



***Strategies for Effective Library
Communication:
Connections, Collegiality, &
Cooperation***

Webinar presented by

Marie L. Radford, Ph.D.

Hosted by ALCTS,

Association for Library Collections & Technical Services

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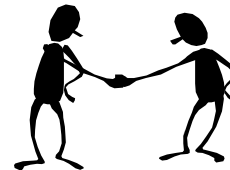
1:00pm-2:00pm CST

Introductions



- **Presenter**
Marie L. Radford, Ph.D., Professor,
Rutgers University
School of Communication & Information

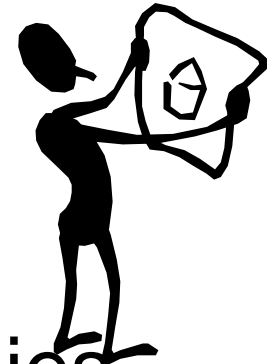
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- **Participants**

AGENDA

- Introduction
- Effective Communication Strategies
- Enhancing Internal & External Service Excellence
- Assertive & Open Communication
- Positive Approaches to Problematic People
- Delegating, Sharing Responsibility & Empowering Others
- Q & A – Answering Your Questions





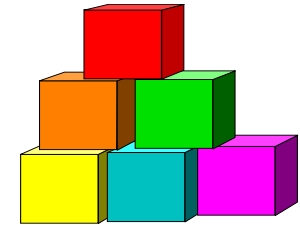
**If we can reduce the
stressful encounters &
multiply the satisfying ones,
our working lives will be
more enjoyable!**



Goal - Service Excellence

- Who are our “customers”
 - External?
 - Internal?
- Why is it important to recognize both?

Effective Communication Strategies



- Think about co-workers you have enjoyed working with the most.
- What communication strategies do they use?

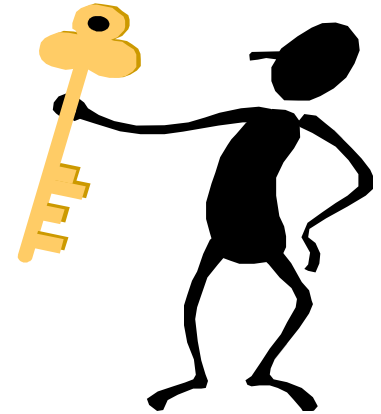
Food for Thought!

- **What do these mean to you?**
 - **Connections**
 - **Collegiality**
 - **Cooperation**
- **How are they communicated?**
- **What barriers exist that get in the way?**
- **How could they be cultivated?**

