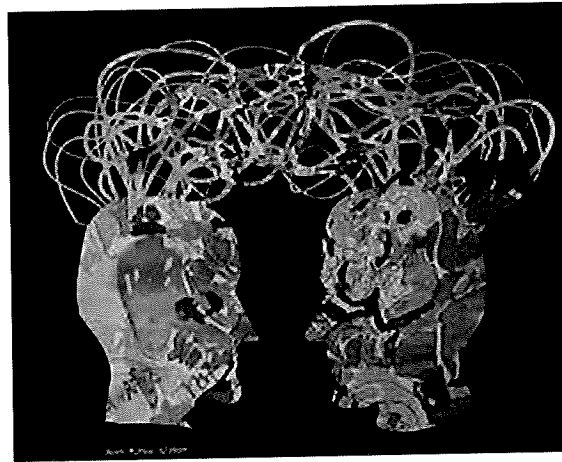


Interpersonal Communication Skills



Good morning, during the next hour and a half we will explore interpersonal communication skills.

We chose to include a presentation this topic because the demand was so great. When Col Erdelatz began to socialize the concept of MCLD, the feedback he got from the Commander's Course, Enlisted PME, and MACG-28 for example, was that they all wanted interpersonal communications skills training. When he spoke to recruiters, who actually get this training, they made the same recommendation.

Interestingly, 100 years ago, adults wanted the same thing. A survey conducted over a two year period in the early 1900s revealed that adults were most interested in developing skills in getting along with and influencing other people more than any other topic (except health). Specifically, they wanted practical skills they could use immediately (per Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People).

That is what we aim to accomplish today; to teach you practical skills that you can use to be more effective leaders, and that you can teach to your Marines so they can be more effective leaders.

Which one of the following traits is most predictive of success?

1. Intelligence
2. Education
3. Experience
4. Knowledge

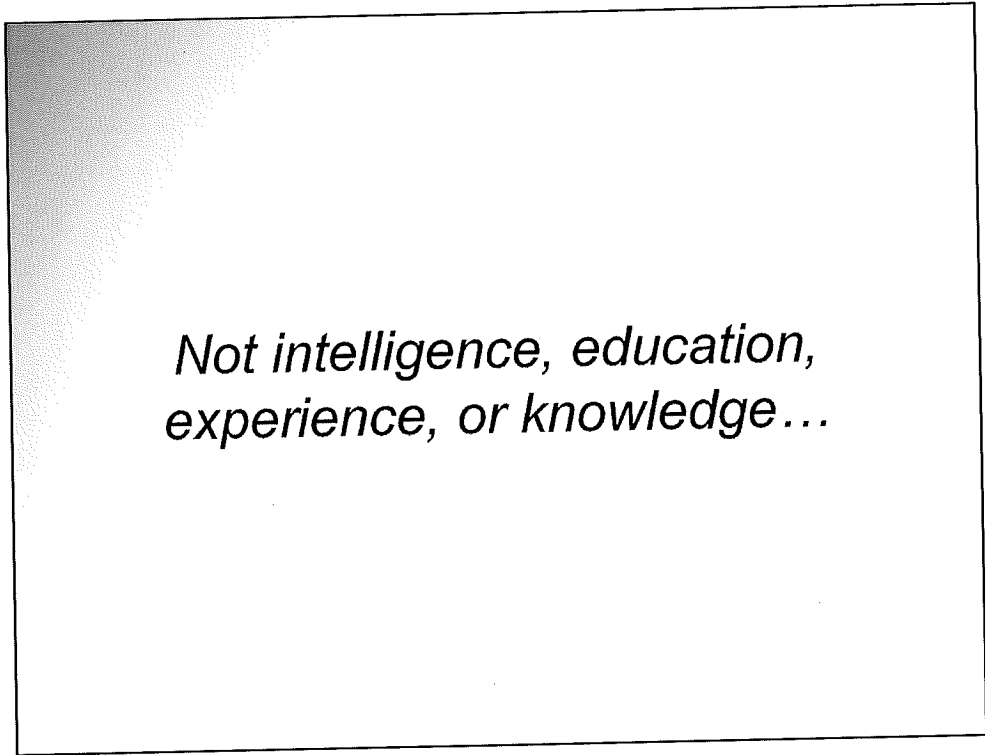
Does anyone have a guess as to what these traits have in common?

