Session Notes
Chapter 3 – Communication styles

I. The four Communication styles and business relationships
   A. The closed style communicators are low on disclosure and low on feedback.
      1. They are usually hard working people who are simply more comfortable working with things than with people.
      2. They are usually most successful when the little interaction is required, going by the book is valued, and subordinates need little supervision.
      3. They are usually least successful when the job requires high interaction, the organization is in a high-risk profession that requires creativity, and subordinates want or need supervision.
   B. The blind style communicators are low on feedback and high on disclosure.
      1. They are not afraid to express their expectations or needs, but don’t ask for feedback because they feel they don’t need it.
      2. They thrive in situations where they can demonstrate their expertise and experience and authority.
      3. Neurotic blind communicators hide insecurities behind an authoritarian mask.
      4. They are most successful when their expertise is needed, in a time of crisis or change, or when an immediate decision is needed.
      5. They are least successful when there are many personnel problems, when subordinates can make their own decisions, and when creativity is critical.
   C. The hidden style communicators are high on feedback (good listeners) and low on disclosure (hide their feelings and knowledge).
      1. They are very people oriented, friendly, and generally well liked.
      2. They are most successful when a social climate is important, teamwork is social, not problem solving, and adequate performance is accepted.
      3. They are least successful when tasks are complex and require problem solving and when excellent performance is expected.
   D. The open style communicators are high on feedback and high on disclosure.
      1. They are equally interested in people’s needs and company productivity.
      2. They may disclose too much (too soon) and ask for too much feedback.
      3. The moderately open style is most successful when employee decision making and teamwork is needed, when change is welcome, when quality work is expected, and when the organization is engaged in global communication.
      4. They are least successful when the open style is perceived negatively, when tasks are simple and require no teamwork, and when immediate decisions are needed.

II. Practical tips for relating to people of different styles
   A. To communicate with the closed style communicators
1. Communicate carefully with closed managers, don’t threaten or question, avoid making waves, and don’t expect praise guidance, or criticism,
2. Make chain of command clear to closed employees, limit criticism, and give them specific instructions,
3. Don’t expect closed customers to openly express themselves.

B. To communicate with blind style communicators
   1. Learn from blind managers, realize that they are very task oriented, appeal to their self confidence, and get their support,
   2. Realize that blind employees tend to be argumentative and inflexible, are self assured but may take criticism poorly, and that they like to be in charge of projects,
   3. Expect that blind customers may give you suggestions on how to improve your selling technique, that they like to be in control, and that they don’t like to be kept waiting,

C. To communicate with hidden communicators
   1. Hidden managers may not be loyal and may distrust you, and may not let you truly know where you stand, but they are generally well liked and sympathetic,
   2. Hidden employees may either be a “yes” person and motivated by public praise or that they are only expressing acceptable ideas,
   3. Get to know the hidden customer before giving your pitch in order to develop trust, use referrals, and listen carefully for their true opinions.

D. To communicate with open communicators
   1. Follow the boss’s lead on sharing personal things and be open but use tact,
   2. With open employees allow them to be where they can develop friendships and be challenged,
   3. With open customers don’t be manipulative, listen and respond to their needs, and don’t defer to them.

III. Becoming more flexible in use of styles
    A. A change in the perceived effectiveness of using feedback and disclosure must occur.
       1. Blind communicators need to ask for more feedback to discover areas needing change.
       2. Hidden communicators need to disclose more information, feelings, and opinions with others.
       3. Closed communicators need to work on more disclosure and more feedback.
       4. Open communicators need to be moderate in the use of each.
    B. In giving feedback remember to
       1. Be direct toward the behavior.
       2. Be descriptive rather than evaluative.
       3. Share ideas rather than give advice.
       4. Limit your feedback to the amount the person can handle at one time.
       5. Be immediate and well timed.
C. In disclosing be sure to
   1. Use it for the purpose of establishing strong relationships.
   2. Be sure that it is mutually shared.
   3. Realize that it involves a certain amount of risk.
   4. Lead up to disclosure gradually.
   5. Disclose moderately for maintaining relationships over time.