

# Building a Customer Centric Communication Culture



a learning experience developed especially for:



delivered by:

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# COACHING NOTES

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# Characteristics of Customer Service

**Good**






**Bad**



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# Grade Your Service

What Customers May Say:	Customer Reaction:	Grade:
“WOW! They really value me as a customer.”	 Dazzled	<b>A</b>
“They were pleasant and friendly.”	 Pleased or Happy	<b>B</b>
“I got the information I needed.”	 Neutral	<b>C</b>
“A hello and thank you would have been nice.”	 Irritated or Angry	<b>D</b>
“That’s unacceptable behavior. He/she was very rude!”	 Outraged	<b>F</b>



# Developing an Attitude

*“A manner of acting, feeling, thinking or speaking that shows one’s disposition or opinion” This is essentially how Webster’s New Word Dictionary defines “Attitude.” Indeed, your attitude is reflected in the way you speak to people. Sometimes it even determines if you speak to people. Attitudes run strong and deep and control much of the communication which takes place in your personal and professional lives. Where do they come from? How do you develop them? The following list may not include all the sources of influence for developing an attitude, but most of the major forces are identified.*

## **Observation:**

Observe someone touching a hot stove and you quickly develop an attitude toward stoves.

## **Experience:**

Touch a hot stove and you learn even quicker!

## **Teachings:**

Parents, teachers and TV are great for teaching us how to feel about everything from sex and money to politics and people.

## **Peers:**

Pressure at all ages! What to drink and wear, where to go, how to act and talk and much more.

## **Personality:**

Each of us must accept some responsibility. These other forces are *not* total determinants.



# Relationships Are...

built primarily on these two things:

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# Relationships and Expectations

