



*“Effective & Compassionate Communication
Strategies During COVID-19”*

Zoom Presentation By:

Joseph E. Ankus, Esq.

President-Attorney Mental Health Education, Inc.

4/16/2020

What We Will Learn Today

- 1. How *effective and compassionate* communication helps our clients and colleagues.
- 2. How using *social styles* improves communication.
- 3. How we can enhance the *impact* of our phone calls, emails, texts and social media posts.



Question: What is compassion?

Answer: Concern for others who may be suffering.



Overview of the Communication Process

- Awareness of ourselves.
- Awareness of who we communicate with.
- Awareness of the most effective ways to communicate.
- Awareness that our actions have consequences.
- Awareness of the need for emotional space and privacy.



Communication- From Aristotle to Zoom!

- Aristotle was an effective speaker long before the Internet or Facebook.
- “A speaker gives a speech on an occasion to an audience which has an effect.”
- Today we email, text, call, tweet, post, or teleconference.
- We want people to **understand** what we are sharing.
- Credibility, Relatability, Factuality + Tranquility= Keys To Success



Berlo's Model of Communication

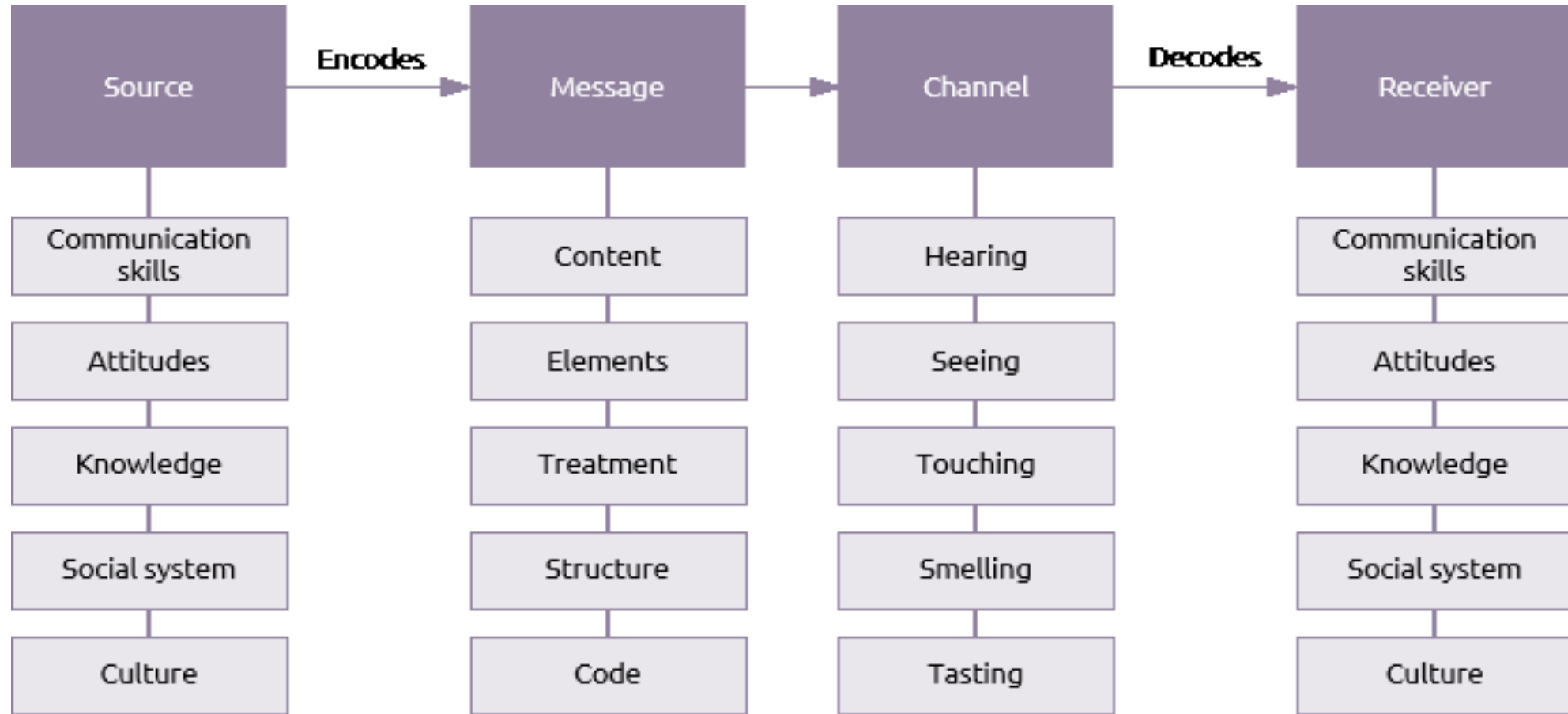
- Dr. David Berlo was a pioneer in modern communication theory.
- His **SMCR** model details the steps in communication.
- A **Source** sends a **Message** through a **Channel** that is interpreted by the **Receiver**.
- Each **SMCR** element reflects how our individuality influences the entire process.
- Understanding **SMCR** allows for effective communication.



