**Relevance**

**COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication improves your conversations and presentations, raises participation at meetings you lead, and lets you express ideas clearly.

**Learning objectives**

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

* Identify different communication styles
* Discuss ways to communicate more effectively

**Before the session**

* Ask participants what they would like to gain from the session and use their comments to customize its content.
* Consider how you will facilitate the session and adjust it for your audience.
* Think of an opening activity that will grab participants’ attention and other ways to keep the session interactive.
* Prepare any materials you will need for the session.

**During the session**

* Welcome participants and introduce yourself.
* Review learning objectives.
* Highlight these key messages:
  + Club leaders are responsible for organizing and giving information to club members, other club leaders, and the community.
  + Storytelling can be a powerful tool to convey your message.
  + Skilled communicators can quickly shift their style to suit any situation.
  + Communication styles include:
    - Analytical: Uses unemotional, logical arguments based on facts and data
    - Intuitive: Refers to the overall topic and avoids detail
    - Functional: Focuses on process, detail, and planning
    - Personal: Values emotional connections and listens well
  + Effective communication also includes active listening, constructive criticism, and recognizing barriers to understanding.
  + No matter what communication style you use, saying “yes, and …” instead of “yes, but …” when you disagree can help you stay open to others’ ideas and perspectives.
* Use discussion questions to boost conversation:
  + Which communication styles do you identify as your own?
  + How do you use storytelling to communicate?
  + How do your spoken and written communication styles differ?
  + What interferes with good communication in your club and in your work? How can it be improved?
  + What are barriers to effective communication? Think of a situation when you communicated poorly and that affected the outcome. What could have improved the interaction?
  + What are some tips for reacting to a quickly changing situation? How do you adapt your interaction based on the person who’s speaking with you?
* Lead one of the activities below.
* At the end of the session:
  + Take questions from participants.
  + Review the learning objectives to make sure they’ve been achieved.
  + Ask participants to write down one idea they’ll use from the session.

**Activities**

1. Purpose: Identifying communication styles

* Allow 2o minutes for this activity.
* Write the four communication styles mentioned above on a flip chart.
* Explain that you will pair participants, and that one partner, then the other will discuss why they should get more involved in Rotary (3-5 minutes for each person).
* Ask participants to notice their partners’ communication styles during the discussion.
* Tell pairs that they will assess each partner’s communication styles when finished.
* Divide participants into pairs.
* Start a discussion with the group after 10 minutes:
  + Which communication styles did you observe?
  + What nonverbal communication did you notice?
  + Which communication styles were most effective?
  + How can you use communication styles personally, professionally, or to help your community?

1. Purpose: Practice impromptu speaking

* Allow 20 minutes for this activity.
* Start by saying, “Once upon a time there was …” and continue the story using your imagination.
* Explain the next steps: Groups of participants will gather in circles, then begin a story and try to keep it going. The first member of each group will start by saying a sentence on any topic. Then, one after another, around the circle, members will say, “Yes and … ,” adding to what the previous member said.
* Encourage participants to speak their first thought and avoid hesitating. Stories can go in any direction.
* Participants should not question or deny any story additions.
* Divide participants into groups of five or more.
* Allow the groups to begin the storytelling, which will last 10 minutes.
* Let groups know when only a couple of minutes are left to finish their stories.
* After 10 minutes, start a discussion with the groups:
  + What was hard about this activity?
  + What did and didn’t work?
  + How did “Yes and …” help you contribute to the story?
  + How could “Yes and …” improve your everyday conversations?