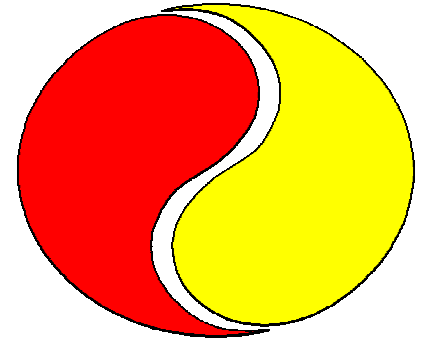


General Principles for Effective Communication

- Be Direct
- Be Clear
- Be Honest – Use “I” Statements
- Ask for Feedback



Be Empathetic – Relational vs. Content Needs



■ Content

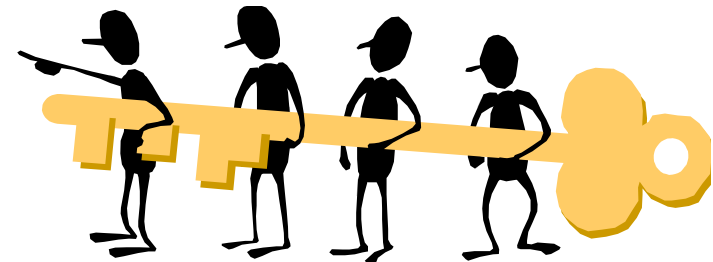
- The “WHAT”
- Information exchange

■ Relational

- “HOW” message is to be taken
- Relationship of the participants

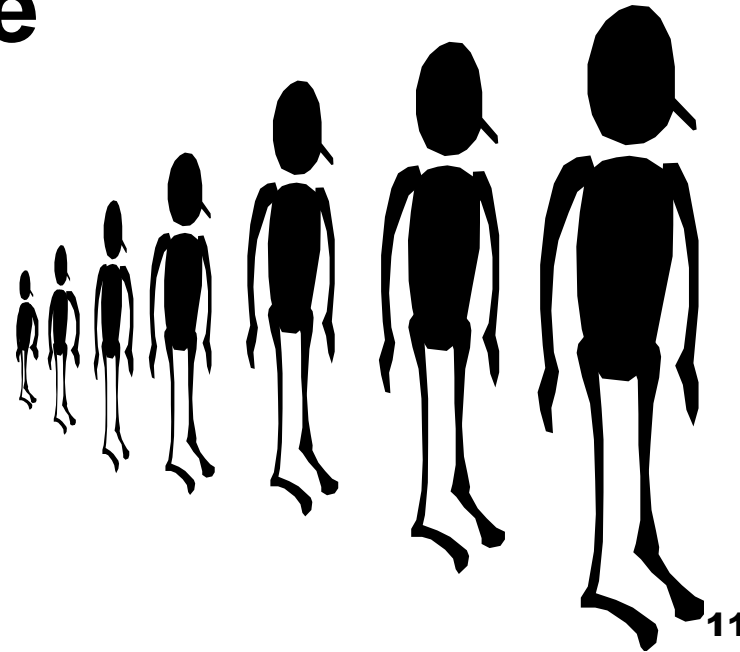
More General Principles for Effective Communication

- **Be Brief – Don't Beat Around the Bush**
- **Be Assertive**



Communication Styles

- Passive
- Aggressive
- Passive-Aggressive
- Assertive



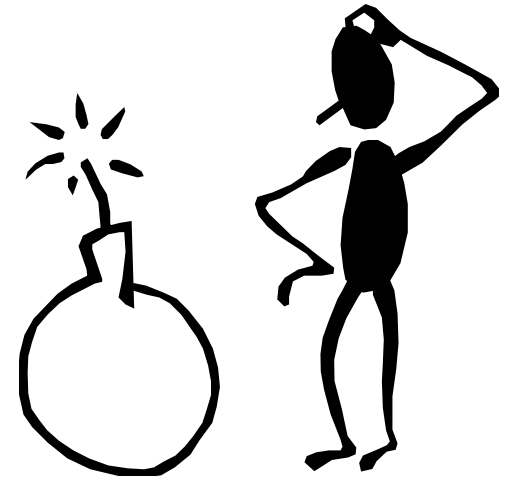
Passive-Aggressive Style

Feelings

- Resentment
- Helpless & powerless
- Repressed anger

Behaviors

- Avoid direct response, but vow to “get even”
- Use sarcasm, sniping, indirect criticism
- Avoid eye contact
- Feign compliance
- Use “gunny sacking” technique



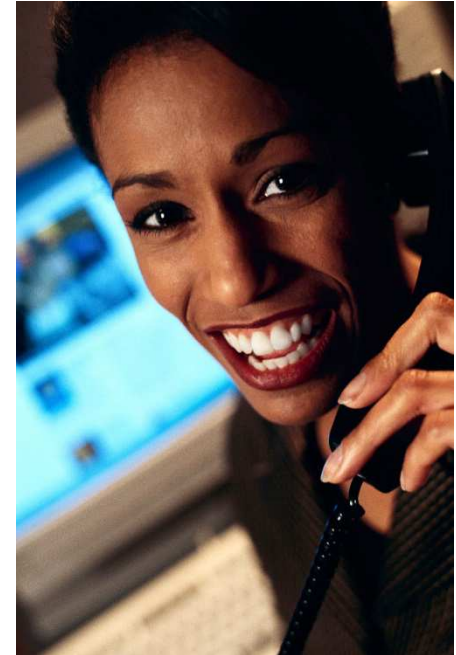
Assertive Style

Feelings

- Concerned about everyone's feelings
- Expect everyone to be self-accountable

Behaviors

- Give direct eye contact
- Have a confident stance
- Ask others for what they need





Assertiveness Toolbox

- **Direct Request**
- **Declarative Statements**
 - “I” statement with direction or explanation
- **Calm Confrontation**
 - Describe unacceptable behavior & give expectation for future behavior
- **Collaboration & Compromise**
- **Accountability**
 - Hold other person responsible for behavior while asking for what you want (with consequences)

Major Cause of Problematic Behavior

STRESS

- Interpersonal relationships with co-workers (& library users) are the major source of stress to library faculty & staff...
- But also the major source of satisfaction!



