

Chapter 10

Effective Communications

Security Guards encounter a wide range of situations and are required to act professionally under all circumstances. Your position requires you to communicate with a wide array of individuals both orally and in writing. You may also encounter someone that just does not want to listen to what you are saying, at this point you may have to customize your communications to them. One thing that you must remember is that you must maintain your composure and adjust your behaviour to suit the individual and situation.

Radio Communications

Security guards are expected to communicate professionally with the general public, the client or the tenants but in addition, security guards must communicate efficiently with their supervisors and their peers. Radio frequencies are typically shared by the entire security team so ideally, transmissions made over the radio should be brief. There are various methods to communicate over the radio. Some hospitals, airports or malls may use a colour code to indicate the level of emergency without alarming or informing the general public. For example, a “code blue” might indicate a missing child at the mall or someone going into cardiac arrest at the hospital.

Colour codes will vary per site. A more universally accepted way for security guards to communicate over the radio are **10 codes**. Historically, **10 codes** originated in 1937 with the Illinois State Police District 10. In general, the first part of the radio transmission is cut off by static so the second part of the transmission is the most important. **10 codes** are recognized throughout law enforcement and it keeps the communication private in case there is a large crowd and it keeps the radio waves open because of the short transmission.

Some security companies will have their own **10 codes**. Some of the more common **10 codes** include:

10-0	Radio test
10-1	Negative copy
10-2	Positive copy
10-3	Stop transmitting
10-4	Message received and understood
10-5	Relay message
10-6	On stand-by (unless urgent)
10-7	Out of service – Off the air
10-8	In service – On the air
10-9	Repeat message
10-20	Your location
10-21	Telephone
10-32	Guard down- Requires assistance
10-61	Undesirable
10-76	En route
10-77	Estimated time of arrival

10-99
10-100

Bomb threat
Request police at

What is Professional Communication?

Law enforcement officers use communication skills daily in performing their duties – whether they are calming a frightened victim, directing a crowd to disperse, placing someone under arrest, or interviewing a witness – being a security guard is no different. Because it is such a big part of a security guard's job, it is important to set communication skills in the context of professional law enforcement. This section addresses the topic of Professional Communication.

The idea of Professional Communication really involves three separate concepts: **professional, communication, and skills**. Let's look at how each of these relates to the work of a law enforcement officer.

Professional

Today's security guard is to be a *professional*. What does that mean? What differentiates professional communication from ordinary communication? While there are many different definitions of what it means to be a professional, most of them involve these concepts:

- **Ethics** – a professional is expected to meet high ethical standards.
- **Respect** – a professional is expected to show respect for others and to earn the respect of others.
- **Appearance** – a professional is expected to “look the part” by being fit, well-groomed and neat.
- **Demeanor** – a professional is expected to exhibit a calm and authoritative demeanor, regardless of how others around are reacting.
- **Diligence** – a professional is expected to complete assigned tasks carefully and thoroughly, and to do any necessary follow-up.
- **Competence** – a professional is to have the knowledge and skill to do the job at hand.
- **Attitude** – a professional is expected to demonstrate a positive, helpful, and respectful attitude, and to be a positive representative for his or her employer.

Communication

Security guards spend the majority of their work time communicating in one way or another. Sometimes the communication is verbal, as when an officer interviews a witness or gives directions to a suspect. Sometimes it is non-verbal, as when an officer uses presence or body language to convey a message to someone. Communication can be oral or written.

Whatever form it takes, communication is a process that involves four basic elements:

1. **A sender**
2. **A message**
3. **The atmosphere in which the communication takes place**
4. **A receiver.**

Looking at the process from another perspective, the sender encodes the message (in spoken or written words or in gestures and body language) and the receiver decodes the message. The goal is for the message that is encoded or sent, to match exactly the message that is decoded or received.

Frequently, however, people encounter barriers to communication that disrupt the process and make it less likely that the message will come through clearly and without distortion. Sometimes these barriers are obvious obstacles like language barriers, and sometimes they are more subtle, such as the emotional climate or atmosphere in which the encounter takes place. You will learn about the barriers to communication most often encountered by law enforcement officers and will learn techniques for overcoming them.

Skills

According to the dictionary, a *skill* is "...a learned power of doing something competently: a developed aptitude or ability" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th edition). In other words, while a person may be born with an aptitude, one has to learn a skill. We are familiar with this concept in athletics – just because a person is strong and coordinated, does not automatically make him/her a good basketball player. Becoming good at a particular sport requires learning specific skills, such as ball handling, teamwork, strategy, and so on.

Security work involves many skills with a strong physical component, such as using a baton, driving a car, employing defensive and arrest tactics, and so on. These are often called *psychomotor* skills, because they involve both mental and physical components. Other skills, such as communicating effectively, involve mental and relational/transactional components. In other words, employing the skill involves both *knowing* what to do and also being able to "read" a person or situation accurately and respond to feedback.