All contribute to success to a certain degree, but NONE guarantee success, not even all of them combined. It doesn't mean they are not important, it just means none of these traits serve as an adequate predictor for why one person succeeds professionally and personally, and another does not.

For example, for years social scientists assumed that IQ was the source of success. Specifically, they thought a person's IQ score could be used to predict how successful a person would be in his/her personal and professional life. But experience taught them something else. For example, people with extremely high IQs outperformed those with average IQs only 20% of the time, while people with average IQs outperformed people with high IQs 70% of the time. Basically, what people realized was there must be another quality that they had not accounted for that significantly contributed to success. Does this surprise you?

Get audience input...

Eventually, what they learned was that people with strong interpersonal communication skills (IPCS) are usually more successful in both their professional and personal lives than those who lack these skills.



*Not intelligence, education,
experience, or knowledge...*

Does anyone have a guess as to what these traits have in common?

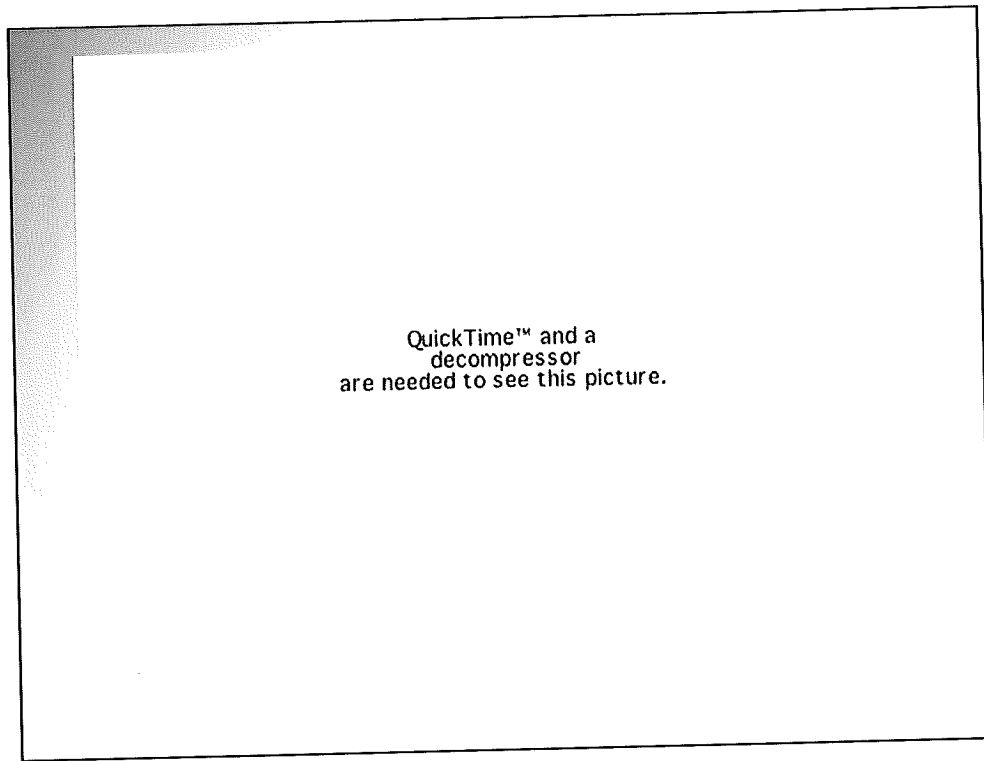
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communication skills (IPCS) are usually more successful in both their professional and personal lives than those who lack these skills.



Here is one example why...

Play Big Bang Theory video clip of Sheldon getting fired because he inadvertently insults his boss (due to his lack of interpersonal communication skills).

