

Prevent Front Office Patient Service Disasters – Fast

Presented by:

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Patient Engagement Success Creating Connections Front Office Professionals

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**Create a connection,
not a transaction**

**Greet patients with
a purpose**



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Is Healthcare a Business?

- Is Healthcare a business?
- Is there an economic cost to providing healthcare?
- Is there a difference between a customer and a patient?



YES or NO?

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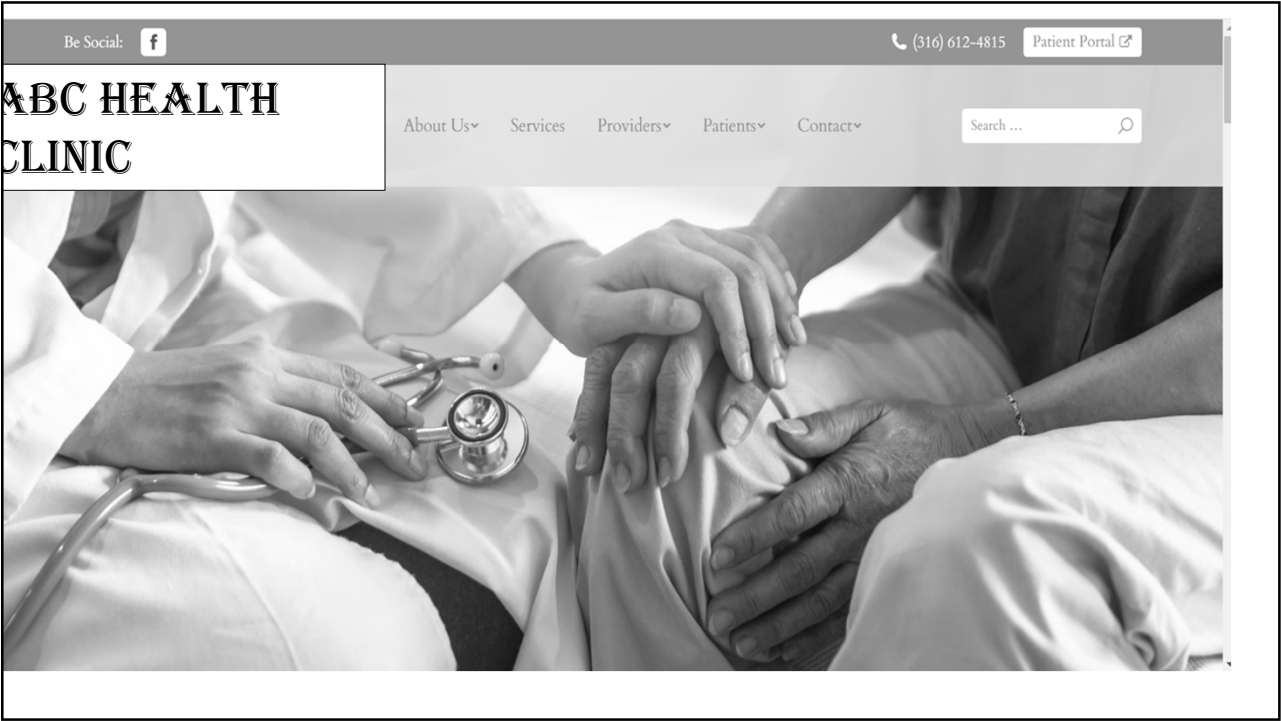
“In-Service” VS “Providing a Service”



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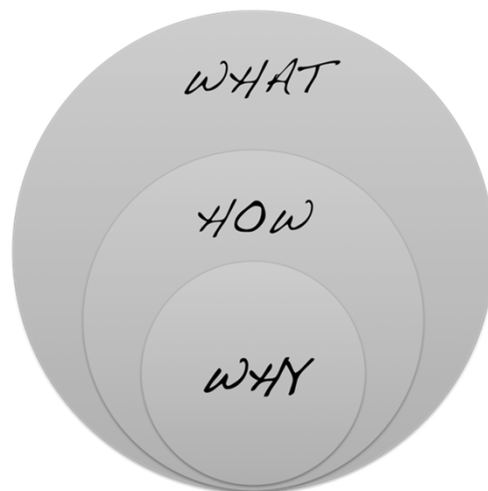
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“A brand is a living entity and it is enriched or undermined cumulatively over time, the product of a thousand small gestures.”