The old saying, "what you don't use, you lose" applies to all skills. Unless you practice regularly, you will lose the ability to perform a skill competently. We know this is true of physical skills – even professional athletes generally get better as they practice and play their sport. That's why the first games of the season are usually "exhibition" games that don't count toward the final standings.

It is also true of non-physical skills like communication. It's important to practice all the skills related to law enforcement to stay proficient in their use. If we combine these three ideas into one concept – *professional communication skills* – we have the basis for all security work. As Security Guards, we must be skilled professional communicators because the essence of our work is dealing with people. As a guard, you may have equipment such as batons and flashlights for

your aid, but they are not the focus of your work: people are. All of your work directly depends on your ability to communicate effectively – with citizens, with suspects and victims, and with you fellow guards. In order to succeed, you must develop Professional Communication Skills.

Why is Professional Communications so important?

Security Guards face many dangers on the street. We all know that every year guards get injured and killed in the line of duty. But not all dangers faced by security guards are from sudden physical assaults. Guards can get injured in the course of using Defense and Arrest Tactics to gain control of resistive people; they can become ill and die of stress-related conditions like heart disease or alcoholism; or their lives can be disrupted by divorce or job-related litigation.

Just as security guards must be proficient in psychomotor skills to be able to defend against sudden assault, they must also be proficient in professional communication skills to head off the more subtle dangers of the job.

Benefits of Professional Communication

Approaching your work as a professional and communicating skillfully (both on and off the job) can make you safer and more effective, and can enhance your career development. Good communicators are safer on the job because they are less likely to have physical confrontations with citizens. A guard who is skilled in talking with people can often get subjects to comply voluntarily with his or her directives, as opposed to a less-skilled communicator, who would need to rely on force. Security guards often get hurt in physical confrontations, even if they are proficient in Defensive Tactics, simply because the situation is fluid and dynamic. At the same time, good communicators can more easily gain the trust and support of the community, so that everyday encounters with the public are less apt to be hostile. Of course, not every suspect can be “talked” to under arrest – but many can. Even if you end up using force, you will need to “come full circle” and finish the interaction with words.

Good communicators are more effective guards for a number of reasons. It is obvious that as the message is clearer, it is less likely that someone will misinterpret the officer’s intentions. Interestingly, the way something is said can be more important than the words themselves. Most agencies find that the bulk of citizen complaints are due to guards who were perceived to be rude or overbearing. A skilled communicator is less likely to have complaints lodged against him or her, and better able to represent his or her agency positively. Additionally, skilled communicators write clearer, more precise reports – reducing rework and making testifying in court easier.

Overall, good communication makes doing your job easier and less stressful, and enhances you career development. As you move up the ladder to positions with wider responsibilities, clear communication is essential, both within the

organization and with the public. For those reasons, skilled communicators are more likely to be promoted with a resulting increase in job satisfaction. The benefits of being a skilled communicator can spill over into your personal life as well, boosting your confidence and self-esteem and enhancing your personal relationships.

Who is listening?

We have mentioned that clear communication is essential to ensure that the person to whom you're speaking understands your message, but you need to ask yourself one question: is that person the only one listening? As a security guard, you cannot escape being in the public eye. You stick out in a crowd because you wear a uniform. You are often seen not as an individual, but as a **representative of your agency**. What you say and do, and the way you behave at any given moment may have implications far beyond the particular situation you are facing. We've all heard stories of officers saying or doing something in an unguarded moment that sets off a storm of controversy. The short answer to "Who is listening?" is: **everyone**.

More specifically, the following are among those who are listening – that is, being aware of what officers are doing and saying:

- Persons interacting directly with guards;
- Other security guards;
- Supervisors;
- Administrators;
- The public;
- Media reporters;
- Municipal or county elected officials;
- Police and Fire Commission members;
- Plaintiff's attorneys.

You should assume that whatever you say, write, or do could appear in tomorrow's newspaper or be headlined on the 11 o'clock news. Citizens have scanners, and they can listen in on radio traffic – even *site only radios* or "talk-around" transmissions. An offhand remark, or pejorative comment intended as a joke can come back to haunt you. When an officer is dealing with a citizen on the street, in a mall, in a commercial office tower, residential building or construction site, other citizens are watching – and sometimes videotaping. What seems like a minor over-reaction in the context of a heated exchange can look like an officer out of control without that context. Professionals don't run the risk of being misinterpreted as a result of indulging in unprofessional communication.

The 8 Step Method For Dealing with People

From George "Doc" Thompson Ph.D.
The Verbal Judo-Institute Inc.

1) Meet and Greet

Hello Sir/Madam

2) Identify yourself and your Department

My name is _____. I am with Mall Security.

3) Give reason for stop

The reason I am speaking with you is because you are Trespassing.

4) Ask for Justified Reason for Infraction

You were advised not to return to the mall. Is there any legal justification for you to be here today?