## Two Kinds of Expectations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Your Expectations of Others:

## Expectations Others Have of You:

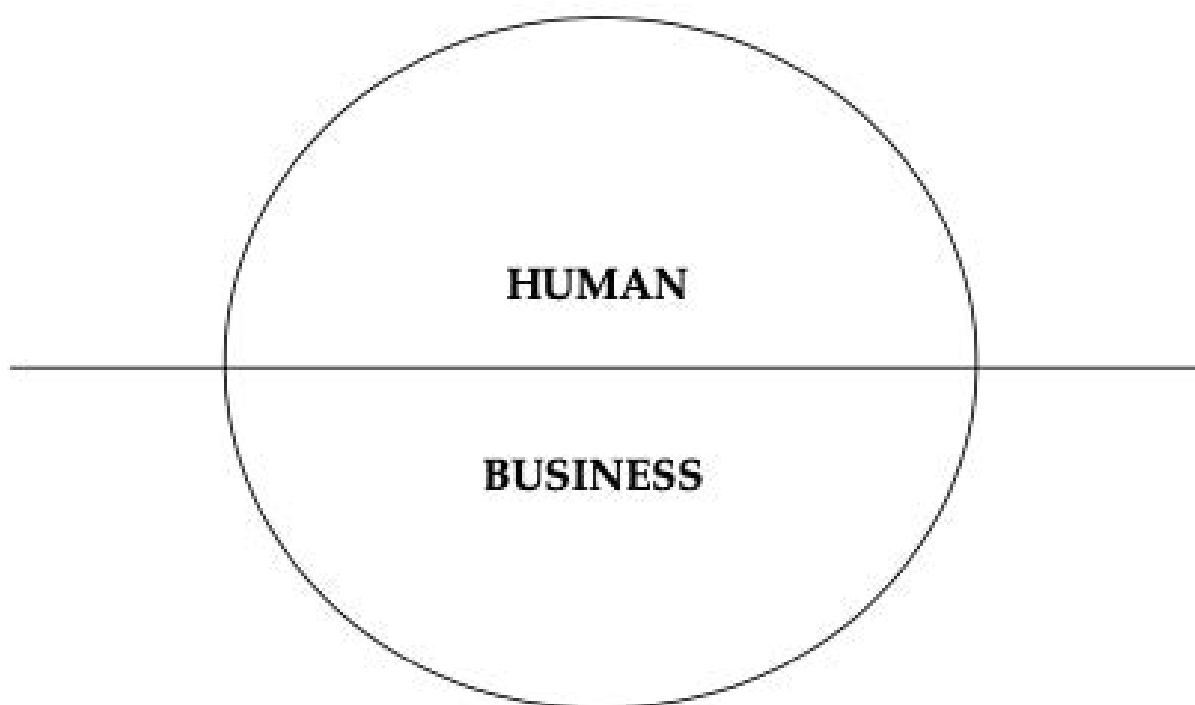
# Guidelines for Effective Listening

- 1. Get Ready to Listen**
- 2. Pay Attention**
- 3. Control Your Biases**
- 4. Separate Fact from Feeling**
- 5. Use Paralanguage**
- 6. Paraphrase or Summarize to Confirm Understanding**





# Human Business Model



- ✓ Two levels in any interaction
- ✓ To have a successful interaction, you need both
- ✓ You have to vary the treatment for equal satisfaction

# Patterns of Reasoning

All of us function with two basic patterns of reasoning, which we use as the structure we give to our speaking. No one of us is completely one, or the other. We all use, both, **INDUCTIVE** and **DEDUCTIVE** processes. Both are correct and powerful. Some of us use them without discriminating or planning. Do you present your ideas **INDUCTIVELY** or **DEDUCTIVELY**? More importantly, how do your colleagues, customers, clients, friends, and family present their ideas? It is crucial to begin assessing how people speak and how they listen to information.

<b>INDUCTIVE</b>	<b>DEDUCTIVE</b>
X	<b>X</b>
X	X
X	X
<b>X</b>	X



# Modes of Persuasion

Centuries ago Aristotle introduced us to “The Modes of Persuasion.” They were then and continue to be the three ways in which people are persuaded. In his work *The Rhetoric*, Aristotle describes how speakers can use these methods and understandings to obtain compliance and action. Learn to utilize them in preparation and delivery of effective and persuasive presentations.

<b>E</b> <sub>thos</sub>	
<b>P</b> <sub>athos</sub>	
<b>L</b> <sub>ogos</sub>	



# Building Relationships

## Activity Sheet

This worksheet will help you to prepare for the “real play” conversation that you will have later in this workshop.

- 1: Identify 3 people either in your professional or personal life that communicate in the following manners:

Ethos:

Pathos:

Logos:

- 2: Make a list of communication tools that you feel would be most appropriate to connect with each type of communicator listed below. Keep in mind the three people you identified in Step 1. For example, an individual who values Pathos needs more eye contact.

**ETHOS**

**PATHOS**

**LOGOS**



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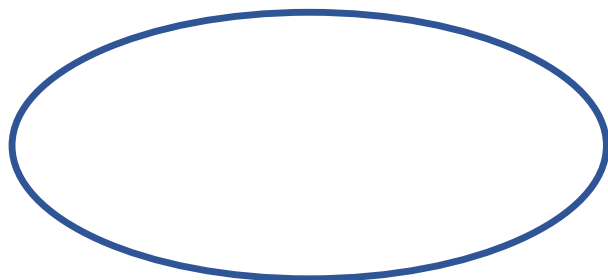
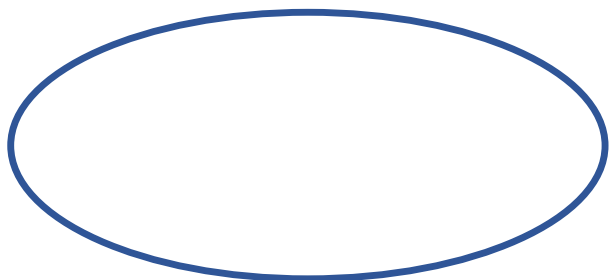
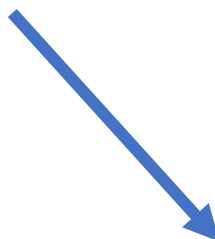
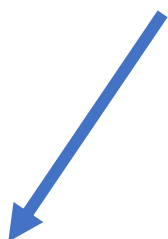
**5. Use Paralanguage**

**6. Paraphrase or Summarize to Confirm Understanding**



# Speed of Speaking

To develop control over the speed at which you speak, it is important to know that FAST/SLOW are not the most critical factors. Yes, they are valuable to control; however, here are two far more important factors to be understood.