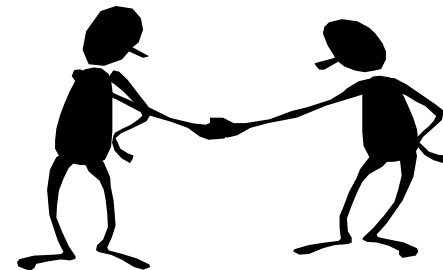


Who Me?

- **Visualize one project or task you are working on right now that you would like to have help with.**
- **What help do you need?**
- **Why haven't you asked for help?**

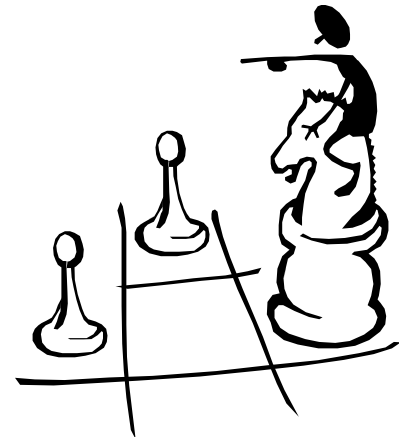
Delegating & Asking for Help

- **Ask: “Am I the only person who can do this?” If not, delegate it.**
- **Ask for help, don’t demand.**
- **Invest training time for routine tasks.**
- **Make sure person knows purpose of work & expectations.**
- **Know who needs closer supervision.**



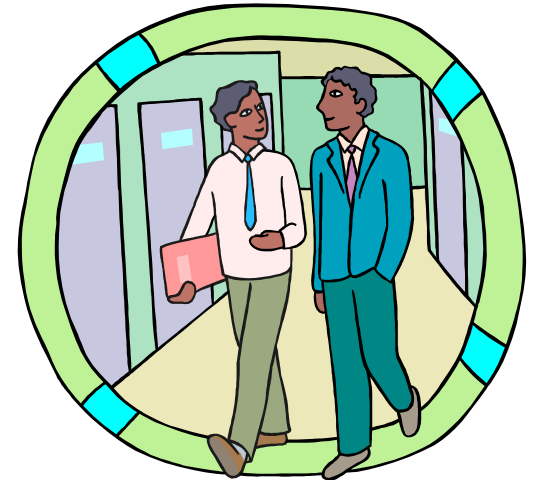
Tips for Communicating Effectively with Supervisors

- Inform them.
- Ask for help.
- Help them.
 - Support managerial decisions.
- Educate them! Different expertise?
- Dazzle them.
- Learn to speak their language.
- Think win-win.



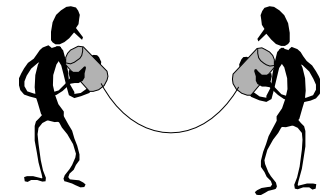
Tips for Communicating Effectively with Subordinates

- Use **assertive** behaviors.
- Be discrete - save face.
- Involve in decision-making.
- Give & request feedback.
- Share information.
- Share credit & allow others to feel important.
- Thank & praise them.



Tips for Cross-Generational Communication

(Lear, 2015)



