



# EFFORTLESS COMMUNICATION

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*How to tweak, tailor or transform your communication to optimise your relationships and increase your results*

*“Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life.”*

BRIAN TRACY



## Introduction

*This white paper explores the integral part that communication plays in our relationships, performance and results.*

The ultimate goal is to create an environment:

- where individuals and teams are fully aware of their communication style, how they interact with others and how they can add more impact
- where everyone learns how to utilise key influencing strategies to maximise team and stakeholder relationships
- where everyone takes ownership for their communication and therefore their focus and results
- where an environment is created that is full of productivity and wellbeing based on rock solid communication skills

Have you ever had the experience of being abroad and not speaking the language? You may order in a restaurant or ask for directions, and the person you ask shouts back at you - loud and slow - hoping that you will understand what they are saying. This generally doesn't tend to work - we need to change more within our communication to get better results than our speed and volume.

In the workplace there is often a lack of communication flexibility, which tends to lead to a futile hope that messages will be understood as they were intended. By achieving effortless communication, the ability to adapt and master different communication tactics is made possible. As a consequence, performance and results increase.

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## About Deborah



Deborah is passionate about driving home the critical importance of communication mastery within the workplace, and the effect that outstanding influencing skills have on team performance and relationships.

She is the author of 'GLIDE - A 5-Step Process To Effortless Performance' and she specialises in the area of culture, leadership and performance.

After training, coaching and teaching her way around the world - she's trained managers in 17 different countries, lived and worked in 5 countries, and learnt 5 languages - gaining deep insight into people, cultures and behaviour has always been one of her biggest drivers.



## Challenges that can arise through a lack of communication mastery

The problem with continuing to communicate in the same way is that extensive opportunities to observe, listen and read what others are really thinking and feeling may be missed, along with not getting the message across, not providing the motivation or reason for people to put the 100% in that is expected of them, and failure to create optimal working relations and conditions.

From experience with working with many teams across multiple industries, poor or unevolved communication can create the following:

1. Toxic, insidious or destructive cultures
2. High turnover - it is a well known fact that people leave their managers, not their companies
3. Wasted potential, time and performance
4. Information deficits and gaps in understanding what is needed and expected
5. Silos due to the lack of face to face contact, over reliance on email communication and poor communication flow

The good news is, these problems can often be solved with new and improved communication skills. We just need to be prepared to put the time and energy aside to learn new tools and techniques that will lift our communication performance and be willing to leave some old habits behind.

On the following page  
we'll look at why we  
don't focus on  
improving our  
communication skills