Communication Is Like A Four Lane Highway

With lots of noise and traffic!

Let's Take A Closer Look...





The **Source** of The Message

- If you are the **sender**, or **source of a message**, consider that:
- It is helpful to understand our **own** communication skills, attitudes, and knowledge **before** we send a message.
- **Our personal belief systems are accumulated over decades and can be unconscious.**
- “It’s a crazy time!” - Joe Ankus
- “It’s a different time...” - Dr. Denise Gaskin, Ph.D., M.S.
- We prefer that everyone think like we do.
- News Flash: We are actually ALL DIFFERENT!
- Example: What you think is “fair” may not be what I think is “fair”. Determining “fairness” keep courts quite busy and lawyers wealthy.

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN
?

You Send Your Own Message!

- Your **message's** content is crucial. Think carefully about what you want to say and how someone might interpret it. 50% of the time, our assumptions are wrong.
- Ask yourself, **before** you send the message, “What effect may this have on the receiver?” If there are ambiguities, clarify them!
- In stressful situations, brief and concise messages are helpful.
- When in doubt, consider asking yourself WWW&H.
- Emoticons can help to reduce verbal ambiguity! 😊 😍 😞
- We **need** to know when to email, text, or call.
- If there is any chance for misinterpretation or a need for detailed explanation- think about making a phone call.



Change The Channel!

- According to Dr. Berlo, the **channel** is simply how we use our five senses to receive the message.
- We are the channel!
- Five Human Senses: Hearing, Seeing, Touching, Smelling and Tasting
- Unless we are in a busy bakery, we can only consider what we **hear and see**.
- **With social distancing, we don't have physical touch (i.e.: shaking hands, hug, etc.) but we can create an emotional touch through our words, tone and empathy.**
- Everyone's sensory perceptions (or their personal "channel") are different too.
- Can we all agree on what the best tasting dessert is? We could try.



The Receiver of The Message

- If you are the **receiver** of a message recall the similarity to the **source** slide.
- We need to understand our **own** communication skills, attitudes and culture when we interpret a message.
- When we understand ourselves better, we recognize how our life experiences filter into the **source's** message.
- **If possible, we want to meet the receiver where THEY are emotionally- not where we think they SHOULD be.**
- We never may know what is actually going on with the receiver. Default to compassion.
- If someone ignores repeated attempts to contact them, don't get angry- ask if they are O.K. or if you can be of help.
- Most of the time, it's not personal. Offer an open line to reach you.



Seeing Is Believing!

The FedEx logo is displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The word "Fed" is rendered in a dark purple color, while the word "Ex" is rendered in a bright orange color. The letters are closely spaced and have a clean, modern appearance.

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)



Did you ever wonder why...

