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How to Communicate with a Left-brained Person

By Susan Dunn

How to Communicate with a Left-brained Person by Susan Dunn, MA, The EQ Coach

Left-brained? Think of Joe Friday on "Dragnet." "The facts, m'am, just the facts."

Left-brained people are linear and sequential, focus on the literal meanings of words, like logic and reason, and often score low on 'reading' nonverbal communication such as gestures and expressions.

P.S. We're both a little of both, and to get into "whole brain thinking," develop your Emotional Intelligence. Go here: <http://www.ipn.at/ipn.asp?BHX> to take a free online Brain Dominance Test.

1. Give A reason (one will do), and answer the direct question.

SAY: "No I haven't completed the Pleading. I had to file the Motion to Compel first. It had priority."

DO NOT SAY: "I was too busy," "I had too much to do," or "I had to do something else." (anticipate – "Did you or did you not, and if not, why not?")

2. Quantify and avoid vague references to time and money. Do not use words like "something," "stuff," "a long time." Avoid 'superfluous' adjectives'.

SAY: "It will take 4 days to get your shirt back from the dry cleaners. If I take it in today, you won't get it back in time for your trip on Friday."

DON'T SAY: "Don't ask me to do stuff like that. It would take waaaaay too long."

SAY: "This machine will cost you no more than \$100 and no less than \$50."

DO NOT SAY: "It'll cost a lot," or "We can't afford that."

3. Be serious. Avoid humor, sarcasm, double entendre or anything ambivalent or ambiguous.

SAY: "I will have that for you by 5:00 this afternoon."

DO NOT SAY: "You're joking aren't you? Tell me you're joking." (They aren't.)

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SAY: "I can't do that by 1:00 and here's why... You will have to ask someone else to do it."

DO NOT SAY: "In your dreams, or "Me and what 5 other people?" or "Sure" (sarcastically), or anything you counteract with gestures and expressions (rolling your eyes), as it will be missed.

4. Do not use metaphor.

SAY: "He talks that way because that's how they teach you to talk in the military."

DO NOT SAY: "You can't change a leopard's spots."

SAY: "I will do my best to convince him to come at that time."

DO NOT SAY: "I'd have to turn cartwheels."

5. Do not be vague or refer to intuition. Refer to logic and authority when possible.

SAY: He didn't go to school because he had a strep throat and the doctor told me to keep him home for 3 days.

DO NOT SAY: I kept him home from school because I could tell he felt bad.

6. Talk about the trees, not the forest.

SAY: "Because this is the first 'First Anniversary Banquet,' there is no data I can analyze that can accurately predict the monetary success of this event."

DO NOT SAY: "I don't know. How could I know? We've never done this before."

7. Stick to the topic.

SAY: "Yes, I got hold of Mr. Sanchez. He will meet with you on Friday."

DO NOT SAY: "Yes, I got hold of Mr. Sanchez. Did you know he's getting married next week? She's a lawyer from Argentina. The wedding will be in Austin ... and yes, he'll be here on Friday."

8. Supply context, and alert when changing subjects.

SAY: "Regarding the meeting with Bob and Jim last week ..." and "Here's the report. Now, in another matter ...[and pause for them to switch gears]"

DO NOT SAY: "Here are the financial figures, and by the way, Mary didn't like it when Bob and Jim ..."

9. Build your case with logic and reason, not emotion.

SAY: "I think (reason) I deserve a raise because I raised my quota 10% and brought in 5 new clients with increased revenue of \$150,000."

DON'T SAY: "I feel (emotion) I deserve a raise (or "I want a raise"). It's demeaning to be the lowest paid in the department. We'd all feel better if ..."

10. Be brief, factual and to-the-point, talk slowly, enunciate, avoid pronouns and make references clear. (Oh, and skip the hand gestures.)

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SAY: Buy the Mazda. It's the best deal. It costs 20% less and Edward [trusted mechanic] said it's in better condition.

DO NOT SAY: My gut says get the Mazda. He liked it too. Plus it's got a lot of stuff the other one doesn't. Just hurry up and decide. This is driving me nuts." (hands waving, voice getting emotional)

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Better Communication by Using All Your Brains

By Susan Dunn

If you use your brain, you can communicate better, but what "brain" are you going to use? Why not use them all?

Standard understanding of the brain right now is that it is "triune," with three parts - the reptilian, or primitive brain; the limbic brain; and the neocortex. Further, the neocortex is divided into two hemispheres, the right and the left.

REPTILIAN

Briefly, the reptilian brain is responsible for keeping us alive and evolved millions of years ago. We share it with reptiles. This brain operates territorial defense and aggression, sex drive, and rudimentary life-maintaining systems such as breathing and heartbeat. It's automatic. We have no control over it.

EXAMPLE

When someone pushes you out of line in the movie theater, although it isn't really life-threatening, our reptilian brain acts as if it were. It is always lurking there, ready to flare up and "protect" us. It's responsible for a lot of fear we feel during the day.

LIMBIC

The limbic brain evolved next and we share it with mammals. It's responsible for the look we see in the dog's eyes, and the way horses attune to us. It gives us the parenting urge (reptilians abandon their young at birth), bonding, compassion, family-ties, and things like that.

