

Session 30

COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) - Listening and the team

WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 20: You will learn to communicate effectively in small group settings.



Hello! You're back! Good.
Let's see, what were we talking about last time? Hmm...car sales..
persuasion...compromise...
mumble.....assertive.....aggressive....
hmmm.....mumble.....talk....talk....

I'm trying to figure out what we are supposed to do next!

Oh, yeah. Listen!  That's right....listen!



No, I'm not telling you to listen to me....that's what we are supposed to talk about now....listening!

Communicating is sending and receiving a message, remember? Most of us are pretty good at the sending part. It's that receiving part that always seems to be the problem.

Why? Because we have to really listen. But it is hard to listen and talk at the same time.

But listening is an important part of communicating.
We are going to look at two things this session. One is.....have you been listening?

Right! We are going to talk about listening.

 The other thing you need to think about is how to be a good team player.



They are related, you see. If you are a good listener you are going to go a long way toward being a good team player. And if you think of yourself as part of the team, you are going to want to listen to what your other teammates have to say.


When you first began *Whose Future Is It Anyway?* you spent quite a bit of time talking about the transition IEP meeting and who should be at that meeting.



Remember?



Go back to **Session 2**. In that session you identified people who should be at your planning meeting and who you would like to be at your planning

meeting.  Look at this stuff again so that you remember what you decided at the end of that session.

Now that you remember who should be at your meeting and who you would like to be there, picture them all seated around the table or wherever you have your planning



meetings. Can you see it? Good.

Now, this is your team that has been put together to make decisions about your school program.

Wait a minute. What's this team stuff? We've been talking about **you** making decisions, about **you** setting goals, about **you** being assertive.... **you, you, you!!!!**

Well...that's not entirely right, is it? I mean we have talked a lot about things you could and should do to make sure you participate. We have talked about ways that you can become more assertive and make decisions.

But we've also talked about the **other people** at the meetings and how important they are to assist you in making good decisions. We talked about how **other people** have information about community resources you could use to reach your **goals**.

In fact, we've really talked a lot about how you can become part of the team that makes decisions about your educational program.

Now, what exactly does that mean? What



is meant by a team?

If you go to your dictionary and look up "team", you will see that it is.....ah yes, here it is... a group of animals with harness



to perform a task!

Oops. Sorry. Wrong definition. Here's what I was looking for...a team is a group of people on the same side who work together for a common goal.



Hey! **Goal!** Now there's something we know about, right? A **goal** is something that you aim for or something that you set



out to do, remember?

Sure you do. So, if a team is a group of people who work together for a common



goal, how can the people who get together for your IEP meeting be a team?

They are working toward a common **goal**.



What is that **goal**? Well, think about it for a minute. What is the **goal** of the team at your meeting?



Right! The common **goal** of the team is to write an educational program that will be the best program to prepare you to become an adult.

That's why they are all on one side (like a team should be). Which side? Your side. They are there to assist you and to be on your side to plan a good program. The **other people** that are there at your meeting are there to assist you to plan your educational program.

Think about teams you know...let's take



volleyball for example. Does each team member have exactly the same



skill or talent?



No. If every team member did exactly the same thing well, it wouldn't be a very good team, would it? A volleyball team needs people who are strong servers, good spikers (tall people!), good at setting the ball up to be spiked, good at returning the



long ball, etc. Basketball teams need people who are good dribblers and passers, shooters, rebounders, etc. So, another thing about your team is that they each have different skills that they bring to the meeting. That is good. The vocational rehabilitation counselor knows all about what supports are out there to help you get a job. Your teacher knows the best way to learn the math skills you need.

What part do you play on the team? Well, what do you bring to the team? What is it that you know more about than any one else?



Right! You know about you! You know what you like, what you don't like, what you're good at and what you are not, what you want to be and where you want to go. Nobody, but nobody, knows you like you!

That is important.

So, teams work together for a common **goal**, are on the same side and bring different skills together to address the **goal**.



Take a few minutes to think about the different things the team members for your planning meeting will bring to the meeting. What do they have to contribute to the meeting? Use the list of team members you came up with in **Session 2**, write out their names or title and then write down what their part on the team should be.

Team member	Part on team
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Finished? Good. Now you should have a better idea of what each team member will be doing.

There is one other thing about being a good team member that we should talk about. What happens when there is one hot dog



on the team? When one team



member hogs the ball, tries to get all the attention, tries to do everything alone?



Right. The team doesn't work well. That person messes everything up. So good team members know their part and don't try to take over everything. They let the **other people** do what they do well.

At your educational planning meeting, that means being prepared, participating, and listening. There are tricks to being a good



listener. Believe it or not, it's not something that just happens. You have to work at it.

Guess what? I've got some rules that could help you learn to be a better listener! Surprised? I didn't think so...I call these my "**get reAL**" rules.

That means:

"**get results** from **Active Listening**."

Ready to **get reAL**?

Good.

get reAL rules

1. **get reAL**.....look at the speaker!



We've talked about this before, but it is worth talking about one more time. When you look at a person while that person is speaking, you tell him/her that you are listening to what she/he has to say. You tell that person that what she/he has to say is important enough for you to take some of your time to listen to. So, when you are in your meeting, look at the person who is speaking.



2. **get reAL**.....ask questions!

When you are listening to people, they will most likely say something that you have a question about. Asking them will show that you were listening and are interested. You can ask a couple of different kinds of questions, questions to clarify something and statements to confirm something.

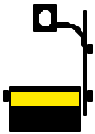
To clarify means to make clear. Clarifying questions are those you ask to try to understand something better. So, if there is something that is said that you don't understand, ask away. That will let you know what is going on and will tell the speaker you are listening.

To confirm means to make sure that something is right. You can use confirming questions just to show you were listening. For example, you might say to a team member **“You said that it would be a good idea to learn how to do advanced math, right?”** That question is just confirming what you already heard, but it lets the speaker know you were paying attention.

3. **get reAL**.....don't interrupt people! It's a good idea to ask some questions to show you are paying attention. It's a bad idea to keep interrupting the speaker. A good listener lets another person speak without interrupting unless it is really necessary. If you keep interrupting, you are telling the speaker you don't really want to hear what she/he is saying.



4. **get reAL**.....take notes! Taking notes shows that you are listening. I mean, how can you write down what you just heard unless you just heard it!



Okay. Let's look at what you've covered this session.

☑ You looked at l_____ and thought about how to be a good team player.



☑ You learned that a t_____ is a group of people who work together for a common goal.



- ☑ You learned that the goal of the team is to write an e_____ program that will be the best possible program to prepare you to become an adult.
- ☑ You learned that each member of the team has different s_____ and that having all those people with different skills on your team is a good thing!
- ☑ You learned how to get r_____ from active listening.



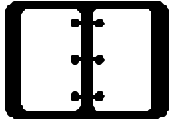
Before the next session, you should have:

- ✎ Looked at who you want at your meeting and on your team.
- ✎ Thought about what each member's part is on the team.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



Session 30 Summary Sheet - Listening and the team

WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 20: You will learn to communicate effectively in small group settings.

- ☒ You looked at listening and thought about how to be a good team player.
- ☒ You learned that a team is a group of people who work together for a common goal.
- ☒ You learned that the goal of the team is to write an educational program that will be the best possible program to prepare you to become an adult.
- ☒ You learned that each member of the team has different skills and that having all those people with different skills on your team is a good thing!
- ☒ You learned how to get results from active listening.