*~Michael Eisner
Former CEO, Disney*

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The Golden Circle



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ROI Facts

**For every patient who complains,
there are 20 who don't**

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ROI Facts

**Of those who are dissatisfied,
10% will return, but 90% will not**

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ROI Facts

**Changing a poor customer
Service image takes 10 years on average**

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ROI Facts

**It costs 10x more to attract new patients
than to keep the ones you have**

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ROI Facts

**10% of revenue is lost to poor
Customer service**

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Transparency

- In 2020 – 71% of patients use online reviews as a way to evaluate and select a doctor.
- In 2020 - 91% of 18–35-year-olds trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation
- 74% of internet users are engaging on social media
- 80% of internet users specifically are looking for health related information

Transparency starts internally with all staff- key to good patient engagement

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Is Communication an Art or a Science?

YES

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Communication Facts

Face to Face Communication

- 7% words
- 38% tone of voice
- 55% body language

Phone Communication

- 16% words
- 84% tone of voice
- 0% body language



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Health Literacy

43% of people aged between 16 and 65 years are unable to “effectively understand and use everyday health information”

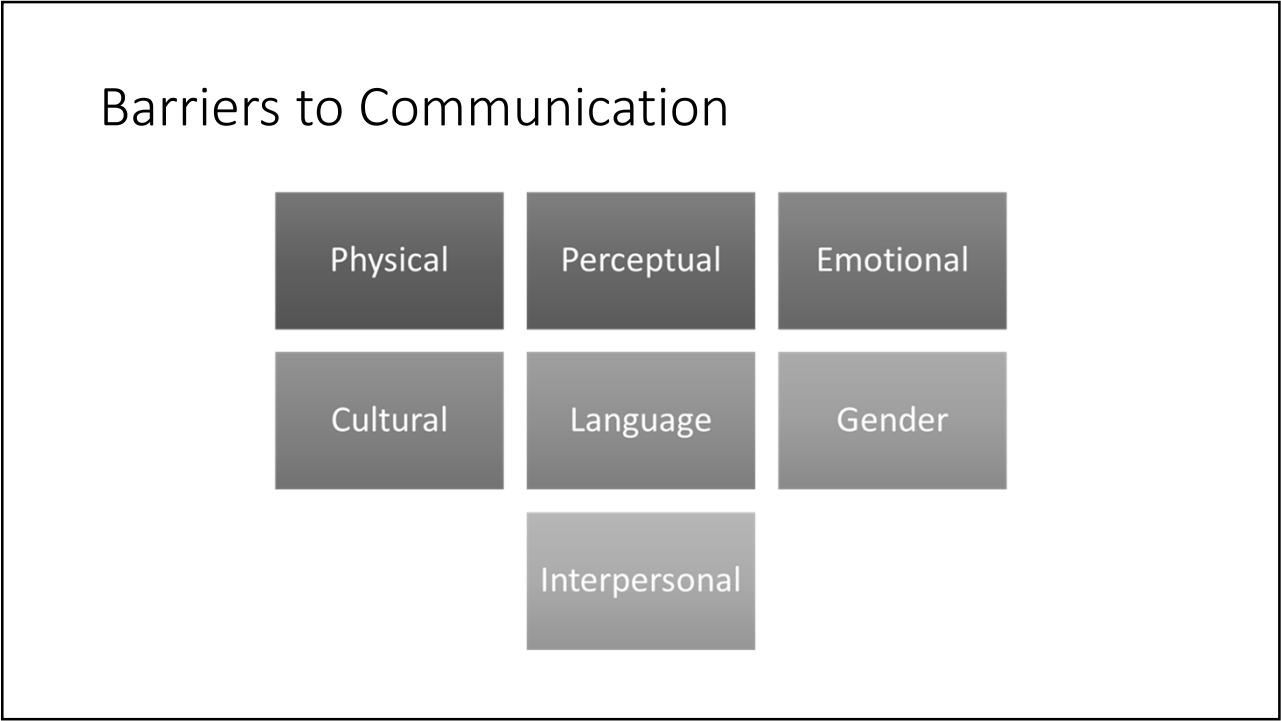
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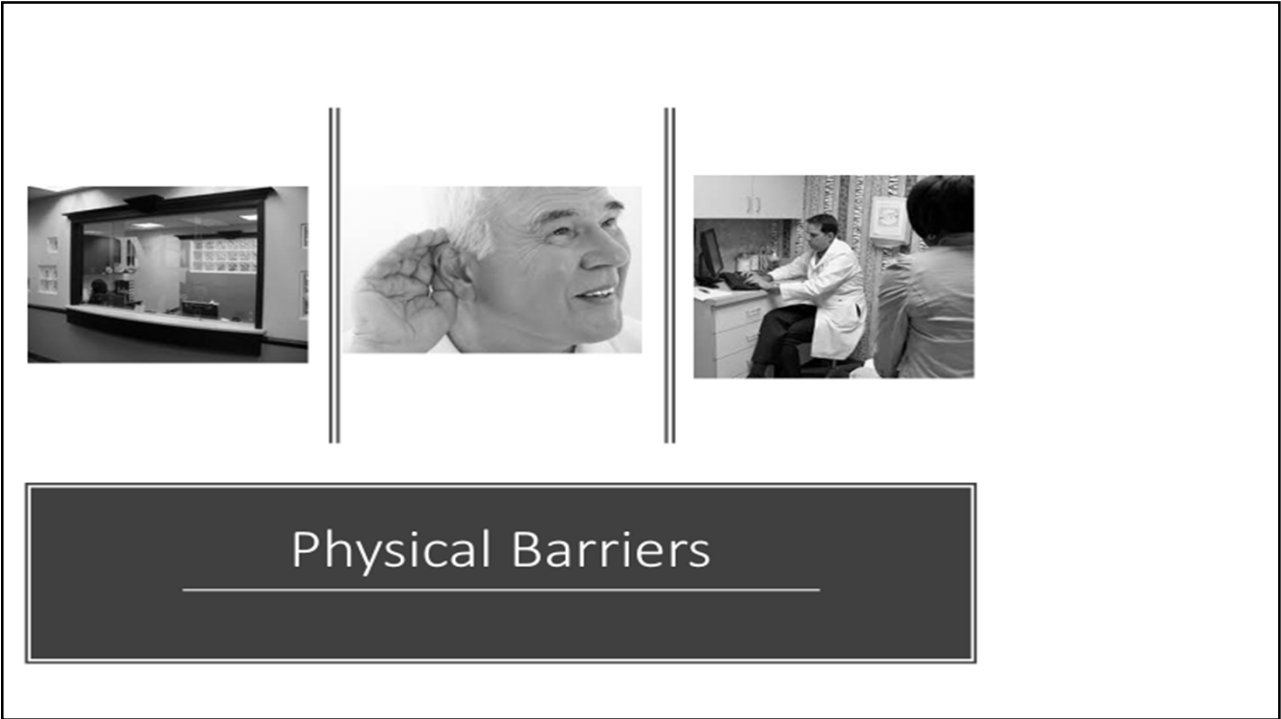
Medical Jargon

- Terms commonly used in your organization
- Abbreviations
- Sentences with 15 or more words
- Words with three or more syllables
- Paragraphs with more than 25 words

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Perceptual Barriers

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Emotional Barriers



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Cultural Barriers

Cultural Differences When Communicating



Why didn't he shake my hand?

What now?

Should I give him my card?

She's a bit close!