5) Ask for Positive Identification

I will need to start by seeing your identification so I can fill out a Trespass Notice

6) Acknowledge their Co-operation in the matter.

Thank you for your continued co-operation in this matter, this will only take a few minutes.

7) Make a decision

8) Effective Close

Thank you for your time and understanding in this matter.
Please have a nice day.

5 Step Hard Style for Dealing with Difficult People

From George "Doc" Thompson Ph.D.

The Verbal Judo Institute, Inc.

1) ETHICAL APPEAL

Ask! Most people when dealing with someone in authority will comply with most requests (especially if they act like they are in authority and NOT arrogant). **"Sir, would you please step out of the vehicle". "Madam, could you step over here please".**

2) REASONABLE APPEAL SET CONTEXT

Explain why you are making the request; mention what law has been broken, the reason for the request, etc. Often people just want to know "Why?" You might tell someone the reason you have stopped them in the mall is because they match the description of someone, or they were seen doing something.

3) PERSONAL APPEAL OPTIONS

Tell the person what they can realistically expect to gain or lose from the encounter. Remember, if the person does not seem to be thinking too clearly, put it in a context they can relate to, especially: **Money, Time, Reputation, or Family.**

4) PRACTICAL APPEAL/CONFIRMATION STAGE

This is where you confirm that the level of resistance you perceive is the intended level they are sending. The line goes something like this:

"Is there anything I can do or say that will make you...(co-operate)...I'd like to think that there is..."

You and your partner should recognize this as the "final warning". If the subject answers negatively, it is time to act.

5) ACT

Use another force option. You may have to grab the subject and ground them prior to handcuffing. Remember the Force Continuum and select your level appropriately.

Example #1
Dealing with a Trespasser
In a Tenant Space

Guard: ***Sir, Please leave now. The tenant here wants you out and the law gives them right to have you leave.***

Subject: I'm not leaving.

Guard: ***Sir, you have to leave. If you don't go voluntarily, I'll have to arrest you for trespassing and forcibly remove you. It'll be a lot easier if you leave on your own.***

Subject: I'm not leaving.

Guard: ***Sir, that's not one of the options. You have to leave. The only question is whether you go voluntarily. Will you leave or do we have to arrest you and drag you out of here for the police.***

Subject: Just try it.

This obviously is going to end in a physical confrontation. Now let's look at example #2 which uses less challenging language.

Example #2
Dealing with a Trespasser
In a Tenant Space

Guard: ***Sir, let's step outside and discuss this matter further. The tenant here wants you out and the law gives them the right to have you leave.***

Subject: I'm not leaving.

Guard: ***Sir, I understand your refusal to leave and I just want to make it clear to you that you are removing options for yourself at this point. We can go outside and you can tell me your side of the story, or you can continue to argue with the tenant who will just call the police and have you arrested for cause disturbance and trespassing. I am sure that you are aware of the fact that the law is very clear in this matter. You were asked to leave and you are being given a chance to do so now. If you continue along this path, there could be substantial fines and police involvement. Luckily we can avoid all that unpleasantness and simply just go outside to discuss this.***

At this point, a reasonable subject will comply and go with the guard. Of course, if the subject had refused, the guard would have had to make good on the promise to arrest and remove the person.

F.A.S.T.E.R.

There are times when words fail. At this point, we use the acronym “**FASTER**” to relate to six distinct times when words alone will or have failed, and physical force or other options are necessary.

Flight

If someone is attempting to escape your lawful custody, stop talking and ACT.

Assault

If a subject attempts to, or does assault you in anyway, ACT.

Security

If the security of you, someone under your protection or the property comes into jeopardy, physical actions should be taken to control the situation. If the situation is, for example, at 3 AM in a retail environment and an unknown individual is in the china store smashing things with his baseball bat. A reasonable response is to contact the police and await their arrival. Physical confrontations at this point are not in favor of the Security Guard.

Threshold Event

A threshold event is something which would transform a group of people into a mob. For example, during a peaceful protest, police moving in to arrest one person may cause the rest of the group to become violent. The arrest attempt by the police would be considered the threshold event. Likewise, a group of passive people, happy over the Maple Leafs winning the Stanley Cup would be transformed by an individual throwing a brick through a window of an electronics store and yelling “Free TV’s!” The normally law abiding citizens believing they have anonymity, would be more inclined to loot and steal than under normal circumstances.

Excessive Repetition

This is a common mistake by people working in law enforcement. As a security guard, you have to set control and limits on the individual you are dealing with. Giving the person an unlimited number of chances to comply is a sign of weakness on the guard’s part. It implies that you are not prepared to take physical control of the situation, if necessary.

Revised Priorities

As the situation changes you, as the security guard involved, must change and adapt to the dynamic process. If you are in the process of handcuffing a subject and 3 of the subject’s friends show up and intervene, a tactical ‘disengage’ is suggested.

