

Challenges to Communication

- ***Listen More Carefully and Responsively***

Listen first and acknowledge what you hear, even if you don't agree with it, before expressing your experience or point of view. Actively acknowledging another person's experience does not mean you have to agree or approve.

- ***Not Explaining Your Conversational Intent***

In order to help your conversation partner cooperate with you and to reduce possible misunderstandings, start important conversations by inviting your conversation partner to join you in the specific kind of conversation you want to have.

Example... "I would like to talk with you for a few minutes about [subject matter]. When would be a good time?"

- ***Express Yourself More Clearly and Completely***

Slow down and give your listeners more information about what you are experiencing by using a wide range of "I statements."

Example: (Coach/Supervisor) What did you see on that play?

Answer: (Official) What I saw on the play was the defender was playing the ball and made slight contact with the receiver.....

- ***Ask and Answer Questions More "Open Ended" and More Creatively.***

"Yes/no" questions/answers actually tend to shut people up rather than opening them up. Open-ended questions allow for a wide range of responses.

- ***Translate Your (and other people's) Complaints and Criticisms Into Specific Requests, and Explain Your Requests.***

In order to get more cooperation from others, whenever possible ask for what you want by using specific, action-oriented, positive language rather than by using generalizations, "why's," "don'ts" or "somebody should's." Help your listeners comply by explaining your requests with a "so that...", "it would help me to... if you would..." or "in order to... ."

- ***Express More Appreciation***

To build more satisfying relationships with the people around you, express more appreciation, delight, affirmation, encouragement and gratitude.

- ***Adopt the "Continuous Learning" Approach To Living***

This challenge includes learning to see each conversation as an opportunity to grow in skill and awareness. Make communication a part of your everyday life. Practice your evolving communications every day.