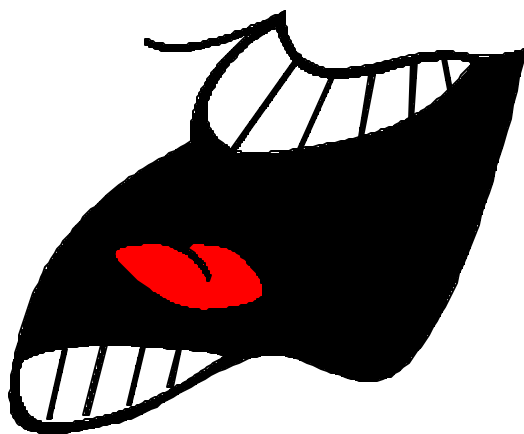


# WHOSE FUTURE IS IT *ANYWAY?*

A STUDENT-DIRECTED TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS



## SECTION 5

(Sessions 25-30)

COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?)



## Session 25

# COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) - Communicating in small groups

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



Hi! How's things? Did you finish that stuff on goals yet? Good. So far, you've done a lot of things that would be useful for your school planning meetings.

Huh? What do you mean, what things? Well, lots of things, that's what!

Think about it....

When you first started *Whose Future Is It Anyway?* we talked about how important it was for you to learn more about your transition planning process. Remember?

### THE TRANSITION PLANNING PROCESS



...is a bridge to your future.

Transition skills are things you need to know to get from one point in your life to another. It is like walking across a bridge from school to the adult world. Transition planning is building that bridge.



Transition planning means making decisions about what you need to learn to be successful as an adult.

You figured out who should be at your transition planning meetings and who you might want to invite. After that, you learned about your unique learning needs and the supports that could assist you in meeting those needs. Next you learned how to make decisions by the **DO IT!** process and then came up with community resources that you could use. The last few sessions you've been working on **goals** and learning how to set **goals** and **objectives**.

Have you figured out how you are going to use all this information yet? Sure... that's right. All of these things are going to be useful as you participate in your educational and transition planning meetings.



Let me list some of the things you've done that should be helpful for you during the school meetings.

- ⇒ You know the purpose of the meeting.
- ⇒ You know who is supposed to be at the meeting.
- ⇒ You know that you should be an active part of the meeting.
- ⇒ You know that transition goals have to be based on your preferences and interests.
- ⇒ You know your unique learning needs and some supports that can assist you in meeting those needs.
- ⇒ You know what outcomes should be looked at in your educational planning meeting.
- ⇒ You learned how to make decisions using a process that defines the problem, identifies options, looks at the outcome of each option and takes action. (DO IT!)
- ⇒ You learned how to use the decision-making process to make decisions about important outcomes for your



planning meeting.

- ⇒ You learned that you should be signing your IEP and transition forms and used the decision-making process to make decisions about giving informed



consent.

- ⇒ You identified community resources on your current IEP or in your file and thought up some more community resources that might assist you to reach outcomes you want.
- ⇒ You learned how to identify and write goals and used this to write some goals for your next planning meeting.

Wow! You've been busy! Hard to believe that you've done all that and had fun too, right?

Don't answer that question. The important thing is that you've covered a lot of ground. Now, what do all those things have in common?



Don't say they are boring...  
I don't want to hear that!

What? What's that? Right! They are all things you needed to know to get ready for



your meeting.

Guess what? You're already two thirds done. That means that you've gone too far to turn back now!

You have two more things to learn before you jump into that IEP meeting. First, you are going to look at how to communicate in a small group meeting. Then, you are going to learn a little about how to run a meeting.

Communicate. What's that?

Easy...it's just talking, right? When you communicate it means you're talking to



someone.

Careful...nothing is ever easy, remember? Communicating is more than just talking. Think about it. You can communicate in writing or by pictures. You can

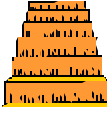


communicate by signing.

Communicating is a process.

Hey...we've heard that  
before...process...remember?


A process means that there are a lot of

steps  that have to happen before  
everything is finished.

Communication is a process that leads to  
sharing information between people. It's  
that simple.

But then again...nothing in life is simple,  
right?

So, what about communication is a  
process? What are the steps to  
communicating? Take a look at this  
example and see how many steps (fingers

pointing) you can see. 

Laticia wanted to find out what happened  
at the homecoming dance after she left.  
She searched up and down the hall for her  
friend Karen, from Biology. There she was,  
down there near the lockers, talking with  
that new kid.

"What was that kid's name?" She thought  
as she hurried down the hall. As she  
moved closer, she could hear the new kid  
saying something about the English  
teacher.

Laticia walked up to the two classmates  
and ☞ stood looking at both of them,  
holding her books with both hands and  
☞tapping her feet.

Both Karen and the new kid

☞ stopped talking and ☞looked back at  
Laticia. ☞Karen said "Oh hi! Do you  
know Luis?"

The new kid ☞looked away from Laticia,  
☞glanced at his feet, while ☞his face  
turned red.

☞ "Hi" said Laticia.

☞ "Hi" mumbled Luis, ☞looking down the  
hall in the other direction.

☞ "I've got to go to Content Mastery," said  
Luis.

☞ "Nice to meet you", said Laticia.

☞ "See you later, Luis", said Karen.

As Luis turned and headed down the hall,  
Laticia ☞looked at Karen and ☞raised  
her eyebrows. Karen ☞ smiled a little,  
then ☞said "What do you want?"

Laticia ☞looked back down where Luis  
was turning the corner and ☞ looked  
back at Karen, ☞smiling.

☞ "Just tell me what you want and keep  
your questions to yourself", said Karen,  
☞smiling.

☞ "I had to leave the dance early and  
wondered what happened after I was  
gone" said Laticia.

Karen ☞quit smiling and ☞ crossed both  
of her arms in front of her. ☞ "You should  
be glad you left," she said.

☞ "Why?" said Laticia, ☞her voice rising  
higher in surprise. She ☞turned her head  
and ☞looked right at Karen's face.

☞ "Well, that band we had hired to play  
for five hours only played for three," said  
Karen. "They just packed up and left!"

Notice anything about the story that seemed  
different?

Right! All that finger pointing. ☞ If you  
haven't already figured it out (I assume that

means you were asleep again!), parts that followed the finger points (☞) were different steps in the communication process.


Now, go back and look at those. What is happening? Let's take a few and look at them more closely.

How about this one?


☞ "Just tell me what you want and keep your questions to yourself", said Karen,

What is happening here?

Right...someone is talking. So one obvious step in communicating is talking. It could

have been someone writing , singing



or using sign language  too, right?

What about this one:

☞ stood looking at both of them,

What's going on here? I mean, nobody is talking. Laticia is just standing there...looking at her classmates.

Is that communication? Well, she is sending a message.


What's that message? Right...she is saying "I want to say something." Instead of saying that or writing it or signing it, she communicates this message by standing there looking at them and tapping her foot.

How about this one:

☞ Karen quit smiling ☹

What message does that send? One minute she's smiling, the next minute she's not. In this case, she got serious because she seemed a little mad at the band for leaving early.

So Karen's facial expressions ☹ were part of the communication process. They sent a message that Karen was serious.

There were lots of other types of communication in the story. Luis spent a lot of time looking at his feet or down the hall and his face turned red  when Laticia spoke to him. What might that tell us? Well, maybe he's shy and has a hard time meeting new people. Or, maybe he likes Laticia and is embarrassed! Sometimes it's hard to tell what the meaning of something is.

At one point Laticia's voice was higher because she was surprised. How someone says something is also part of the communication process. If someone says something in A VERY LOUD VOICE that might mean they are mad or excited. If they talk real low, they might be shy or not sure about what they are saying.

