**Communication Skills – Playing Games**

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**Games senders play**

When sending a piece

Feedback

Derail the communication

Take it off target. Take it off the message

Game – It is my duty

I have to do this. It is my duty.

Takes the focus of communication and puts it on the obligation

Game – Sandwich or junk dealer

Between 2 or 3 good feedbacks put the negative feedback

Game – Detective

Not direct feedback or suggestion

Do it remember when this happened

Directing one to already one has concluded

Game – Lifesaver

It is going to hurt your feelings. You know what it doesn’t matter when you are doing so many other good things. Just work on that one.

**Games receivers play**

Game – wanted animal

Self pity.

Game – Ally builder

Why others don’t do but I have to do. Difference in standards

To get back to really good communication skills

Observing, describing, concluding, questioning, listening and empathizing

Senders convey negative feedback through games like It’s-My-Duty. The Sandwich game sandwiches negative feedback between positive comments. The Detective game asks do-you-remember questions. Receivers play the Wounded Animal and Ally Builder games.

**Lesson Summary**

* As both senders and receivers of communication, people knowingly or otherwise play games in conversations.
* Senders' games include using duty as an excuse, sandwiching critiques in compliments, playing detective, and throwing lifesavers.
* Receivers' games may take the form of playing the wounded animal or becoming an ally builder.
* When people play games with communication, they take it off target and create confusion.

**Ideas for Action**

* Check yourself against McLagan's list. Be honest with yourself if you are playing any of these games.
* As a sender, give clear and honest feedback, gently, but truthfully. Don't pass the blame onto someone else.
* As a receiver, accept feedback gracefully and gratefully. Don't try to make the sender feel guilty.
* This week, practice the critical skills of communication: observing, listening, empathizing, questioning, describing, and concluding.

**Questions to Ask**

* How does playing games confuse communication?
* Which of the games McLagan discusses result from emotional responses?
* When you notice the game being played, how can you redirect the conversation?
* Why is clear, direct, on-the-level communication so important in today's workplace?