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A Diagnostic Tool  
for  
Identifying Interpersonal Communication Competence  
(Verbally and Nonverbal)

Usage: (1) Allow the questions under each major heading to guide your ratings.  
(2) 5=superior, 4= above average, 3=average, 2=below average, 1=inadequate.

I. The Verbal Dimension--the five components of interpersonal competence.

(A). Descriptiveness--Are the speaker's expressions concrete, specific, and free from an inordinate number of vague, abstract and evaluative messages? 1 2 3 4 5

For example, instead of saying, "Bill you always try to control the conversations," a descriptive communicator might say, "Bill you've interrupted Jane three times now."

(B). Owning Feelings--Does the speaker take responsibility for his/her own feelings and thoughts? Owning is the antithesis of blaming. 1 2 3 4 5

For example, someone "owning" might say: "I wish you would talk more often." While a "non-owner" might say: "Why don't you ever talk?"

(C). Self-Disclosure--Does the speaker permit me to know what he/she is feeling, thinking, or wishing? The information is volunteered if it is unlikely to be found from other sources. 1 2 3 4 5

For example, the manager said, "we need someone who understands Brazilian culture firsthand on this project." Then Bill said, "well I'm not sure this will help but I lived three years as a teenager."

(D). Flexibility--Does the person demonstrate the ability to relate in new ways when necessary? 1 2 3 4 5

For example, the manager said, "Bill you don't need to stay late and help are new staff." Then Bill said, "I know but if I work a little longer now it may save us a lot of extra effort down the road."

(E). Empathy--Does the speaker demonstrate the ability to take the role of another? 1 2 3 4 5

For example, Jane said, "guess what happen to me today? I got fired. In response Alice said, "oh, you must be devastated. That happened to me once too."

Verbally this communicator merits a: 1 2 3 4 5

Interpersonal Communication Tool (continued)  
(Nonverbal)

II. The Nonverbal Dimension--though difficult to measure a general perspective is possible via the following elements.

(A). Personal space--Does the person maintain the proper distance within the communication context? Intimate-6-8 inches; personal-18" to 4 ft.; social 4 to 12 ft.; public-12 to 25 ft. 1 2 3 4 5

(B). Touch--Does the person use touch appropriate for their cultural background? In the US it is rare for two persons to touch each other more than three or four times in an hour. 1 2 3 4 5

(C). Movement--Does the person use bodily movement appropriately for the occasion or use movement that contradicts verbal statements? While the policeman stroked his gun he said, "We really care about you around here." 1 2 3 4 5

(D). Dress--Is the person dressed appropriately for the occasion? (Hamilton p.137) 1 2 3 4 5

The following basic rules are suggested for both men and women in the typical business environment: dress conservatively; simple; classic lines; neutral colors (gray, navy, tan beige, brown); clothes as expensive as you can afford, natural fabrics (wool, cotton, silk); real leather shoes, briefcase, and so on; simple hairstyles, very little jewelry.

(E). Facial expression--Does the communicator use facial expressions consistent with verbal content? 1 2 3 4 5

(F). Eye contact--Does the communicator make eye contact that is longer and less frequent? 1 2 3 4 5

(G). Posture--Does the communicator posture him/herself consistent with accession and verbal content? 1 2 3 4 5

(H). Voice--Are the communicator's voice qualities used in a manner that helps identify the meaning of the words spoken? 1 2 3 4 5

(I). Silence--Are the communicators pauses used with ease? Does the communicator seem at ease with moments of silence during the conversation? 1 2 3 4 5

Nonverbal the communicator merits a: 1 2 3 4 5

The communicator as a whole merits a: 1 2 3 4 5