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# Assimilation

Assimilation is the running together of sounds. Most of us do it all the time. It can become troublesome and sound quite inarticulate and mumbled. Although listeners may be accustomed to hearing assimilated speech, it may also produce an undesirable impression. The following words and phrases are frequently assimilated. Try to say them distinctly without assimilating. For an extra challenge, say them aloud as rapidly BUT AS CLEARLY as you can.

## EXAMPLE:

'wanna'	for	'want to'	'gimme'	for	'give me'
'shunt'	for	'shouldn't'	'wunt'	for	'wouldn't'
'shurnuff'	for	'sure enough'	'dyano'	for	'do you know'
'frinstance'	for	'for instance'	'lemme'	for	'let me'

## EXERCISES:

- |                  |                |                  |               |
|------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| A. It was mashed | It was smashed | B. that's mack   | that smack    |
| Joe's near       | Joe's sneer    | that's low       | that slow     |
| mother's lap     | mother's slap  | that's red       | that shred    |
| C. this hen      | this N         | D. this mile     | this smile    |
| this heart       | this art       | it's napping     | it's snapping |
| with hair        | with air       | misled           | miss sled     |
| catch Hal        | catch Al       | this weather     | this sweater  |
| E. a weak cough  | a week off     | F. the same make | the same ache |
| gate 10          | gate N         | ten notes        | ten oats      |
| help Pearl       | help Earl      | call Lynn        | call in       |
| four races       | four aces      |                  |               |
| G. a big pen     | a bic pen      |                  |               |
| I own nothing    | I owe nothing  |                  |               |
| a red rope       | a red robe     |                  |               |
| tap the code     | tab the code   |                  |               |



# Plosives

An *exploded* plosive sound is produced by building up air pressure in the mouth, completely closing off that air pressure and then releasing it. If the final release of the air pressure does not occur, the sound is *imploded* instead of *exploded*. Here are the eight plosive sounds:

As in

**B** → curb

**P** → cap

**D** → Hartford

**T** → quote

**J** → knowledge

**CH** → match

**G** → colleague

**K** → risk





# Plosive Sentences

An *exploded* plosive sound is produced by building up air pressure in the mouth, completely closing off that air pressure and then releasing it. If the final release of the air pressure does not occur, the sound is *imploded* instead of *exploded*.

1. Bob needs to contact someone at The Hartford on behalf of the agent.
2. My colleague, Eric Pratt, commented that Patrick was not happy about the eighty eight percent increase.
3. Please ask our executive assistant to trust management right off the bat.
4. Top management tends to concentrate on public image and technique.
5. Monique Reed has a technical background and an excellent work ethic.
6. First, ask Kurt if he'd mind traveling next week to meet with his client.
7. One trend which won't shift is the benefit of outstanding service.
8. Our internet is not reliable and no one should depend upon it.
9. Fast paced speech is often interpreted as articulate and intelligent.
10. What is the benefit to an independent agent to become part of the Telamon family?
11. Patrick told me that the budget was cut by twenty-eight percent.
12. Bob's first training workshop was a great success.



# Inflection

## Creating the Sounds of Service

Inflection is the stress or emphasis placed on a word or phrase to convey a certain meaning. We use it because it successfully conveys emotion. In a service environment the need to convey warmth, sincerity, concern and empathy is essential.

Three types of Inflection:

1. Upward

2. Straight

3. Downward



# Sounds of Success

## Practice Sentences

Customers pay attention to **WHAT** we say, but even more attention to **HOW** we talk. Here are some helpful sentences to use with customers. Try saying them with and without the **Sounds of Success** we discussed in the workshop. Can you hear a difference?

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*Good morning, **Telamon Insurance Network**, Mary speaking.*

*How may I be helpful?*

*May I ask you for your account number?*

*Thank you for the information.*

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*I'm sure we can work this situation out.*

*May I put you on hold while I check on that situation for you?*

*Thank you for holding.*

---

*It looks like you are all set.*

*Thanks for your patience.*

*Is there anything else I can be helpful with?*

*Thanks for calling **Telamon**. Goodbye.*



# A Way with Words

## Words that Separate

You have to ....

I need you to....

What's your problem?

I can't/you can't

Would you mind?

