

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

July 2013  
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## Five Ways to Understand Your Communication Style



As a professional, how you present yourself to others is critical to your success; and although technical skills are important in doing your job well, it is how well you communicate and get along with others that is the real test of your true potential.

Trust, transparency, authenticity and rapport are the four cornerstones of effective communication. Knowing that some people just naturally click with one another – and others, not so much – we can struggle to find common ground which can lead to conflict and a negative work environment.

What we don't always remember, however, is that each of us approach the world differently and have different communication styles. In communication, we tend to speak different "languages." Master communicators understand fully the four cornerstones of effective communication and they adapt their communication "language" to that of the other person. It doesn't mean they would give up their native tongue (who they truly are). It just means they are willing to adapt their approach in order to most effectively engage with others.

Adapting our behavioral and communication styles is one of the most important ways to apply the four cornerstones of effective communication; while also being willing to respect others and put their communication style preference first. Remember, people want to be treated the way THEY want to be treated; not the way you think they should be treated.

*What are the communication and behavior styles?*

No matter whose approach you study, you will find that your behavior and communication style falls into one of four categories:

1. The Socializer
2. The Commander
3. The Thinker
4. The Relator

## Chat Reminder

### Leadership in the Workplace

Connect with Deer Oaks and a counselor for a live confidential chat.

#### When:

July 17, 2013

#### Where:

[www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com)

#### Session Times (CST):

- 12:15 PM to 12:45 PM
- 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM





## Five Ways to Understand Your Communication Style *continued...*

**The Socializer** is open in their communication style and the focus is on people. They are enthusiastic and creative, they love to talk, love being the center of attention and they are not much for details and organization.

**The Commander** is closed in their communication style and the focus is on tasks. They are highly verbal, directive, know how to inspire, yet like to be in control and can be pushy.

**The Thinker** is closed in their communication style and the focus is on tasks. They are detail oriented, reserved, regimented and prefers to work alone rather than with a group.

**The Relator** is open in their communication style and the focus is on people. They are friendly and accommodating, democratic and supportive. However, they will give in under pressure and have a tendency to value the approval of others.

Each one of us has a core style as well as a sub-style. As you begin to learn and understand your communication and behavioral style, you will be able to recognize the different communication styles of others and adapt accordingly. This is a great skill to have because you will be seen as someone who can get along with others, work within a team and be seen as someone who can solve challenging problems.

*Source: <http://www.expressyourselftosuccess.com/five-ways-to-understand-your-communication-style/>*



# Care for the Caregiver



Stress, anxiety, and burnout are never far from the doorsteps of millions of Americans who are caregivers as they often juggle the responsibilities of providing daily care for a loved one with dementia or another condition with the added demands of working, maintaining a household, or raising children.

Too often caregivers don't know how to ask for help, and friends and family members aren't sure of how to lend a hand.

"Caregivers will say 'no' when offered help because they worry it will reflect poorly on them or because they 'don't want to bother' others. And some caregivers get so attached to their role that they just can't let go," said Nancy Alterman, a licensed clinical social worker with the New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging at the UMDNJ-School of Osteopathic Medicine.

If you know a family member or close friend who is a caregiver, Alterman offers the following suggestions to help ease that person's burden.

- Be sensitive about visiting by calling ahead to schedule a time that is convenient. But if the caregiver routinely declines offers of a visit, you may need to just show up with special foods or an easy activity like a puzzle.
- Avoid bringing a crowd, but visiting with at least one other person gives the caregiver a chance to go out with a friend, knowing that another trusted person is there for the patient's needs.
- Instead of asking, "What can I do?" offer to grocery shop, go to the post office, do laundry or cook a meal that you can bring over.
- Be a good listener. Whether in person or by phone, sometimes just having a contact to the outside world is all the caregiver needs to help cope with that day's burden.
- Be alert for signs of caregiver stress, such as denial, social withdrawal, sleeplessness, or lack of concentration.
- Offer to spend the night so the caregiver can get some rest. Lack of sleep can quickly lead to a deteriorating situation or a health crisis. Make sure the caregiver and the patient are discussing any sleep issues with their doctors.
- Research adult medical day care services in your community and share that information with the caregiver. These medically supervised programs can actually help extend the time that the patient can remain at home.

Health-e headlines™

## *What exercise is best for the heart?*

Using large muscle mass repetitively is best for heart health. Think about the acronym FIT:

- F- Frequency (5 days a week)
- I- Intensity (if you can talk, you're at the right intensity)
- T- Time (30 to 60 minutes/day)

Health-e headlines™

## *Eating Right Tip*

Busy work days. Business travel. Eating on the fly. *Suggestions:* Keep single-serve packages of crackers, fruit, peanut butter, low-sodium soup, and canned tuna in your desk. Tuck portable, nonperishable foods in your purse, briefcase, or backpack for a meal on the run. Try granola bars, peanut butter and crackers, fresh fruit, trail mix, and single-serve packs of whole-grain cereal or crackers.

Health-e headlines™

## *An EAP Reminder*

*Life Can Be Hectic. The EAP Can Help You Find Your Balance.*

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members.

If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.