■ **Baby Boomers (born '46-'64)**

- Want formal communication & etiquette
- Expect continuous feedback & respect

■ **Gen Exers (born '65-'79)**

- Give straight, honest & unfiltered communication
- Are independent & skeptical

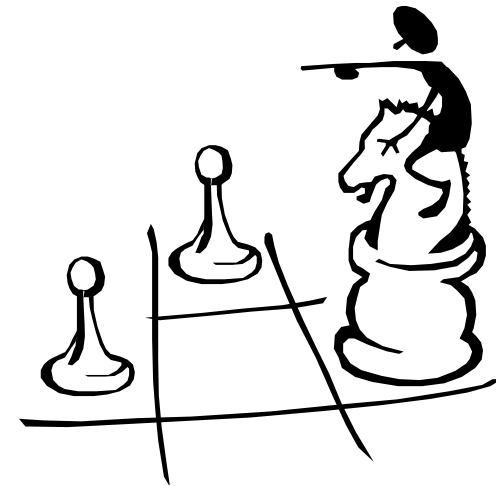
■ **Millennials (born '80-'95)**

- Need specific directions & expected results
- Want to make a difference & their input valued
- Impatient with red tape

Think about This!

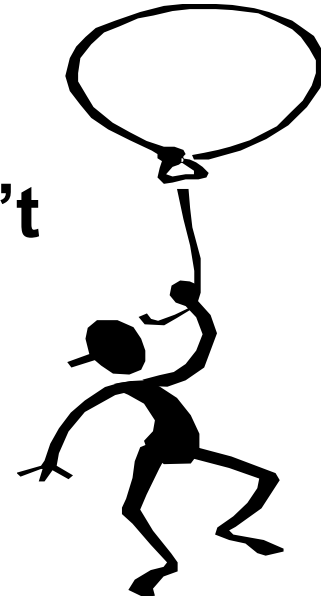
Communication Problems/Issues

- What are your communication problems or issues...
 - With co-workers?
 - With supervisors?
 - With subordinates?
- Self assessment
 - What areas do you need to improve?



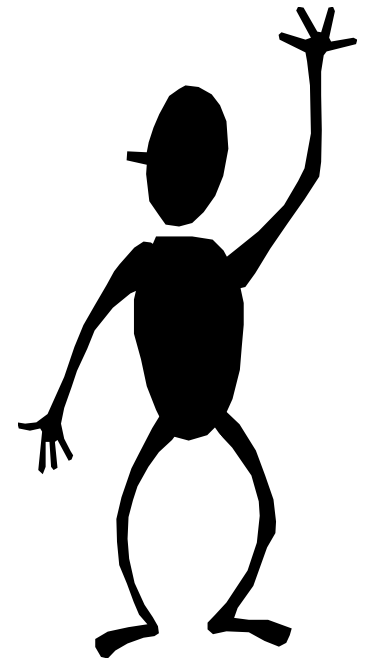
Positive Approaches to Problematic Internal Relationships

- ❑ Put problem people in perspective. Don't take personally!
- ❑ Take your pick – positive or negative. Can't focus both on alternatives & negative feelings.
- ❑ Don't expect difficult people to change. They won't! But you can!



More Positive Approaches

- ❑ Learn to respond as well as to listen - state your feelings.
- ❑ Give & request frequent feedback.
- ❑ Look 1st at policies & procedures.