- You like some people better than others?
- It is easier to communicate with certain people?
- It is easier to work with certain people?
- People sometimes “just don’t get you?”
- People argue endlessly over trivial things?
- Opposing counsel “makes things personal” instead of about the case?

When Someone Disagrees With **You...**

They Have To Be An **Alien!**

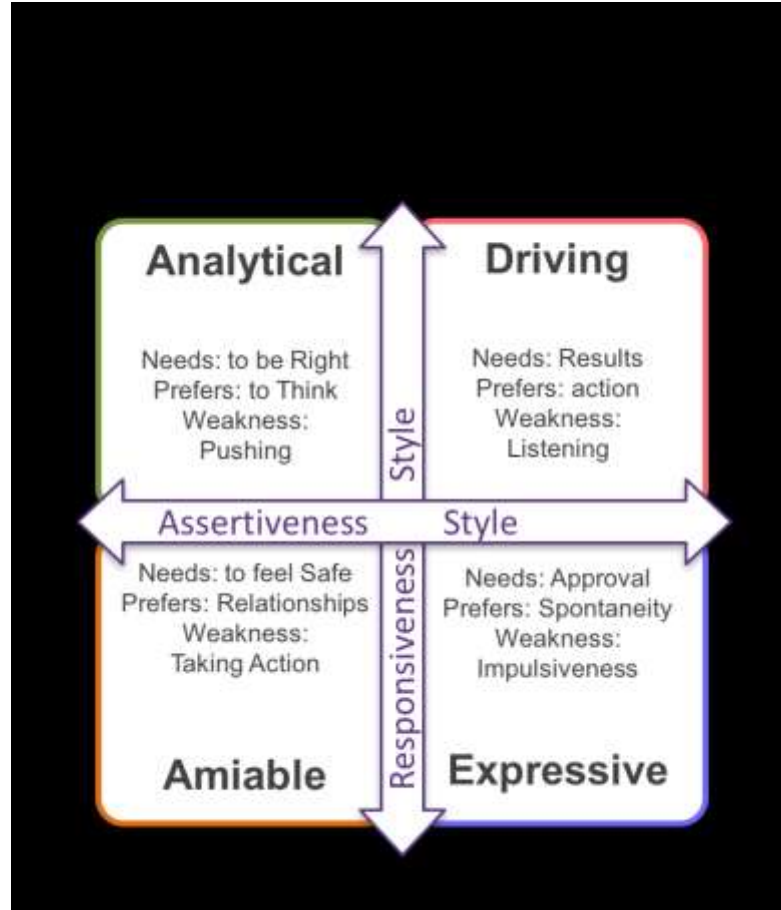




Understanding Social Styles

- Social style analysis has been studied for decades.
- We all have **observable** primary and secondary social styles.
- Social styles help us to work and communicate effectively.
- There is no style that is “right” or “wrong” or “good” or “bad”.
- Watch for the diagonals!

Introduction To Merrill-Reid Social Styles



Tying It All Together

- Strategy 1: Focus on personal self-awareness in communication.
- Strategy 2: Focus on message content, delivery and intended outcome.
- Strategy 3: Focus on differential information processing.
- Strategy 4: Focus on knowing your audience.
- Strategy 5: Focus on analyzing and using social styles.
- Strategy 6: Focus on integrating compassion into your communication.

Florida Bar CLE Information

CLE Course Reference Number: 3905

Title: “Effective Communication Strategies During COVID-19”

Level: Intermediate

Approval Period: 4/16/2020-10/31/2021

Additional Resources

- Berlo, David K.- “The Process of Communication: An Introduction To Theory and Practice”
- Gaskin, Denise, Ph.D., M.S. “Design A Healthy Culture- A DIY Guide For Building A Healthy Culture” (www.ravenwork.com)
- Merrill, David W. & Reid, Roger H.- “Personal Styles & Effective Performance”
- Photos sourced from Unsplash.com (www.unsplash.com)