# Clinician's Corner..

*Monthly Advice from the Deer Oaks Clinical Team*

## Unhealthy Thinking can Lead to Stress

Perhaps some of us have heard of “cognitive distortions,” or “thinking errors.” How we think leads to how we feel. And how we feel, if it’s negative, can lead to negative stress and poor self-esteem. So, let’s see how to overcome some of the most common thinking errors.

1. **Assuming:** You assume without checking out the facts or evidence. Overcome this by checking out the facts or think of different ways to think about it positively.
2. **Shoulds:** Demands we make on ourselves- “I should be perfect.” Overcome this by thinking that the only should that makes sense is that humans “should” be fallible.
3. **The Fairy-Tale Fantasy:** Demanding the ideal from life rather than realizing that unfair/bad things happen randomly to good people. Overcome this by substituting “would” or “could” for “should.” “I wonder what I should do to improve things.”
4. **All or Nothing Thinking:** You hold yourself to impossible standards- “If I’m not performing perfectly, I’m a loser.” Overcome this by thinking “grey” or in the middle between all or nothing. Counter the example by thinking “Poor performance never makes a complex person worthless, just fallible.”
5. **Over Generalizing:** Deciding that negative experiences describe your life completely- “I always get rejected in love.” Overcome by thinking of when you weren’t rejected by love, for example.
6. **Labeling:** Giving yourself a label as though a single word describes a person completely- “I’m stupid.” Overcome by recognizing that a label doesn’t make up the whole person. Maybe at times you don’t have all the information but that doesn’t make you stupid, plus you have so many other positive qualities.
7. **Dwelling on the Negative:** You concentrate on the negative so much everything becomes negative- “How can I feel good about the day when I was criticized.” Overcome this by thinking, “Would I enjoy the day more if I focused on something different?”
8. **Rejecting the Positive:** You concentrate on the negative so much you overlook the positive; someone compliments your work and you say, “Anyone could do it.” Not only are you disrespecting yourself by not soaking in the compliment but you are disrespecting the gift someone is giving you. Overcome this by thinking that you’d give your best friend credit for the things that he/she is doing, so why not take the credit too?
9. **Unfavorable Comparisons:** Magnifying your faults and comparing them to others would always make you seem inferior. Overcome this by saying, “Why must I compare? I need to appreciate my uniqueness.”
10. **Catastrophizing:** You tell yourself that something is so awful that you don’t have the capability of dealing with it. Overcome this by asking, “If this does happen, how likely is it to do me in?”
11. **Personalizing:** You give yourself more power to be in control of or involved in things when you really are not. For instance, a son drops out of college and the mother thinks it’s all her fault. Overcome this by distinguishing influences from causes. Others’ make their own decisions.
12. **Blaming:** You give someone else all the blame vs. taking responsibility for your actions. Overcome this by thinking a healthy person needs to own his/her actions but it doesn’t make me a bad person.
13. **Making Feelings Facts:** You take your feelings as proof of the way things really are. For example, “I feel ashamed and bad. I must be bad.” Overcome this by asking, “What would someone who is 100 percent bad be like? Am I really like that.” Remember thoughts change how we feel.

~Calleen Friedel, MS LMFT-S CEAP SAP

*Excerpts taken from The Self-Esteem Workbook by Glenn R. Schiradli, Ph.D.*



# How To: Save for College Finances



As fast as children grow, so does the cost to educate them which has more than tripled in the past 20 years. Whether you have 18 years to prepare or your son or daughter is packing right now, you'll have to decide how to foot the bill. If you plan on paying for all or part of your child's college education, you'll need to develop a savings plan as early as possible.

The most common way to finance an education is with student loans. While most student loans do offer attractive repayment options, many students are dismayed when they are still paying for their education 5, 10, or even 20 years after graduation. If this is a situation you and your college-bound child would like to avoid, there is good news: opportunities for funding your child's education are as diverse as the career paths they afford.

## Private scholarships

There are thousands of private scholarships awarded every year that fall outside of the university's domain. Private scholarships are not limited to students with perfect grades and packed resumes. Artistic talent, creative writing skills, lineage, interest in a particular field of study or being a member of an underrepresented group can all help you secure a private scholarship. However deadlines can be as early as July, more than a full-year before the student plans to enter college, so scout out and apply for scholarships early.

## Section 529 plans

Section 529 plans are state-sponsored college savings programs. The two major types are Prepaid Tuition Plans, which lock in current tuition rates, and State College Savings Plans, which offer more flexible investing options. Both are useful ways for families to save for their children's college education. If you are planning to use a 529 plan, dedicate a specific dollar amount per month to add to the account. Funds in a 529 plan are taxed at the student's tax rate, and can be transferred to another individual if they aren't needed.

## College controlled aid

Your individual college may be able to offer a short-term installment plan that splits your tuition into equal monthly payments. Many schools also offer their own merit scholarships.

## Military aid

The U.S. Armed Forces offer several programs to provide students with money for school. The most well know is the Montgomery G.I. Bill that provides cash education incentives to encourage students to join and serve a tour of duty.

Finally, don't forget to enlist the student's help. Money earned from a part-time job, including work/study jobs can cover incidentals, such as books. Keep an open line of communication with your child as they will not be learning about personal finance at college, but from you.

## **About Money Management International**

*Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit [www.MoneyManagement.org](http://www.MoneyManagement.org).*