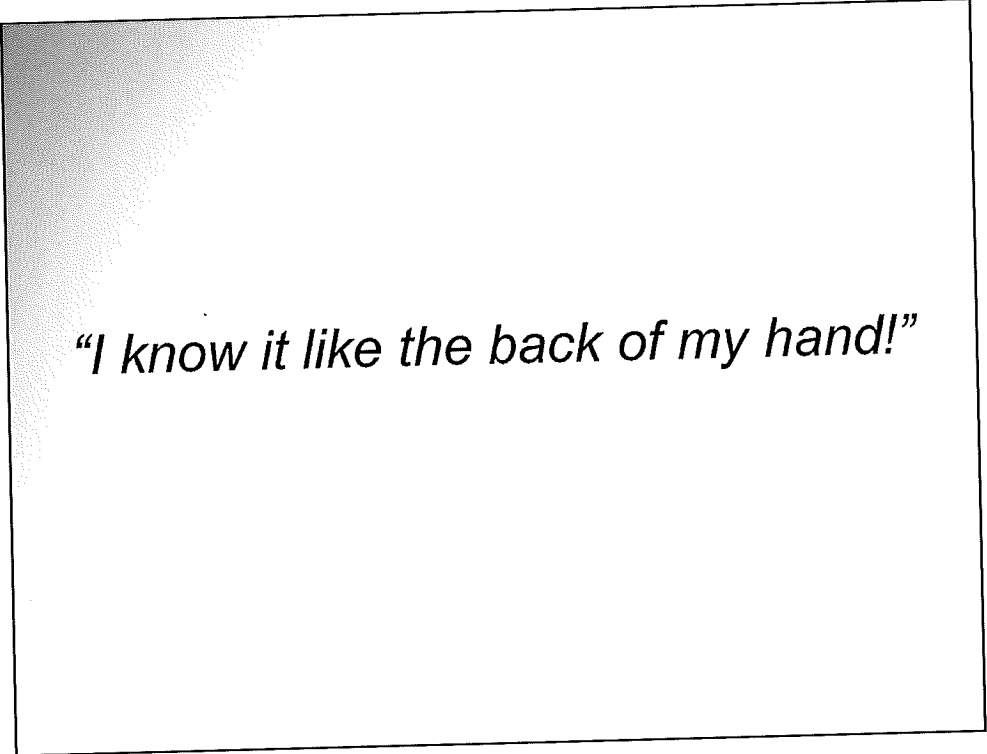
When I saw this episode of the Big Bang Theory, I thought it was likely an exaggeration. No one could be that smart but also that lacking in common sense. However, the last time I gave this presentation, a 1stSgt shared a story about how he had to separate a Marine who had a GT score of 140—the highest of any other Marine he had ever served with—prior to the Marine's EAS. The Marine could not follow simple orders or get along with the Marines in this squad or his squad leader. Basically, he was arrogant and had zero social skills. Matter-of-fact, the Marine told his CO during his NJP that he could try to explain the situation that led to his NJP but he doubted his CO was intelligent enough to understand.

Studies support these anecdotal stories. Significantly, the correlation between professional success and IPCS is so strong that those with high IPCS make an average of 29k more per year than people with low IPCS in the civilian world. These findings hold true for people in all industries, at all levels, in every region of the world.

Other studies confirm that even in technical jobs such as engineering, only 15% of a person's success can be attributed to a person's technical knowledge, while 85% is attributed to their ability to deal with and lead other people.

The findings also hold true for the Marine Corps. Marines with strong IPCS don't necessarily make more money, but they tend to be better leaders. The reason is in a people organization like Marine Corps, strong IPCS enable us as leaders to better connect with our Marines. They help us to build rapport, earn respect, and gain trust. This in turn allows us to better influence our Marines in a positive manner.

