

Self-Appraisal Survey—Communications

The purpose of this survey is to determine your susceptibility to being a source of communication breakdown. Since no one but you will see the results of this questionnaire, answer the questions as honestly as possible. Respond not as you would like to be seen as a communicator but as you really are.

Indicate how frequently you engage in the following behaviors when communicating with another person or persons.

Use this scale to describe your behavior.

- 4 – I always do this.
- 3 – I often do this.
- 2 – I sometimes do this.
- 1 – I seldom do this.
- 0 – I never do this.

- _____ 1. When I have something to say, I am open and honest about my need to say it.
- _____ 2. I communicate with an awareness that the words I choose may not mean the same thing to other people that they do to me.
- _____ 3. I recognize that the message I receive may not be the same one the other person intended to send.
- _____ 4. Before I communicate, I ask myself questions about who my receiver is and how that will affect his or her reception of my message.
- _____ 5. As I communicate to someone, I keep a watchful eye and ear out for an indication that I am understood.
- _____ 6. I make my messages as brief and to the point as possible.
- _____ 7. I consciously avoid the use of jargon with those who may not understand it.
- _____ 8. I consciously avoid the use of slang words and colloquialisms with those who may be put off by them.
- _____ 9. I try not to use red-flag words (words that might trigger an emotional response) that may upset or distract the receiver of my message.
- _____ 10. I recognize that how I say something is just as important as what I say.
- _____ 11. I analyze my communication style to determine what nonverbal messages I send and how well they conform to the meaning I desire to get across.

- ___ 12. I carefully consider whether my message would be best understood by my receiver in a face-to-face meeting, over the telephone, or in writing.
- ___ 13. I form opinions about what others say to me based on what I hear them saying rather than what I think of them as a person.
- ___ 14. I make a genuine effort to listen to ideas with which I don't agree.
- ___ 15. I look for ways to improve my listening skills.

TOTAL SCORE

Analyze Survey Results

Find your score on the following table.

| Score | Interpretations |
|--------------|--|
| 50 – 60 | Are you sure you were honest? If so, you are an extremely effective communicator who almost never contributes to misunderstanding. |
| 40 – 49 | You are an effective communicator who only infrequently causes communication breakdown. The goal of these exercises is to move everyone up to this level. |
| 30 – 39 | You are an above average communicator with occasional lapses. You cause some misunderstandings but less than your share. |
| 20 – 29 | Many people (at least those who are honest) fall into this category. While things could be worse, there is much room for improvement in your communication style. The goal of these exercises is to move you to a higher category. |
| 10 – 19 | You are a frequent source of communication problems. Enthusiastically tackle the rest of these exercises and consider their implications for you personally. |
| Less Than | Your honesty is commendable, but it will take more than honesty to improve your communication effectiveness. Consider taking a communication course. |