's a bad thing,

that's a whole other point.

There's certainly an appropriateness to those power dynamics at times.

Think an emergency scenario,

if you're trying to communicate effectively of how to evacuate a building,

there doesn't need to be a, "Hey, you know what?

Well, I think we should do this instead."

There needs to be direct focus.

Safety is another one that I don't think we touched on as much.

Barriers exist in which your safety

might be the reason that you choose not to continue to

communicate down a string of an interaction.

Now, when we look at the spectrum or
the axis of the sender and the receiver in terms of communicator,
I might feel as the sender,
I don't even want to give any bit of information,
because if I do give any information,
if I do say anything,
that's going to put my physical or my emotional risk at play.

So I don't want to risk my physical or emotional safety.

That's absolutely fair.

One example that I can think of with safety in mind is privilege.

Privileged positions or privilege exists all across the board.

I know that as a supervisor to a staff member,

I have the privilege of being able to say something
critical and I feel very comfortable with that.

But for a staff member to say something critical to me,
they have a less privileged position in giving that feedback.

So it's more emotionally taxing for them to even step in.

We have acknowledging barriers.

Then I want to address overcoming barriers,

because there's a time and place where we do want to overcome our barrier so that
we can effectively communicate and navigate communication as a whole.

I only came up with two. Identify a game plan.

Hindsight is 2020.

Whenever we run into a scenario that we reflect on,

I think of myself three days later,

I'm still thinking about a scenario and I'm like,

"Dang I should have done this instead."

That's okay. I think that's a really healthy,

overcoming a barrier is having a plan in place when we run into those situations again.

Another way to overcome a barrier is delegation.

Can either of you speculate as to what I mean by that?

Not sure.

Well, if I have a contentious relationship with a coworker,

and I want to give them some feedback,

but I don't really want to emotionally invest,

I don't want to put myself in a vulnerable position where they might snap at me,

my feeling towards the situation might be at risk in any way,

my needs might not be met,

I can really ask my supervisor to provide that feedback.

I might ask somebody else to communicate for me.

Now, this is a harder process to navigate

because you do have to bring a third party into it.

But think about the mediator position.

It is a profession or a role dedicated to effective communication,

and a mediator or a third party can really help whenever there

are moments where we can't take our feelings away from our needs,

but we can separate those into objective statements and objective observations.

I have an activity for us,

one final activity at least,
but I don't know if it'll work very well with three of us.
I might cut a little early there,
before I run into our activity called Forced Choice,
which you just saw the spoiler at the bottom of the screen,
I do want to take a moment to acknowledge Professional versus personal communication,
because the way that I'm going to communicate professionally is going to be very
different than the way that I communicate personally.
By that, I mean, professionally,
it's my job to give my colleagues,
my supervisor, my staff, feedback.
It is not my job to personally give my uncle,
my sister, my brother, feedback.
Now, I might have a reason to do so and
effectively communicate to them why my perspective and hear their perspective,
and engage in that back and forth dialogue.
There's absolutely a time and place for that,
but I'm more likely as a professional to engage in a conversation that's difficult.
I was delivering a Count on Cougs workshop not too long ago.
It was about sexual violence and
which somebody in the audience said something inappropriate.
Sorry. Personally, somebody who had said the statement that they did,
I wouldn't have touch that with a 10-foot pole.
I probably would have just ignored it because it was like,

I don't want to dig into it.

But professionally, I had to address it,

I needed to address it,

because I didn't want the rest of the students involved to let that stand and see that I was normalizing that kind of behavior.

So that's what I mean by that.

I do have a small request of this group when it comes to professional and personal involvement in communication.

I think we have an ethical obligation to not be complacent with our morals.

We have our own values,

we believe in things for our own reasons,

and so whenever you feel your value is pushed on,

I think back to the president of that company saying what he said.

I think it's important to ask ourselves, do I push back?

Because if you're complacent with your morals,

it's really a disservice to society.

That's a personal request on my end, Arturo to you.

Be mindful of your morals,

and try to engage in effective dialogue and communicate with your counterpart.

A larger request I have is seek to understand your counterpart's perspective.

You mentioned it earlier, Aaron,

but we often find ourselves waiting for our turn to talk

and I think that's very common behavior.

I think it's very critical that as individuals,

we seek to understand the perspective that the other person has so that we can help make the communication processes easier, not only for yourself, but anybody engaging in conversation or in dialogue with them down the road.

Now, forced choice is appropriate.

Forced choice is an activity in which I'm going to pull up two topics.

One of which you're going

to denote the left side of this line drawn in the middle of the screen.

The other of which you're going to denote on the right side.

For example, dog versus cat.

What I'm going to ask you to do here is use the annotate tool, and for those of you who are not familiar with the annotate tool, you should see the top of your screen, a View Options button.

It says you are viewing Arturo's screen, and you should see a dropdown that says View Options, and then in there, you should see annotate.

Somebody's already annotating for us.

Go ahead and use the stamp tool to annotate which one you would prefer, dog versus cat.