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Language Barriers

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Gender Barriers

Duel

Less eye contact

Status

Decision

Public

Engage

Problem internalising

Physical Orientation

Status and Connection

Direct / indirect

Public / Private

Ritual opposition

Style

Duel

More eye contact

Relationship

Discussion

Private

Avoid

Sharing

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Interpersonal Barriers



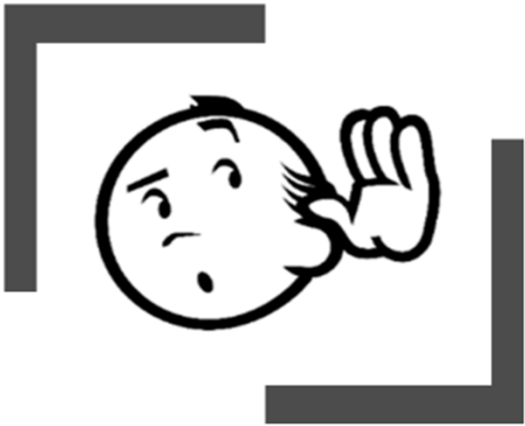
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Effective Communication Skills



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Active Listening



- We have 2 ears and 1 mouth for a reason
- Active listeners are well regarded by their co-workers
- Focus on the speaker
- Avoid distractions
- Ask questions

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Friendliness



- Honesty and kindness foster trust relationships
- Positive attitude
- Open mind
- Ask questions to understand the other position
- Smile
- Ask how someone is doing
- Offer praise for work well done

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Confidence



- Others respond positively when ideas are presented with confidence
- Prepare ahead of time so your thoughts are polished
- Appearing confident includes:
 - Making eye contact
 - Sitting up straight
 - Shoulders open

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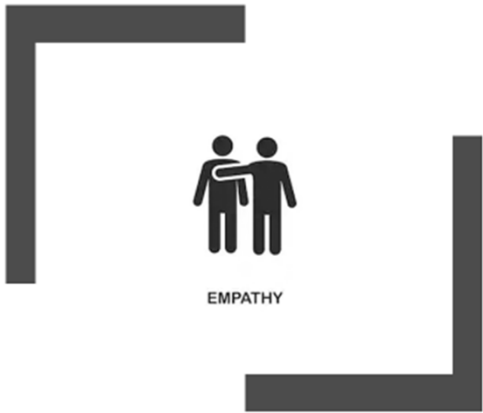
Giving and Receiving Feedback



- Accept critical feedback
- Provide constructive input to others
- Feedback should answer questions, provide solutions or help strengthen the topic at hand

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Empathy



- Understand and share emotions of others
- Important for team and one on one interactions
- Seek to understand the others emotions and select an appropriate response

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Respect



- Know when to initiate communication and respond
- Don't interrupt someone who is talking
- Use your time with someone else wisely
- Stay on topic
- Ask clear questions and respond fully to any questions asked of you

