



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
Community Health Centers®

# COMMUNICATE LIKE A LEADER

Participant Workbook



**EXCELLING IN YOUR ROLE AS A HEALTH CENTER  
LEADER**

*There are some people who have the quality of richness and joy in them and they communicate it to everything they touch. It is first of all a physical quality; then it is a quality of the spirit.*  
—Tom Wolfe

## COMMUNICATE LIKE A LEADER

As a leader, your words are secondary to many other forms of sharing meaning-how you make eye contact or mirror someone's emotional state, how you modulate your tone and brim with enthusiasm and excitement, how you ask questions that allow others to unfold their selves and their message. Often it seems paradoxical-the less you speak, the more you communicate.

In this course, you will investigate ways to enrich your team's culture by allowing authentic communication to take place. You'll identify skills that you can adopt and practice until they become second nature.

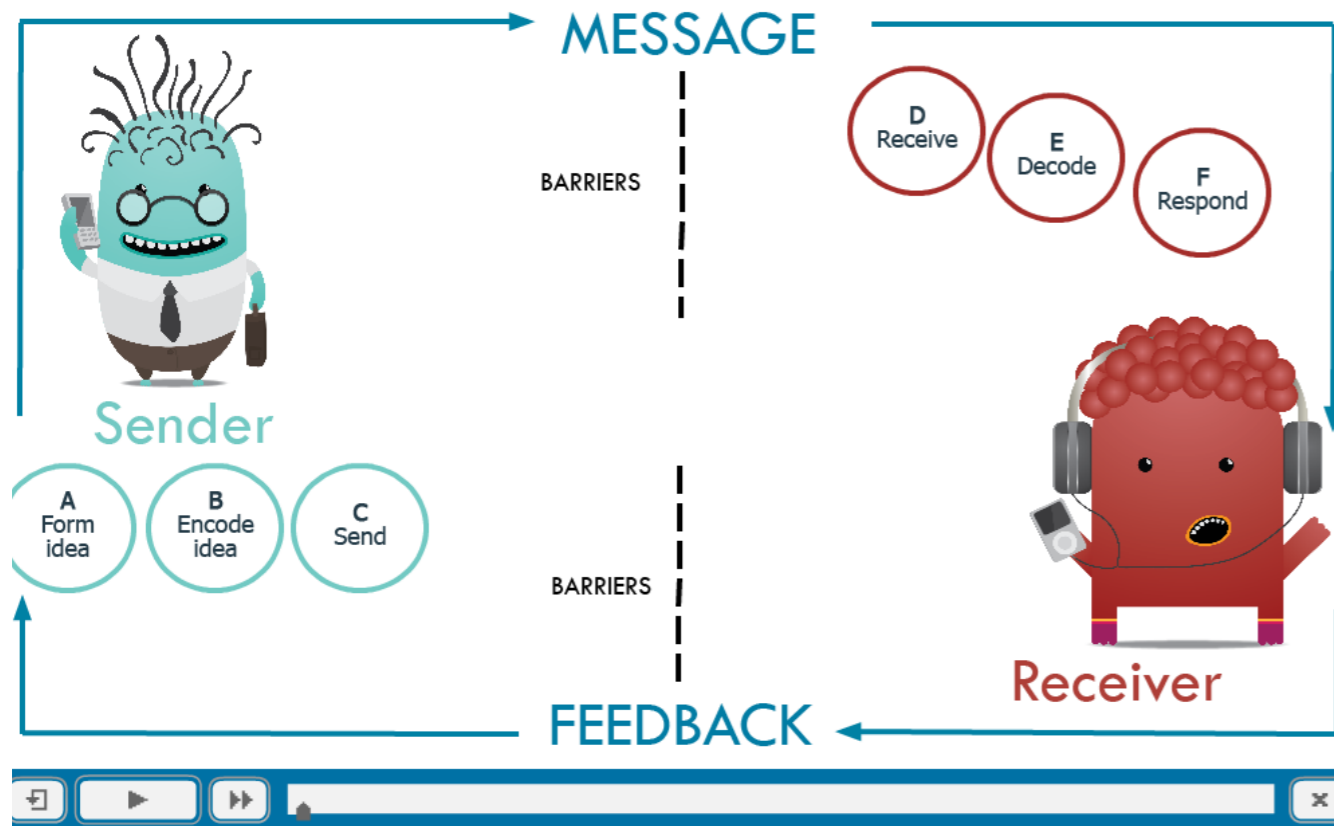
## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify barriers to open communication
- Adopt tools and techniques that allow you to generate a sense of buy-in and ownership within your team
- Ask questions that encourage team members to participate effectively as a diverse and equitable team