# Six common reasons we don't focus on mastering our communication

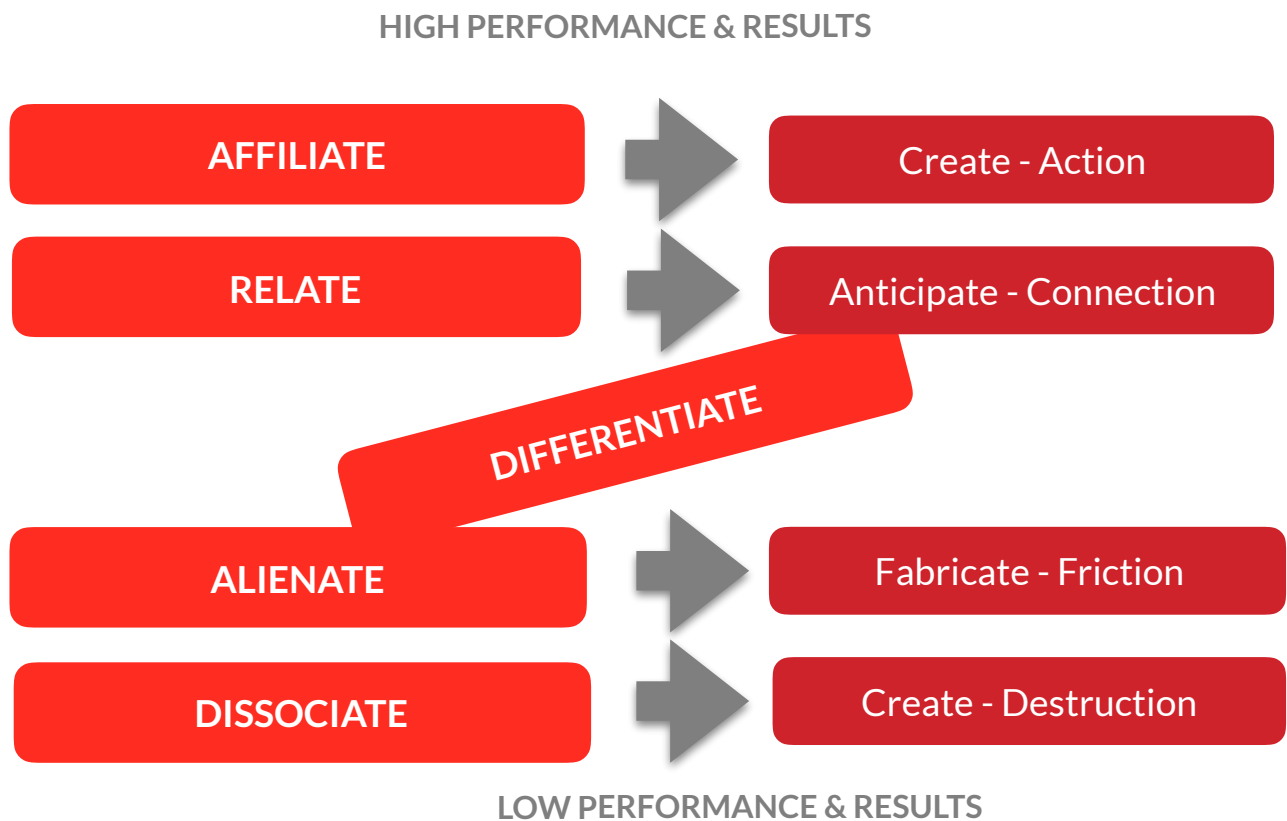
In his book, *Outliers, the Story of Success*, Malcolm Gladwell talks about the 10,000 hour rule - the number of hours reached by those who demonstrate elite level and beyond performance.

We all have 10,000 hours in communication under our belts - but how many of us would be categorised as stand out masters in communication? Six common reasons why we haven't all reached a beyond - elite level of communication that I've come across in my work with clients are:

1. 'Life' gets in the way - we are operating in crisis management mode so often, it gives us very few opportunities to actually think through about how and what we're communicating. Resorting to survival or fighting fires mode doesn't always give us the best patterns to choose from at the time, and it also limits opportunities for observation and reflection.
2. We think we already know what needs to be said or what others are thinking or feeling. We base far too much on our assumptions and our own model of the world. Andy Murray said recently 'Commentators like to speculate what someone is thinking at different stages on the court. They have no idea what each individual is thinking.' We tend to fall into this trap at work too often.
3. Our ego can get in the way - it's not easy to admit that we could improve something that we've been doing our whole lives. However, adding to your toolkit helps you be far more influential if you can see other ways of communicating and act on them.
4. We wait for others to 'get' us and our style. That won't happen. It's up to us to flex our style if we want to get different results. An NLP belief is 'The meaning of communication is the response you get.'
5. We are unaware of all the different linguistic tools out there to appeal to different ways of thinking and processing. Some leading therapists in history were masters at linguistics - take Virginia Satir or Milton Erickson as two legendary examples.
6. We don't often see the link between communication and wellbeing. We don't realise how our unintentional bad communication skills can eat someone up inside and have them fight negative emotions that continue way beyond the working day and unfortunately the ripple effects can be wide spreading.



## Shifting to a level of mastery within your communication



This model tracks the difference in performance and results that can be affected based on communication and its potential intended, or unintended, outcomes.

Let's examine this  
model more closely....



# GLIDE

## WHITE PAPER

The model on the previous page explores the impact of communication skills within a work culture on a scale from poor to excellent.

### DISSOCIATE

Starting at the bottom, if your communication dissociates, then no connection or understanding exists. This can **create** a **destructive** environment in the sense that there is no desire or incentive to come together and work as a team.

In a culture where there is high dissociation between the leader and team or amongst team members, people don't work together and remain very separated. Shared knowledge, skills or vision is not in existence.

### ALIENTATE

If your communication alienates, then you may **fabricate friction** across the team. This can create a toxic culture where negative talk or thoughts dominate. Sides may be taken, the team may be divided and favourites may be obvious. Where there is alienation, resistance, defiance or even mutiny can occur. One must question whether it's really worth the negative energy that is needed for the constant battles facing you. Team support does not exist in this culture.