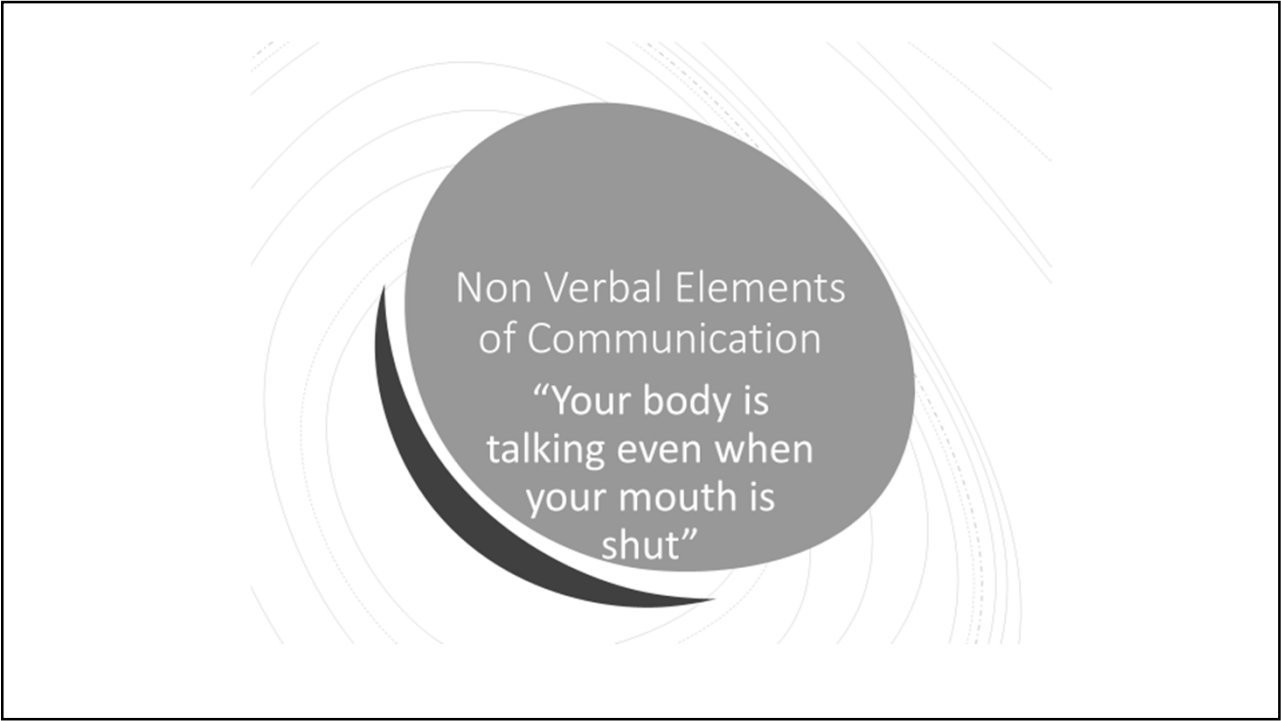
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Adapt Communication Style to Your Audience



- Consider your audience and adapt your communication style for the most effective communication with that individual or group
- Take into consideration how the listener may receive your communication
- Be intuitive

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Facial Expressions

- Most common non verbal communication
- Most notable expressions include:
 - Smiling
 - Frowning
 - Blinking
 - Eye rolling
- Establish a connection with a smile

A grid of nine hand-drawn faces, each showing a different facial expression. The expressions include smiling, frowning, surprise, and eye-rolling. The drawing style is simple and sketchy. A small watermark "PENSART.BLOGSPOT.COM" is visible in the top left corner of the grid.

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Body Movements



- Hand gestures
- Nodding
- Convey enthusiasm or excitement
- Some body movements are perceived as anxiety and nervousness
 - Involuntary tremors
 - Frequent clearing of the throat
 - Shaking leg
 - Drumming
 - Face touching

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Posture



- Good posture makes a positive impression
- How others perceive you
- Standing straight with head high shows confidence, assurance
- Slouching shows uncertainty, indifference, or weakness
- Crossed arms – demonstrates boredom or hostility
- To express friendliness and positivity – maintain an open posture
- Legs hip distance apart
- Torso exposed (no crossed arms)
- Head raised
- Relaxed facial expressions

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Personal Appearance



- Choice of color, clothing, and hairstyles affect non verbal communication
- Different colors evoke different moods
- Appearance can alter physiological reactions, judgment, and interpretation.
- First impressions are important

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Tone of Voice



- Includes loudness, inflection and pitch
- Consider the powerful effect a tone of voice can have on the meaning of a sentence.
- A sentence said in a strong tone might be interpreted with approval or enthusiasm
- The same sentence in a hesitant tone of voice might convey disapproval and lack of interest
- Example: someone asks how you are?
 - Cold tone
 - Happy tone

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Gestures



- Deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words
- Common gestures include:
 - Waving
 - Pointing
 - Using fingers to indicate a numeric amount
 - Some gestures are arbitrary and relate to culture