## ACTIVITY

Who do you wish to emulate as a communicator? (Unless you've actually met Jesus or Ghandi, don't go that route. Mr. Rogers is, however, fine, if you are often in the Neighborhood). Name your most important influence, then write down as many characteristics of their communication style as you can. Think about non-verbals as well as verbal communication (it's not really what Mr. Rogers says that is so captivating, right?)



## THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Remember, the process of communication is complex and involves the transfer of an idea. However, if you think that an idea can be transferred like a package in the mail. Or, depending on your mail service, very much like that package after it's mangled, rained on, sent to the wrong address, stolen, or misunderstood by its recipient. The verbal content of a message is only 7%, so the receiver is not just decoding your message in terms of words and syntax. It's also tone, rhythm, posture, gestures, style, and all the wonderful and perplexing richness of communication.

There are a number of barriers to communication that distort your message. Gender, class, race, ethnicity, place in the hierarchy, age, culture, languages, environment...the list is enormous. So be humble and recognize that what you think you're communicating is probably not exactly what others are receiving.

## ACTIVITY

What communication barriers do you face on your team? Think not only about verbal communication, but also non-verbal ways your team communicates. Then address the concrete impacts of that poor communication.

## BARRIERS

# OUTCOMES


# ACTIVITY

Put yourself in the shoes of a team member. How would they **view** your ability to communicate? Think first in terms of non-verbals. What would show that you are empathetic? What would indicate that you sincerely want feedback or are truly interested in your team's ideas? Be as specific as possible—describe yourself being “authentic,” for example, as richly as possible. Then think of when and where this could be shown most effectively.

## SHOW EMPATHY

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## BE PRESENT

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## SOLICIT FEEDBACK

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## OBSERVE

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## CREATE A QUESTIONING CULTURE

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## ACTIVELY LISTEN

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## ADMIT MISTAKES

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## BE AUTHENTIC

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## BE CURIOUS

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## SET CLEAR GOALS

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## ACTIVITY

Consider this situation: In your team meetings on Zoom, the level of participation and activity has dropped significantly. Many team members keep their cameras off and are hesitant to contribute. Much of the ideas come from chat, where the ideas come fast and furious, but only from a couple of people. While you have had productive individual conversations with team members outside of team meetings, they are silent now.

1. Come up with the top 10 things you can do to turn this situation around and help create a culture of listening and trust.

2. Imagine that you still did not get the kind of participation you wanted. You now feel the need to schedule one-on-one meetings to try and understand what's going on. What questions would you ask?

### *Let's Recap:*

- Identify problems in the communication process and describe strategies to avoid common communication problems
- Discuss the key communication skills needed to be an effective leader
- Demonstrate how to provide clear and concise communication to a team member
- Explain the importance of being a listening leader and developing a team culture of questioning/listening

### *Let's Action Plan:*

1. What was something NEW that you learned today?
2. What one thing was validated for you that you are already doing as a health center leader?
3. *What is the one thing you are going to put into practice as a leader in your health center?*

## YOUR NEXT STEPS

1. SHARE WHAT YOU LEARNED
2. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
3. ASK FOR FEEDBACK
4. PRACTICE MORE UNTIL NEW SKILLS BECOME A HABIT

## OTHER TRAININGS IN THIS SERIES:

[Applying Workplace Emotional Intelligence Tools](#)  
[Being a Leader vs. Being a Boss](#)  
[Leading Curiosity, Creativity and Innovation](#)