I'll try

I'm sorry

Must

Policy

Jargon

## Words that Build

Are you willing?

Will you?

What are your options?

What have you considered?

Which do you prefer?

Here are some options.

I understand your concern.

I apologize for ....  
(be specific)

Willing

Able/Unable



# Words That Work!

Turn This...	Into This...
No.	Unfortunately, I'm unable to because... However, what I can do is...
It's not my fault your policy was canceled.	Let's see how we can help resolve the situation.
I can't help you with that.	I can understand your frustration and I would like to help you, however I'm unable to because...
I didn't make the mistake.	I'm not sure what happened, but let's see how we can take care of it.
I'll try to fix the problem.	Here's what I can do for you...
I am not the person you should be yelling at.	Let me apologize for any inconvenience that this has caused you. Let's see how we can resolve the situation.
What's your problem?	Is there something I can help you with?



# Words That Work

## Practice Sheet

### 1. Turn This...

No, I am pretty positive that is not in your coverage.

**...Into This**

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### 2. Turn This...

I don't have that information. You will need to call Travelers.

**...Into This**

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### 3. Turn This...

You don't need to yell at me. We don't determine how much the policies increase.

**...Into This**

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### 4. Turn This...

No, I can't do that.

**...Into This**

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### 5. Turn This...

Your policy is only going to cover half of your claim.

**...Into This**

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# Stress

**What Gets to You?**

**What Helps You?**



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# Take it From Us...

Excerpts from books by The Speech Improvement Company, Inc. authors

**Author:** Dr. Dennis Becker  
**Book:** Speaking Skills for Business Careers  
**Topic:** Breathing

There are three types of breathing that we control. If you can learn to control your breathing, you can virtually eliminate the physical symptoms of your speaking fear.

The three types of breathing are:

1. *Clavicular* breathing: Used by an athlete who has completed a vigorous workout. It is panting, heavy breathing that gets its name from the movement of the clavicles (shoulder muscles) and the effort to inhale and exhale quickly. It is appropriate breathing for vigorous exercises, but not for speaking.
2. *Upper-thoracic* breathing: Used by a weightlifter about to lift a 300-pound barbell. He fills his chest (thorax) with air to increase the pressure and lifting capacity of his upper-thoracic muscles. Upper-thoracic breathing is appropriate breathing for lifting, pulling, throwing, and other upper body activities, but not for speaking.
3. *Diaphragmatic* breathing: Designed for the normal inhalation and exhalation process. It is controlled by the diaphragm, a huge dome-shaped muscle just below the rib cage. Because it is the body's natural method of breathing, diaphragmatic breathing is instrumental in natural childbirth, yoga exercises, singing lessons, and many other control and relaxation situations. *It is also the most appropriate breathing for speaking.*



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# Diaphragmatic Breathing

This is the most natural method of breathing. The name comes from the Diaphragm, which is the main muscle of breathing. It is a large dome shaped muscle, which fills the base of the thorax (your chest cavity). As you inhale the diaphragm moves down and pushes out slightly. This allows the lungs to extend and fill with air. After a second or two, when the body has processed the inhaled air, the diaphragm pushes back up and compresses the air out of the lungs in exhalation. This process continues throughout life. When you breathe *in*, the diaphragm goes *out*. When you breathe *out*, the diaphragm goes *in*. Although there are other types of breathing, Diaphragmatic Breathing is best for speech and voice production. The following exercise will help you strengthen your diaphragm and produce a strong flow of air to the vocal folds. When mastered, Diaphragmatic Breathing also promotes less tense vocal musculature, lower pitch and a more relaxed feeling.

## Diaphragmatic Breathing Exercise:

1. Sit or stand comfortably in front of a mirror, if possible, so you can observe the process.
2. Use your fingertips to push in lightly on your diaphragm. Feel the movement as you breathe.
3. Inhale slowly through nose or mouth. Feel the diaphragm push out. Shoulders or upper chest should not move.
4. Hold this inhalation for 3 seconds.
5. As you exhale, count to 20 by saying, "one by one, two by two, three by three," etc., until you reach 20.
6. Stop wherever you are when exhalation becomes a strain.
7. If you do not reach 20 on one breath, repeat this exercise 10 times. Do this three times daily until you reach 20 comfortably.

