**Name: Gunnar Forcier** Oral/Interpersonal Communication: Chapter 5

Creating Listenable Messages (10 points)

**Guidelines**

*Based on information provided in* [*Section 5.4*](https://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/chapter/5-4-listenable-messages-and-effective-feedback/) *of the textbook, create a listenable message with specific and appropriate feedback for each of the following scenarios. Your responses should reflect* ***AT LEAST ONE*** *key criterion identified in the textbook for* ***EACH*** *of the following:* ***1)*** *creating a listenable message* ***AND******2)*** *providing informal feedback to others. For each response, YOU are the speaker responding DIRECTLY TO the person identified in the scenario.*

**Submission**

Once you have completed this activity, submit it in Canvas.

**SCENARIO # 1:**

Your best friend is telling you about his/her concerns about the person he/she has been seeing for two years. They had always planned to marry after college, but now your friend says, “I’m just feeling like we never really dated anyone else seriously. I love Pat, but I wonder if we should see other people while we’re still in college. I don’t think we’ll know if we’re right for each other if we don’t really know anyone else.”

**Your response to your friend:** It sounds like a tough situation to be in. It’s hard to go all in on someone if you’re always wondering if something better is out there. What problems can you identify in your relationship that would make you think that it wouldn’t work long-term? If this is something you really want though, it’s going to be challenging for both of you. Because if you take a break and enter relationships with other people one of you might stay with them, and you wouldn’t be getting back together. Y’all are going to have to have a conversation about this and be honest about your needs and if your current relationship is meeting them.

**Which criteria did you employ 1) to create a listenable message and 2) to provide feedback?** I started off by empathizing with them, and then gave them realistic feedback that their relationship might not last if they see other people. I made it listenable by using shorter phrasing and using personal pronouns.

**SCENARIO #2:**

Two friends have been advised by their physician that they fit the profile of someone at higher-than-average risk for Hepatitis B. Their health plan won’t pay for the vaccines (about $250). They are considering getting the vaccine, but are concerned about the cost. One says to you, “I know I’m in a high risk group, but I’m not sure there’s much chance of getting it. I haven’t really known anyone who has. What would you do?”

**Your response to your friend:** Well, let’s consider a few things. Will $250 break the bank this month? If you can get by even if you’re a bit uncomfortable, you’d be saving yourself having to either wait it out or getting treated if you do end up getting it. If you can’t, you can protect yourself by not sleeping with unfamiliar partners, or if you’re really scared about it, not having any sex at all until you do have enough to get it. It’s a lifetime condition so I’d recommend getting treated, but it’s your choice.

**Which criteria did you employ 1) to create a listenable message and 2) to provide feedback?** I tried giving different scenarios that involved getting the vaccine and reminding them that Hep B is a condition they might have to deal with their entire life. To make the message listenable, I worked to show pros and cons as well as problems and solutions while communicating.

**SCENARIO # 3:**

Your supervisor is considering allowing some employees (including you) to begin to experiment with flexible hours. She is discussing the idea with you and a few other employees before work one morning. She says, “I’d really like to have some of you try flex hours and see the impact on morale and productivity. I know some of you have concerns about transportation and childcare, and others are trying to take classes and work. But if some are allowed to try flex hours and all aren’t, it could create more hard feelings. I can’t make it department wide without my district manager’s okay, and he’s not willing to try it. But I do have leeway to experiment on a small scale. I wonder what would be best.”

**Your response to your supervisor:** I really appreciate how you are advocating for your employees, but I’m worried about how this might affect the relationships between coworkers, especially since the changes are giving preference to certain employees. Even if you’re not able to offer the opportunity to everyone in the department, I think people will feel more respected if they are made aware of the changes and be given a chance to share their thoughts about it.

**Which criteria did you employ 1) to create a listenable message and 2) to provide feedback?**

I used personal pronouns to help the conversation feel more relevant and listenable. While my sentences were longer, they are broken apart into phrases to help make the messaging easier to track when listening. With the feedback, I made sure to acknowledge the positives while clearly sharing my concerns. I also offered a suggestion for a way the supervisor could consider responding based on what I thought.

**SCENARIO # 4:**

A co-worker with whom you must coordinate projects says, “Ever since my brother was killed in that car accident, I just haven’t felt like this job is important. I haven’t felt that much of anything is important. I can’t focus or concentrate very well, and nothing matters much. I’m sorry I’ve caused you to miss some deadlines, too.”

**Your response to your co-worker:** I can only imagine how hard it was for you to lose your brother. I know it can take time to process grief, but I’m worried about you, especially if you’re struggling to cope in your daily life. Have you been talking to anyone about how you’ve been feeling, like a therapist, a counselor or a clergy person?

**Which criteria did you employ 1) to create a listenable message and 2) to provide feedback?**

I left my response short because it sounds like this person wants to be heard, not given advice or platitudes about grief. My response was relevant to what they shared and I used personal pronouns as well. In providing feedback, I acknowledged the challenging situation they’re in and offered a realistic and constructive option for them to consider. I was conscious not to place blame or tell them “It’s okay” that deadlines were missed at work. Instead, I focused on my coworker’s safety and wellbeing.