



Communication Breakthrough

March 2012

THE INSIDE RUNNING

When we communicate we are generally conveying two things: what are the facts and how we feel about a situation.

As men we can be very good at conveying information, even if we don't always do so well at receiving and applying those facts. We receive it through filters of our own perspective, worldview, education and experience. A self-centred man might be thinking only about how the information applies to him personally instead of considering the perspective of the communicator. His response might be to reply with a story of his own.

Men listening to women is the biggest communication challenge. We are looking for the facts. If something is wrong we want to offer a solution and fix the problem.

I have slowly learnt that my wife wants to communicate her feelings to me in the hope that I can understand her better. She wants to know that I am on her side, that together we are a team. If I don't listen empathetically and really try to understand where she is coming from, then she does not feel that I have heard her heart, and defensive walls start to go up.

That, in a nutshell, is the true importance of listening and communicating well. Trust, joy and intimacy depend on us as men willingly and wholeheartedly going the extra mile and listening well.

This newsletter has some brilliant advice to help us all do better.

Bless your communications!



John

John Subritzky

By Jim Hurn

We are not born with the ability to communicate well. It is a learned skill. Many are brought up in homes where they never see or hear good communication in action, so they don't learn how. In some homes communication means "shout louder". Without a doubt role models are needed to assist learning.

The Five C's of Communication

- 1. Be Correct** – Have all the facts before you open your mouth.
- 2. Be Clear** – Be understandable. Use enough words so people can understand your meaning.
- 3. Be Concise** – Everyone is busy so keep what you say brief and to the point.
- 4. Be Complete** – As far as possible, think through all aspects of the issue at hand before you speak.
- 5. Be Courteous** – Be careful with your body language, tone and volume.

There is a process that takes place in all communication: Firstly there is the **source**, which is the person who is desiring to communicate. The **message** is the information they are wanting to share and this may contain **illustrations, symbols, words or images** that will help convey their meaning. Thirdly, there is the **medium** used to deliver the message – ie writing, speaking, texting, Skyping. Lastly there is the **recipient**. It is important for the person communicating to consider the **personality and attitude** of the recipient of the message and make it relevant to them, as they have the task of decoding it.

Words, Words, Words...

- The Lord's Prayer has **56** words
- Lincoln's Gettysburg Address has **266**
- The Ten Commandments have **297**
- The US Declaration of Independence has **300**
- But a Price Control Order in the United States concerning cabbages contained **26,911**

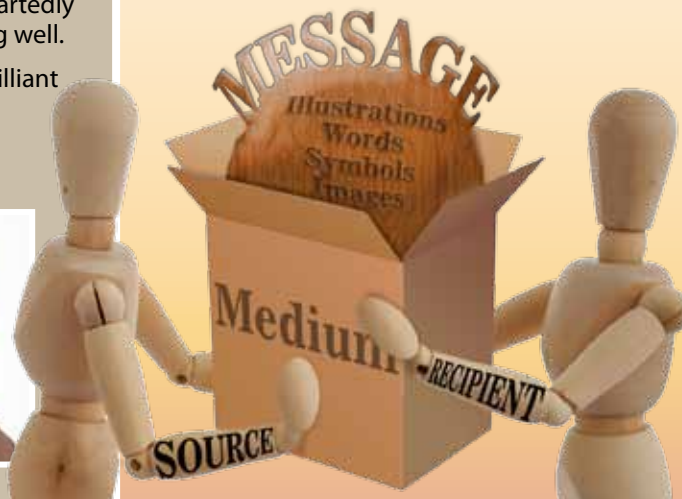
Two important points to consider in all communication:

1. WHAT WE SAY

"Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff and nudge me when I've said enough!"

What we say has four kinds of words:

- **Attack words** - "you never" or "you always".
- **Defence words** - "are you sure you're right?" or "I don't like the sound of that".





- **“Clever” compromise words** - “I’m sorry, but it wasn’t my fault” or “I’m quite prepared to apologise if you want me to”.
- **Bridge-building words** - “I’d like to hear more” or “I never saw it that way before”. “I feel...” statements.

2. HOW WE SAY IT

University Research states that when two persons communicate, the verbal content of the message spoken and heard comprises only 7% of all that is transmitted. The tone of voice conveys an additional 33%. The other 60% is expressed non-verbally by body postures, gestures, facial signs and eye contact, which is imperative.

Listening

Listening is one of the most important areas of communication to cultivate. When you get to my age you have done a lot of talking, and you become conscious that you could have improved your communication skills by listening a little more intently.

Consider the following four points:

1. **Don’t interrupt** - Allow time for the speaker to complete their statement. *It is better to be patient than powerful; it is better to have self-control than to conquer a city. Prov 16:32*
2. **Allow time** before responding. *Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. James 1:19*

There are three stages in all verbal communication:

Impulse/Consideration/Speech

In haste it’s possible to leave out the second “consideration” stage and jump from “impulse” to “speech” - and afterwards we are sometimes sorry we did that!

Talking comes by nature. Silence comes by wisdom.

3. Always keep your voice to a **conversational level**. Use your “inside” voice, not your “outside” voice!

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger. Prov 15:1

4. Concentrate on **what is being said** to you. A problem most of us face is mentally rehearsing our reply before we have heard the whole content of the message being given.

What a shame, what folly, to give advice before listening to the facts! Prov 18:13

Reflective listening is a powerful skill to develop. This occurs when we restate the message received to the other person’s satisfaction, which

conveys to them that we have understood their communication.

Men often overlook or ignore the importance of listening compassionately to the **feelings** being conveyed by the individual as well as the facts. Sometimes people refrain from sharing deep feelings for fear of an emotional takeover by the listener. They wear a mask and communicate “mask to mask” rather than person to person. Uncommunicated inner hostilities don’t just go away but are timeless and if not expressed verbally will often emerge in another form of emotional insecurity.

So in closing, practise your communication skills and realise that hearing is one of the body’s five senses – seeing, smelling, tasting, touching and hearing – **but listening is an art** to be learned and developed.



Jim Hurn is a gifted and sought-after communicator with over 40 years’ experience in teaching in many countries on character development, leadership, stress management, marriage & family, singleness... you name it! His powerful combination of wisdom and wit have made him a popular

speaker at Promise Keepers Events over many years.



Listening Skills

The following are ten statements that describe behaviours a person usually finds irritating because they feel they are not being listened to:

1. The other person interrupts me when I talk.
2. The other person never looks at me when I talk. I don’t know whether they are listening or not.
3. The other person continually fidgets with a pencil or something, examining it rather than listening to me.
4. Whenever I make a suggestion, the other person always throws cold water on me.
5. The other person is always trying to get ahead of my story and guess what my point is, sometimes even finishing my sentence for me.
6. The other person argues with everything I say – even before I have a chance to finish stating my case.
7. Everything I say reminds the other person of an experience they have had or a happening they have heard of recently. I get frustrated when they continually interrupt to say, “That reminds me...”
8. The other person just waits for me to get through talking so they can interject something of their own.
9. The other person inserts humorous remarks when I am trying to be serious.
10. The other person acts as if they are doing me a favour in talking to me, and frequently looks at the clock or their watch while I am talking.

Excerpted from *Brothers! Calling Men into Vital Relationships* by Geoff Gorsuch

**PROMISE
#6**

A Promise Keeper reaches beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

NEXT ISSUE: HOLY SPIRIT



PK Men’s Events 2012 - Book Early!

- ♦ **Christchurch 24-25 Aug 2012**
- ♦ **Wellington 14-15 Sep 2012** 0800 PROMISE (77 66 47)
- ♦ **Auckland 5-6 Oct 2012**

