

Interpersonal Skills

Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest

-- Dale Carnegie



Learning Outcomes

- After this lecture you should be able to:
 - recognise the importance of interpersonal skills
 - describe how good communication with other can influence our working relationships
 - outline the roles we play in our work groups and teams

Outline

- What are IP skills?
- Why are good IP skills important?
- Conflict Resolution and Management
- Different Roles in a Team
- How to improve your IP skills?
- Networking: Why is it important?
- Rules for Good Networking

Activity

- According to you, what do employers seek in their employees? List them in order of importance

10 skills employers say they seek

- (1) **Ability to work in a team**
- (2) Ability to make decisions and solve problems
- (3) Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work
- (4) Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside an organization
- (5) Ability to obtain and process information
- (6) Ability to analyze quantitative data
- (7) Technical knowledge related to the job
- (8) Proficiency with computer software programs
- (9) Ability to create and/or edit written reports
- (10) Ability to sell and influence others

Interpersonal Communication

- English definition of interpersonal:
 - Connected with relationships between people
- Interpersonal communication occurs when two people use verbal and nonverbal messages to create understanding and to influence each other to manage the relationship

What are IP Skills?

- Also known as people/human skills
- Ability to communicate and interact with people, to work with, understand, and motivate other people both individually and in groups
- Good IP skills enable a person to interact positively and work effectively with others
- People with strong interpersonal skills are usually more successful in both their professional and personal lives

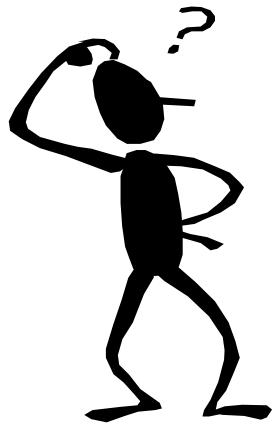
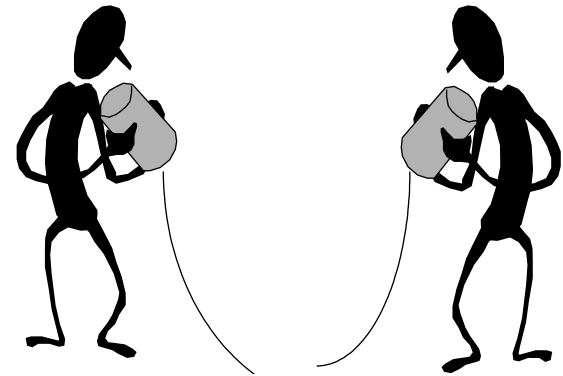


Examples of IP skills

listening



using feedback



questioning



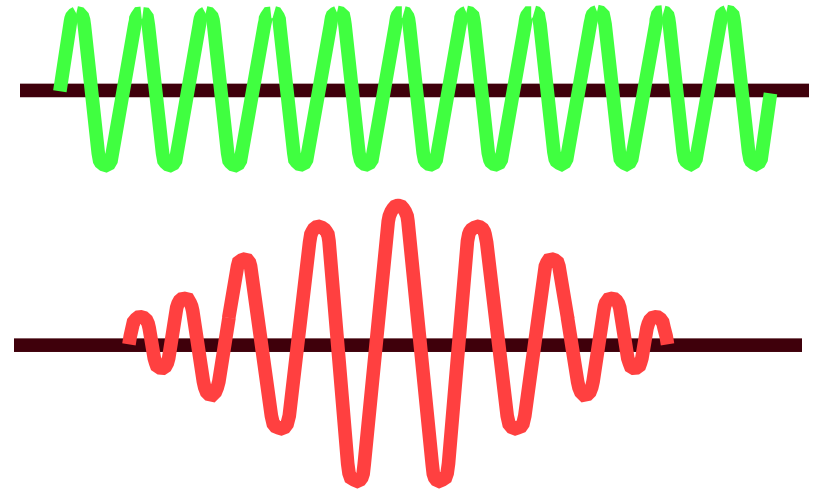
handling conflicts

Examples of IP skills

- **Assertiveness**
- **Communication**
- Conflict Management
- **Conflict Resolution**
- Constructive Criticism
- Counseling
- **Decision Making**
- Developing Rapport
- Diplomacy
- **Empathy**
- Encouraging
- Flexibility
- Helping Others
- Humour
- Inquiry
- **Listening**
- Mediating
- Mentoring
- Motivation
- Negotiating
- **Networking**
- **Problem Solving**
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Sensitivity
- Sympathy
- Teamwork
- Tolerance
- ...