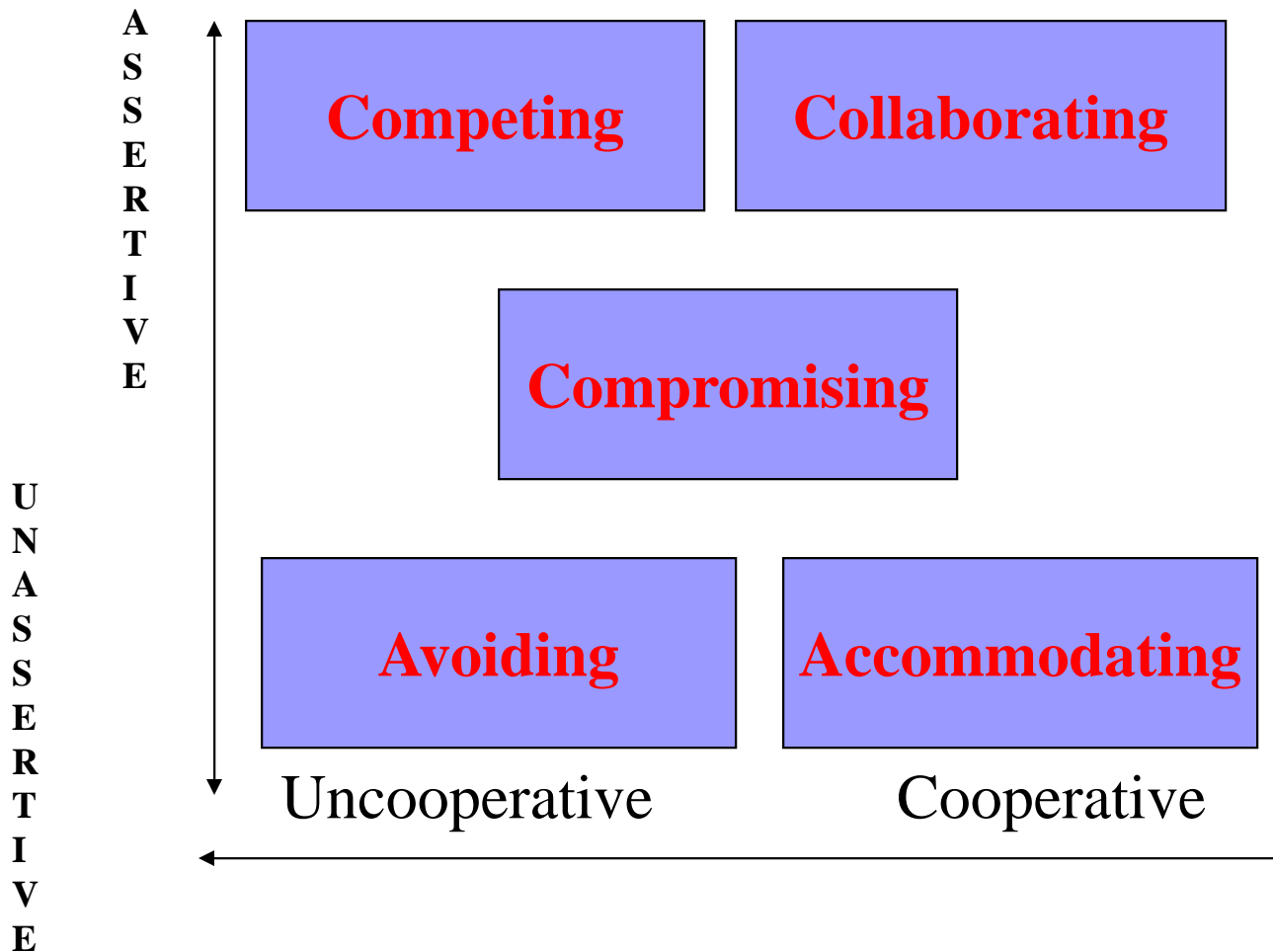




Yet More...

- Be direct, straightforward, unemotional.**
- Be discreet.**
- Be gracious - other's rudeness doesn't give right to be rude.**
- Disarm with kindness, share credit & allow others to feel important.**

Conflict Handling Modes (Walsh, 2004)





Negative Modes

(Walsh, 2004)

■ **COMPETING:**

- Assertive & uncooperative
- Behavior at other's expense

■ **ACCOMMODATING:**

- Unassertive & cooperative
- Doing what other wants - disregards your needs

■ **AVOIDING:**

- Unassertive & uncooperative
- Side-steps issues, doesn't address conflict



Positive Modes

(Walsh, 2004)