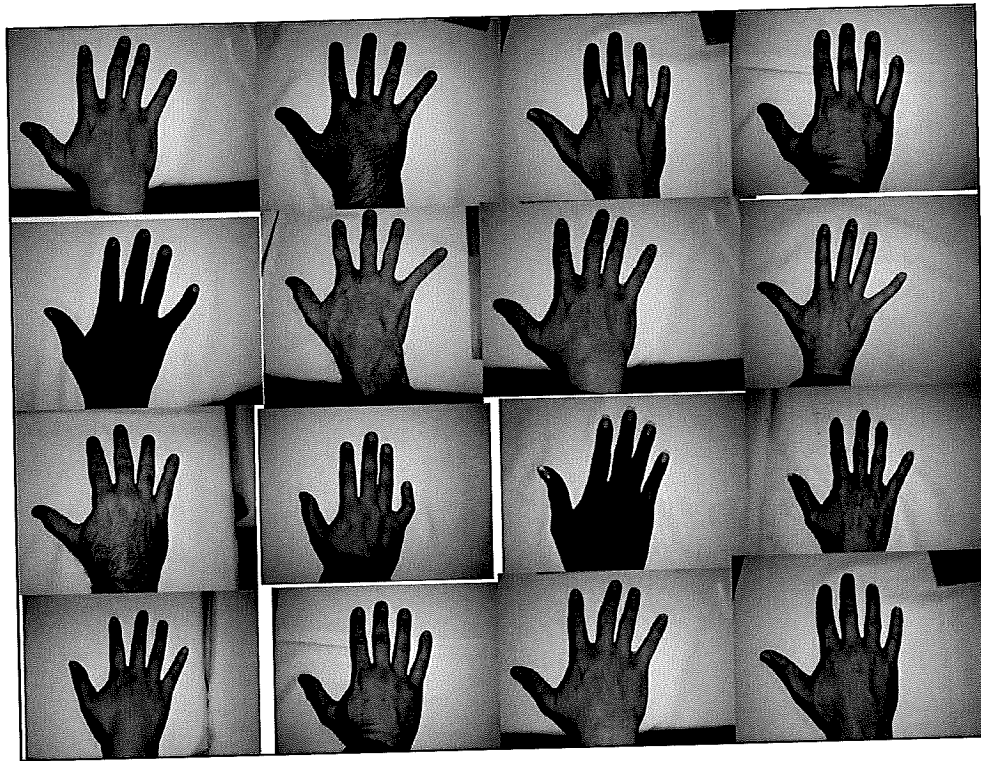
So, as it turns out, people 100 years ago, and Marines today, seem to have an intuitive understanding that IPCS are foundational to leadership.



“I know it like the back of my hand!”

Most of us have either used the phrase or heard others use the phrase, “I know it like I know the back of my hand.” Matter of fact, I asked a waitress at a Hard Rock Café recently about a couple of items on the menu. She said she was new, but that she would fetch another waitress who “knew the menu like the back of her hand.”

By using this phrase, the intent is to convince others that you are “intimately” familiar with something.



The irony is that only 5% of people can identify the back of their hand from a photo.

And just like the backs of our hands, most of us are largely unaware of our own interpersonal communication style and level of skill.

The reason is it's something that's inherent—most of us do it automatically—so we don't tend to think about it very much, let alone study it.

That being said, we can improve our interpersonal communication skills, but it requires self awareness and intentional effort. Just like in the video we saw, good interpersonal communication skills are not automatic. Some of us have them, and some of us don't. But we can all improve.

The good news is we will get a huge payoff for our investment. We might discover idiosyncrasies we don't realize are negatively affecting our ability to communicate with our Marines. We will undoubtedly learn some new skills that we don't currently possess.

Do you see your hand on the
screen?

1. Yes
2. No

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Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Interpersonal skills are the set of abilities we use every day to work, communicate, and interact with other people, both individually and in groups.

Now that we have established the importance of IPCS, let's make sure we all understand the definition.

IPCS are the set of abilities we use to interact and communicate with other people.

So, let's again discuss the fact that adults 100 years ago and today want to learn how to interact more effectively with other people. Why do people want these skills? What do these skills allow us to do? What is "implied" in the definition?

Get audience input...

To prevent or deal better with conflict, avoid arguments, to have more satisfying/meaningful relationships, etc. But, the main reason is to have more "influence" over other people. To bring them to our way of thinking, to influence them in a positive manner, etc.

Now let's look at the definition of leadership...

Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Interpersonal skills are the set of abilities we use every day to work, communicate, and interact with other people, both individually and in groups.
- **Leadership:** The sum of those qualities of intellect, human knowledge, and moral character that allow a person to motivate a group of people to reach a common goal.

