

Communication Counts – Strategies for Improving Physician  
Communication & Patient Experience

# Communication Counts

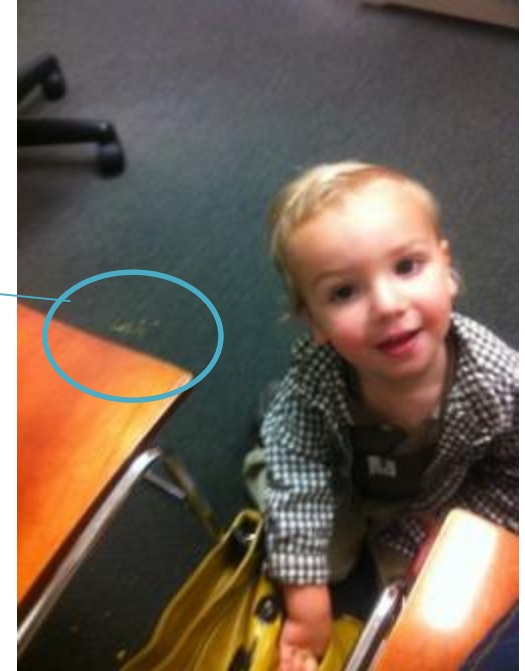
*Janiece Gray, Founding Partner DTA Associates*

# Start with a Story...



Empathy doesn't  
have to be huge

**Exhibit A:** Smashed Goldfish  
snacks remnants



Total elapsed time in an  
exam room with 2 year  
old boy waiting to see a  
provider:

**63 minutes!**

# M & M's – What do you notice?



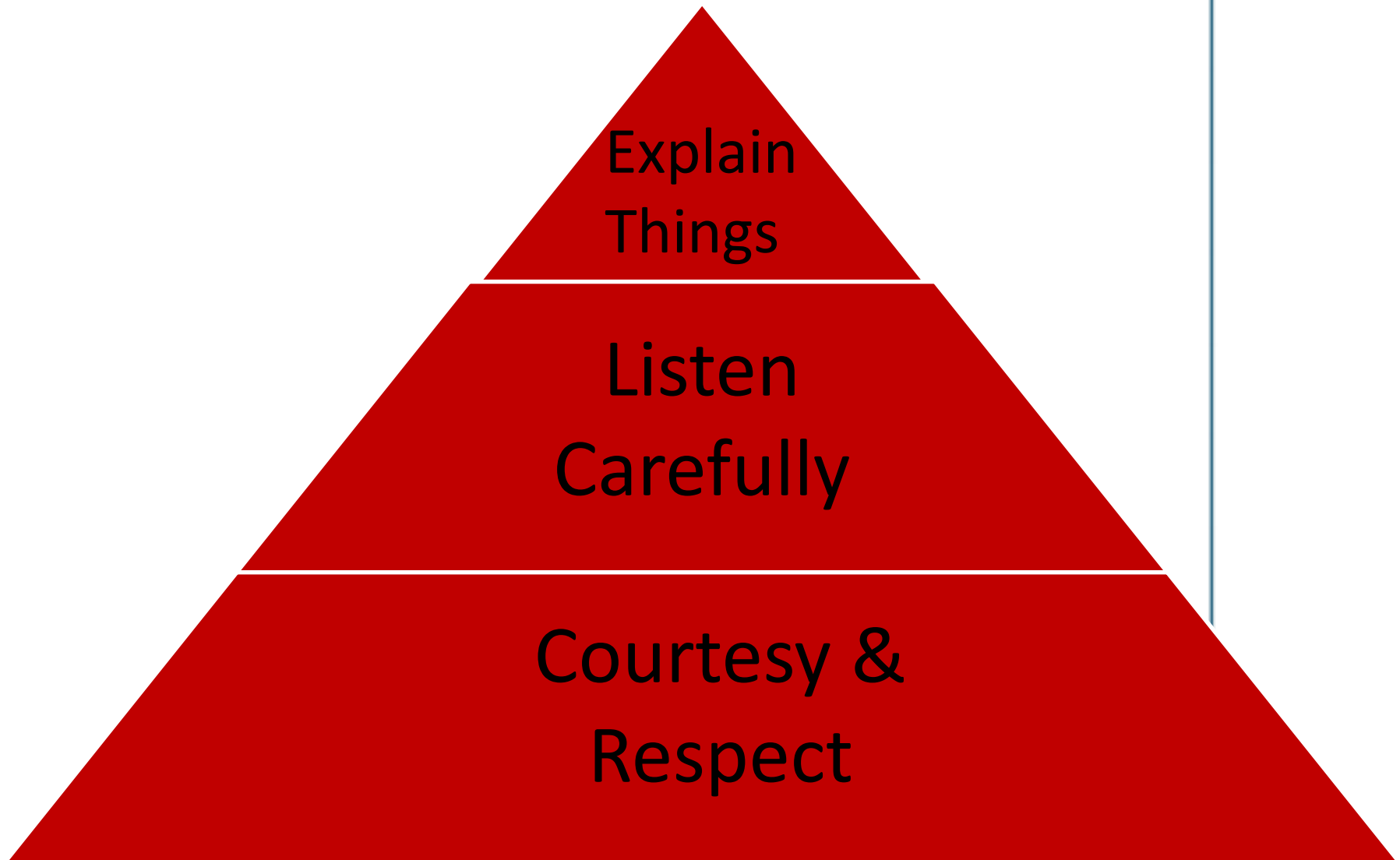
(Video Link)