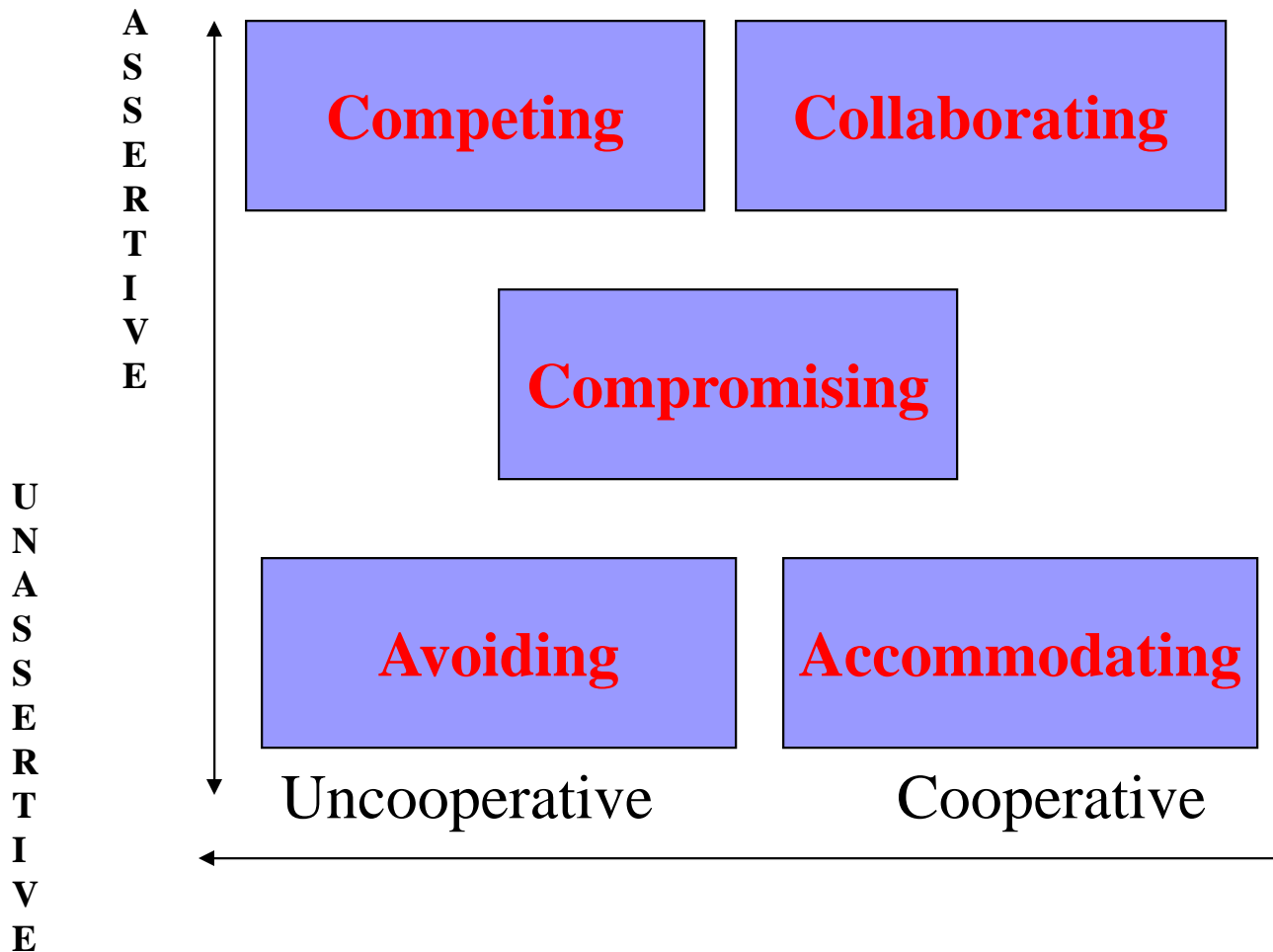
■ **COMPROMISING:**

- Between assertiveness & cooperativeness**
- Seeks middle ground**
- May satisfactorily solve problem**

■ **COLLABORATING:**

- Both assertive & cooperative**
- Mutually find **lasting** solutions**

Conflict Handling Modes (Walsh, 2004)





Resolving Conflicts Three-Steps

- 1. IDENTIFY the Conflict**
- 2. IDENTIFY Solutions - Collaboratively**
- 3. IMPLEMENT Solutions**

May sound easy, but it is not!



Your Attitude & Approach

- **“Don’t get angry, get interested!”**
- **Stay calm & curious**
- **Focus on other – collaborative approach**
- **Use positive “Words that Work”**



Silence Is **Not** Safe

- Conflict avoidance is **dangerous**
- Communicate for **healthy** conflict
 - Speak up
 - Be constructive
 - Seek input from all



In Conclusion...

- **Practice & self-reflection** needed.
- **Some trial & error!**
- Take **responsibility** for your behavior.
- Be a **positive** role model for others!
- **Effective internal communication is an ongoing challenge for all!!**

More Information & Feedback

- Questions?

- THANKS!

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