Making Requests & Giving Orders

As a Security Guard, you will often have to get people to do things that you want them to do. These situations will range from simple, straightforward occasions in which you want someone to do a small, easily understood task (such as sign a form), to more complex incidents in which you will use a series of specific commands to get people to comply. As with other communication settings, the way in which you make a request or issue an order can very much affect the outcome. The degree to which you show respect and consideration to others often affects their reaction to you, and in turn, the amount of aggravation or stress that you experience.

Making Requests

It is usually – though not always – better to *ask* someone to do something rather than to *tell* someone to do something. People almost always prefer being asked rather than given orders, because they feel that this puts them on a more equal level with the other person. If a request is not complied with, you can always escalate to issuing orders. On the other hand, it's difficult to go the other way – to issue an order and then, if the person does not comply, to make a request.

Here are some steps to follow when making requests:

1. Make direct eye contact with the person.
2. Make your request politely but firmly, using words and phrases that are simple and most likely to be easily understood. Use the word “please.”

Examples:

- “Sir, would you please get out of your car and close the door behind you?”
 - “Ma’am, will you please stay here for a minute while I check on this information?”
 - “Sir, could you please move over to the curb at this time?”
3. Say “thank you” if the person complies. Sometimes, it may even be a good idea to say “thank you” *before* the subject actually complies with what you’ve asked.

This gives the impression that you expect them to comply, and they may then do so.

Example:

- “Sir, please place your hands on the steering wheel. Thank you.”

Remember: Your goal is always to obtain cooperation. If you can accomplish that with a polite request, you win and you allow the subject to retain his/her dignity.

Giving Orders

There are times when you will need to tell someone to do something rather than ask them to do so. For example, you might do so if a subject does not comply with your request, or based on your tactical evaluation, if it would be clearly inappropriate to make a request. The context of the situation dictates whether you will give orders.

As with asking questions, the way in which you give orders is very important. If you are authoritarian, sarcastic or otherwise disrespectful, the person will be less likely to comply with your order, and voluntary compliance is always a main objective.

When you issue an order, follow these guidelines:

- ◆ When you can, make direct eye contact with the person.
- ◆ Start with the word “sir” or “ma’am” as a way of showing respect.
- ◆ In a calm, firm tone of voice, tell the person what you wish to be done.

Use simple, direct language. Avoid using the phrase “You need to...” or “I need you to...” as this personalizes it for the subject.

Examples:

- “Sir, put your hands on the steering wheel where I can see them”
- “Ma’am, move over to the side of the room.”
- “Sir, leave the property now.”
- “Sir, show me your hands right now.”
- “Sir, turn and face that wall.”

If you wish, use appropriate gestures to help clarify your orders, such as pointing with your whole hand (not a single finger) to where you want the other person to go.

If the person does not comply, and your **threat assessment** indicates the need, use heavy control talk to issue an order.

Heavy control talk involves the issuing short, very direct commands in a loud authoritative voice, repeating the command as necessary. Here, the need to get the subject to immediately comply with your orders outweighs the need to be polite. At this point, the safety of those involved (guard and others) is more important than social courtesy.

Phrasing Questions

You should avoid phrasing question in such a way that the respondent feels that only one answer is acceptable, for example, “he hit him with the 2 x 4, right?” or “it was that drunk over there, wasn’t it?”

A useful exercise after taking a statement or set of facts is to summarize the facts as you have heard them. Quite often, you will find that other information will be forthcoming or that you have misunderstood some piece of information given to you. By summarizing the information back, you will avoid the embarrassment of having errors or misunderstandings surfacing at a later time. Also, by repeating the information, it gives you a chance to run over your mental check list and fill in any gaps which might have occurred.

When in court, HEARSAY evidence is not admissible. However, when conducting an investigation, hearsay can be very useful in giving you leads, opening up other areas of investigation or providing a possible motive for the crime. For example, you might ask a person’s supervisor if they were having trouble with their fellow employees following a vandalism or theft occurrence. Anything the supervisor tells you would not be germane to the case as far as a court of law is concerned but might give you a possible motive and suspect.

When questioning witnesses, it is important to place them at ease and establish TRUST in you personally, trust in your ability, knowledge, and trust that the information given will be treated in proper manner with all seriousness.

Only you can do this. However, there are some points which you can be aware of which tend to establish trust and confidence.

Using your notes

1. Do not start off the conversation by taking notes. Introduce them slowly, discreetly or tell them you have to make notes. For example:

“That’s interesting; I should make a note of that.”

Once the memo book is out, you can continue using it, without further reference to it.

2. Remember, they are your NOTES of what happened. Do not share your notes with the informant.
3. When taking notes, do so without drawing too much attention to them. Do not tell the witness to pause while you write something down. Clarify points later.
4. Be responsive to the mood and voice tone, but do not overact. Be natural.