### DIFFERENTIATE

When communication differentiates, buy-in is important as it can go either two ways. If there is an existing strong relationship across a team, then it can be seen as challenging, lateral thinking or playing devils advocate. Teams may welcome this if they are facing disruption or change so that they can face the various paths ahead together. If there is no existing bond however, then it can be seen as divisive and therefore not a very productive communication style.

### RELATE

Once your communication relates, a **connection** and comprehension between people is **anticipated** and formed. Viewpoints, preferences and individual values and beliefs are respected, and a team can start to work with far more clarity and collaboration, the cornerstones to teams that achieve effortless communication and therefore higher performance.

### AFFILIATE

At the affiliate stage, there is a much deeper team identity and leader to team relationship, and performance and results are significantly improved as a result of a team being genuinely united. Here, effortless communication is achieved through the team having taken the time and effort to really get to know each other, their work and communication preferences and they have genuinely bought into the collective vision as a team. Alignment and **action is created** instinctively while the culture is somewhere that all team members want to be.

On the next page we're going to look at some critical elements to achieving the results you want

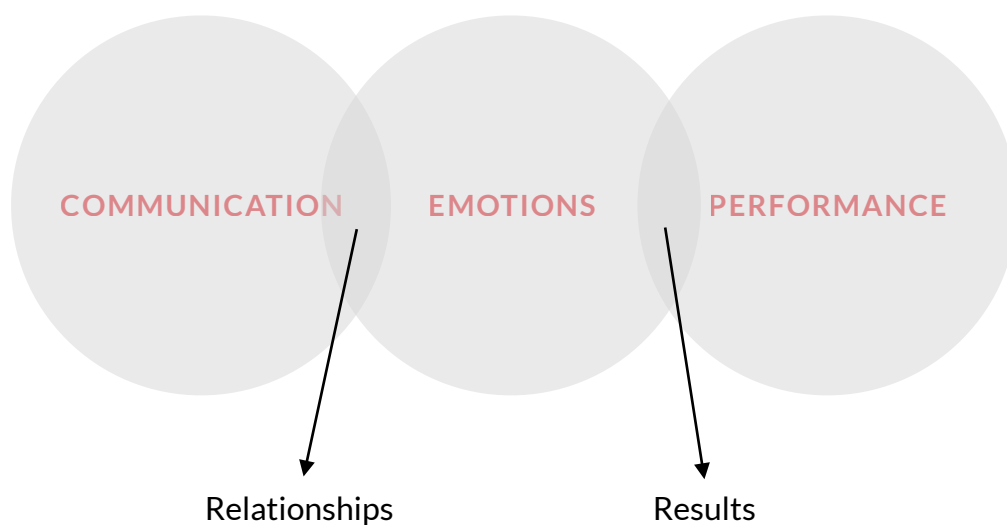


### The critical elements

The journey to effortless communication relies on three critical elements - the communication itself, the emotions that are at play and the performance that is demonstrated.

At the intersections of Communication and Emotions, you get the quality of your Relationships. With high quality relationships, true collaboration occurs.

At the intersections of Emotions and Performance, you get your Results. All are inextricably linked. If you are experiencing positive emotions, your energy and productivity will be higher.



Let's look at this in more detail and what it actually means...



### COMMUNICATION

Examining your communication and rating the agility you are capable of is vital to improving your communication skills.

There are so many factors at play - your delivery, patterns, tone, triggers, awareness, generosity, belief and perseverance.

At times, some soul searching is needed if you want to break some old patterns and create new ones. We need to examine what's important to you, how you interact, your beliefs behind communication and your impact.

Sometimes, what you're missing is what you're creating. If you're needing more direction for example, you may not be giving enough yourself.

Exploring communication from all perspectives is invaluable in identifying improvement inflection points.

### EMOTIONS

How people feel determines how they perform.

When the right emotions are at play, people feel fulfilled, focused, connected and motivated.

On the flip side, with the wrong emotions present, people will feel a lack of motivation and focus that certainly can affect their performance.

Often, the emotions we feel are determined by the communication that we are getting or giving.

It's not only communication from others, but communication within ourselves - what we're telling ourselves, what thoughts we're allowing to roam free, how we're perceiving what's going on around us and therefore what we are projecting.

Our fears, inadequacies, frustrations and insecurities unfortunately don't remain hidden inside of us. Identifying what we may be projecting can help us change what we're processing inside.