EXAMPLE

When the baby cries at night and you'd rather be sleeping, you get up. Why? Because those parental emotions are tugging at you.

NEOCORTEX

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The neocortex, or thinking brain was the last to evolve, and belongs exclusively to humans. It is divided into two halves, the left hemisphere (left-brain) and the right hemisphere (right-brain). They aren't isolated or separate. They are divided by something called the corpus callosum, which allows us to switch from one to the other.

The corpus callosum is typically better developed in women. This is why women can generally move from talking about feelings to talking about thoughts more easily than men can, though of course there are exceptions.

You will either be left-brain dominant, or right-brain dominant, but you can develop both sides and the communication between them by developing your emotional intelligence. I have worked with many people who have developed both sides of their brain so they are very balanced between the two. However, under stress, you will always revert to your dominant mode.

Here is a website where you can take a free assessment to see which you are:
<http://www.susandunn.cc/assessments.htm> .

Left-brain

The left-brain is verbal, sequential, linear, and logical. People who are left-brain dominant respond to word meanings (more than how it's said), plan ahead and go by steps, recall people's names, and speak with fewer gestures and less expression.

Right Brain

The right brain is visual, holistic, and random. People who are right-brain dominant process in varied order, respond to emotion and tone of voice (more than the actual meaning of the words spoken), are more impulsive, remember people's faces (more than their names), and use more gestures and expressions.

COMMUNICATION

This is how this helps with communication. The hemisphere that's dominant affects how the person hears, learns, relates and problem-solves, as you can see.

EXAMPLE

If you want to explain a project to a left-brained person, give them a step-by-step outline, with a timeline and accountability. Right-brained people prefer to be told what to do, but not how to do it. They're adept at figuring out how. Right-brained people, being visual, prefer to see something like a mind-map - it gives them the points to be covered, but does not dictate the order.

Since right-brained people are more flexible, if you're right-brained, you may need to accommodate to the left-brained people with whom you work. That's just the way it works. Whatever it takes to get a project done, right?

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TAKE THE TEST

Here's a test to see if you understand the difference. Which "brain dominant" is talking in each of these examples, "right" or "left"?

1. First you put a cup of flour in a bowl. Then you add a teaspoon of salt. Then you cut in a cup of shortening. Right or Left?
2. Mix up some flour and salt and shortening in a bowl. A cup or 2 of flour, some salt. Right or Left?
3. The first step is to do some general market research so you can get the big picture. Right or Left?
4. The first step is to write down your goals and objectives. Then do a timeline. Then do an accountability chart. Then do a budget. Then call me. Right or Left?
5. No one ever accomplished anything without a dream. Right or Left?

6. No one ever accomplished anything without a plan and a lot of hard work. It's in the details. Right or Left?
7. Personal hygiene means brushing your teeth, washing your hair, putting on deodorant, and wearing clean clothes. Right or Left?
8. Personal hygiene means keeping yourself clean. Right or Left?
9. You're driving me nuts with details. Just give me the ballpark figures. Right or Left?
10. Making a business projection is like throwing a dart at a board. You can't predict what's going to happen. Right or Left?
11. Stop yelling at me. It isn't what you say, it's the way that you say it. Right or Left?
12. Will you stop jumping around and tell me what you do one step at a time, please? Start at the beginning and go one by one. Right or Left?
13. Yes, I'd like to hear what's bothering you. Start anywhere you like. Right or Left?
14. I don't care what the figures indicate. I'm going with my gut instinct. Right or Left?
15. Draw me a picture. I can't figure out what the heck you're talking about. Right or Left?
16. I want a flow chart. I want to know the hierarchy and the sequence of events, and I want a logical explanation for each step. Right or Left?
17. I can't concentrate. It's too quiet in here. Right or Left?
18. Help me figure out who Ben Adams is. I know he's here because he's the CFO, but I can't remember what he looks like.
19. I know that guy over there. I saw him last week at Rotary. But what's his name? Right or Left?

ANSWERS:

Right - 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 19.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence means understanding how the brain works, how we process information, how to manage emotions, and how to communicate better. When you study EQ, your problem-solving skills, teamwork, leadership and interpersonal skills will improve, as well as your resilience. You'll function better at work and at home, with better relationships, and better health. You'll be more effective, more efficient, and you'll handle stress better.

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Take an EQ assessment: <http://inyurl.com/z94t> . Then take The EQ Foundation Course, which is on the Internet and interactive. Then work with a certified emotional intelligence coach. EQ is not something you can "just" read about.

Improve your EQ and you'll notice positive results in your life immediately.

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Better Communication by Using All Your Brains

The Importance of Whole-Brain Thinking

10 Effective Ways to Communicate with a Right-Brained Person

6 Ways Small Businesses Can Survive In A Crazy Economy

What is an advance directive? Does an Alzheimer's patient need one?

IP Ad Websender – The Ultimate Promotion Tool

Success Secrets

Coping With Alzheimer's Disease

About Niches

How to keep up the SPICE in your Love Life.



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