See.. nothing is simple! Not even communication.


But, that doesn't mean you can't learn the ins and outs of communicating at meetings. I mean, if you are really going to take part in these meetings, you need to be able to communicate your message and to understand other people's messages as well.

So, over the next few sessions you'll be looking at communication. All kinds of communication.


You know, come to think of it, there is one more point about this communication process stuff that needs to be made.

We've talked about ways to send messages...by what you say, write or sign, how you say it, the tone of your voice, and your body language. Those are all important skills to learn. But for every person sending a message there needs to be someone receiving it - someone on the other end to hear it!

So another part of the communication

process is listening.  Sometimes you do something once you hear the message. Like, if you hear a kid down the block yelling for help 'cause he stuck his head in between the fence posts and can't get it out. You are going to hear it and run down there quickly. Well, I hope you are. Never mind that that kid is a brat and does this every week. You are still going to act.

Other times you just listen without acting. Like when your friend broke up with his girlfriend and talked to you for eighteen straight hours. He didn't want you to do anything, he just wanted you to listen. Now when your Dad yelled at you to get off the phone after the 14th hour, he probably wanted you to act on that!

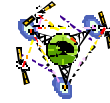
Anyway.....listening  is an important part of communicating.

Come to think of it, I've done a lot of talking and you've been doing a lot of listening. Or sleeping. Whatever. Maybe it's time to do something and kind of wrap this session up.



### Sending and receiving

messages. That is what communication is really all about. But, it isn't all that easy to figure out what the message being sent is! Sometimes there are "mixed messages"



where the person says one thing but seems to mean another. Sometimes messages are not clear enough. It's no wonder communication breakdowns happen!

Look at the two communication scenes below. If you want, you can work with someone else in the class. You can write the answers or just talk about them.

Communication Scene 1: You have done it again. You've been sleeping in class. Of course, while you were asleep you didn't notice that you were asleep. But now you can tell because the spiral notebook left marks on your cheek. That and the fact that your teacher is glaring at you. You think she looks like she's about to explode. Her face is all red. She is staring straight at you and she has her hands on her hips.

You try to make your hair lay back down right. Suddenly, your teacher says "I hope you had a very nice nap!"

How should you answer her?

☐ Say loudly..."Thank you, Ms. Rollins, I feel refreshed and ready to get on with the day now!"

**or**

☐ Mumble something like "I'm sorry about falling asleep, I'll try not to let it happen again."

What might happen if you chose the first one (Thank you, Ms. Rollins...)?

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What might happen if you chose the second one (I'm sorry...)

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Did Ms. Rollins really mean that she was glad you had a nice nap? Why?

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How do you think Ms. Rollins said "I hope you had a very nice nap."

- ☐ In a kind, gentle voice.
- ☐ With an attitude.
- ☐ Loudly.

Communication Scene 2: You are late for class on the first day of the new school year. You couldn't believe it. Everything went wrong. The alarm didn't go off. No one woke you up. The bus was late. And now you are not sure where your homeroom is located. You are walking as fast as you can get away with to the end of the school where you think your class might be and see the assistant principal up ahead. She looks at you and, while trying to catch your breath since you ran from the bus stop, you say "Excuse me, Ms. Richards, where is room 222?"

Which of these would you rather have Ms. Richards say?

- ☐ "Um, down that way, sort of past that one locker and turn and then you will see the room."

**or**

- ☐ "Keep going straight, past three doors, to the locker on the left with the red sticker on the front. Turn left in that hallway and look on the right side of the hall. Room 222 is the second door you will see."

How are the two messages different?

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What could Ms. Richards have done to make it even easier for you to find the room, without walking you there?

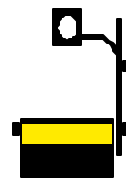
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Okay. Let's look at what you've covered this session.

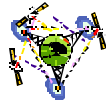
- ☒ You saw that before you take part in your IEP meeting, you need to learn how to c\_\_\_\_\_ in small groups.



- ☑ You learned that communication is a process of s\_\_\_\_\_ information between two or more people.
- ☑ You figured out that communicating is more than just t\_\_\_\_\_ and that there are many ways to communicate, like writing, using sign language, body language, or the tone of your voice.

- ☑ You learned about “mixed

m\_\_\_\_\_,” where the person says one thing but means another.



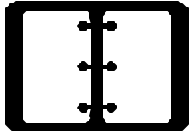
Before the next session, you should have:

- ✎ Spent some time looking at how body language is used in communication.
- ✎ Thought about the types of communication you use to get your messages across.

Okay. So that’s it for now.



Later.



### **Session 25 Summary Sheet - Communicating in small groups**

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

- ☒ You saw that before you take part in your IEP meeting, you need to learn how to communicate in small groups.
- ☒ You learned that communication is a process of sharing information between two or more people.
- ☒ You figured out that communicating is more than just talking and that there are many ways to communicate, like writing, using sign language, body language, or the tone of your voice.
- ☒ You learned about “mixed messages”, where the person says one thing but means another.

## Session 26

# COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) — Body language and assertiveness

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



Welcome back! Come on in,



have a seat and get comfortable!  
What's that? You are sitting? And in a  
desk so that there is no way you can get  
comfortable? Well, yeah...I knew that. I  
was just trying to make you feel at home!

Anyway, here we go again! Let's see,  
where were we?

Oh yeah...communication. You remember  
that, of course. It means sending and  
receiving messages.



Last session you decided that  
communication was a process. That means



there are lots of steps  
that have to happen before you really  
communicate.

Then you looked at some of those steps.

Like what you say, how you say something,  
how you use body language, and how you  
listen.



Body language?

Well, yeah... body language. We talked  
about that, remember? Like when your  
teacher was really upset about you falling



asleep in class. She was looking at  
you like she was real mad, had her hands  
on her hips, and her face was red.

Body language. The way she looked at  
you, the way she had her arms, and her  
facial expression all sent a message. That's  
part of communicating.

The problem is that if you don't understand  
those messages, there is no real  
communication. Communicating takes  
someone sending a message and someone  
receiving the message.



You are going to spend a little time thinking  
about body language that happens at  
meetings like your IEP meeting. I mean, if

someone in the meeting is sending a message through their body language, it would be useful if you saw that message.

Plus, you are sending all sorts of body language messages yourself. You don't believe it? Well, it's true. You may sometimes send messages you don't want to if you are not aware of what you are doing.

Take a minute and think about the last IEP meeting you attended. If you have never been to a meeting like that, ask these questions to someone who has been to a meeting, like your teacher or a family member.

Think about who was there.



What did the room you were in look like?



How were the tables and chairs set up?



Okay. Keep those images in your mind as you think about what the body language people use in these meetings can mean.

Now, let's start with you. Can you see yourself sitting at the table? Go ahead, give it a try.



**Picture this.**

You are sitting in your chair all slouched down. You spend most of the time staring

at a scratch on the table, using the pencil you brought to color in the scratch. Every now and then you look up at the clock.



Then you go back to staring at the table.



What message are you sending?

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You are sending a couple of messages. One message that you send with your body language is that you are bored.



You keep looking at the clock,



which tells the other team members that you are counting the minutes until the meeting is over.

You are also telling the other team members that you are not interested in what the team is doing. You would rather kill time by marking up the table.

Your body language is telling all the other members that you don't want to be a part of the team that is making decisions. Do this long enough and people will not bother to have you there. Then **other people** will make those important decisions for you.

So, what types of body language would send the message that you are interested in

what happens at the meeting and that you want to be taken seriously as a team member?

