

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

One-on-One

The difference between one-on-one encounters and the group interactions we've been talking about is the level of intensity: it's personal visibility without dilution. You can't get away with as much in a one-on-one situation: the margin for error is *very* small.

This makes the give and take a little harder than in a group, where you get some relief because of the numbers participating and the time *that* gives you to think.

Now, close encounters *can* be benign, like mild get-acquainted or informational sessions; they're not all acute, emotional, or confrontive. But the process of two people interacting in a business setting *is* up three or four stress notches from anything else you do at work.

So our work in this chapter will be to analyze each segment of a close encounter; to understand and find good communications solutions to the various aspects; to give you options as initiator or participant. Let's begin with the underlying structure.

A one-on-one encounter has four segments—Openers, Substance, Special Issues, Closure. The *function* and *quality* of each segment determines what kind of communication is needed and how to deliver it best.

OPENERS

As we've already discovered by the pains I took to "open" this book well and invitingly for you, those first few opening moments really count in *any* human encounter, but especially in a one-on-one.