



Questioning Skills

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Communicating and Presenting your Case

- and Effective Questioning

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Core Solutions Group

Clean the filter ...

- jump to conclusions
- assume that we are right
- but... can often be wrong!
- so....challenge our assumptions – open minds
- “90% of errors of thinking are errors of perception”
- tendency to reinforcement shapes response – WWSIATI? Judges??
- thinking fast and slow
- be open to new angles and perspectives – literally!

Keep your Filters Clean!

There are two (many?) sides to most (all) stories.....

It just depends on where you are standing.....
or where you start from.....

A Structure for Communication

- Why am I
- conveying this **Message**
- to this **Audience**
- at this **Time**
- in this **Way**
- Why?
- What?
- Who?
- When?
- How?

Planning and Preparation

- What are my objectives in the hearing? What outcome do I seek?
- What are the key issues? How to identify them? What rules apply – and are allegedly infringed? **NB!!**
- What is really in dispute? What do I need to establish?
- What material do I have? What information do I need?
- What is missing? Where and from whom to get it? And how?

Planning and Preparation

- What *seems* good and/or bad for me? What is best? worst?
- What will my lines of argument be?
- How do I present the evidence? What witnesses?
- What specific questions will I ask - and in what order?
- What other evidence will I present – and how?
- Why do I win? Common Sense? Logic? Fairness?

- **What?** My message
- = my arguments – output of preparation
- prepare skeleton submissions/statement?
- need precision, clarity, structure, simplicity

- **Who?** My audience
- = the Protest Committee
- What do I know of them? What do they know? How to help them? What do they prefer?
- Make it easy for them! Work with them.....

- separate the person from the problem: rigour on the issues
- respect and courtesy, patience and tolerance
- value the person not the person's values
- the value of acknowledgement - whether or not we agree
- listen and observe; ensure *they* listen and observe!
- check understanding: engage and involve them

"I know you believe you understand what you think I said.
 But I am not sure you realise that what you **heard** is not what I meant"

What we intend to communicate and what others take from what we say and do may be quite different.....

The Communication Chasm



Applying the Theory: Verbal

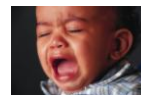
- **Words** are vital
- keep it simple: "any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex"
- choose carefully: every word carefully chosen for its purpose...
- consider impact: violent or non violent?
- reframing – detoxify the language

Vocal – How we say it

- Pace
- Audibility
- Tone
- Emphasis
- Variety is the spice....
- Silence
- Pausing

Visual - what we do

- posture, gesture, mannerisms
- physical appearance
- movement, use of space, proximity
- eye contact
- facial expression



Visual – another aspect

- Visual aids – paint picture – set scene
- Documents, photos, models, diagrams, videos.....
- Tell, Show, Discuss
- what, when, by whom, where
- Prepare!!



Open Questions

- keep it short
- one point per question: contrasts facts and conclusions
- keep it simple: clarity and precision
- language: every word carefully chose
- **listen to the answers..... “enjoy the answer”....**
- **follow through..... drill down**

Closed questions - a warning

- often reflect assumptions
- act as a filter, filter may be dirty
- indicate pre-judgement
- limit the information elicited
- may pre-determine the answer
- **useful when?**

Final Statements

- What do I want?
- What am I going to say?
- Chapters? Headings? Transitions?
- Clarity and simplicity
- The rules
- The facts
- Draw inferences
- Why do I succeed?
- Summarise – what finding do I seek?