The 80s band Van Halen famously (or infamously) had a rider in its contract which required promoters to provide the band a large number of M&M's in the dressing room. But brown M&M's were forbidden. If the band found a single brown M&M, the promoter forfeited his earnings. Why? David Lee Roth explains in this video.

It was actually a clever test. Van Halen stage shows were elaborate productions. To get ready, a promoter had to follow a set of lengthy, complex instructions provided in the contract. The brown M&M provision was buried, at random, among these instructions. If the band members went backstage and found brown M&M's, that meant that the promoter had not [read](#) the instructions and there were potential problems with the show.

## Pay Attention to the Basics!

# A Hierarchy of Communication



# Spectrum of Strategies

	Less	More	Most
Projecting the Patient Voice	Sharing comments, awards	Patient & Family Advisory Council	Patients serving on committees
Data & Reporting	Clinic/site/unit level	Physician level	Enterprise Data Warehouse
Goal Setting & Compensation	Identify areas of focus	Internal scorecard	Tied to physician compensation
Service Strategy & Training	Discuss at provider meetings	Develop/adopt a service mnemonic, Video vignettes	Service training, CMEs
Other	Newsletters, Cards, Care boards	Care team coaching, mystery shopping	SWAT Teams, Patient Centered Medical Home

Resource Investment (\$/Time)

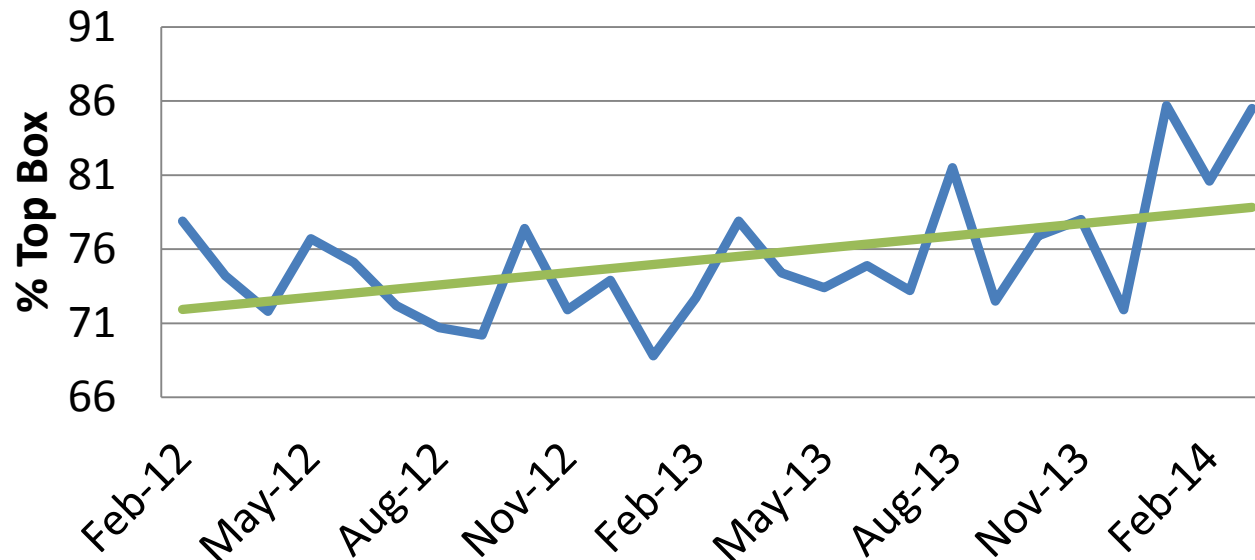




# North Memorial Medical Center

North Memorial Medical Center improved 10x the national rate of improvement!

## HCAHPS Physician Communication Composite



- Level I trauma care facility in Minneapolis
- Average daily Census = 240
- 70,000 annual ED visits
- Large Medicare Population
- Full spectrum of care excluding transplants