We got one person for dog,
one person for cat.

I am going to be the swing vote here.

Where is it going to go? I'm a cat person.

What I want to do with this activity, [LAUGHTER] sorry,

my dog is upstairs and I hope he doesn't hear this,

but I truly do love my cat.

What I want to do with this activity though is hear each other's perspectives.

Why did you pick what you picked?

When you share your perspective,

I want the folks that are listening to actively listen and try to understand,

hey, maybe I should be a dog or a cat person.

It's a very forced interaction,

but practice makes perfect in this communication,

so let's run with it.

I'm happy to kick us off,

but I'd love it if one of you does.

AARON: Wait, did you want to begin with the dog versus cat?

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah. Let's do it

AARON: Okay. I'm a dog person.

I think having a personal companion you shows the constant affection,

doesn't run off doing their own thing independently,

that you could take for walks,

you could play catch and Frisbee with,

I think that's what you need out of a companion, out of a personal pet.

ARTURO GAVILANES: How long have you had your dog?

AARON: I have never had a dog.

[LAUGHTER]

ARTURO GAVILANES: That is interesting.

That is perspective that I did not expect to get.

[LAUGHTER] Well, thank you for sharing.

I do agree with you on so many levels of what you described.

Having that unconditional love from a dog,

it's just so hard to beat.

Andrea, I'm assuming you're the cat person?

ANDREA: Yes.

ARTURO GAVILANES: You're the cat person.

Go ahead and share with me if you'd be so kind.

ANDREA: That's interesting. [LAUGHTER] I do like those qualities about a dog,

but I prefer the independence of cats.

They don't always have to be around you.

Dogs are a little bit too dependent, I think.

Yeah. I've also never had a dog,

so maybe I would change my mind if I ever had one.

ARTURO GAVILANES: This is funny for me because pre-2011,

when I got my cat,

I was definitely a dog person.

Then now that I have Sawyer and I've had him for like eight years,

he just fills my bucket.

He's such a cute and cuddly guy.

He has boundaries and I respect that so much.

But my partner has a dog and I've been living with

this dog for about a year now and now he's swaying me

back to the dog side because that unconditional love,

that ability to play,

the energy that comes with that animal is very,

very, what's the word I'm looking for here?

Very, very satisfying.

We know what this is going to look like,

let's run it back, try it again.

This time, the prompts are coffee versus tea.

Again, I really want to encourage us to try to consider the other perspective

and see whether or not you could sway yourself to consider being the other option.

I selected coffee on this one.

Usually, I do have folks do the lines down on the bottom,

but since we started with stamping left versus right on dog versus cat,

I liked it, so let's run with that.

Am I correct in saying we're all coffee people? All right.

So for this portion,

let's think through why we should consider tea as an option here.

What are the pros of tea?

Why might we consider,

instead of buying a latte,

Americano, whatever your drink of choice is,

why might you consider the alternative?

AARON: Yeah, I think we're all in the minority worldwide.

I think there's probably more tea drinkers in the world than there are coffee drinkers,

so there must be something to it.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Yeah. I did this activity about two days ago for a different workshop and it was like conflict resolution workshop.

About 14 out of 15 people were tea people.

I was the only coffee person.

Just fascinating to me.

Let's think critically, what might it be about tea that makes it so tasty for people?

ANDREA: A lot of people can't have caffeine, so that's one thing.

Although some teas, I think have caffeine.

There's also some health benefits associated with most teas, and yeah, it might just be an acquired taste as well.

ARTURO GAVILANES: Absolutely. Yeah, I agree with that.

Aaron, you had some thoughts.

AARON: Yeah. I can play devil's advocate on any topic, so I'll take tea on this one.

Coffee, if you can indulge me, is essentially one flavor.

You can get different flavor creamers and things like that, but it doesn't cover the spectrum that tea does.

Tea, you can get teas that are thicker, ones that are milder, stronger.

You can get caffeinated or not.

You can get a tea for breakfast, for lunch, for dinner.

It can fit a mood of a wider context than coffee can, in my opinion.

ARTURO GAVILANES: I'll snap to that. My partner is a big tea drinker and so she's got Earl Grey, to chamomile, to Egyptian licorice, to strawberry chocolate.

I'm like, what are all these options and these varieties you have access to and all these loose leaves in a bag?

Meanwhile, I'm looking at this ground powder.

That said, I do like my caffeine. Mix the two.

I'm going to skip our next two prompts and just move us through this, but before I do, I'm going to clear my annotations.

How do I do that?

Annotation tool, where did you go? That's why.

We're going to leave our two hearts sign, because I'm too lazy to remove them, but those two hearts are for you-all.

Thank you so much for sitting through this with me.

I appreciate the back and forth,

I appreciate the conversation.

Communication is a skill that is very difficult to develop, and I do thank you both.

If anybody needs to reach me for anything,

here's my e-mail address,

and you can find more about my program within the Challenge Program at this website, urec.wsu.edu.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Otherwise, I really wish that you make it a great day.