HOW TO TALK TO “DIFFICULT” STUDENTS

IATEFL BESIG Conference Stuttgart 2012
Presenter: Patricia de Griese

COMMUNICATION LAWS
• Communication usually fails, except by accident.
• If a message can be interpreted in several ways, it will be interpreted in a manner that maximizes damage.
• There is always someone who knows better than you what you meant by your message.

LEARNING GOALS
- Understand Communication Dynamics
- Learn about the Concept of Personality and Communication Styles
- Use the Right Mental Attitude
- Choose the Right Responding Style

WHAT IS A “DIFFICULT” STUDENT?

1%

THE LESSON OF THE FIST

“Problems cannot be solved at the same level of awareness that created them.”

People speak at 100-175 words per minute, but can listen intelligently at 600-800 words per minute.

What are the implications of this data?

Facts (sensory information)
Thoughts
Beliefs
Experience
Values
People communicate like icebergs

MISTAKEN ASSUMPTION
Facts (see + hear) → Feel → Act

FILTERS + SELF TALK

CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE
My gender
My culture
My upbringing
WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS

Facts (see + hear) ➔ Story (Self-talk)

Feel ➔ Act

WATZLAWICK’S AXIOMS

• In face-to-face situations, communication is inevitable.
• Face-to-face communication always combines words and non-verbals.
• In face-to-face communication, it’s always about content and relationship at the same time.

% IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION

WORDS: 15%
VOICE: 38%
BODY LANGUAGE: 55%

PAUL WATZLAWICK

The Pragmatics of Human Communication
PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

We cannot NOT communicate.
Communication is also ALWAYS non-verbal.
We tend to believe our behavior is mostly a reaction to somebody else’s behavior. And their behavior is a result of their character.

RAPPORT

People like people who are like them.

People like people who like them.

A QUESTION OF STYLE

“I have evaluated the situation and I have made a decision. We will begin this course of action immediately.”

“This is an exciting project, and you will all come through as winners.”

“I feel this may be a sensitive topic for some of us. Let’s check with everyone before we proceed.”

“Based on 5 years of reports and analysis, I suggest we move forward with the new project.”
DIFFERENT STYLES

JOHARI WINDOW

Carl Gustav Jung: Psychological Types

WHAT TO DO WHEN FORCED TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT PERSON?
CALM DOWN

- Take a deep breath
- Excuse yourself
- Postpone the talk
- Go for a walk

SHOW YOU CARE

TALK ABOUT POSITIVE FUTURE

EXPLAIN PROBLEM SPECIFICALLY

STATE WHY THIS IS AN ISSUE

MAKE YOUR REQUEST

END POSITIVELY

Patricia de Griese

Trainer
Systemic Coach
Workshop Designer and Facilitator
Translator
NLP Master

Prime Areas:
Effective Communication Skills
Presentations
Negotiations
Cross-Cultural Awareness
Emotional Intelligence
Train-the-Trainer
Brain-Friendly Teaching Techniques
Business English

patriciagriese@compuserve.com