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Eye Gaze



- Rate of blinking increases and pupils dilate when people encounter people or things they like.
- Looking at another person can indicate a wide range of emotions such as hostility, interest or attraction
- People use eye gaze to determine honesty. Steady eye gaze vs. shifty eye gaze

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Personal Touch



- Touch is used to communicate affection, familiarity, sympathy, and other emotions
- Also used to communicate status and power
- Women use touch to convey concern and nurturing
- Men use touch to assert power and control over others

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Body Language

Your Gesture	Body Language
Arms crossed	Defensive
Constant eye contact	Aggressive
Fidgeting	Bored/impatient
Hunched posture	Lack confidence
Little eye contact	Low interest/lack confidence
Rubbing nose or mouth	Lying
Tapping	Impatient or nervous
Touching face/hair	Timid
Watching time	Anxious to move on to something else

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“I” Language vs. “You” Language

“I” Language

- Holds you responsible for your emotional state and reaction toward a situation
- Is more accurate and is a less provocative way of expressing a complaint
- Encourages dialogue rather than seeks blame

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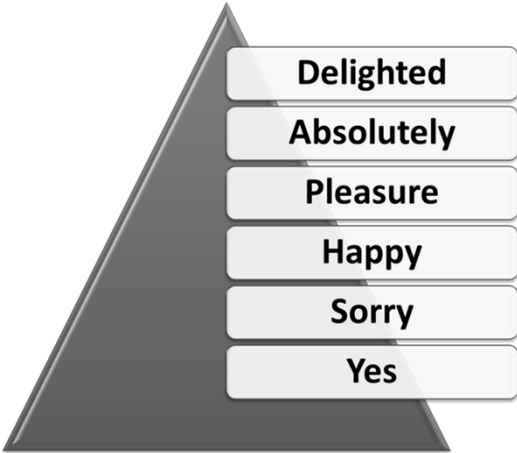
“I” Language vs. “You” Language

“You” Language

- Injures or attacks even when you actually don’t intend to
- Points a finger and finds blame for your own reaction or emotional state
- Assumes knowledge of others’ motives or states of mind
- Elicits a defensive and argumentative response

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Mood Altering Language



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Building Communication Skills

- You have 30 seconds to make a first impression
- Ask appropriate questions; lean in and practice active listening
- Use “I” language
- Keep responses short
- Monitor your tone of voice

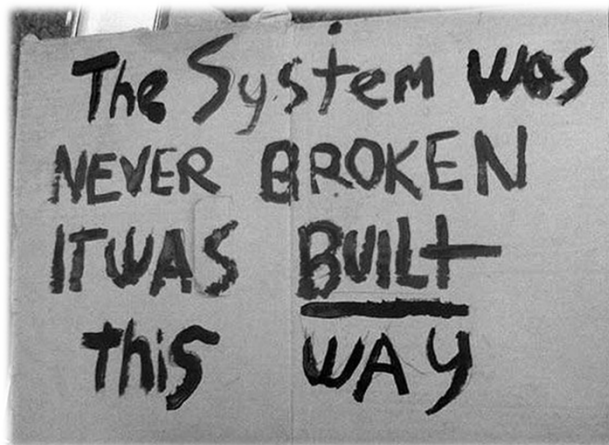
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Building Communication Skills