5. Show a genuine interest in what the informant is telling you.
6. Ask whether the witness would mind signing your memo book to confirm what he/she has said establishes trust by allowing them to sign as an indicator that the information recorded is accurate and they know what you wrote. (If they refuse: Have them sign indicating they refused to sign.)

Questioning Methods

1. OPEN END QUESTIONS:

Questions in which you ask the subject to tell you what occurred in their own words – have been shown to get answers that are more accurate but offer less information than interrogatory questions. These questions usually start with Who, What, Where, When and How.

2. LEADING QUESTIONS:

Specific questions that require specific answers – have been shown to provide more detail but generally less accurate detail. More errors occur when the subject is forced to answer questions than when they are free to choose their own details.

The wording of the question can suggest to the subject the answer you are seeing. For example:

1. Did you see a gun?
2. Was there a gun?
3. Did you see the gun?

Each question offers a different suggestion to the subject, although they seek to get at the same answer.

Communication Concepts Spoken and Unspoken

Non-Verbal Communication	= 55 %
Kinesics, Body Language, gestures...	
Vocal	= 38 %
Tone of voice, volume, pitch, modulation, etc.,	
Verbal	= 7 %
Actual words, chosen language, content.	

(One expert estimated that these figures change to 82% vocal and 18% verbal, when the communication is via telephone, and thus the parties cannot see the other person's non-verbal communication)

If voice tone and physiology (not your appearance per se, but rather your posture and facial expression) are so crucial in how people react to you, then what is the key to producing voice tone and physiology? It is your belief and expectation about the outcome.

If, when you first meet someone and you want to gain rapport, you believe you are going to get rejected; either you will convey fear and make him/her fearful, or you will try to beat them to the punch and act obnoxious and arrogant that he/she will reject you. You don't have to wait too long in suspense for your negative prediction to come true. You just want to get it over with quickly so you actually produce the humiliation that you believe you cannot avoid.

By contrast, if you act as if you truly were someone whom everyone likes and receives warmly, then that warmth is what your tone and physiology will convey and that's the response you will get, nine times out of ten.

Conveying warmth and affinity isn't so tough – just think of how you look and sound when you see a niece or nephew, or even a pet that delights you. This is not to suggest that baby talk is a way of gaining rapport. This is just an example of where it's natural for you to behave the way you want to when dealing with new people and in gaining rapport.

The most important principle to remember here is that **THE MEANING OF YOUR COMMUNICATIONS IS THE RESPONSE IT GETS**. If you use a tone of voice or a facial expression that makes people fearful or suspicious, then no matter how clever your words are, the message you convey to them is that they should be afraid and suspicious of you.

This may seem a little silly and it will help you gain more skill and flexibility in communication than you ever dreamed of, so just do it.

Practice exercise:

Step one

Remember the nursery rhyme Row, Row, Row your boat? Here are the words:
Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream. Merrily, merrily, merrily,
merrily life is but a dream.

Step two

Practice out loud, saying these words with all the warmth and friendliness you can muster.

Step three

Practice saying them out loud as if you thought they were the funniest thing in the world and you might crack up laughing at any moment.

Step four

Practice saying them out loud as if they were the saddest words you've ever read.

Okay, so you feel a bit silly practicing and it seems a bit weird. Just remember:

It isn't so much what you say to a person, but your tone of voice and body language when you say it!

Also

Your message must match your body language and your body language must match your message!

Receiver Skill and Active Listening

It has been said that 50% of daily communication is listening. Keeping this in mind, it is not that hard to accept that in society there are people who are very good listeners, and adversely, those who are very poor listeners. By looking at some ***Listening Habits***, consider how you listen to people...is there room for improvement here?

Listening habits**CRITICIZING THE SPEAKER & DELIVERY**

Not focusing on what is actually being said but how it is being said. Noticing lisps, accents, stutters, word whiskers, etc.

LISTENING ONLY FOR THE FACTS AND NOT THE FEELINGS

What other non-verbal messages are being given with the actual content? If a subject says that he/she's fine and not going to resist but his/her body language suggests a certain amount of resistive tension, then watch the subject closely and be cautious.

FAKING ATTENTION

Appearing to listen but not in fact doing so. I.e., nodding your head, tilting your head, saying "Mmmm", "yes", "Oh, I see", and not listening to what is really being said at all.

TOLERATING OR CREATING DISTRACTIONS

When interviewing someone in a noisy area, you could try to find a quiet room or a more conducive place to speak to each other.

TUNING OUT DIFFICULT OR CONFUSING INFORMATION

Some people tend to “turn-off” when they hear technical information that may seem confusing to them. An example is that of the school child that does not understand the content of a class, and thus becomes distracted.

LETTING EMOTIONAL WORDS BLOCK THE MESSAGE

The subject may be emotionally upset and become insulting with their choice of words. Do not ‘bite the bait’ and let your personal face show. Keep your professional face on and complete the task.