Leadership, like interpersonal skills, involves using a set of abilities to interact with other people. But leadership has a specific purpose... it also involves motivating or inspiring a group of people to reach a common goal. In other words, leadership is the act of "influencing" others to accomplish the mission.

Thus, IPCS are foundational to effective leadership, since the requirement to influence is inherent in leadership, and good IPCS will allow you to influence others more effectively.

And this is what great leaders must be able to do, to influence others, for our positional authority is not sufficient to lead Marines into battle and be successful.

Agenda

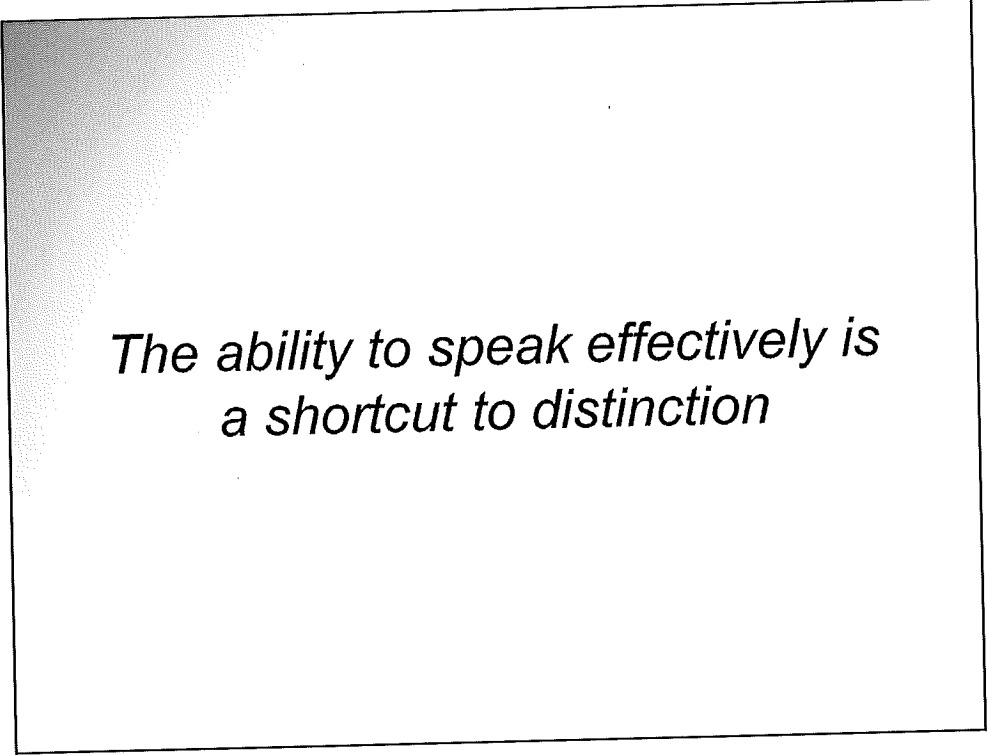
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
 - Verbal communication
 - Non-verbal communication



This is our agenda.

During this presentation, we will cover verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Keep in mind that even if you are already aware of most of these things in this brief, your young Marines still might find it useful, especially since they have less experience. They may not have developed some of these skills.



*The ability to speak effectively is
a shortcut to distinction*

Why do we care about verbal communication?

Because it puts the person in the limelight, raises one head and shoulders above the crowd, and a person who speaks acceptably is usually given credit for an ability out of all proportion to what he or she really possesses. Followers gravitate to the people who can talk.

Verbal Communication

- The sharing of information between individuals by using speech; a way of conveying information in a spoken rather than written manner.



The first IPC skill we will cover today is verbal communication.

It is defined as the sharing of information between individuals in a spoken rather than written manner.

It includes formal and informal, face-to-face communication, such as that which takes place during mentoring, coaching, and counseling sessions, to include the information that is shared during meetings, conferences, briefs, formations, phone calls, verbal orders, etc.

Informal communication is normally built around the social relationships of an organization.

Formal communication is communication that takes place through the official and regulated channels of the organization.

Now that we have defined formal and informal communication, what is the difference between public and private speaking? I will change your mind about how you differentiate between the two...