# Hooks

## Don't Take the Bait

- Different things hook different people
- When you take a hook, you lose control
- YOU have a choice



# P-P-P

**Paraphrase** the comments given to you.

*“You’re concerned about the way the office is being run.”*

**Prompt** to discover what your client is specifically concerned about.

*“What do you think needs improvement in the way the office is run?”*

**Provide Solutions**. Demonstrate confidence in yourself and an attitude of positive problem solving.

*“I can think of a few ways the filing and telephone system can be improved,”  
etc.*



# Tips for Dealing with Difficult People

1. It's not personal.
2. Avoid smiling.
3. Listen with your ears and eyes.
4. Set limitations.
5. Flexibility is a must.
6. Don't say, "I understand."
7. Compliance is not your goal.
8. Remember you are part of a team.



# Escalated Concern

**Escalated Concern** is something we all do naturally when someone gives us bad news. It is a Human Level response. It's a response that shows your clients that you are just as upset at the situation as they are. You can show Escalated Concern by the words you use, your tone of voice, and even your body language.

**Escalated Concern** statements include:

That's terrible!

Oh, wow!

Oh, no!

That's awful!

Oh, boy!

I can't believe it.

No kidding!

What a mess!

This is really bad.

**Example using Escalated Concern:**

A client calls you and tells you that his/her home was lost in a fire.

**Example response using Escalated Concern:**

"Oh no! That's awful! Are you and your family ok? I am going to help you through the process of filing your claim and getting you into emergency shelter and monetary support."



# F-F-F

## For Handling Upset People

From time to time we all encounter people who are very upset and irritated about something. It may be on the phone. It may be in the office. It may be almost anywhere. What can you do? How can you respond to this anger and irritation? Here is a tried and true technique that may be of help to you. It is important that you use the 3 F's in this order. You may use your own language and style, but the order is critical.

### 1st **F** **From what I hear, it sounds as if you feel...**

The person needs to know that you really do understand. You must allow him/her to finish his/her entire statement or complaint before using this F.

### 2nd **F** **Others have FELT the same way...**

You may want to personalize this one. Let the person know that the concern is not strange and that he/she is not alone in having that concern.

### 3rd **F** **We have FOUND that the best thing to do is...**

Naturally, this F is most effective if you can share a solution or if you can explain a procedure that will lead to a resolution. Be patient, be direct and be honest.

# Selective Agreement

**Selective Agreement** helps us to communicate concern, understanding and also validates some of the client's concerns/complaints. This helps to lower the client's resistance. When a client expresses a concern or complaint, follow this two-step approach to de-escalate and move him/her to find a solution.

**Step 1: Select** one of their complaints/concerns with which you can **Agree**. Communicate your agreement briefly.

**Step 2:** Follow with suggested actions for addressing the reason for the inquiry.

## Example:

### *Customer's Response:*

"I am unsure what is going on with this issue. I haven't heard from you in two weeks. Why is this taking so long? I need a solution ASAP."

### *Telamon's Response:*

"**Two weeks is an unacceptable time to wait.** I apologize. Let me check with my team and get back to you within the hour."

## Practice:

### *Customer's Response:*

"I have been in this business for 30 years and I have never heard of these kinds of restrictions in a policy. It sounds unreasonable. My clients are going to be upset when I communicate this to them."

### *Your Response:*



# Handling Mistakes

Everyone makes mistakes. What clients will remember is how you handled them. Recovery is everything. Saying you are sorry is not always adequate. If you make a mistake without taking responsibility for it and providing explanation of how/why it happened, you are endangering your relationship with that customer/client.

1. Apologize.
2. Admit the mistake and take responsibility for it.
3. Empathize with your customer/client.
4. Explain in detail what went wrong.
5. Show how you will prevent it from happening again.





# Everyone Makes Them... Mistakes

Here's how to handle them:

## *Practice Sheet*

**Example of mistake**

**How would you handle it?**

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# What is Best in Class Customer Service?



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# How Do We Build a Culture of Accountability?



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# How Would You Like to Be Recognized?



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# How Could We Recognize Each Other Internally?



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# Help Seat:

## What are Challenging Situations You Face in Your Role?



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