

OWNERS MANUAL SERIES - VOLUME 4

COMMUNICATION THAT WORKS



Vision
Perceptual
Style

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**Your
Talent Advantage**



Owner's Manual Series

**Volume 4:
Communication
That Works**

VISION Perceptual Style™

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and
Gary M. Jordan, Ph.D.**

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**Dedicated to
The Desire to be Understood in All of Us**

**The single biggest problem in communication is the
illusion that it has taken place.**

-George Bernard Shaw

Table of Contents

Topic	Page
Welcome!	2
Introduction to Communication That Works	3
A Very Brief Introduction to Communication Theory	3
Key Aspects of Vision Communication	8
When You Engage in Transactions	9
When You Engage in Operations	10
When You Engage in Resources	11
Communicating with other Perceptual Styles	12
Vision and Activity (Neighbors)	16
Vision and Adjustments (Opposites)	18
Vision and Flow (One-Off)	20
Vision and Goals (Neighbors).....	21
Vision and Methods (One-Off).....	23
Vision and Vision (Kindred Spirits).....	24
Be True To Your Communication Strengths	26
Advanced Communication Skills	26

Welcome!

Communication—you might say we human beings are obsessed with it. After all, it's the fundamental action that brings us together or pushes us apart.

There are hundreds of communication theories, thousands of books on the topic, and millions of articles. You can pursue degrees in communication, choose from thousands of seminars and classes about communication, or engage in philosophical conversations about it with friends, family, or strangers.

Communication permeates our lives.

We all want to be understood. So, we search for the right words and the right tone to convey our message. What we often fail to recognize is that each one of us has a built-in communication filter and because of that filter, what we mean isn't always what others hear and vice versa.

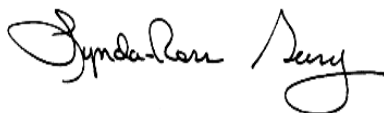
At the core of your communication filter is your **Perceptual Style™** (which you discovered in [Celebrate You](#)). How you see the world and make it meaningful to you has everything to do with how you express yourself and how you listen.

The key to effective communication is twofold—understanding your natural communication skills and understanding how your skills differ from people with other Perceptual Styles. Communication is, after all, a two-way street.

This guide is designed to help you understand the connections and challenges you face as a person with the **Vision Perceptual Style** as you communicate with people of varying Perceptual Styles.

One thing to remember is that this is a guide, not a hard and fast rule book. While Perceptual Style is an essential determining factor of communication skills, it is by no means the only one. Using the tips in this guide, along with your knowledge of the individuals you communicate with, will help you to ensure you are communicating in ways that really work.

To Your Communication Success!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynda-Ross and Gary'.

Lynda-Ross and Gary

Introduction to Communication That Works

Have you ever gone to a movie with someone and realized afterward that each of you walked away with a significantly different meaning from the plot? (It makes you wonder if they slept through the good parts, doesn't it?)

Ever given instructions to someone that you thought were perfectly clear and then they do something that is only "kinda like" what you said?

Ever been told to follow a foolproof method and ended up frustrated and feeling like a fool?

These disconnects in communication happen to all of us. It's not because we're not smart enough, and it's not because other people aren't smart enough. And it's not because one of you isn't listening or trying hard enough.

Words are a code we put on our thoughts and ideas to communicate our intention and meaning to others. The code you use on a regular daily basis to communicate is highly dependent on how you perceive the world – your Perceptual Style.

Let's look at an example – storytelling. We all like a good story. But how we define a "good story" and how we tell stories differs among Perceptual Styles. How we tell stories determines what we expect to hear when we listen to them:

- * **Activity** people tell stories because they want to share an experience.
- * **Adjustments** people tell stories to share information they know other people need.
- * **Flow** people tell stories to create a feeling of belonging, a common bond.
- * **Goals** people tell stories to state opinions and provide directions.
- * **Methods** people tell stories to explain structure and how something is done.
- * **Vision** people tell stories to impact and influence others.

It's pretty easy to see how we can each get different meanings from the same story or conversation! Then, when you consider that most words have more than one meaning (just check the dictionary), it's a miracle we ever make ourselves understood!

You have a natural and comfortable style of communication because of your Perceptual Style. And so does everyone else.

In this guide, you'll find tips of what to listen for to help you discern someone's *possible* Perceptual Style. *Please note the "possible"* – Perceptual Style is about how people make meaning for themselves, and that's an internal process that isn't observable. By listening carefully and watching how others respond to you, it is possible to make an educated guess and narrow down the possibilities.

When you narrow down your read of others' Perceptual Style, it will allow you to tune your communications to them for greater impact. The real key is in recognizing what the differences are between you and the people with whom you are communicating.

Once you can discern those differences, then you can apply specific techniques to your communication to ensure that you are more fully understood. With practice you will be able to quickly get a good feel for how different Perceptual Styles can most readily receive what you are trying to communicate.

Remember, this is not about abandoning your voice or changing your fundamental message. It's about augmenting how you communicate naturally to ensure you are understood and that you understand others in return.

A Very Brief Introduction to Communication Theory

One of the fundamental aspects of communication theory is that it is impossible not to communicate.

"Activity or inactivity, words or silence all have message value: they influence others, and these others, in turn, cannot *not* respond to these communications and are thus themselves communicating." (Watzlawick et al, *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, p. 49)

The challenge, however, is to communicate the meaning you intend. The big question is whether the message sent is the same as the message received.

Perceptual Style affects not only what we perceive but how we represent what we perceive to ourselves and how we communicate it to others.