Get audience input...

“Public is in front of more than one person. Private is between two people.”

Actually, all speaking is public speaking. No conversation is ever “private” for long. For example, if we approach our leader with constructive criticism or an idea, and she s/he is an asshole, it won’t take long for word to get around. The same is true if the leader is genuinely interested in what the Marine has to say and is receptive to his/her ideas. Word will also get around.

No communication, no speaking, is ever private. ALL is public.

Verbal Communication Principles

1. Think before you speak
2. Organize your message
3. Be clear and concise
4. Learn how to listen
5. Master the art of conversation
6. Communicate with power

1. Think Before You Speak

- Prepare
- Make the information relevant
- Start with what your listener needs to know

“Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.”

The first verbal communication skill is to think before you speak. I find that many people say whatever goes through their minds without putting any thought into what they are saying. As a result they say things that end up reflecting poorly on themselves and confuses their listeners.

We can prevent this by planning ahead. Planning ahead will allow you to think better on your feet, express your ideas with more clarity, more effectiveness, and more poise. It will also helps you to ensure that your message is clear in your own mind and that your message will be understood by your Marines--that it comes off the way you intend.

The more formal the communication, the more preparation that is required.

For example, President Lincoln is remembered for being a remarkable communicator. What some people might not know is he was to great was because he spent a lot of time in preparation. For example, he spent months meticulously preparing the Cooper Union Address, the speech that made him president. And contrary to popular opinion, he did not draft the Gettysburg address on the back of an envelope on his way to the cemetery.

The less formal the communication, less preparation is necessary. One way to be prepared for extemporaneous communication is to read.

2. When preparing our communication, you should start with what your audience needs to know, not with everything you know. For example, Marines have enough information. They are drowning in it. What they need is someone to help them make sense of it, to help them make meaning of the information.

Matter of fact, leadership theory states the power to motivate followers and shape their values resides almost solely in the ability of leaders to effectively communicate...because in so doing, you create meaning for the members of the organization. It is the way members of a group become aligned with the goals and values of the organization.

3. We want to make the information relevant to our Marines, because this will ensure they pay attention. Research demonstrates that when we hear someone speak, the area of the brain that deals with whether or not the information is useful to us is activated.

4. Think about what you are saying from the other person's perspective. Just because you understand what you mean, it doesn't mean that they will. This will help us ensure the information is presented in a way that is best understood by our audience.

For all these reasons, we want to make sure we make the most of our verbal communication opportunities, and we can do this by being prepared.

President Lincoln understood this. He is known as an intelligent and tremendously effective communicator. He was careful about what he said and thought before he spoke. He also had the ability to communicate his feelings and emotions. Because of this, he had the capacity to raise the emotions of his audience and influence them.

How long did President Lincoln spend preparing the Gettysburg address?

1. 1 Day
2. 1 Week
3. Several weeks
4. He wrote it on the way to the cemetery.

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2. Organize Your Message

Five Principles (Winston Churchill):

- Start strong
- One theme
- Simple language
- Create a word picture (story)
- End with emotion

One of the greatest public speakers of the 20th Century.

One way that we can do that is to keep these 5 principles in mind when we organize our messages.

1. Starting strong is important because you have the greatest attention of your audience at the beginning. But do not start with small talk. They won't likely remember what you say at the end if you begin this way. You can skip the pleasantries.

2. He read Aristotle's rhetoric that said the most important thing in making a speech is sticking to one theme. If when your speech is done your audience cannot say in one sentence what your speech is about, it is not worth delivering.

You want people to remember what you say, so the trick is to have one theme. You might have many points, but you want to capture them under one heading. Does anyone recall the theme of my leadership heritage brief yesterday? It was that leadership is our most important responsibility.

One technique is to write the theme first before you develop what you want to say.

This is true not just of speeches, but of classes as well.

3. It should sound the way you talk. Simple conversational language. There is less cognitive resistance if we use simple, familiar language.

4. We think in narrative. Basically, our brain's way of expressing thought is through a story we tell ourselves. The reason is a story is broken down into cause and effect, and this is how we think. Since we think in narrative, we are more receptive to messages in narrative.