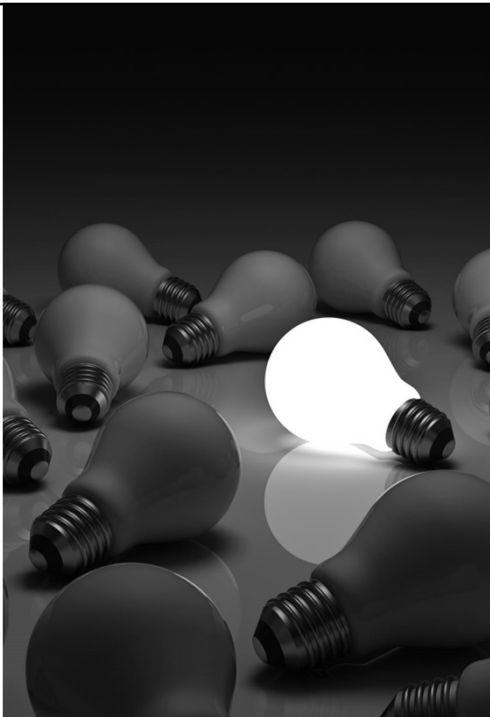
- Slow down verbally—don't talk too fast
- Speaking slow (insincere) Fast (boredom)
- Watch use of jargon, coding terms & medical terms
- Be conscious of non-verbal messages
- Aim for thoughtful input rather than clichés and comments that do not further the discussion

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Processes, Policies, and Procedures



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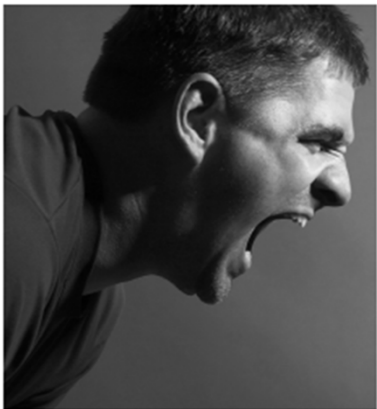


Intuitive Skills

- We all have the inherent skill of intuition
- Level of alertness for everything around you
- Integrate intuition into your tasks – tap into the patient as an individual and seek to understand their needs
- Intuition invites you to consider actions, changes in attitude, and is a matter of paying attention more closely

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Communication With Difficult Patients



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The Intimidator



- Tries to get his/her way
- Argumentative
- Agitated
- Demanding and forceful
- Know what they want and will negotiate to get it

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Dealing With The Intimidator

- Speak to them at eye level, lean towards the patient and ask relevant questions
- Focus on what they are saying, let them “get it out”, acknowledge the patient’s dissatisfaction
- Paraphrase by saying “If I understand what I hear” and re-stating pertinent facts clearly and forcefully
- Be prepared to offer alternatives, assure patient that you will follow up

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The Ambiguous Patient



- Avoids responsibility for their decisions
- Will place blame on others for their dissatisfaction
- More hostile with staff than physician

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Dealing with the Ambiguous Patient

- Let the patient get their anger off their chest
- Practice active listening but then respond with facts rather than opinions
- Reassure the patient

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The Rambler



- Will state the problem but gets sidetracked with other issues

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Dealing with the Rambler Patient

- Don't be rude or abrupt, but look for opportunities to re-direct the conversation to the issue at hand
- Listen carefully and acknowledge the subject of the conversation
- Start with open ended question "how may I help you today" but end with close ended questions requiring "yes" or "no" answers
- Offer a quick solution

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The Complaining Patient



- Constantly creating new problems
- Always has negative comments
- Does not like the staff or the service
- Saying sorry isn't enough
- Will often resort to name calling

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Dealing with the Complaining Patient

- The patient won't even realize you have fixed the problem they will find another thing to complain about
- Make the patient feel heard
- Realize when the issue has gone too far and document that
- Ask the patient what has upset them and what they feel has gone wrong
- Make them feel important and ask them to complete a patient feedback survey so the practice can fix the problem

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The Impatient Patient



- Always in a hurry
- Everything is an emergency
- Will constantly call and take staff time
- They maintain other offices could do what you do 10 times faster

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Dealing with an Impatient Patient

- Don't feel you must bump another patient to handle the impatient one to satisfy their demand
- Provide an explanation about why things are not going as fast as they think it should
- Thank them for their patience
- Provide reassurance that you have everything under control

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Keys To Dealing With Difficult Patients



- Maintain a good attitude
- Positive body language
- Try to see their perspective
- Respond appropriately
- Be proactive
- After situation is resolved, regain your cool
- When a patient is at his or her worst, you need to be at your best.