① Sit up in your chair.



Yeah, yeah, yeah... I know. The chair is uncomfortable and you can't seem to keep your back straight that long!

You don't have to be "Miss Manners" and sit ramrod straight like some dummy that won't bend at the waist. But on the other

hand you shouldn't **SLOUCH** in your chair,

slide down so far that you can

barely see over the table


or lean on the back legs of the chair


so that you


**fall over**


six times during the meeting!


It seems silly, but by sitting up to the table you send the message that you are ready to be part of the team.

② Look  at whoever is talking at the time. When you look at people

 while they are speaking, they think you are listening to them. When you

look away  from someone, they think you have quit listening. You and I know that you can still listen to someone


even if you are  staring somewhere else. Still, if you want people to get the message that you are interested in what's

going on in the meeting,  look at the person who is talking.

It's usually better to look into the speakers' eyes while they are talking. When a new person begins talking, shift your gaze to them.

When you are talking, look at the people you are speaking to. That means looking at everyone on the team if you are speaking generally, or at one person if you are talking to that person. When speaking to the whole group, look from one person to the next.

③ Every now and then nod your head when you hear something you agree with,

smile  when someone compliments you or makes a joke, or make a facial

expression that says you don't understand if someone says something that you didn't



follow.

This tells people that you are listening and makes you an active part of the communication process.

④ If you have the chance, take notes



about things you want to remember, bring up later, or think would be useful. Don't spend the whole meeting slumped over the paper taking notes.

Instead, just jot down a few short things that will help you remember the point that was made. If you want, you might have someone else assist you writing down these



notes.

These are a few ways to use body language to your advantage at your meeting. In the next few sessions you will learn other communication strategies to participate in your meeting. For now, let's look at some other team members and what their body language might tell you about them.



### Picture this.

You invited a friend from your neighborhood to your meeting. After it has been going on for about fifteen minutes, you look over at your friend. She is sitting quietly. She is frowning a lot, and keeps looking over at you, raising her eyebrows. Once she catches your eyes, she

shrugs her shoulders and shakes her head slightly.

What message is she sending?

Your friend is confused




She is probably lost and doesn't really understand what is going on. You might feel the same way the first time you take part in one of these. There are lots of reasons to be confused. We've talked about them before, remember? There are a lot of initials like IEP, VR and on and on.

If you do get lost in the meeting, what kind of body language will help tell people that you are confused?

⑤ Like before, if you get lost or something is said that you don't understand, let the speaker know by your facial expressions that you have a question about what is happening. Raise

your eyebrows  , lift

your finger (like you are raising your hand in

class)  to let them know you want to say something. Again, don't just sit there and hope it gets better. Odds are, you will just get more and more lost!



### Picture this.

Your dad has been sitting quietly next to you the entire meeting. He hasn't said a word, but you've noticed several things about him. First, he is frowning more and more as the meeting goes on. He is thumping the table in front of him with his ring finger and doesn't seem to notice the noise he is making. He is beginning to sweat a little, even though it's not that hot.

What message is he sending?

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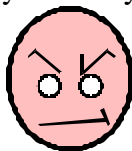
Easy, right? Your dad is mad



Something or someone has made him angry. It happens! Usually it happens because the communication process breaks down. People misunderstand each other. That is why it is important to recognize



body language. In the next set of lessons you will learn what the leader of the meeting should do to deal with this when it happens. What body language should you use if you find yourself getting



angry?

© When you hear something that makes you angry, let the speaker know by your facial expressions that you have a question

about what was said. Raise your



eyebrows,

lift your finger to let them know you want to say something. Don't just sit there and get madder and madder



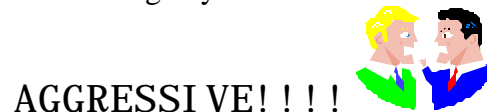
Which makes me think of something else about communication you should think about. Let's talk about how to get what you want without making people angry! You need to know two words:

*Assertive*  
&  
**AGGRESSIVE!!!!**

These words are things that you are (or can be!). What does that mean? Well, you can



be *Assertive* in a meeting or you can be



**AGGRESSIVE!!!**

One is a good idea, but one is not a good idea. You tell me which is which.

To be *Assertive* means to stand up for yourself, to be confident, and to make sure that your opinions are listened to.



To be **AGGRESSIVE!!** means to attack other people, to be hard to deal with and to argue.



When you are angry it is easy to be **AGGRESSIVE!!** You might feel like yelling at them or arguing a lot. If you feel like no one is listening to you, you might think you have to be loud and noisy to get some attention. Or you might think you want something so badly that you won't listen to anyone else and argue with other team members.

Not a good idea? Well, sure, I know you would never do those things, but I bet you know someone who might, right?

When you are **AGGRESSIVE!!** in a meeting, how are **other people** going to react?

Well, think about this situation. That kid down the block (the one who got his head stuck in the fence that you had to go help last session) is at it again. He has another



neighbor's cat backed into a corner and is teasing it by squirting water on it from some squirt gun. Cats hate water. The neighbor kid is being **AGGRESSIVE!!** by attacking the cat and teasing it. You know that cat well...she is normally a very nice cat and lets you pet



her all the time. In fact, you've never seen the cat actually bite anyone. But

there it is, backed into the corner and getting water squirted on it. To make matters worse, the neighbor kid is not too smart because he keeps getting closer and closer to the cat. When the boy gets too close, how do you think the cat is going to



react?



Well, that's not too hard. The cat is going to be **AGGRESSIVE!!** right back! When the neighborhood boy gets close enough, that cat is going to spit and hiss and scratch the heck out of him. I know, he probably deserves it!

But, think about it.

When someone becomes **AGGRESSIVE!!** toward you, what is the first thing you are likely to do?

Right!

Be **AGGRESSIVE!!** right back! If someone comes up to you and says "I can't believe you gave that answer in class, that was really dumb" you are going to get angry and say something right back.

Now, think this through.

If you are in your meeting and you are **AGGRESSIVE!!** in the way you talk to **other people**, are you going to get what you want?





Probably not. All you are going to do is make **ot her peopl e** angry! And they will not invite you to the next meeting!

So, does that mean you sit quietly when someone says something you don't agree with? Or do you keep your opinions all to yourself just because you are afraid to make someone mad?

Well, no...those are not good ideas either. It is probably a good idea to become more *Assertive*.



That means letting people know you have some ideas. It means letting people know that you are an equal part of the team.

The important thing to remember is to do that without becoming



**AGGRESSIVE!!**

How? Well, in the next session you are going to work on some things that will help you advocate for yourself.

Advocate...that means stand up for yourself. And you can remember these rules for being *Assertive*.

- Keep your voice calm. Don't yell, holler or scream. If you have something to say, speak up but don't shout out!
- Wait for your turn to speak. Don't interrupt **ot her peopl e**, it only makes

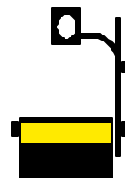
them mad. If you have a hard time getting a

word in, lift your finger  to show that you want to say something.

- Most people in the meeting are not there for fun. They are there because they care about what happens to you and your life! Hard to believe, eh? So, when someone says something that makes you really mad, it might be because they don't understand something. Ask people why they said something or why they think something should happen. Most of the time they will have a good reason, and you can explain why you disagree.

- Don't "fight" dirty. If you and another team member do have a disagreement, don't bring up something that is not related to the meeting. For example, don't tell someone that their hair looks like Ronald McDonald's hair just because you disagree with them. Sometimes the whole team will disagree with you. Then you really have your work cut out to convince them you are right. Or, maybe you need to think about changing your mind, too!