Factors influencing IP interactions

- Distractions
- Poor connection
- Poor listening
- Competing stimuli
- Competing needs
- Differences in objectives
- Lack of time
- Emotional arousal



Why are good IP skills important?

- To develop successful careers
- To have meaningful and satisfying lives
- Today's work needs good **networking** skills
- People work as a **team**



Networking



Networking

Think back to a cocktail party you recently attended. You will recall that there were guests who seemed to know almost everyone in the room, moving from group to group with great ease, leaving no hand unshaken. Others, meanwhile, stood either alone or with just one other person for what seemed like hours, chatting stiffly and appearing as if they couldn't wait to be on their way home.

- Which type would you expect to accomplish more in his or her career? Why?
- **The ability to relate well with others is a sign of a person's mastery of the art of networking.**

Networking: Why is it important?

In the traditional corporate culture that existed until the 1980s, an executive gave an order and subordinates were expected to follow it — no questions asked. Today, companies are constantly reorganizing. Clear cut lines of authority have faded.

The actions and attitudes of superiors, subordinates, colleagues, customers, suppliers, competitors and government regulators are more important than ever to the success of your efforts, because each individual plays a key role in today's tight, anti-bureaucratic world.

How well you do your job ... your pay raises and promotions ... depend on your ability to network with all of these different people. In addition, in today's downsized business climate, the people whose help you need to get your job done may be located in another department ... another company ... or even on another continent.

Who makes up your network?

- Family, friends, neighbours
- Professional in your field, colleagues
- Suppliers, clients
- ...

Rules for Good Networking (1)

- Be open. Be open to new ideas, opportunities and people.
- Be prepared. Learn the skills required to network effectively.
- Give just to give. Don't give with the sole purpose of getting something back.
- Treat everyone as equals. There is no real value in title or prestige alone.
- If you need help, ask!

Rules for Good Networking (2)

- Thank people who have helped you.
- Commit yourself to following through. Work hard.
- Be courteous. E.g. Listen to others when they speak
- Talk with as many people as you can at a networking function.
- ...

