



Tool 5-1. Checklist of Poor Personal Communication

Dianna Booher

Based on Chapter 5, “Five Critical Communication Skills for Leaders of the Future,” in *The ASTD Leadership Handbook*, edited by Elaine Biech, © 2010 ASTD

Purpose: A checklist of ineffective communication symptoms.

Most leaders think they are excellent communicators. Everything they communicate is clear to them—or they wouldn’t have said it or written it that way. Unfortunately, your own understanding or response is not the best measure of effectiveness! Consider this checklist of symptoms that often surface to suggest the need for improvement in your own communication:

- ☐ Feeling that everyone agrees with and supports what you say, feel, and do most of the time
- ☐ Lack of input, questions, or feedback on your ideas presented in meetings
- ☐ Few or no ideas contributed in your meetings
- ☐ Inability to influence others to accept your ideas or change their viewpoint or behavior
- ☐ Seeing little or no behavioral change in people you’ve coached for improved performance
- ☐ Confusion about what you’re supposed to be doing
- ☐ Lack of understanding the “why” behind assigned projects and goals
- ☐ Thinking that what you do or say doesn’t really “change things” in the long run
- ☐ Nervousness or hesitancy about presenting new ideas to your boss, client, or strategic partners
- ☐ Ongoing conflict with peers or family
- ☐ Frequent rework
- ☐ Constant reminders from you to others to take action, meet deadlines, or send information
- ☐ Frequent requests for more information about topics or issues that you think you’ve already addressed sufficiently
- ☐ Feeling of disconnection and discomfort in one-on-one and small-group interactions
- ☐ Lack of positive feedback about your presentations or documents (from those not obligated to give it)