



Journey to

Vision 2030:

Faculty Perspectives

ASCCC FALL  
PLENARY SESSION

NOVEMBER 16-18, 2023 | HYBRID EVENT  
WESTIN SOUTH COAST PLAZA, COSTA MESA

# Effective Communication Strategies for Inclusive Academic Senate Leaders

Thursday November 16, 2023

3:00 pm - 4:00pm

(Room: Viejo/Laguna)

# Facilitators

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# Session Description

Communication competency is often defined in relation to the effectiveness and appropriateness of our communication. To engage in transformational and transactional leadership, communication is our primary tool. In addition, our best decisions occur when we authentically welcome and include diverse perspectives. However, we sometimes find ourselves in situations of misunderstanding and tension. In this session, join us as we share suggestions on how to build a collaborative climate within your senate work, discuss the reality of working with conflict, and share strategies to develop your awareness and sensitivity to be an effective leader of diverse voices. Being intentional in this work will help us all meet the goal of higher levels of faculty engagement and create structures where our diverse faculty can emerge as faculty leaders.



# Topics

- Cultural Communication Considerations
- Creating a Sense of Belonging Using Communication
- Listening, Responding, and Building Confirming Climates
- Conflict
- Open Discussion



# Cultural Communication Considerations



# Cultures: High & Low Contact

- **High Contact Cultures**

- Maintain small distances among themselves
- May be viewed as pushy and possibly intrusive from those outside their culture
- Middle East, men touch, hug, kiss on the cheek, nose to nose



- **Low Contact Cultures**

- Maintain large distances among themselves
- May be viewed as unapproachable, distant, and hostile
- U.S touch between men limited to high 5/handshakes



# Cultures: Low Context & High Context

- **Low context:**

- *explicit*
- spelled out clearly
- reveals intent through direct verbal codes
- less reliance on nonverbal
  - ex: business deal with an American business owner
  - communicators are straightforward, concise, and efficient in telling what action is expected
  - US, Australia, and Switzerland

- **High context:**

- implicit
- revealed through context
- rely on implicit (unsaid) nonverbal messages
- relationship building
  - ex: foreign exchange student from Japan
  - communicators use “flowery” language, humility, and elaborate apologies
  - Brazil, Spain, China, and France



# Communication & Multiculturalism

## understanding the various ways that different cultures communicate

- **Gestures & Body Language**

- The nuances of facial expression, body language, gestures

- **Eye Contact**

- Eye contact can be a form of respect
- Lack of eye contact can be a form of disrespect
- Recognize that some people struggle with eye contact for other reasons

- **Voice**

- Those who speak different languages have various tones and inflexion
- Ex. Accents, gender, Ebonics/Black Vernacular





# Creating a Sense of Belonging Using Communication



# Sense of Belonging: Centering Voice of Marginalized Faculty



*Unlike DEI, BDJ is centered in the experiences and voices of marginalized people. Image: Decolonize Design*



# Inviting More Voices and Authentic Stories

True belonging doesn't  
require you to change  
who you are; it requires  
you to be who you are.

*Brené Brown*



- The conversation around inclusion and diversity needs to take a human-centric approach. It's not just about the numbers - it's about the people.
- When we bring our authentic stories with empathy to better relate and assist our colleagues and students, we provide an opportunity for others to look through new lenses for perspective taking.
- Sharing our stories and owning them are a powerful tool to help us foster a sense of belonging and build community.
- Underrepresented faculty voices are crucial for transformational change in our institutions.

# Belonging Moments

Perhaps most important, belonging in the real world occurs not only in “big moments” but mainly in “little moments” (i.e. as part of our daily interactions with others.)

- Belonging is both formal and informal arrangements;
- Belonging happens within a community;
- Belonging occurs within a network of professional relationships;
- Belonging is reciprocal and involves the “giving and receiving of wisdom”;
- Builds a “community” to help faculty to be part of the campus life and leadership, part of a whole.

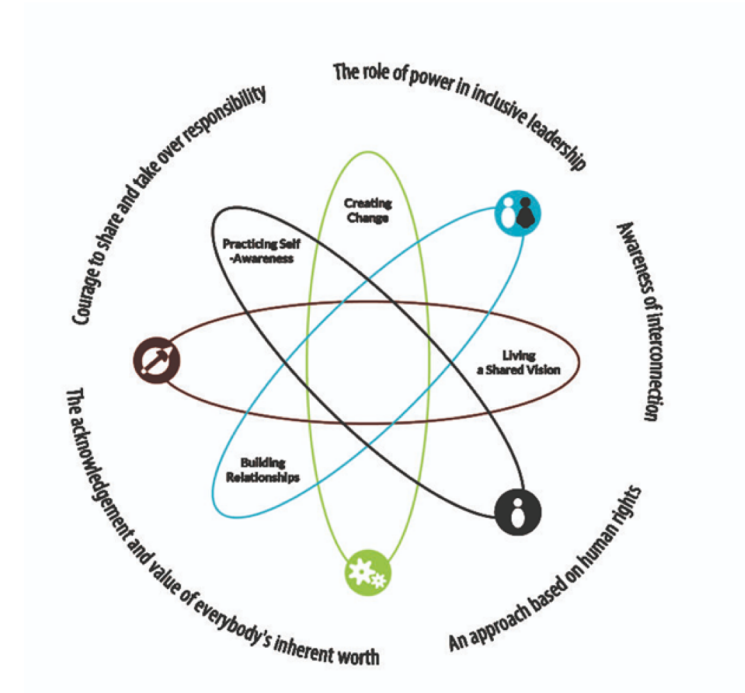


# The Inclusive Leadership Framework

According to the [\*Inclusive Leadership Handbook\*](#), an inclusive leadership approach “appreciates diversity, invites and welcomes everyone’s individual contribution, and encourages full engagement with the processes of decision-making and shaping reality. The following traits are important for creating an inclusive environment

- **Visible commitment**
- **Humility**
- **Awareness of bias**
- **Curiosity about others**
- **Cultural intelligence**
- **Effective collaboration**

What are some of the benefits of truly inclusive work group environments?