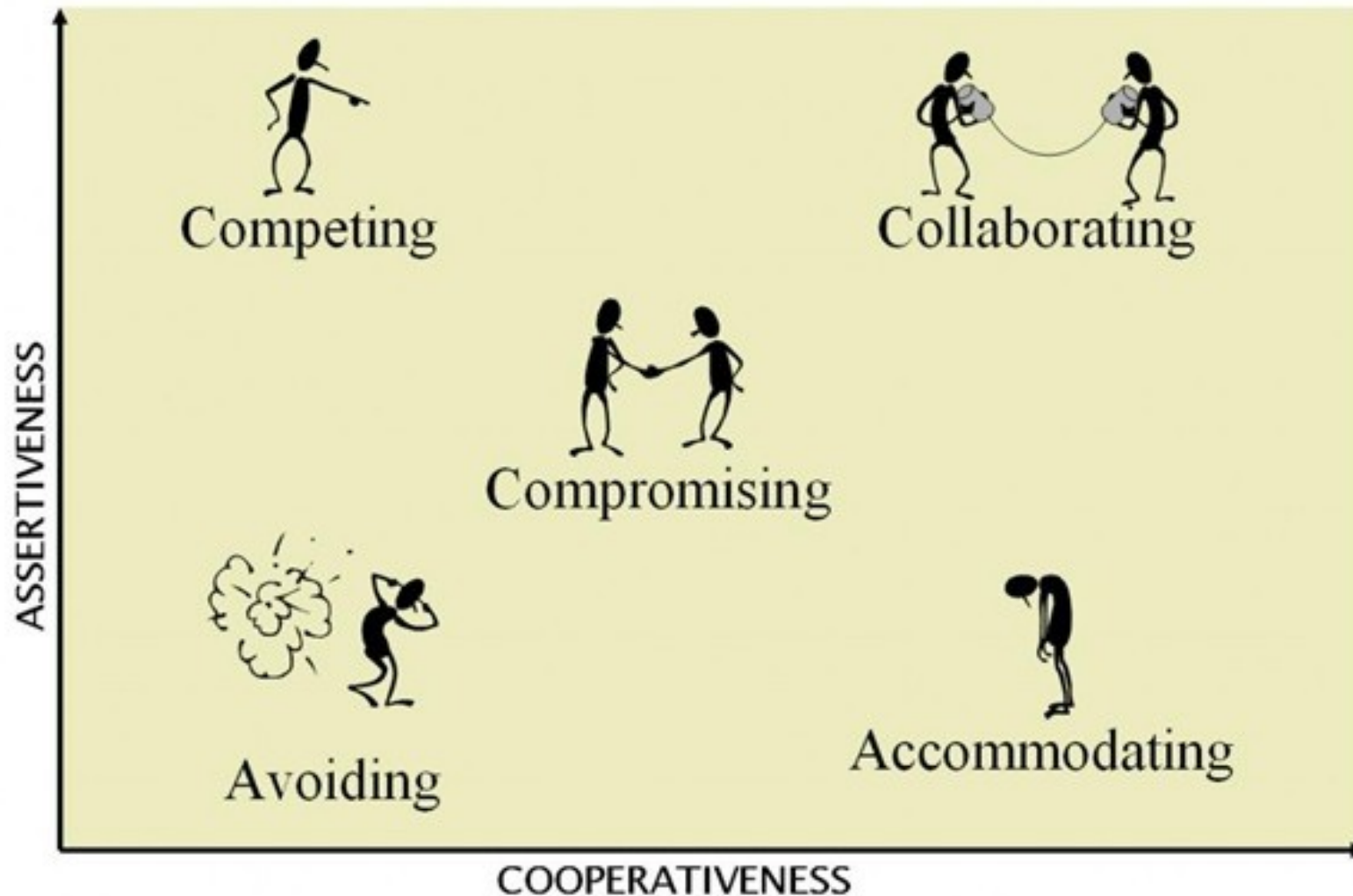
Conflict Management

Is that a smiley face?



Conflict Management

Dealing With Conflict – Thomas/Kilmann model



IP Skill: Assertiveness

Passive

- Inhibited & submissive. Unwillingness to confront problems.
- Perceived as a "wimp" who can be bullied by others

Aggressive

- Domineering, self-centered. "The little dictator."
- Taking command & dominating others is interpreted as pushy

Assertive

- Stand up for own rights & sensitive to others' needs
- Confront issues in a straightforward manner

Which is best?

- Assertiveness helps interpersonal communication because it lessens defensiveness, domination, putting down other people, "wishy-washiness," and similar dysfunctional behaviors

Conflict Management (2)

- Avoiding
 - An unassertive and uncooperative approach to the conflict and don't deal with it. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.
- Accommodating
 - A wholly unassertive and co-operative approach. It could be a form of selfless generosity or charity, giving in to another person's orders when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Conflict Management (2)

- Competing
 - Wholly assertive and uncooperative approach in solving the conflict
- Compromising
 - Both assertive and co-operative but only to some extent. It's the approach of "half a sixpence is better than none". Both sides get something but not everything. It might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, some give and take, or seeking a quick solution in the middle ground

Conflict Management (4)

- Collaborating
 - Extreme way of cooperation and avoidance. This is the most cooperative way for parties to take into discussion and come out with the best result they want. Collaborating requires a realization and understanding of resolution skills to solve out conflicts and a compromise as well as a harmony for each side to listen to each others and find out the best way of solution

Things to avoid...

- Gossip
- Judging
- Negativity
- Complaining
- Excuses
- Exaggeration
- Dogmatism
- Self-absorption

Roles in a Team



Roles in a Team

Role Type	Description	Characteristics
Implementer	Likes to get on with the team's task(s) and sort out practical details	Dutiful, practical and quite cautious; predictable and sometimes inflexible
Coordinator	Encourages team members to make their point but keeps the team going in the right direction	Calm, self-confident and supportive; does not get involved in matters of detail

Roles in a Team (2)

Role Type	Description	Characteristics
Shaper	Provides drive and energy to the team's work, but can try to influence it with their own views	Outgoing, dynamic, challenging; impatient and sometimes provocative
Plant	Offers lots of imaginative ideas or specialist knowledge to the task	Creative thinker, often unorthodox; likes to work alone and not very practical

Roles in a Team (3)

Role Type	Description	Characteristics
Resource investigator	Provides lots of information and has lots of useful contacts	Highly communicative, enthusiastic and curious; easily bored
Monitor / Evaluator	Likes to observe and measure how well the team are doing	Prudent, hard-headed and a good judge; at times rather unemotional

Roles in a Team (4)

Role Type	Description	Characteristics
Teamworker	Does things to keep up team spirit or morale	Socially orientated, sensitive and responsive; sometimes indecisive
Completer / Finisher	Makes sure that all tasks are finished off completely	Painstaking, orderly, conscientious; can be anxious and find it difficult to 'let go'

Team Roles (5)

- Often need to play more than one role
- Switch between roles according to the needs of the team and the task

Activity

- Can you recognise from the descriptions and characteristics of the different roles, which one you would tend to feel comfortable with?
- Could you manage to play any of the other roles without too much of a problem?