5. Start strong, end strong. By creating an emotional response, you are more likely to be persuasive and remembered. People remember not so much of what you say or do, but how you make them feel.

3. Be Clear and Concise

- Use the right words
 - Word choice: using the best words to get your point across
 - How to improve: Increase the size of your vocabulary

A well-developed vocabulary is the outward sign of a well-developed mind. Words are the working tools of your brain, just as surely as your hands or your eyes.

Marilyn vos Savant

The second verbal communication skill is to be clear, because messages, especially if they are complex, can easily be misunderstood.

One way to be clear is to use the right words.

The concept is easy to define; it's simply using the best words to get your point across.

Play Bush video-2000 presidential debate, reputation for mispronouncing words.
(salavitate, strategery)

Poor word choice damages our credibility. The right words, on the other hand, allow us to connect with others. They allow us to influence the thoughts of our Marines, which helps influence attitudes. The right words also help prevent us from being misunderstood.

This is especially important because if people don't understand something, we tend to reject it, rather than seek to understand. Clarity is also key due to the nature of what we do--it is crucial that our Marines to understand our message. Especially when carrying out orders.

Kelly's story...

What is a better word that could have been used?

So, how to do you improve word choice? According to **Marilyn vos Savant**, you increase your vocabulary. She is the person with the highest IQ ever measured on the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. Normal IQ is 100. Hers registered at 230.

Matter of fact, we subconsciously judge each others level of intelligence by the words we use, our vocabulary...how often have you said or heard someone say, "He's got a 10 pound brain? Or "He's really smart." Odds are, you did not look up their GT or IQ score. You figured this out mostly by the words the person uses.

Contrary to what some people believe, the point of having a large vocabulary is not to use complicated words to impress other people.

The point is to be able to choose words with greater precision. To choose the right word. This allows you to tailor your words to your audience and to use less words to get your point across.

In addition to helping you communicate your ideas and thoughts more effectively, a large vocabulary helps you to better understand what others are trying to say to you because the right words make you more open minded, they make you more receptive to new ideas.

Each new word you learn opens a new avenue of thought, empowering you to think or take action in ways you could never have before. For example, people who possess a limited vocabulary have a much tougher time breaking out from old patterns of thought or questioning.

My favorite story that illustrates the importance of vocabulary is from the novel Nineteen Eighty-Four. In the book, the authoritarian government controls every citizen via the official language: Newspeak.

Newspeak is rigidly controlled by the government, and it's the only language whose vocabulary gets smaller every year.

In Newspeak, words that convey subversive thoughts – like “freedom” – simply don't exist anymore. By systematically removing or distorting the meaning of words, the government takes away the tools to question its authority. Without words to exchange or perpetuate ideas, these ideas start to gradually disappear from people's minds. Without not even being aware of it, people became powerless and easily controlled.

Although this example may be a bit extreme, it serves to illustrate the point: when you possess a small vocabulary, you shut down lines of communication and lines of reasoning.

It logically follows that the way to increase our vocabularies is to memorize words. If you are wondering how can you possibly memorize long lists of new words, it is important to note that the more you memorize, the more you can memorize, because memory exercises have been proven to increase connections in the brain. Matter of fact, you are actually increasing our IQ by doing this.

The concepts involved are neuroplasticity and neurogenesis: essentially, the brain changes in response to your experience and is capable of growth and development.

Finally, 20 years of extensive and rigorous research has observed that a person's vocabulary level is the best single predictor of occupational success. It is significant that researchers tested successful people in many walks of life, they always found the same results, no matter which area he looked at, and no matter how they analyzed the data.

In class exercise: word choice

The first verbal communication skill is to think before you speak. I find that many people say whatever goes through their minds without putting any thought into what they are saying. As a result they say things that end up reflecting poorly on themselves and confuses their listeners.

We can prevent this by planning ahead. Planning ahead will allow you to think better on your feet, express your ideas with more clarity, more effectiveness, and more poise. It will also helps you to ensure that your message is clear in your own mind and that your message will be understood by your Marines--that it comes off the way you intend.