BIASES OR PREJUDICES

Not restricted to race, color etc., don’t allow yourself to be close minded about anything you see in the person with whom you are speaking, you may be sending a negative signal.

NOT FACING THE (UPSET) PERSON

Show a genuine interest when listening, but be aware of cultural influences. For example, staring at someone in most cultures denotes some sort of challenge or disrespect.

NOT CHECKING THAT YOU HAVE UNDERSTOOD

Confirm that you have understood the message. **Paraphrase, repeat, compliment, or contend if necessary.** At least, this shows that you have been listening and have enough interest in the topic, or speaker to speak further.

INTERRUPTING THE PERSON OR COMPLETING THEIR SENTENCE

This irritating habit will only induce further anger in an already upset person. Take a moment and let them finish.

Be patient when truly listening. Try to develop a sincere sense of understanding the true meaning of the message being sent. By monitoring and improving your listening skills you’ll be surprised at the improvements in your communication skills.

Five things that a Security Guard should never say!

Come here

“Come Here” means “Go Away”. The person hearing this probably expects to get into trouble, so try a different approach, such as...

“Excuse me sir, I need to speak with you for a moment.”

Calm down

We have all probably encountered failure using this phrase, on friends, relatives, lovers, etc. Instead, approach with a calm demeanor, and say...

“It’s going to be alright.”

What’s the Problem?

This is a non-helpful phrase, because it turns everything back on the person needing our help. Instead, say...

“What’s the matter?” or “What specifically can I do to help you?”

Why don’t you be more reasonable?

Rarely does a person walk around thinking they are not reasonable. Try to ensure the person becomes more reasonable by the way you talk to them. Use language of reassurance, and say things like...

“Let me see if I understand your position...” – paraphrase using their own language

Don’t you know any better?

Why not just say “What are you, stupid?” This phrase sets the person up for some sort of punishment, instead use a phrase like...

“I know you better than this. What really happened?”

**Staying away from language like this will help you avoid escalating situations,
and will likely aid you in diffusing a potentially volatile situation.**

Non-Verbal Communication

Our body language is so obvious, yet sometimes we hardly realize it. Why is it that without even speaking, some people are readily accepted into social groups, when others are not well liked at all? Without saying a word, people will already make judgement of you, just as you do of them, based purely on the way you look, your overall appearance and behavior.

We have all heard reference to “personal space” and how some people can invade it, making you uncomfortable. A study conducted by Dr. Edward Hall, who coined the term proxemics describes his theories and observations about man’s personal space, his zones of territory and how they are used. Everyone has their own territorial needs and these may vary from time to time depending on several factors, i.e., culture, sex, familiarity, emotion, etc.

When dealing with those individuals who may be suffering from mental illness, these territorial zones may take on dynamic importance, with some people responding in violent manners to any perceived invasion of their zone.

Being aware of these zones is important, because depending on with whom you are dealing; rapport can be increased or detracted from. For example, it is common in European countries to treat strangers, or have business encounters within the “personal” space, while in North America, that would not be likely to occur.

So as to not offend someone, and possibly escalate a situation, try putting something between yourself and the subject, like a table, info booth, etc. This can also enhance your reactionary gap and response time when dealing with potentially hostile individuals.

Proxemics

Dr. Edward T. Hall, professor of anthropology at Northwestern University coined the term “Proxemics” to describe his theories and observations about man’s personal space; his zones of territory and how they are used. Everyone has their own territorial needs and these may vary from time to time depending on several factors, i.e., culture, sex, familiarity, emotion, etc.

Dr. Hall broke down these territorial needs, attempting to standardize the science of ‘Proxemics’ into 4 distinct zones, which are then split up further into near and far sub-zones. These are:

ZONES	CLOSE	FAR
Intimate	Contact to 6”	6” to 18”
Personal	18” to 30”	30” to 4’
Social	4’ to 7’	7’ to 12’
Public Distance	12’ to 25’	25’ or more

Intimate Zone

Close: Contact to 6 inches

For being intimate and close. Reserved for making love or displaying close affection. Also used by children to parents or each other or very close friendships and relationships.

- At this distance, one is very aware of their partner.
- Most natural zone for man and woman on intimate terms.
- Most natural zone for loved one (children/spouses/pets)

Far: 6 inches to 18 inches

Still close enough to hold hands but not “hugging.” Usually certain rules of rigidity are observed in this distance between strangers. If an elevator or train brings people closely together, a tense and fixed posture is adapted. People deliberately draw away if touched and in particular if the loins meet. They are pulled away as in hugging those we are intimate with. Talking reduced at this distance and prolonged eye contact and sitting is avoided.

Personal Zone

Close: 18 inches to 30 inches

At this distance you can still hold or take your partner's hand. Offense may be taken if a husband and wife are conversing at this range and another person not well known by the couple moves in to talk. Close friends speak in confidence and whisper at this distance.

Far: 30 inches to 48 inches, (4 feet)

You cannot touch your partner at this distance so it lends a certain privacy to any encounter. This is the comfortable and usual distance that two friends meeting in the street, will converse from. To move in too close with an acquaintance may be considered ‘pushy’.

Social Zone

Usually the initial Law Enforcement “Reactionary Gap” Zone

Close: 4 feet to 7 feet

This is generally the distance at which we conduct personal business from. In business, it is the distance we stand when we meet the new client or office manager. This can also be a zone at which executives and their subordinates are seen in their respective roles. The “Boss” is noted without even speaking as is the worker.

Far: 7 feet to 12 feet

More formal, social or business relationships are conducted from this zone. It is more acceptable in the western world to have a discussion and hold the stare more than before, at the persons eyes. In an office or work environment, it is neither rude nor expected to have a conversation with another party at this distance. If conversation occurs, it is comfortable but it is not considered rude if both parties wished to work and not speak.

Public Distance ZoneClose: 12 feet to 25 feet

This distance is reserved for informal group gatherings such as a teacher's address to his/her class, or a boss speaking to a conference of workers. This is a good distance for a Law Enforcement Officer to try to move a passive crowd gathered by waving his/her arms as if to say; "Move back, please." Closer than that, only a few of the group would see it and much farther that that and the movement would start to lose its effect.

Far: 25 feet or more

Generally, the distance at which politicians deal or address each other. Large and formal groups. No longer used for personal contact or rapport. This is a safety distance for potential threats.

RAPPORT (Some Definitions)

Matching and **Mirroring** are things you do behaviorally to be like the other person. That is, you alter your behavior to be like theirs.

When you continue matching and mirroring, you may then enter a state that is called **RAPPORT**.

Now, **RAPPORT** is slightly more difficult to describe. It originally comes from the French word "to carry back", but it is not just that you are feeding back to others how they are, but it means two other things as well.

It means not only that the other has a sense of ease and comfort and familiarity when communicating with you (hey, this is somebody just like me!), but also that the other is being responsive, and is receptive to your ideas.

Rapport in turn is part of a larger level concept (a bigger chunk) called **pacing** which is normally taken to mean a whole range of things that are communicated

to others. ‘Let us go at your pace, at least for a little while. Let me walk your walk, talk your talk, accept – no matter how strange – your ideas, even if they would normally be different from mines.’

So pacing can include:

- Mirroring
- Matching
- Getting Rapport
- Matching Rep Systems
- Matching Rep System Sequences (or Strategies)
- Matching Meta Programs
- Going Along with the Content of Other’s Beliefs
- Matching the Structure of Other’s Beliefs

Rapport Building - Patterns

The basic rapport building pattern is **MATCHING**. Matching is the process whereby you adjust the same aspects of your own external behavior to approximate those same aspects of the other person’s external behavior. For example, when the other person tilts his/her head down to his/her left, you adjust the tilt of your head in a corresponding fashion to match his/hers.

The ongoing process of matching is referred to as **PACING**. That is: you move as the other person moves, matching his/her sequence of movements.

The chart following offers a variety of behavioral outputs to match, which can lead to creating very powerful states of RAPPORT, both consciously **and** unconsciously. Mastering these skills will develop your ability (and give you choice) to establish rapport with anybody you choose.

When first setting out to get rapport, and matching mirroring at the level of posture and gesture, many people report that it seems an artificial thing to do; or that it makes them or the other feel self-conscious. Or they worry that they might be “making fun of people.”

The issue here is not so much “Am I being too obvious?” or “Could I be more subtle?” (Or as we say “Am I being too overt, or too covert?”). It is much more: are you being **congruent** in your communication?

If you are congruent, you can be as overt as you like, and still get and maintain rapport. (Especially if you follow all the various methods suggested to you in training).

It is just that it’s more graceful and more elegant (and more respectful) to make what you do almost imperceptible.

RAPPORT BUILDING CHART

WHOLE BODY MATCHING

Adjust your body to appropriate the other person's postural shifts.

PART BODY MATCHING

Pacing any consistent or stylistic use of body movements, e.g. eye blinks.

HALF BODY MATCHING

Matching the upper or lower portion of the other person's body.

VOCAL (ANALOGUE) QUALITIES

Match shift in tonality, tempo, volume, timbre, intonation patterns.

HEAD/SHOULDERS ANGLE

VERBAL PATTERNS...

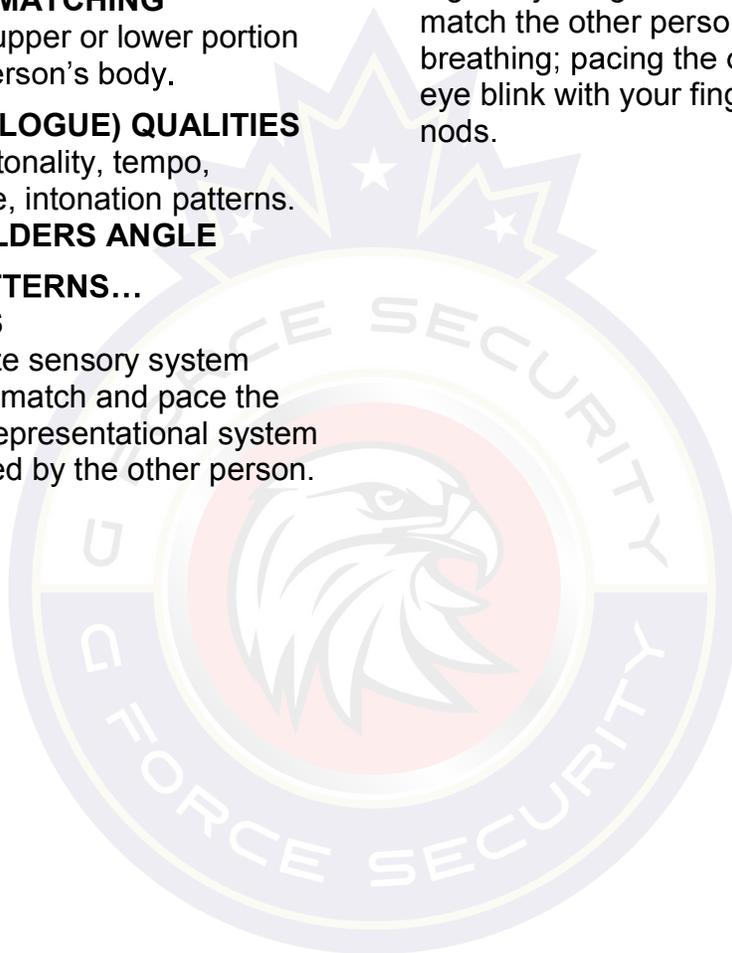
PREDICATES

Hear and utilize sensory system predicate that match and pace the sequence of representational system predicates used by the other person.

Match characteristic poses that the other person offers with his/her head, shoulders.

INDIRECT MATCHING (CROSS-OVER MIRRORING)

Using one aspect of your behavior, e.g.: adjusting the tempo of voice to match the other person's rate of breathing; pacing the other person's eye blink with your finger or head nods.



The Four Great Persuaders

If you find that no matter what you seem to try with this person isn't working, then consider using "**The Four Great Persuaders**". They are:

- **Time**
 - If I have to arrest you, it could detain you for several hours until the police arrive.
- **Money**
 - If you're arrested it could result in a fine of up to \$ 2000.00. Is it really worth all that money?
- **Reputation**
 - Sir, do you really want to go to work and explain to your boss why you might need a day off work to fight a trespassing charge?
- **Family**
 - I see your daughter over there. For her sake, let's avoid the necessity for arrest by you just leaving peacefully.

Remember, even if you think you are dealing with a totally uncooperative individual, it is important to continually verbalize with them, and here are some reasons why.

Verbalize – Always!

- ▶ During High Stress Situations – It lets the subject know what to do
- ▶ It lets the *Public* know what is being done
- ▶ It looks good if the *Media* is present
- ▶ It can *save you* in a court of law!

Multicultural Awareness & Interaction

I think that we can safely say that even when we communicate with people from our own culture, there can be misunderstandings. This problem can obviously be compounded when dealing with people from different cultures.

The reasons for these misunderstandings are multifold, so let's discuss a few of them now.

1) Vernacular – *The Language / Native Tongue Used*

This is the most obvious factor, when you consider speaking to someone who doesn't even speak your language. Kinesics and the use of non-verbal body language will become that more important, and the most likely vehicle for relaying your message. To complicate things even more, there are accents, expressions, slang and dialects to name a few things to consider.

2) Cultural – *Different Standards & Practices (Ethnic)*

The culture that the person you are speaking to may very much be affected by the culture they are from. The Western (North American) way of life is still very different from our Eastern counterparts in the world. We are accustomed to a lot of open space and large personal distances, however if you are speaking to an Arab or Eastern European, you may notice that they like to get physically close or even touch more during communication.

3) Distinctive – *A Sense of Aversion or Difference Between Cultures*

When people from the same culture communicate with one another there is often an automatic affinity or common bond formed. Conversely, when someone from a completely different culture comes into that communication process, you may have very little in common, and therefore the building of rapport becomes even more important.

4) Prejudicial – *Preconceived Notions or Feelings Made Without Real Knowledge*

We all have prejudices about different things. When you choose to wear one item of clothing over another, or choose to go only to one type of restaurant, you are acting out a prejudice. Obviously, in examples like the ones given, it's harmless prejudice. However, when prejudices cause the person to discriminate harmfully towards another due to race, religion, color, sexual orientation, marital status, etc., it is just plain wrong. It will most likely have an impact on your communication with someone. This is obviously a two way street. For example, if the person you are talking to really dislikes police officers or security guards, it will influence their interactions.