How to improve our IP skills?

- “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”
- To become competent at any skill
 - understand the skill conceptually
 - practice the skill
 - get feedback on how well performing the skill
 - integrate the skill into behavioral repertoire



How to improve our IP skills? (2)

- Plan: Develop a SMART objective
- Research your contacts and networking groups to find which one works for you
- Promote yourself effectively
- Communicate effectively
- Think Creatively
- Follow through on your commitments
- Take full and accurate notes
- Organize yourself
- Teamwork

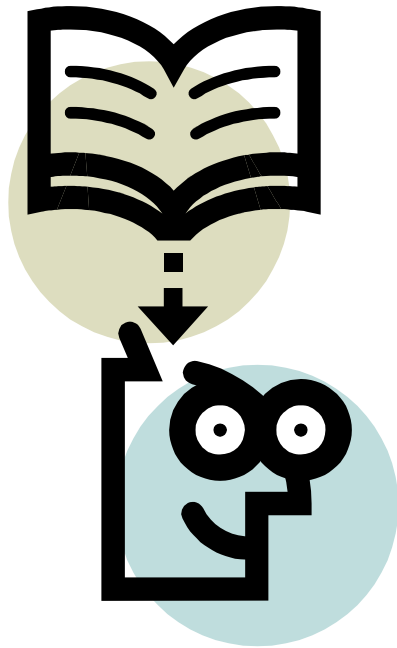
Self-Awareness

- Who am I?
- How can I find out?
- Who can help me?



Self-Awareness

To improve your interpersonal skills
you need to know:



- Your *personality*: values, needs & behavioral styles
- The *impression* you make on others
- Your *blind spots*: things you do that hinder your interpersonal effectiveness

Self-assessment will show you



- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Actions that deprive you of the full benefits of your strengths
- Where you have no strengths and can't perform well

Big Five Personality Factors

Adjustment

High = emotional stability

Low = unstable (reactive, worrying, stressed)

Sociability

High = Extroversion

Low = introversion

Openness

High = want to learn - explorer

Low = stick with known - preserver

Agreeableness

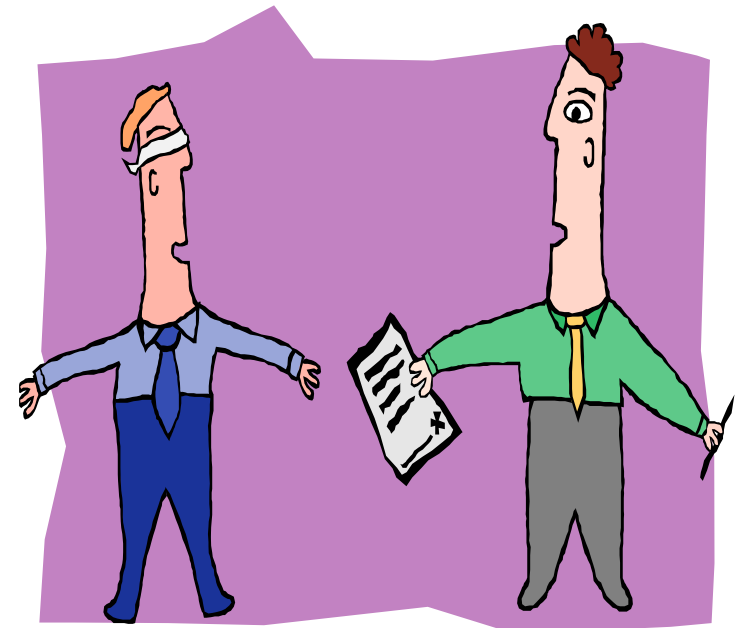
High = easy to get along with (trusting team player)

Low = hard to get along with (skeptical, questioning)

Conscientiousness

High = disciplined, organized, dependable

Low = spontaneous, impulsive, not dependable



Activity

Think about how effective you are in each of these areas:

- Establishing trust
- Communicating, verbally or in writing
- Active listening
- Clarifying, paraphrasing, reframing and checking understanding
- Summarizing
- Asking questions
- Collaborating and co-operating
- Working under supervision, able to follow instructions
- Working independently, showing initiative
- Solving problems

Activity

Go through the list below and mark an X beside any trait that you currently have and would like to shift. Then write out an action plan to do so.