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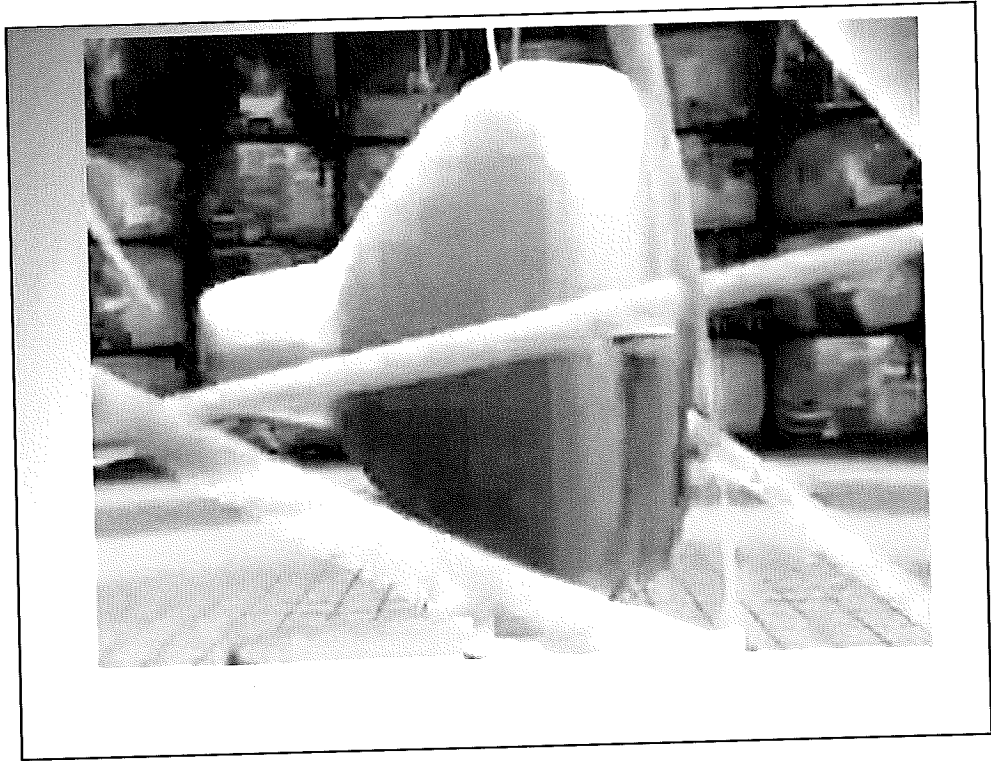
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Bush speech blunder video.

Resources to Improve Vocabulary

- To check your current vocabulary size:
 - <http://testyourvocab.com/>
 - <http://my.vocabularysize.com/select/test>
- To improve the size of your vocabulary:
 - <https://www.vocabulary.com/>
 - Boost Your Brainpower by Frank Minirth, MD

4. Learn How to Listen



The problem with communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished.

George Bernard Shaw

As Ernest Hemingway stated, "When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen."

The third verbal communication skill is to learn how to listen.

Listening is part of verbal communication skills because it is not just what you say, but what others people say.

Hearing: Hearing is simply the process of perceiving sounds within our environment (ear)

- Mechanical

Listening: Listening, on the other hand, is paying deliberate attention (mind)

- Intellectual

It involves the extra steps of really understanding what we heard, and giving it deliberate attention and thoughtful consideration.

Being an attentive listener is more important in verbal communication than any words that can come out of your mouth. When you listen, you communicate that you value not just what the person has to say, but them as well.

As a result, your Marines will more likely to come to you with information if you actually listen to them because they trust you. They will also be less upset if you do not take their recommendations if you at least really listen to them when they make them. Most Marines just want an opportunity to be heard, to help the CO make more informed decisions.

Improving your listening skills will also help you to better understand tasks, provide better input in working groups and OPTs. You can also better connect with your Marines. Significantly, a better connection with your Marines allows you to better influence them in a positive manner.

The problem is, few people know how to really listen.

We spend 60% of our time listening to others speak. But we only retain 25% of what was said, due to poor listening skills.



In class exercise: listening skills

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