

trends of the subject matter. Not only should you notice in order to pick up clues on what to answer; you also can find out about the hidden concerns of the person you're talking with. Good to know for further motivation and persuasion.

When you mention what else is taking place, "I see you want to know . . .", it's generally very disarming and also focuses the discussion. How they deal with the answer is also important to notice.

Know When to Get Out

You need to develop a sense about when you've been around the track enough times and learn to end it and get out.

"Well, I guess we could keep pulling this apart but perhaps we've explored it enough for now. Let me suggest that I leave (or send you) some materials for you to think about." Or, "I hear what you're saying. Let me think about it for a while and then we can talk about it again."

These approaches work whether you are the originator of the meeting or the one being questioned or perhaps disagreed with.

To sum up segment two of Close Encounters—Substance: The techniques for presenting an idea or explaining yourself are as important here as in a large speech. You need to capture and hold your audience of one, too! Don't forget about motivation when you want to persuade. Be sure to bring substantive visual materials to bolster your point and to leave materials behind for further consideration.

SPECIAL ISSUES

So far, the steps within each segment have followed a chronological order. But there are also particularly ticklish communications issues that often crop up in a close encounter and they need special attention.

Creative Criticism

We often forget that the main purpose of criticizing is not to be negative but to be constructive! To *fix* something! One of the most difficult things to do when you need to criticize someone for a job not well done, or for a major goof, is to reassure and encourage at the same