# Listening, Responding, & Building Confirming Climates



# Mindful Listening



- Listening and Hearing are not the same thing
- Active Mindful Listening requires you to be present and avoid internal & external distractions/obstacles
- Avoid engaging in “non-listening” techniques such as:
  - ***Pseudolistening***
  - ***Monopolizing*** (such as *Rerouting*, *Competitive Interrupting*)
  - ***Selective Listening***
  - ***Defensive Listening***
  - ***Ambushing***
  - ***Literal Listening***

Tips: Be mindful, adapt listening appropriately, and listen actively! Use support responses and encouragers.

“Effective” depends on our purpose for listening, the context, and the needs of the circumstances.



# Empathic Listening

Listeners are not empathizing when...

- Denying others the right to their feelings.
  - Minimizing the significance of the situation.
  - Reroute focus back on yourself.
  - Raining on the speaker's parade. (a.k.a. "Yucking someone Yummy")
- 
- VIDEO: [Brené Brown on Empathy \(2:50 min\)](#)





# Interpersonal and Group Climate

On a continuum from confirming to disconfirming, supportive to defensive

- **Climate** = overall feeling or emotional mood between people or among group members
- Communication is the primary tool to build and influence the climate in personal, social, and professional relationships.



# Confirming Behavior

*There are three kinds of confirming behavior:*

- **Recognition**- confirms that "You exist for me."
- **Acknowledgement** -is a statement about awareness of or interest in the other person's perceptions, comments, or questions
- **Endorsement** - is confirming behavior that sends the message "the way you are feeling is OK, or the way you are perceiving this is OK."



# Practice Compassionate Curiosity

- Use perception checking and “I” language
- Listen to the other person’s needs
- Validate their perception (truth)
- Generate possible solutions
- Other ways?

Video: [Finding Confidence in Conflict](#)

Kwame Christian - TEDxDayton  
(11:30 mins)



# Respond Constructively to Criticism

- Not everyone will communicate criticism in descriptive ways
- May seem like evaluation = might make us feel defensive
- Sometimes we must look past the way it's said to see the message...ask for clarification
- We need to evaluate if it is valid (dual perspective)
- If it is valid, we need to consider whether or not we wish to change
- Thank the person who offered the criticism – it gives us insight into us



# Conflict



# Conflict Defined

One useful definition of conflict (Wilmot & Hocker (1978) is: Conflict is an **expressed struggle** between at least two **interdependent parties** who **perceive incompatible goals**, scarce resources, and **interference from others in achieving their goals**.

- What is “real” and what is just “perceived”?
- Could be expressed directly or indirectly.
- How does your past conflict experiences and perception about conflict influence the way you engage in new conflict moments?
- “Conflict Resolution” vs “Conflict Management”
- **Destructive** Conflict - dominance, escalation, retaliation, competition, and inflexibility
- **Constructive** Conflict - “we-orientation”, cooperation, and flexibility



# Conflict Styles

(Thomas Kilmann Model)

## Collaborating (Problem Solving)

High task, High social “win/win”

## Accommodating (Yielding)

Low task, High social

## Compromising

Moderate task, Moderate social “Lose/Lose”

## Avoiding (Withdrawing)

Low task, Low social

## Competing (Power/Forcing)

High task, Low social “Win/Lose”

Personal Conflict Style Self-Assessment



# Constructive and Unproductive Communication During Conflict

## Constructive

- Validation of each other
- Sensitive listening
- Dual perspective
- Recognition of other's concerns
- Asking for clarification
- Infrequent interruption
- Focus on specific issues
- Compromises and contracts
- Useful metacommunication
- Summarizing the concerns
- Positive affect

## Unproductive

- Disconfirmation of each other
- Poor listening
- Preoccupation with self
- Cross-complaining
- Hostile mind reading
- Frequent interruptions
- Kitchen-sinking
- Counterproposals
- Excessive metacommunication
- Self-summarizing by both partners
- Negative affect





# Tips on Conflict Management Skills

- Attend to the Relationship Level of Meaning
- Communicate Supportively
- Listen Mindfully
- Take Responsibility for your Thoughts, Feelings, and Issues
- Check Perceptions
- Look for Points of Agreement
- Look for Ways to Preserve the Other's Face
- Imagine How you'll Feel in the Future
- Focus on the overall communication system
- Time conflict purposefully (time, environment, etc.)
- Aim for a “win-win”
- Honor yourself, your partner, and the relationship
- **SHOW GRACE** when appropriate



# Reminders about Conflict

- Conflict is natural in relationships
- Conflict may be overt or covert
- Social Groups shape the meaning of conflict behaviors
- Cultural differences regarding conflict
- Differences among social communities
- Conflict can be managed well or poorly
- Conflict can be good for individuals and relationships



**Just a  
reminder...**



# Open Discussion

We want this to be a safe space. This session is not being recorded, and these plenary events are where we have community to support each other as we recognize what might work in one situation in the context of one college/district may not be the reality or opportunity in another.



# Final Thoughts

Thank you for sharing space with us and engaging in this dialogue. We appreciate your dedication to your colleagues, local governance, and most importantly to your students.

Questions:

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