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10 Effective Ways to Communicate with a Right-Brained Person

By Susan Dunn

10 Effective Ways to Communicate with a Right-Brained Person by Susan Dunn, MA,

Emotional Intelligence Coach

Right-brained folks process randomly and holistically, are intuitive, subjective, and look at the whole, not parts. They rely on nonverbal means of communication such as gestures and expressions, and generally read it well. They're likely to pay more attention to the tone of your voice and the gist of the communication rather than the meaning of the actual words used.

P.S. Whether you're left-brain dominant, or right-brain dominant, you can get into "whole brain thinking" when you develop your Emotional Intelligence. Then you have more options, more tools in the arsenal, so to speak.

Go here: <http://www.ipn.at/ipn.asp?BHX> to take a free online Brain Dominance Test.

1.TELL THEM WHAT TO DO, NOT HOW TO DO IT.

SAY: "Welcome aboard. Glad you're my new Marketing Direction. I want so many new members this year we have to build an additional wing."

DO NOT SAY: "Welcome aboard. Glad you're my new Marketing Director. I want a 25% increase in membership by November One and here's how I want you to do it. A monthly newsletter, 2 more direct mails per month ... "

2.DON'T BE OVERLY FASTIDIOUS ABOUT DETAILS, OR BELABOR POINTS, I.E., NO NEED TO DO THE I'S AND CROSS THE T'S..

SAY: "Set up a meeting for the 4 of them - nice place, food, music ... you know the drill."

DON'T SAY: "Set up a meeting for the 4 of them. I want a catered box lunch. Make it low carb, tuna or chicken, no bread ..."

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SAY: "Order a new printer for yourself but don't spend too much."

DO NOT SAY: "Order a new printer for yourself. Get a ProMax, \$200 at the most. 5 features. Oh, and get it from Office Max. In fact, get it from Harry. Here's his number."

3.USE COLORFUL LANGUAGE, METAPHORS, HUMOR.

SAY: "Okay, team, we're pitching to the MiniPro Co. on Friday. I want a killer presentation. No holds barred. All the bells and whistles."

DO NOT SAY: "We're presenting a proposal to the MiniPro Co. on Friday. Bill, please pull all the figures from May of 2003. Mary, prepare a PowerPoint showing the trend over the last 6 months. Katerina, copy the exact format we used for ..."

SAY: "How was it? Usual Dog and Pony Show."

DO NOT SAY: "How was it? The meeting was called to order promptly at 6 p.m. Harrison Borring presided..."

SAY: "Get that apartment filled up. I want that owner grinning from ear-to-ear. Stand naked on a street corner if you have to."

DO NOT SAY: "Get that apartment up to 80%. This is crucial to the ..."

4.PAY MORE ATTENTION TO HOW YOU SAY IT THAN WHAT YOU SAY, I.E., TONE, RHYTHM AND PITCH OF VOICE.

SAY: "Mary, [pause, soften tone] that last report was great, but... There's just one thing I'd add [raise tone, become enthusiastic] - more exciting language, more drama. Get `em on the edge of their seats! That beginning was dynamite. When you start Part II, make it smooooother [use hand gestures, smooth tone]. Now go after it! (clap hands, pop!) You're the greatest!"

DO NOT SAY: "There are some points I need to make about your last report. Starting on page 2, second paragraph, line 10, your logic here was faulty ..."

5.BE GENERAL, AND REFER TO INTUITION. LOGIC AND AUTHORITY ARE NOT BIG WINNERS FOR THE RIGHT-BRAINED.

SAY: I stayed home because I was sick. I didn't want to give it to everyone else.

DO NOT SAY: I stayed home because the doctor said I had strep throat and told me not to go to work.

SAY: I know he's the perfect candidate. How do I know? Intuition

DO NOT SAY: I know he's the perfect candidate. How do I know? He meets all 6 of the key criteria outlined in Foster's "A Rational Guide to Choosing the Right Person for the Right Job."

6.TALK ABOUT THE FOREST, NOT THE TREES; THE WHOLE, NOT THE PARTS.

SAY: "Give me a summary. Just the big picture. Ballpark figures, hit the high points. Something that'll convince the Board."

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DO NOT SAY: "Prepare a prospectus for the Board. Start with financial projections. Be exact. Then"

7. BE EMOTIONALLY EXPRESSIVE. IF NOT, BECAUSE THEY READ 'NONVERBAL' WELL, THEY'LL BE GUESSING, AND THEY MAY GUESS WRONG.

SAY: "You got him to agree to it? Sally, I love you! You're the best thing since sliced bread."

DO NOT SAY: "You got him to agree to it? Good. Now please prepare ..."

SAY: "I liked your report."

DO NOT SAY: "Your report met or exceeded my criteria."

8. SKIPPING AROUND IS FINE. LOOSE REFERENCES ARE FINE. THEY'LL FOLLOW THE BREAD CRUMB TRAIL.

SAY: "Darling, I'd get the blue one. She liked it the best, remember? Oh! And did I tell you, Sam just got engaged ... "

DO NOT SAY: "Darling, I'd get the blue dress for Sam's party. Mary, the PR person we met at Ringold's, liked it the best."

9. TO CONVINCe, BUILD YOUR CASE WITH EMOTION, NOT LOGIC AND REASON.

SAY: "Tom, if you get me that diamond necklace, I'll melt. I mean I'll be all over you like a wet skivvy. Your wish will be my command."

