

Are You Misunderstood?

What if, when you communicated your thoughts and ideas, people actually understood what you meant?. How much more effective would your communication with others be if they actually understood you? If you really think about it you would probably discover that most conflicts in your day-to-day dealings with others could be attributed to a misunderstanding of some kind. In this segment I will show you the most effective way to be understood thus having a profound effect on your communication with others.

One of the best ways to know how others understand you is to recognize how you understand them. If you're being misunderstood, it may be because you're not seeking to understand them. The best way for you to be understood is for you to first understand them. In fact, listen to your own inner feelings towards that last statement. That uncomfortable feeling of 'why do I need to understand them when I need them to understand me?' How closed off do you feel to the idea of needing to understand them until their need for being understood is met? When we feel understood, we feel a sense of acceptance. This is the equivalent to emotional air. When others feel more understood, they are more open to understanding you. Why is that? A satisfied need no longer motivates. With their need satisfied, their attention can easily shift towards understanding you. This need to be understood is a need we all share.

Until you understand them, you will not know how to communicate with them. What makes one person happy may upset another. You will never know how they will perceive your message until you understand their frame of reference. Once you understand their frame of reference, you can communicate from their frame of reference. This will provide you with the most effective way for communicating your message. You know how to relate with them from their frame work. In other words, you understand them. In communication, being understood is like having a breath of air. If you're closed off to understanding them, how can you honestly expect them to be open to understanding you? Here are some causes for communication problems that usually get people in trouble. From time to time, we have all done these styles of listening.

The first one is 'The Agenda' style of listening. Most people listen with the intent to respond. This means they are listening for key points in your message that they can use in their reply to convey their own message. The problem with this style is it is agenda based. They are listening to respond instead of listening to understand. If they are not listening to understand, you may be misunderstood.

The second style is 'The Ya But's'. The 'Ya But's' are people who have a position and are unwilling to move from it while down grading your position. They generally agree with your statement and then use a statement of their own to counteract your statement they just agreed too. The segue for this dichotomy is the ever popular 'ya but...' Like the agenda style of listening, you're going to feel more misunderstood then before and it will feel like you're hitting your head against a brick wall.

The third style is 'The Yessers and Noders'. These are the ones who are always nodding or saying 'yes' as to be in agreement with you. There is no input whatsoever on their part except a nod, yes or both. Don't expect to be understood by them, they are not even listening. They are nodding and yessing to avoid a discussion they would rather not have. If they gave an opinion either way, they would be getting involved in a discussion they are not even interested in. For whatever reason, they are just not interested in the conversation at this time. Save your breath and move on.

With knowing how others listen, you can use the information to your benefit. You can seek to understand their frame of reference in order to communicate more effectively with them. You also know if they are using one of the listening styles mentioned above, that you may be misunderstood, and to try your call again later because the phone is temporarily off the hook.