human relations

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

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SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-DISCLOSURE
Learning Objectives

- Define self-awareness.
- Explain how awareness-related barriers impact human relations.
- Use the Johari Window as a tool for self-understanding.
- Define self-disclosure.
Learning Objectives

● List the outcomes of failing to self-disclose.
● Understand the five major levels of communication as they relate to disclosure.
● Discuss the impact of making assumptions regarding other people.
● Explain the risk factor of disclosure.
What is Self-Awareness

- Self-awareness – The ability to see yourself realistically without a great deal of difference between what you are and how you assume others see you.

- Self-disclosure – The ability to let another person know what is real about your thoughts, desires, and feelings.
People spend much of their lives building walls to prevent other people from determining their true thoughts and motives.

They believe that if the walls are not there, it will result in catastrophes such as rejection and loneliness.
The Johari Window

Figure 3.1: The Johari Window
The Johari Window

- Everyone shares four ways of relating to others.
  - Open pane – The pane that contains information that one knows about oneself and has no reason to hide.
  - Hidden pane – The pane that contains information and feelings that one is hiding from other people.
The Johari Window

- **Blind pane** – The pane that contains everything other people can see about a person, but the person cannot see about himself.
- **Unknown pane** – The pane that contains unknown talents, abilities, and attitudes, as well as forgotten and repressed experiences, emotions, and possibilities.
The Johari Window

Figure 3.2: The Johari Window After Established Relationship
What is Self-Disclosure

- Self-disclosure allows people to know themselves and those around them better.
- Very often, people withhold information for legitimate reasons or to protect other people’s feelings.
What is Self-Disclosure

People withhold information in order to:

- Feel all-powerful.
- Control the feelings of others.
- Feel superior to those around them.
- Believe that they are perfect.
- Have everyone’s approval.
- Feel safe from people who might challenge them.
- Deny that they have problems.
- Avoid the fear that they aren’t lovable.
- Avoid feelings of inadequacy.
Outcomes of Failing to Self-Disclose

Figure 3.3: Four Outcomes Of Failing To Self-Disclose
Levels of Communication as They Relate to Disclosure

Figure 3.4: Levels of self disclosure

1. Peak communication
2. The “gut level”
3. Expressing ideas and judgments
4. Reporting facts about others
5. Cliché conversation
Author John Powell identified five general levels of self-disclosure.

- **Level 5: Cliché Conversation:**
  - It is the level of communication with the least amount of self-disclosure.

- **Level 4: Reporting the Facts About Others**
  - People move beyond clichés, although no real self disclosure takes place.
Levels of Communication as They Relate to Disclosure

- **Level 3: Expressing Ideas and Judgments**
  - Ideas and judgments are expressed through conscious thoughts, opinions, and theories in this level of communication.

- **Level 2: Expressing Feelings and Emotions on the “Gut Level”**.
  - An individual’s uniqueness is what is being communicated at this level.
  - Gut-level is the level of communication in which feelings are expressed honestly.
Levels of Communication as They Relate to Disclosure

- Level 1: Peak Communication
  - Communication characterized by complete openness and honest self-disclosure.
  - It happens rarely.
  - Communication can be triggered by unexpected events.
A key to improved human relations – Level 2:
- Making the gut level work for you is a key step in the process of learning to self-disclose.
- The primary benefits include improving relationships, growing toward maturity, and bringing out the honesty of others.
Making Assumptions About Other People

- Another dimension of both self-awareness and self-disclosure is the way people operate on perceptions or hunches.
- According to R. D. Laing, assumptions or hunches we have about others keep us from operating in the real world.
The Risk Factor of Disclosure

- Choosing to self-disclose involves fear of:
  - Losing control of a conversation or relationship.
  - Becoming trapped or controlled by someone else.
  - Facing something unpleasant within yourself.
  - Losing self-respect.
  - Appearing to be a loser to others.
  - Being rejected or being belittled.
The first step in dealing with fear is to look at exactly what you are afraid of.

If your fear is not on this list, you need to identify it and then decide how to respond to it.
Strategy for Success

- Know when to stop:
  - Understand that self-disclosure can be difficult and awkward at first.
  - Be aware that you can overdisclose unintentionally.
  - Learn how to avoid overdisclosure, especially with strangers or in the workplace.
  - Learn how to self-disclose comfortably and appropriately.
Strategy for Success

- Pay attention to differences:
  - Know how much to disclose and how soon.
  - Remember: Different cultures, different disclosure.
  - Allow the other person to take lead.
  - Factor in gender, race, and social position.
  - Pay attention to the other person’s level of openness.
Facing fear of self-disclosure:
- Start with the worst possible scenario.
- Prepare yourself to accept the worst possible outcome.
- Proceed with a plan.
Summary

- Self-awareness is the ability to see oneself realistically.
- Every individual needs to grow, develop, and be open to change.
- The Johari Window is a tool for self-understanding.
- Self-disclosure is letting another person know one’s real thoughts, desires, and feelings.
- There are five major levels of communication.
- The final barrier to disclosure is fear.