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ACTIVE LISTENING



CLASS ACTIVITY

- **Complete instructions are on page**
- **The instructor will pair you off**
- **Agree on which of the two of you will be the “halfway house director” which the neighbor**
- **Read your own role; don’t read the other role**
- **Play your roles – your job is to convince the other person you are right**



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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE FEEL RESISTED?

- They feel compelled to repeat whatever they felt was not acknowledged
- They “escalate” -- more emotional language; voice tone sarcastic; volume increases.
- They become more accusatory.
- Their position becomes more rigid and fixed.
- They become less open to alternatives.
- They start seeing others as the enemy.



ROADBLOCKS TO LISTENING

- **Ordering, demanding**
- **Warning, threatening**
- **Admonishing, moralizing**
- **Persuading, arguing, lecturing**
- **Criticizing, judging, evaluating**
- **Interpreting, diagnosing**



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ROADBLOCKS TO LISTENING .

Continued

- **Advising, giving answers, offering solutions**
- **Criticizing, disagreeing, contradicting**
- **Praising, agreeing**
- **Reassuring, sympathizing**
- **Probing, questioning**
- **Sarcasm, kidding, humor**
- **Diverting, avoiding**



WAYS TO ACKNOWLEDGE

- Summarize your understanding of what people are thinking and feeling.
- Record a summary on a flip chart.
- Use the flip chart summary as the record of the meeting.



ACTIVE LISTENING

- **Summarize, rather than judge, what the other person is saying**
- **Summarize both feelings and ideas**
- **Avoid lead-in phrases – “I hear you saying...”**
- **Choose words that match the intensity of the feeling**



WHY MEETING LEADERS USE ACTIVE LISTENING

- **If there is no acknowledgement, people feel incomplete and unsatisfied**
- **Disagreeing causes escalation**
- **Agreeing can alienate someone else in the audience**
- **Active Listening creates an environment in which people begin to share interests, not just positions**



WHEN IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO SUMMARIZE FEELINGS

- **Voice tone or word choice shows high intensity**
- **Repeating the same point**
- **When people say they are not being understood**



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HOW AUDIENCES REACT TO MEETING LEADERS

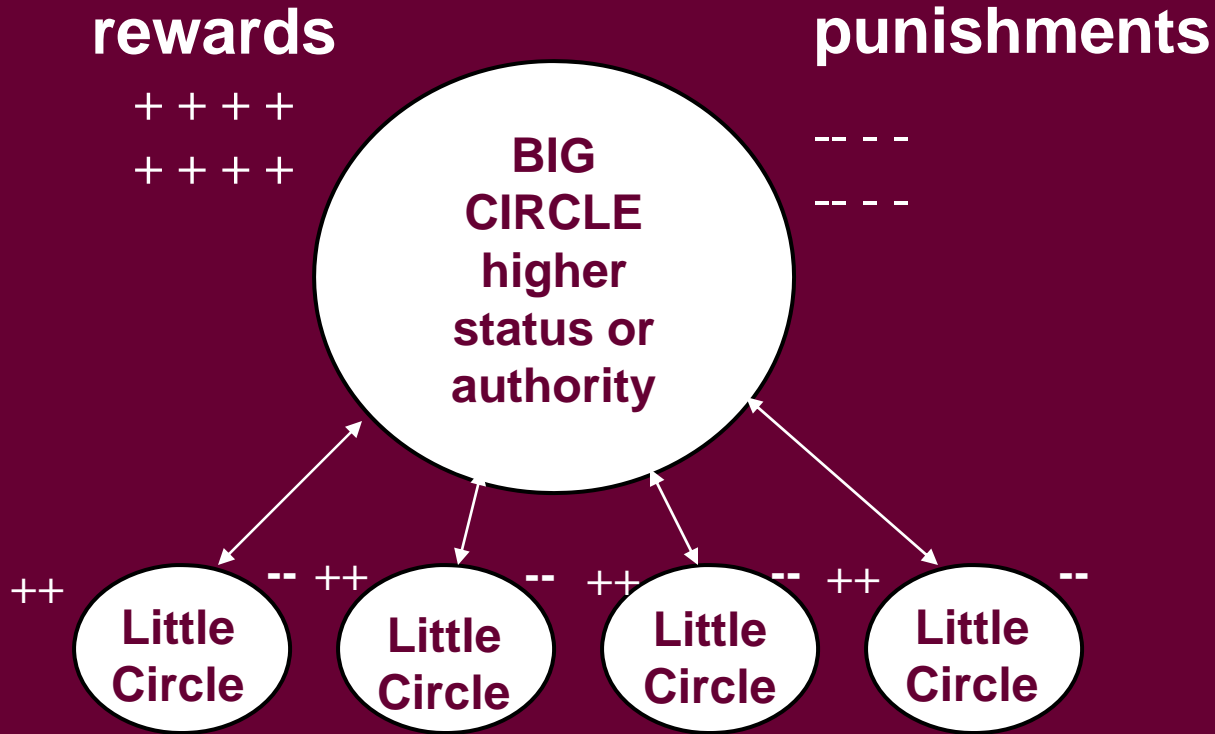


WHEN A MEETING LEADER MUST INTERVENE

- **Group has drifted off the agreed-upon topic**
- **People are interrupting each other**
- **Comments exceed agreed-upon time limits**
- **Comments are insulting**
- **Remind the group of time limits**
- **To propose the use of a technique**



THE PROBLEM WITH USING POWER





THIS CAN LEAD TO “EQUALIZING BEHAVIORS”

- “Cutting down to size” – constant attacks
- Teaming-up in opposition
- Finding another “bigger circle,” e.g. courts
- Withdrawal
- Passive/aggressive – no open opposition, but constant undermining, delays, nit-picking



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AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

“Equalizing behavior” is a key dynamic between agencies, and between supporters and opponents



OVERNIGHT ASSIGNMENT

- **Carefully read the case study assigned to your team**
- **Think about roles you would like to play, and key issues you would like to see discussed**



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WEDNESDAY



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COMMUNICATING CONCERNS



BEHAVIORS MEETING LEADERS SHOULD AVOID

- **Judging, admonishing**
- **Proposing solutions without giving a reason that makes sense from the audience's perspective**
- **Using power**



WHEN A MEETING LEADER JUDGES OR USES POWER

- **It stimulates equalizing behaviors**
- **The impact is exaggerated due to the psychological size of the meeting leader**
- **People feel “put down” in front of their friends and peers**



COMMUNICATING CONCERNS

- **Send the problem, not the solution**
- **Communicate a feeling – appropriate to your role as a facilitator - not a judgment**
- **“Own” your feelings**
- **Describe behavior instead of evaluating it**



THE MODEL

**I feel (ownership) + feeling word
+ behavioral description (and
sometimes) + suggestion**

AN EXAMPLE

“I’m frustrated because I would like to have a lot of interaction, but I’m also concerned that people aren’t getting a chance to complete their comments without interruption. Perhaps you could raise your hands and let me call on you.”



CLASS ACTIVITY

- **Complete instructions are on page**
- **Silently, write what you would say if you were the facilitator**
- **Pick a partner**
- **Discuss how best to send concerns without creating defensiveness or putting people down**



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