Next session you will learn more about advocating for yourself.



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


- ☒ You learned that using b\_\_\_\_\_ language



is an important part of communicating

- ☑ You sometimes send m\_\_\_\_\_ using body language that you don't want or don't mean to send.

- ☑ You saw that it is important to l\_\_\_\_ at

people  when you are speaking to them and when they are speaking to you.

- ☑ You learned that being *assertive*



means s\_\_\_\_\_ up for yourself, being confident, and making sure that your ideas and opinions are heard.



- ☑ You learned that being aggressive



is not a good idea if you want things to go w\_\_\_\_\_ at you IEP meeting.



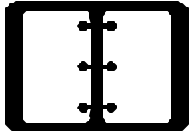
Before the next session, you should have:

-  Thought about whether you were assertive or aggressive at your last meeting.
-  Talked to an adult about ways to be assertive without offending people.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



## **Session 26 Summary Sheet - Body language and assertiveness**

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

- ☒ You learned that using body language is an important part of communicating
- ☒ You sometimes send messages using body language that you don't want or don't mean to send.
- ☒ You saw that it is important to look at people when you are speaking to them and when they are speaking to you.
- ☒ You learned that being assertive means standing up for yourself, being confident, and making sure that your ideas and opinions are heard.
- ☒ You learned that being aggressive is not a good idea if you want things to go well at you IEP meeting.



## Session 27

### COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) - Advocating and appealing

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



WHAT KIND OF  
DELIVERY PERSON ARE YOU?  
MY DOG COULD DO A BETTER  
JOB OF DELIVERING THE  
PAPER THAN YOU DO! OH  
YEAH?.. WELL...

Oh... hi! I didn't see you. Sorry. I was kind of angry. You see, I have my newspaper delivered to my home every morning. That's how I like to start my day...a hot bowl of oatmeal, a glass of cold milk and my morning paper.



Except that the new person delivering my paper keeps throwing it in the bushes where I have to climb in to get it.




And it keeps getting all wet from the rain and the dew in the bushes.

I mean, who wants to read a soggy, torn newspaper every morning? So, I was just giving that newspaper carrier a piece of my mind!

Now where were we? Oh yeah, last time we were talking about the difference

between being *Assertive*



and **AGGRESSIVE!!**  and how being **AGGRESSIVE!!** is not a good way to get what you want.

What?

What do you mean do I ever listen to myself? Of course I do.

Oh, you mean the newspaper carrier. I was kind of **AGGRESSIVE!!**



when I talked to him, wasn't I? He looked like he didn't like it much when I told him my dog could do a better job. That's not true either. My dog would tear the paper to shreds and slobber all over it.

How should I have handled that situation?



Well, you are right. I probably should have started out by telling the newspaper carrier


what the problem was and suggest that he be more careful. Then, if the paper keeps ending up in the shrubbery, I could tell him that that wasn't going to cut it and that he needed to do something about it or I was going to contact someone who could. I guess if I had to I could then complain to his manager or someone.

But, I bet we could work it out if I did a better job of advocating for myself and not

be **AGGRESSIVE!!**



OK. I'll do that. Maybe we should work through some activities that will give both of

us  a better idea of how to advocate for ourselves!

**Advocate.** That means to speak up for or to support. When you advocate for yourself, you speak up for yourself and stand up for things that are important to you.

We are going to think about advocating for yourself in your educational planning process. There are three things you really need to be able to do to advocate for yourself during these meetings:

1. Know what you want.
2. Know what **other people** want.
3. Know how to communicate why it is important to do what you want.

OK. We have talked about what you want in your educational program in the other sessions. You should have a good idea of your learning strengths, some outcomes you prefer, the supports you need to reach

those outcomes, and goals that you can set to succeed. So you should know what you



want out of the meeting.

Unfortunately, we don't always get everything we want! So you should choose what is most important to you if you have several things you would like to have happen. Give a little on one thing and you might get something you really want in return!

Why is it important to know what the **other people** want? Well, for one thing you can look at what you want and what they want and see if there are some things that are the same. That way you can agree on at least part of what both of you want! Everybody wins!



A lot of times people want the same thing and just say it in different ways.

Later on we will talk about negotiating and compromising. If what you want and what someone else wants can never agree, maybe there is another outcome that you could both agree on. That is a compromise. If you know what the other person wants, you can figure out a good compromise.

Of course, the third thing you need to be a good advocate for yourself is to be able to communicate to others...that is what this whole section is about!

We've already talked some about being

## Assertive.



You remember? Standing up for yourself, being confident and making sure your ideas and opinions are heard.

Right. To be a good advocate and to communicate what you want to **other people**, you have be *Assertive*.



How assertive are you?

Here is a little quiz you can take to see if you know how an assertive person should act. We'll talk about the answers to the quiz sheet when you finish. Take it just for fun and see how assertive you are!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

Put an X in either the True or False box under each statement.

*If you are assertive, you should....*

1. Make eye contact with the person who is speaking.  
☐ True ☐ False
2. Talk with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice.  
☐ True ☐ False
3. Hide your face so you won't be embarrassed.  
☐ True ☐ False
4. Stand or sit up straight.

☐ True

☐ False

5. Yell or scream so you get everybody's attention.

☐ True

☐ False

6. Be prepared to talk about what you

need. ☐ True

☐ False

7. Start crying if you don't get your way.

☐ True

☐ False

8. Find out who you need to talk to about your problem.

☐ True

☐ False

9. Take a friend with you if you feel afraid or nervous.

☐ True

☐ False

10. Not worry about what the laws say because they are too confusing.

☐ True

☐ False

11. Ask if there is an appeal process.

☐ True

☐ False

12. Not take no for an answer.

☐ True

☐ False

13. Ask for help if you can't solve the problem yourself.

☐ True

☐ False

14. Give up and go home.

☐ True

☐ False

Easy, right? Well, let's look at these answers and see!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

1. Make eye contact with the person who is speaking.

True! We've already talked about that, right? Looking at people when they are talking lets them know you are listening to



what they have to say.

*If you are assertive, you should....*

2. Talk with a firm, clear, friendly, direct voice.

True! That way, people will understand what you have to say and will be more



likely to listen to what you say!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

3. Hide your face so you won't be embarrassed.



False! It hardly does any good to speak in a firm, clear voice if you are speaking to the table or into your arms or lap! Of course you shouldn't hide your face...I mean, you can't look someone in the eyes and hide your face at the same time, can you?

*If you are assertive, you should....*

4. Stand or sit up straight.

True! Another one we talked about.



Sitting up straight says that you are paying attention and are interested.

*If you are assertive, you should....*

5. Yell or scream so you get everybody's attention.



False! What is that? Right, that is being aggressive not assertive! You might get everyone's attention, but most likely they will throw you out for making a scene!

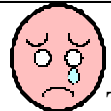
*If you are assertive, you should....*

6. Be prepared to talk about what you need.

True! Another one we've already talked about! Hey, you already know this stuff, don't you? By being prepared to talk about what you want you will be prepared to answer all the questions that might come up and can convince more people that what you want is right.

*If you are assertive, you should....*

7. Start crying if you don't get your way.



False! This may seem silly, but when people are talking about you, you might get really upset! It is best to try to keep all your emotions under control. It's OK to feel something, like anger or pleasure, but don't act based on your emotions. When something makes you feel angry, happy or even confused, tell the team using "I" statements. Those are things like "I feel angry when I hear you say something like that" or "I am glad we decided that!"

*If you are assertive, you should....*

8. Find out who you need to talk to about your problem.

True! Remember my paper carrier? If I could not get him to quit tossing the paper



in the bushes, I should have found out the person at the paper company who is in charge of paper carriers so I could talk with that person. Of course, in your educational and transition planning meetings, the people who you need to talk to, who can make things happen for you, should be at the meeting!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

9. Take a friend with you if you feel afraid or nervous.

True! Being assertive does not mean being the Lone Ranger! Come to think of it, even the Lone Ranger had a friend! If you feel uncomfortable, bring a friend.



*If you are assertive, you should....*

10. Not worry about what the laws say because they are too confusing.

False! You need to know your rights and your responsibilities. It is part of being prepared!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

11. Ask if there is an appeal process.

True! I had to sneak one in on you since you were doing so well! We haven't talked about the appeal process! You know of course that a process is something with



several steps in it before it is finished. Appeal means to ask someone to look at something again or to think about a decision that has been made. If decisions are made at your planning meetings that you

disagree with, and you can't get the team to see your point, you might be able to appeal the decision. That means someone else would look at the decision and decide whether it was a good decision or whether the team should meet again to make another decision.

Your school might not have an appeals process for students, but the law



requires that families can appeal decisions. You might think about working with your parents (I know, I know... ugh!) if some decisions are made that you all don't agree with.

*If you are assertive, you should....*

12. Not take no for an answer.

True! If you believe in what you want, and you know it is right for you then don't give up too soon. Keep working on it and maybe you can convince others to join you. That doesn't mean you shouldn't compromise and there are times when we all have to quit trying...at least for the moment!

*If you are assertive, you should....*

13. Ask for help if you can't solve the problem by yourself.


True! What makes you think you know everything? Of course you could use some assistance...we all can. Go ahead and take advantage of the people around you who can assist you in reaching your goals.



*If you are assertive, you should....*


14. Give up and go home.

False! Well, what can I say, really? If you

give up and go home  then **other people** will just keep making those decisions and living your life for you!



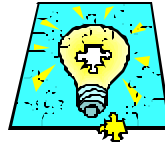
Go back and count the number of answers on the quiz that were the same as those I just gave you. If you got 10 to 14 of them right, you know a lot

about being assertive!  Good job! If you got 5 to 9 right, you've got a good start...keep after it! If you got 1 to 4 right...you must have been asleep during the last two sessions again! You don't want people running your life for you, do you? I didn't think so...work some more on the last few sessions!

There are some other things that will make you a better advocate for yourself. We've talked about how important it is to be prepared. That's why it is important that you know about your rights. I mean, if you are going to stand up for your own rights, you had better know what in the world they are, right? As a student receiving MULES



(remember ... My Unique Learning and Educational Supports?), you have some rights. We've already talked about IDEA



and some of the things it says you have rights about. I will bet that somewhere there is a list or booklet that shows your rights as a student in special education.



Take some time now to find out about your rights as a student. See if the school district has a book listing those



rights. Maybe they have a book about parental rights that also lists your rights. You may have to just talk with someone or actually phone someone who might know.



In any case, find out what rights you have available to you.

I'll wait.

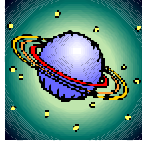
OK. Now, you've got an idea of some rights. We've talked about a lot of them. Like the right to an IEP that lists your goals and the right to the supports you need.

Rights have responsibilities with them. So, if you have a right to be involved in your transition meeting, you also have the responsibility to come to that meeting prepared, right?

Anyway, knowing your rights will help you advocate for yourself better. I mean, let's suppose you go to your meeting and begin demanding that for lunch each day you have pizza. I mean, that may be something you want. On the other hand, I doubt your

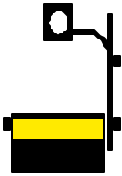
folks want to have you eating pizza every day. But anyway, you are in this meeting and you stand up and say “I have a right to have pizza every day!”

Well, they are going to look at you like you



are from Saturn. I mean, no law gives you the right to have pizza every day!

But if you say that you understand that you have the right to participate in your planning meeting and that you have done some work to prepare for it...well, that's a different story. Those **other people** are going to take you seriously for a change!



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





- ☒ You learned that it is important to a \_\_\_\_\_ and speak up for yourself and for things that are important to you.
- ☒ You found out that if decisions are made at your planning meetings that you disagree with, you might be able to a \_\_\_\_\_ the decision.
- ☒ You saw that you do have r \_\_\_\_\_ as a student, but that you also have to be reasonable about what you want.

☒ You learned that if you want to be taken seriously, you have to be p \_\_\_\_\_ when you go into your meeting.

☒ You saw the difference between being assertive and being a \_\_\_\_\_ and learned that you don't get anywhere by being aggressive.



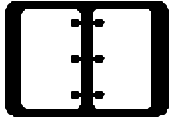
Before the next session, you should have:

-  Thought about what you want out of your IEP meeting.
-  Thought about how you are going to communicate the things that are important to you to the other team members.
-  Talked to someone at your school to see what rights you have as a student if you disagree with the decisions made during your planning meeting.
-  Taken responsibility to be prepared for your planning meeting.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



### **Session 27 Summary Sheet - Advocating and appealing**

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

- ☒ You learned that it is important to advocate and speak up for yourself and for things that are important to you.
- ☒ You found out that if decisions are made at your planning meetings that you disagree with, you might be able to appeal the decision.
- ☒ You saw that you do have rights as a student, but that you also have to be reasonable about what you want.
- ☒ You learned that if you want to be taken seriously, you have to be prepared when you go into your meeting.
- ☒ You saw the difference between being assertive and being aggressive and learned that you don't get anywhere by being aggressive.

## Session 28

# COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) – Timing and persuasion

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



I just have to tell you what I did after our last session. Remember my little problem with the newspaper carrier... you know, soggy newspapers instead of soggy oatmeal? Well I thought about what you said last time and about some of the things we looked at about being a good advocate. Then I went into action.

Guess what? It works! And I learned some new things, too! Of course, you are the first person I wanted to tell about some of these new things.

Lucky you, right? Don't answer that!

This session we are going to deal with several parts of communicating during the meeting that all add up to one thing... being a good **SALESPERSON**!



Whoa, you say? What does being a good **SALESPERSON** have to do with communicating at your educational planning meeting?

Well, lots of things.... Persuasion, talking too much or too little, negotiating and compromising, and listening. These

are things a good **SALESPERSON** needs to be able to do, and they are things you need to be able to do if you are going to participate in your educational planning meetings.

Who knows, maybe this will lead to a great job selling *ROLLS ROYCE* cars!



Probably not, but then, you never know!

Now, let's think this thing through. What is the job of a **SALESPERSON**?



What is her mission, her goal?



You got it! To sell something! To sell **you** something. To sell you something you don't even know you need! To sell you something you probably don't even need!

Seems simple enough, right? Now, what is your mission in your educational



planning meeting?



Well, right... one thing is to participate

as an equal partner.

Another thing is to be a part of the decision-making process.



But a third thing is to get some things into that IEP that you want.





How are you going to do that?

Well, you're going to have to sell those OTHER PEOPLE a few things yourself. You are going to have to sell them something that they don't even know they want yet. You might even have to sell them something they don't want!

What? Of course I'm not talking about actually selling the OTHER PEOPLE on your planning team anything like magazines, candy bars, or Christmas wrapping paper.

I'm talking about selling them on your

ideas , your goals , your opinions. When I say "selling" I really am talking about convincing them that what you want is right. They have to


"buy" into your ideas,



your

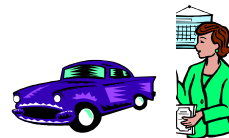
plans, your goals.



It's a lot like selling a car.  If you don't convince them that this is a good idea, they won't buy and you won't get what you want!

So, for the next few sessions, we are going to become someone else. We are going to take on a new role. We are going to get a new attitude. We are going to become a ...

**CAR SALESPERSON !**



That's right. Why? When you think of a SALESPERSON, one of the first things you think of is a car SALESPERSON. And believe me, some of the best salespeople in the world sell cars. And the good ones make a pretty decent living doing so. But, that's a different story.

So, from now on, you are a car SALESPERSON.

You think like a car SALESPERSON.

You act like a car SALESPERSON.

You eat like a car SALESPERSON.

You sleep like a car SALESPERSON.

You... SALESPERSON.

You...

What's that? How does a car SALESPERSON eat and sleep? Well,

like everyone else in the world, I guess. Sorry, I got carried away.

We are going to go through an exercise looking at how you, the super car **SALESPERSON**, go about selling a car to a possible buyer. As we go through this, we will think about some of the skills that you, as a car **SALESPERSON**, have that could be useful in your

planning meetings.

Ready?



Begin:

You are going into work on Monday morning. It is a cold, somewhat misty



morning.

You turn



the wheel into the back lot of Kelsey's New and Used Cars. It is a huge place, with new and used cars of every make and model parked all around.

As usual, you are the very first **SALESPERSON** in the showroom this



morning.

That is one reason you are good at what you do! You are proud of the fact that you are the **#1 SALESPERSON** at Kelsey's New and Used Cars. You are also proud of the fact that you always treat your customers fairly, find out what they really want, and give them the best deal you can!

So, anyway, you are at work at 7:20 a.m. on a cold, drizzly morning. You had some preparation to do. There was that report on that new line of cars, the Speedo

XF2.



You found that it really pays to know all about a car before you try to sell one. People trust you if you know what you are talking about and can answer their questions.

REDUCE  
SPEED  
NOW



What is the first thing about being a **SALESPERSON** that would be important for your educational planning meetings?



## #1 Being prepared!

Sure, we already knew that. We talked about that as being important to be a good advocate for yourself.

Remember? Knowing what you want? Well, being prepared is important if you are going to convince anyone that what you want is important. And that what you want should be included in your educational plan.



If you go back and work through all the things that we talked about in the first four sessions, I think




you'll be very well prepared for your meeting.

All right, the first point is that good salespeople are **prepared**.




On we go.

You look up from your report and see that it is now 8:55 a.m. Five minutes until opening time in the showroom. There are no customers there this morning, so you spend a few minutes looking at the Speedo XF2

parked there.  It is bright red, and you have to admit it is one nice car! You check out some of the features you were reading about, to make sure the demo model has them to point out.

At 9:15 the first customer walks in. You know that people like a minute to look around. If you go over too soon, they are going to tell you that they just want to look and you will never get a sale. On the other hand, if you ignore them for too long, they will take a quick look around and leave. There is a fine art here... knowing when to come up and when to stay back! You watch the customer and after she has had a moment to walk around the showroom, she comes

back to that Speedo XF2  you were just examining. You decide that it is time to act, so you walk over, introduce yourself, give her your business card, offer her a cup of coffee or tea, and let her know that you are available to answer any questions she might have. She has a question about the Speedo XF2.



Good thing you did your homework!



Take a look at the last bit.

What was important about the way you, the **SALESPERSON**, got to the point where you can begin to make a sale?



Maybe you already figured it out, but let's put it another way. Suppose that you had jumped up, rushed over to the customer when she first entered the door, and blurted out "BOY HOWDY, DO I HAVE A CAR FOR YOU!"

She would have turned and left the showroom quicker than you could say "Let me tell you 'bout this deal I have."

## #2 Timing.



It's about **timing**.



The **timing** in when you bring up a topic or subject. There are good times and there are bad times.

Now, this is just as true during your educational planning meeting. You have to "time" when you bring up an idea or give your opinion on something. If you don't, you end up like **SALESPERSON** with the bad timing... everything he wants goes right out the door.

Let me try to explain this timing thing in another way. Say you are working at **Burger Beast** and your boss is working the same shift. You think it is time for your boss to think about giving you a



raise, and you have decided that you will

ask him. *Assertively!*



Here are four different times during your work shift that you could bring up the topic of your raise. Put a "Y" next to those times that are good times to bring up the subject, and an "N" next to those that are not such a good time:

☐ You have just flipped a burger



onto the floor, causing the customer to have to wait for another **Burger Beast Monster Meal**.

☐ You have been working hard all day and just finished waxing the **Burger**



**Beast** floor to a shiny finish.

☐ The other fry chef is on break and it is only you on the grill and your boss at the cash register. There is a line of six



people at the cash register, and the drive-thru is backed out into the

street.

☐ You and your boss finished cleaning up the grill, have just locked the doors, and are almost ready to leave for the



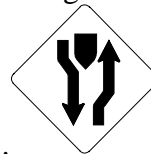
night. I'll let you figure out the good and bad times.

**Helpful Hint:** NO, YES, NO, & YES might be a good series of answers.

How can you tell when it is a good time or a bad time to bring up new points at your IEP meeting? Well, here are some things to consider:

1. Is someone else talking? The time is never right to interrupt someone else on the team. You will only get them upset. **Don't interrupt!**
2. Are you talking about the right topic at the time? If you have a specific employment goal in mind, and you bring it up when the team is talking about last year's goals or recreational outcomes, it is going to be ignored. **Be on topic.**
3. Do you have time to cover what you need? If you are five minutes from taking a break and you bring up a topic that takes twenty minutes to discuss, the team is not going to give enough thought to the idea. **Think Ahead!**
4. Have you heard enough of the other team members' ideas to include that in your discussion? If another team member has an idea that is different from your idea, you will be in better shape to get what you want if you can tell how it meets that team member's needs or wants. That way you can explain how your idea benefits everyone, or at least explain why it is more important to do what you want. **Listen to Everyone!**

Okay, let's go back to the car



story...


You have been talking with your customer for a long time...usually a good sign. She asked a lot of questions that showed she had been doing her homework, too. And you were able to answer all her questions, and give her more information about that Speedo XF2.



Then came the surprise.

After all that, she looks at you and says "I can buy it for the same price at a dealer that is closer to my house. That will make it easier for me to bring it in for routine maintenance."

For a moment, you think you have lost your sale. But you say there are other ways to get

that convenience, like our Gold Key  pick up and drop off service, which will come and pick up your car at your home and bring it back. Plus, that is only one factor you should take into consideration when you buy your car. You should compare our service department, the warranty, and the options we provide."

**REDUCE  
SPEED  
NOW**



What is going on here? You are trying to talk the customer into buying her car from you and not someone else. Look at the last part of that section and think about how you are doing that.




There are several ways you could get someone to change his or her mind about something. First, you could become

**AGGRESSIVE!!**



and threaten them. But they are going to get mad and do everything they can to keep you from getting what you want! Not a good strategy.

Alternatively, you could get real whiny and tell people that if you don't get what you want, you will just leave. But then again, if you do that, they will probably just let you leave. So that doesn't get you what you want.

Or, you could put on your persuade shoes  and take everyone to the

dance with you!



What? Persuade shoes?



Dance?



If you want to reach your goals and get what you want, you have to persuade people. **Persuade**. That means to convince people that what you have to say is worth listening to and might be better than other plans. So it is kind of like puttin' on some persuade shoes



and taking others to the dance!

How do you persuade people that what you have to say is worth listening to? Well, that is where the dance stuff comes in. What do you do when you dance?



You sort of move together with your partner, sometimes going one



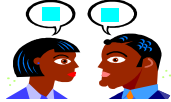
way and sometimes another. Sometimes you lead, other times you follow. Persuading people is sort of like

a dance. How? I'm so glad you asked. Shall we dance?

First, you have to do a kind of backward step.



You have to let the person know that **you understand what they are saying.**

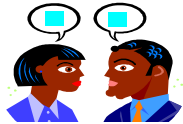


For example, your customer said that she could get the same deal at an automobile dealer near her home, which would be more convenient for her. You started persuading her by saying that convenience was an important thing to think about.

So, the first step in the persuasion dance is to take a backward step



and **restate what someone else has**



**said.** In your educational planning meeting you might find that someone wants to have you take a greenhouse and horticulture



course because they think that would be good for getting a job later on. You might start by saying that you agree that preparing for a job is important, but that you had something else in mind.

The next step in the persuasion dance is to take a forward step



and **show how you might achieve the same thing a different way... YOUR**



way! So, as a car **SALESPERSON** you tell the customer about the pickup and delivery service that is just as convenient for her. It meets the same needs talked about in the first step. So, for example, if you wanted to take a math course



instead of horticulture,



you might point out how that course prepares you for a job.

The final step in the persuasion dance is



to take a slide step to the right.

You do this by **telling all the other**



**advantages** of your plan



**or idea.** You could go on to show how the math class would also prepare you for post-secondary education if you decided to do that instead of going right to work after high school.

Let's see.

Step backwards



and **let people know that you understand what they said.**



Step forward



and **tell how your plan meets the**



**same goal.**

Take a slide step to the right  
and **tell all the other benefits**



**of your plan.**

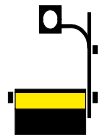


There it is... the persuasion shuffle!

Time to put on your persuade shoes




and go to the dance!



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

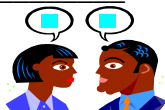
☒ You learned how to be a good  
salesperson at your planning meeting  
by being p\_\_\_\_\_ and  
communicating.

☒ You learned that t\_\_\_\_\_  is  
very important. You need to know  
when to persuade, when to talk,  
when to negotiate, when to  
compromise, and when to just sit  
back and listen.

☒ You learned a new dance - the  
p\_\_\_\_\_ shuffle.

First you step backward ↘

and let people know that you  
u\_\_\_\_\_ what they said.



Then you step forward ↗



and  
tell how y\_\_\_\_\_ plan meets the same



goals.

Finally, you take a slide step to the right





and tell a\_\_ the other benefits



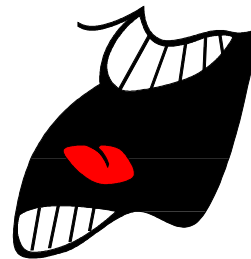
**of your plan.**



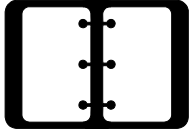
Before the next  
session, you should  
have:

-  Looked at how you can "sell" what  
you would like to see done at your  
next planning meeting.
-  Prepared yourself for the meeting by  
going back and looking at topics we  
have discussed in the past sessions.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



## Session 28 Summary Sheet - Timing and persuasion

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

- ☒ You learned how to be a good salesperson at your planning meeting by being prepared and communicating.
- ☒ You learned that timing is very important. You need to know when to persuade, when to talk, when to negotiate, when to compromise, and when to just sit back and listen.
- ☒ You learned a new dance - the persuasion shuffle. First you step backward and let people know that you understand what they said. Then you step forward and tell how your plan meets the same goals. And finally you take a slide step to the right and tell all the other benefits of your plan.



## Session 29

# COMMUNICATING (Or: I thought you said she said he said?) - Keeping your ideas out there

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



Hello! How's the #1


SALESPERSON



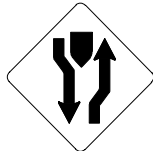
at Kelsey's



New and Used Cars?

Got your persuade shoes  on and ready to convince some folks that you have some goals and ideas that you want included in your IEP?

Right! Then time to motor back onto



that highway!

Your customer looks like she might be considering all of the extra advantages to buying her car from Kelsey's that you have told her about. You could easily keep going on and on...I mean that is what they trained you to do, right? But you know better than to keep talking and talking and talking.

One of the first things you learned about selling cars is that after you give people the facts they need, it is a good idea to let them talk about what they want and what they think of the things you've told them. Of course, sometimes you need to say something. You usually wait until there is a

small silence before you say something else...maybe ask a question or point out something that the customer might not have seen. Sure enough, your customer seems to be talking herself into buying the car from you...right then and there! It helps to have that bright, shiny red Speedo XF2 sitting

there! 

REDUCE  
SPEED  
NOW



Check it out. What has happened here that would be useful for you to know about for your educational planning meeting?



1.

2.

Did you notice two things that might be useful? One is that you have to be careful not to talk too much or too little. The other is that it helps to keep your ideas in front of people so they can think



about them.

Talking too much or too little. That can be a big problem at a planning meeting.



What is going to happen if you talk too much?



Right. After a while, no one is going to listen to you at all. It's like what happens with the elevator music they play at the department stores.



When you first walk in you hear it, but after a while you don't hear it unless you think about it. You just tune it out. Well, your team members are likely to tune you out if you go on and on and on...like the Energizer Bunny®!

On the other hand, if you don't say anything, what are they going to think?



Right. They are going to think that you are not interested or don't have any good ideas. Don't care what they think? Well, pretty soon, if they think you don't have any good ideas, they are going to



start treating you like a kid... you know, talking down to you, telling you what to do and when to do it. Then they will make decisions about your life for you.

Not good. So, how do you know when you're talking too much or too little? Well, good question. Usually you know you've talked too much when you leave a meeting and you have this feeling in your bones that you said too much! But

that's too late. Use a few common sense rules to decide when and when not to say something during your meeting.

**To speak or not to speak,  
that is the question.  
blah, blah, blah, and so forth.**

**Speak...** when you are spoken to!  
When someone says something to you, look them in the eye and answer him or



her. Don't shrug your shoulders and mumble, but speak up!

**Don't speak...** when someone else is



speaking. It's rude and it will make them mad. That won't get you anywhere.

**Speak...** when you haven't said anything for a while. If you sit too long people will wonder if you're asleep with your eyes open! You can find something to comment about, even if it just to say you



agree with something.

**Don't speak...** if you've been talking a while and it looks like other people have



questions. If you've been talking for a few minutes, telling people about a goal you would like to have in your education plan, and you look around at the other team members and notice that they are trying to say something or have puzzled looks on their faces. Now it's time to be quiet for a few minutes. Let them ask questions or give their opinions



and only speak if you are asked a question.


**Speak...** if you have something important to say about a topic. Go ahead! Speak up! Be assertive! Of course, be polite and wait until no one else is talking, but put in your two cents.



But keep it short and to the point. This is no time to tell a long story about something that is only slightly related.

The best rule is to pay attention to what other people are saying, take part in the discussion, but respect the rights of other team members to take part, too.


The second thing #2 worth remembering

is that it pays to keep your idea  or





goal in front of everyone. Your customer was thinking about where she wanted to buy her car and trying to get all the facts so she could make a decision. (I wonder if she knows the **DO IT!** process?)

Anyway, she was thinking and thinking, but all the time she was looking at that


shiny, red sports car.  She was thinking about how much fun it would be to drive. She was thinking how much she would enjoy showing it to the people she works with at the bank. She was beginning to think she might want to just drive it right of that showroom that morning!

We all do that. Why do you think they put those pictures of the **Monster**

**Burger**  on the wall of the **Burger Beast** where you work? They put those pictures there so that the customer will walk in, look at that perfect **Monster**

**Burger**  and think “Gosh, that looks great. I think I’ll have a **Monster Burger Meal**.”


It works, too. Keep your product out in front of the customer and they might just

buy it. Same is true for your idea,  opinion, or goal. The more people look at it and see that it is a good plan or idea, the more they might begin to buy into it!

But, you say..... it’s easy to keep a car



or a burger  in front of people.


How do you keep an idea  or goal




in front of people?

I’m glad you asked that question.

One thing you might do is to come into

the meeting with your idea  or

goals  written out on a sheet of


 paper. Make sure there is a

copy for everyone and make sure the sheet is neat and clean. That will keep it in front of everyone and at the same time let people know you are serious about this stuff.



Take a few minutes and use the sheet called **FOUR THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT AT MY MEETING**, to identify four goals,



ideas,  or opinions you would like to talk about at your meeting. (It's at the end of this session). Be positive about what you say... make your opinion sound


assertive!



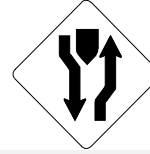
When it comes time for your meeting, you will have this to hand out if you choose to do that. If you change your mind between now and then, you can always make a new list.

Go ahead, I'll wait.

Got it? Good. One other way you can

keep your ideas  before the team is to mention them a couple of times. Be careful, don't bring them up so many times that people get tired of hearing them, but when the timing is right, repeat your idea, goal or opinion as one you would still like the team to consider.

Right. Now, back to the showroom.



Just as you thought, your customer has made a decision. She turns to you and tells you that she might be interested in buying the car if the terms are right.

Now comes the part that most car buyers dread the most. Talking about the money.



The whole process is frustrating. Your job is to make it as easy as possible for someone to buy a car. You work hard to make sure that customers understand everything they need to know to make a good decision.

In this case, it's easy. The customer has done her homework. She knows how much she can afford to spend and even has arranged with the bank for getting her loan approved before coming in.

After working out the details, you sell her the car.



Look at what has just happened at the car showroom and find what is important to remember for your educational planning meeting.




What was going on as you and your customer were deciding on a price for the car?

## Negotiation and Compromise

Two important words to remember.

Negotiate means to work out a deal on something...like the price of the car.

\$

\$  ✚ When you negotiate something, you talk with the other person or people, find out what they want and try to find something that you all can agree to.

When you agree to something that was different from what both parties started with, that is a compromise.

Why, you ask, should you settle for anything other than exactly what you want? Well, the answer to that is pretty simple.

If you don't, you will never get anything you want! If you hold out for things just as you want them, you may find yourself with nothing.

Compromising is a way to get most of what you want because the other people get at least some of what they want as well. Everybody's happy, right?

Look at it this way. Say you and a friend have the same amount of money, and together you have exactly enough

dollars to get a pizza.

You go to the pizza restaurant. You announce that you want the Pepperoni with Extra Cheese. Your friend wants Sausage and Mushrooms.

Problem.



What do you do? You could insist that you get your way and your friend insist on getting her way and the next thing you know neither of you gets anything.

Or you could use

## Negotiation and Compromise

So, in talking about types of pizza you both discover that your second favorite topping is hamburger. You could order one of those pizzas and both be pretty happy. Sure, it's not Pepperoni and Extra Cheese, but it beats nothing.

Or maybe you decide that you will split the pizza, get half Pepperoni and Extra Cheese and half Sausage and Mushroom. You don't have as much pizza to eat, but on the other hand you only paid for half anyway.

Most things aren't as easy to negotiate and find a compromise about as pizza. You have to work at finding what would be a good compromise. But once you begin thinking about it, you get better and better at it.

*Tips for*

## Negotiation and Compromise

1. *Be prepared.* Before the meeting,


think about what you would not be willing to compromise on. Make sure you have a very good reason for this. If you find that you have a whole list of




things you are not willing to compromise on, you will not accomplish most of what you want.

2. *Never say never!* When you get to the meeting, listen to what others have to say. You might find yourself willing to compromise on something you didn't want to because someone else has a good idea.

3. *Remember the Alamo!* Don't back yourself into a corner where the only thing you can do is become

defensive.  Don't draw a "line in the sand" and then challenge the other team members to cross it. In the end, you won't get what you need.

4. *Teammates!*  Keep in mind that the members of the planning committee, including yourself, have the same goal...to put together the best educational and transition plan to meet your educational needs. These are not your enemies you are dealing with here! They are people who care about what happens. They might have different ideas on how to get what you need, but if you deal with them as teammates and not enemies, you will find that they will be more likely to see things your way. We'll talk more about this next time.

5. *Never say never, part 2.* If, in the end, you don't achieve what you want, don't give up. Go back and look at the reasons you didn't get what you wanted. Maybe you need to change some things about your idea or plan. Maybe the timing was just wrong. Be

honest with yourself. Then, if you still think it is important, find ways to convince others that it is important.



Take a look at these examples. What compromises might work in each case?

You want a Saint Bernard dog because you

really like big dogs.



Your brother wants a Scotty because he wants a dog that lives inside your house.



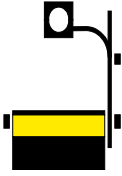
You need to go by the library to return a book and you need someone to drive you there. Your sister doesn't want to drive you because she is watching her

favorite TV show.






Driver's education is offered at the same time as a math class you have to have to graduate. You have two more semesters left before you graduate.








Let's look at what you covered this session.

- ☒ You learned that you have to be careful not to t\_\_\_\_\_ too much or too little.
- ☒ You saw that it helps to keep your i\_\_\_\_\_  in front of everyone so they can think about them.
- ☒ You figured out that writing your ideas  out and giving others a c\_\_\_\_\_ might be a good way to keep your ideas in front of other team members.
- ☒ You learned that n\_\_\_\_\_ means to work out a deal on something and find something that everyone involved can agree with. \$  

- ☒ You learned that to c\_\_\_\_\_ is to agree to something that was different from what you wanted in

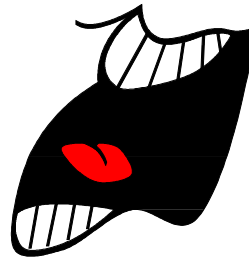
the first place, but that compromising is a good way to get most of what you want.



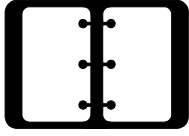
Before the next session, you should have:

-  Looked at the IEP form and decided what is important to you in each area.
-  Talked to your parents, teachers and other people about your ideas.
-  Completed the form listing things you would like to talk about at your meeting.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



### **Session 29 Summary Sheet - Keeping your ideas out there**

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

- ☒ You learned that you have to be careful not to talk too much or too little.
- ☒ You saw that it helps to keep your ideas in front of everyone so they can think about them.
- ☒ You figured out that writing your ideas out and giving others a copy might be a good way to keep your ideas in front of other team members.
- ☒ You learned that negotiation means to work out a deal on something and find something that everyone involved can agree with.
- ☒ You learned that to compromise is to agree to something that was different from what you wanted in the first place, but that compromising is a good way to get most of what you want.

## FOUR THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT AT MY MEETING



NAME\_\_\_\_\_

MEETING LOCATION\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF MEETING\_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF MEETING \_\_\_\_\_



1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





## 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.

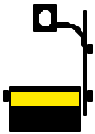
To clarify means to make clear. Clarifying questions are those you ask to try to understand something better. So, if there is something that is said that you don't understand, ask away. That will let you know what is going on and will tell the speaker you are listening.

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.



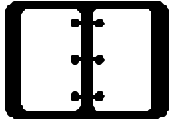
Before the next session, you should have:

- ✎ 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.