DO NOT SAY: "90% of the women in a recent survey said that ..."

SAY: Son, marry that girl. I like her.

DO NOT SAY: Son, marry that girl. She's the logical choice.

10. LONG, CONVOLUTED COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES ARE FINE, WITH ADJECTIVES, ADVERBS, METAPHOR AND GILDING OF THE LILY. IT HOLDS THEIR INTEREST.

SAY: "We agreed to spend the weekend at a cabin in the Catskills. He was sure it would solve The Problem, hold that thought - The Problem; and when we arrived, I felt like the German soldiers must have arriving on the Russian front, or maybe more like Napoleon (what really defeated Napoleon, you know, was the Russian winter. Well, now they're saying it was because the buttons on the soldier's overcoats disintegrated in the cold), anyway it was cold, grey, dark -- I know you're waiting for the punch line here - the problem, oh yes, The Problem (hand to brow). Well actually it was that HE was like the Russian winter ... cold, foreboding, gloomy, and I, like the German soldiers, or the French before themcold doesn't work. Talk about pathetic fallacy ..."

DO NOT SAY: We agreed to spend the weekend at a cabin in the Catskills. He wanted to work on our relationship. It was cold. He was cold. It didn't work.

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The Importance of Whole-Brain Thinking

By Susan Dunn

Understanding the parts of our brains, knowing them all, and getting them together for effective functioning is Emotional Intelligence. It means being able to engage in whole-brain thinking, and the whole is definitely greater than the sum of its parts.

Our brain consists of three brains, the reptilian, or primitive brain; the limbic brain; and the neocortex. Furthermore, the neocortex, the thinking brain, is divided into two parts - a left and right hemisphere.

The reptilian and limbic brains deal with emotions. The reptilian deals with the lower ones needed for survival, such as territorial aggression and defense, sex, and disgust. These feelings are automatic, and beyond our control. The limbic brain deals with higher order emotions, such as parenting and social responsibility. They are also automatic, as you know, if a child has assaulted your preschooler on the playground and you are overtaken with rage.

The neocortex, the thinking brain, consists of two parts - the left and right hemispheres. We each have both, but generally one is dominant. It is always dominant unless you have worked to develop the other side of the brain. It will always be the one you revert to under stress.

The left brain is analytical, logical, linear and factual. It deals with words as words, and tends to see the trees, not the forest.

The right brain is holistic, sees patterns, creative, metaphorical, and intuitive. It tends to see the forest and not the trees. Right-brained people tend to pay attention to the tone of the voice, the nuances and the nonverbal expressions rather than the actual words being spoken.

You can see difficulties in communication here. If you have one person who is very right-brained trying to communicate with someone who is very left-brained, the discomfort on the other person's part can be physiological and real.

In the best-case scenario, if you've worked on your emotional intelligence, you have developed both hemispheres of the brain. The advantages to this are numerous. In relationships at home, in your social life and at work, you can simply communicate better. Not everyone can switch their style of communication, but if you can, you will have a crucial advantage in communication.

If you've ever listened to someone try and present a case when they're using the wrong "language," you know what I

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mean. For one person, saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" can clinch the deal. To another, they will

become upset and ask you to "stick to the topic please." Metaphor works with some people and not with others.

Alternatively, giving a list of data, with facts in a linear progression may convince someone else, but leave you cold.

Research at Harvard Business School has demonstrated that the higher up you go in an organization, the more important it is to combine right-brain intuition with left-brain rationality.

In actuality, both hemispheres AND the other brains are necessary to make good decisions. Emotions give us information. Rational thinking can help us make a strategy and carry it out.

Effective people, for instance, use all their skills in all phases of problem-solving. Intuition - call it gut feeling if you prefer - can direct your initial thinking processes, and also provide clues along the way. Gathering quantified data is also necessary and must be systematically organized and analyzed. Gut feeling can again guide your final decision, as data always runs out at some point.

Gut feeling is particularly effective in dealing with people. It's not uncommon to receive resumes from several people who are similar in skills, education and training, or to be interviewing several who are similar. The final decision will rest on the interviewer's skilled intuition as to which one would make the best fit with the organization. It's not always possible to quantify how such a decision is made, though it may rest on years of experience.

You can see how it's crucial to know and understand your emotions in problem-solving. You may want a certain candidate, for instance, because you like them a lot, but they may not be the best qualified for the job, or the best one to choose. Or you may dislike a candidate for personal reasons, and need to over-ride that, because they would be the best candidate. At another time, it may be prudent to select the candidate you like the best - particularly if they're going to be working closely with you. There are all sorts of variable to take into consideration, and it takes a whole brain to do that.

Anxiety is also an emotion that can interfere. If you're experiencing anxiety, it's cramping down on your ability to think and reason, and you will make poor decisions, or none at all, which can be worse.

Emotional Intelligence is whole-brained thinking. It means understanding your emotions, managing them, and using them, and being able to do this about others. It means understanding how to think and integrate emotion with analysis for problem-solving, strategizing and implementation.

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Such skills as resilience, creativity, flexibility, intuition, and intentionality can greatly increase your effectiveness in relationships and on the job. Developing your Emotional Intelligence pays great dividends in all areas of your life, and lets you make use of your whole brain.

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Better Communication by Using All Your Brains

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