### PERFORMANCE

For high performance, an effortless communication flow needs to be established, along with the right solution focused mindsets and energy generating environment.

Clarity in our interpretations of reality is also vital to maintain the rationale needed for focused progress.





### 3 things you can start to do to lift your communication

Often, when we don't know what we don't know, we don't know what else we can do to be more effective in our communication.

Here are 3 tips for those inflection point conversations, those moments that really matter.

1. Keep your attention out - turn off your self talk and inner dialogue. This will help turn off your assumptions, judgements or your own need for validation. The best way to achieve genuine communication is if you really do put yourselves in their shoes and see things from their world. Keep challenging yourself to filter the communication impartially and not through your world view. If you find your mind wandering, snap back to this moment in time by being curious to what they are saying and what it may mean to them.

What you can do: Challenge yourself to find something out about them that you didn't know before.

2. Interrupt the flow - if your instincts are telling you to. It's usually during or after a high stakes conversation when we experience that uneasy or incomplete feeling that we often don't pursue. When you walk away with questions in your mind about the conversation, then it means you missed something.

What you can do: Challenge yourself to pause more to let the information sink in before you respond, checking for any incongruence. Then follow the pause with a question before you move on.

3. Align your focus and actions. What's your physiology doing? Are you truly focused on them? Trust and rapport can be hard to build, and it can be destroyed in a second of glancing away, looking at your watch, checking your emails or being incongruent with what you're saying and what your body language is doing. Are you matching their energy and movement? It pays to keep your focus up and on them - you won't miss any potential clues or cues about real thoughts or feelings.

What you can do: Challenge yourself to read them more accurately - why are they looking like that or standing that way. What are they thinking or feeling right now? (You can only do this however if you don't have a screen between you!)



## Conclusion

Teams that don't leave their communication to chance are the ones that perform at a high level. Many issues or blocks can be the result of poor communication and as soon as a team identifies, recognises and establishes how best to communicate with each other and their stakeholders, results will flow.

Creating the relationships and culture for a team to thrive is critical in achieving the performance and the wellbeing you'd like to see. Learning how to do this is a wise investment for your team. Successful teams that I've worked with have a healthy balance within their culture. I like to sum it up as the 4 F's:

- Friend - respect each other and look out for each other like you would your mates
- Flow - allow communication to flow - get rid of silos and communication blockers
- Fun - we need to be able to laugh and have fun at work to work at our best
- For real - keep the communication real - no bull. People can smell it a mile off.



Friend  
Flow  
Fun  
For Real



# GLIDE

## How Deborah's Effortless Communication program can transform your performance and results

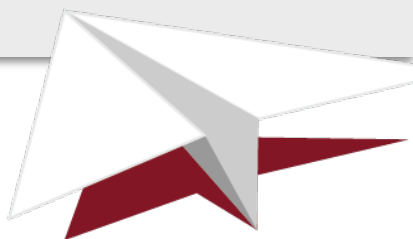
A one day highly interactive and thought provoking program to help transform your communication. Communication lies at the heart of performance and relationships, and the tools and techniques learnt in this workshop will help you influence and add impact in order to enhance your results.

*"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."  
George Bernard Shaw*

*"Deborah is an incredible communicator who managed to captivate any audience she stood in front of. Her GLIDE program is a great tool for team bonding and has greatly benefitted the culture and effectiveness of our team. I would recommend to anyone wanting to enhance the culture and skills, particularly with communication for their team."*

MARKETING DIRECTOR

Contact Deborah at [deborah@deborahkeep.com](mailto:deborah@deborahkeep.com) to find out more.



DEBORAH KEEP

The workshop covers the following key areas:

**GOAL** - knowing what the purpose of your communication is at that moment, using a structure for clarity and having conscious intention behind the communication you are choosing to use

**LISTEN** - essential tips on how to listen, observe and hear what is not being said, while using the power of mindfulness and empathy to deepen your communication results

**INFLUENCE** - applying key influencing strategies to maximise your interactions, identifying communication styles and preferences and using appropriate delivery techniques

**DIRECT** - directing the tone of the interaction, being deliberate with words we choose to use, discovering how different words hold different meanings to different people, identifying how to get the most out of your interactions linguistically

**EMPOWER** - choosing the best mindset for the communication outcomes you want, increasing accountability and ownership within communication with others and empowering people through the language you choose to use