- ☐ I often feel I am a victim of circumstances around me
- ☐ I lash out at others when I am upset or feeling unfairly treated
- ☐ I often open communications with “you make me...”
- ☐ I have a difficult time admitting that I am wrong
- ☐ I overburden myself and don't say no often enough
- ☐ I am overcritical of others and myself
- ☐ I often use the illogical and extreme terms “never” and “always” when talking to another about his or her behavior
- ☐ I avoid confrontation at all costs and shy away from being assertive

Activity

What is wrong with the following conversation?

Tom: Hi John

John: Hi Tom

Tom: I saw your report, you must prepare it again and that too today itself

John: but why??

Tom: I am not getting any results from it

John: I am not going to do it again, and that too today. It is impossible

Tom: John!! Try to understand. I need it today

John: No!! I don't have time

Tom: You must do it

John: I already told you no

... finally they arrive at no conclusion

Activity

Tom: Hi John, how are you?

John: Hi Tom, I am fine.

Tom: I saw your report, I think we missed some analysis in it. We may have to prepare it again.

John: but why??

Tom: We are not getting any cost analysis from it, and the meeting is for cost

John: It will be difficult for me to do it again. I don't have time for it.

Tom: John, I know you put your best efforts into preparing it. But it is a requirement from the customer. Otherwise whatever we are doing now will be of no use.

John: To do it alone for today is not possible.

Tom: Okay I will send Sara to help you. I may also join you

John: Thanks. Only one of you would be great. I will try to finish it for today.

Tom: Thank you John.

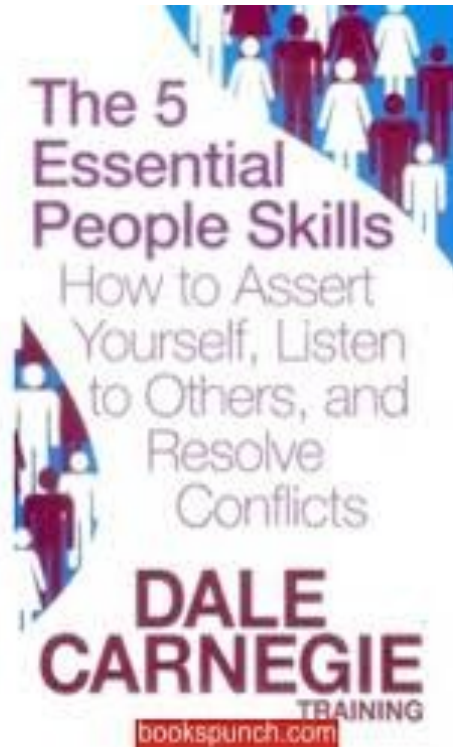
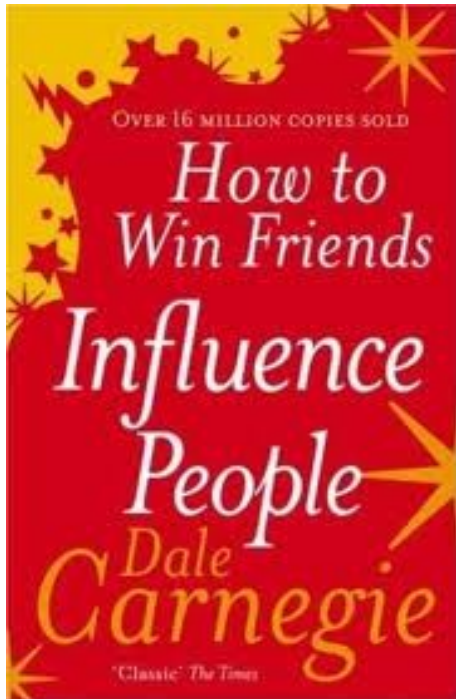
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Begin with praise and honest appreciation.

Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.

-- Dale Carnegie

Good Read



Dale Carnegie

References

- The Importance of Interpersonal Skills
- Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment