Talking to Aliens or, How to Talk So People Listen

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EDC Conference
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The Objective

- Two way communication
- For your message to be heard
Talking to Aliens

Consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your</th>
<th>Their</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Goals</td>
<td>• Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emotions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations</td>
<td>• Expectations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Consider

- Dept Chair wants to meet to discuss a faculty member who claimed to have tried a risky teaching method in class on your advice. Students have filed complaints.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>MY response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you really want to happen? (I want...)</td>
<td>I want to set the record straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to regain credibility</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you really feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is at stake?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you need from this person?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you really expect will take place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person wants to hear what advice the faculty member was given</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Pre-think Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal</strong></th>
<th><strong>They</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Try to see their position clearly</td>
<td>Situation to be addressed quickly and effectively for instructor &amp; students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What outcomes would they want?</td>
<td>• Their handling of the situation seen as demonstrating good leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do they want for themselves and what do they want from you?</td>
<td>• Want you to help them fix this problem and not make things worse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emotion
- How do they feel?
- What's at stake for them?
- Frustrated, annoyed, angry
- Reputation of the dept. & their leadership

### Expectation
- What do you really expect will happen?
- Want to gather information. Blame?
- They need to determine the facts.
- Clarification and they want to know if you can fix it.
Consider

• Your VP/provost/supervisor has stated publicly that the same handful of people attend sessions held by Teaching & Learning offices. You have been directed to identify a strategy to address this obvious shortcoming.
Consider

- Your new VP, with best intentions, has taken an interest in centre activities and started micromanaging your development initiatives. They want you to apply one-off “workshop” approach to address deep-rooted problematic campus issues.
Consider

- A faculty member has complained to your VP about an approach taken by your centre.

- The VP has summoned you to deal with this issue.
Activity

- Form groups of 3 or 4
- Choose a scenario or a real situation from your group to examine
- Complete the form and discuss implications
- Duration:
- Prepare to report back to the group about the **process**
  - Is this process useful?
  - Observations
The discussion

- Clarify how much time you will have
- Cut to the chase but make it relevant to the other persons concerns and interests

- **Motivate your listener**
  - Present your case based on the other’s primary concerns.

- **Ask before you tell**
  - What do they need?
  - Provide an overview
  - Present your case succinctly
Strategy based on the Chart

• Study & compare the two perspectives
• Adapt your original plan
• Motivate with what you now know
To sum

- Determining the others concerns & interests helps to better understand them and find language to reach out and include the other’s needs as you reach for your own

- The Pre-think chart can help.
- The objective is communication and a better outcome for all parties.
- So you can speak to aliens.
Reference

• **How to talk so people listen**: Connecting in Today’s workplace, Sonya Hamlin New York: Collins, 2006.