

How To Effectively Communicate With Your Administrator

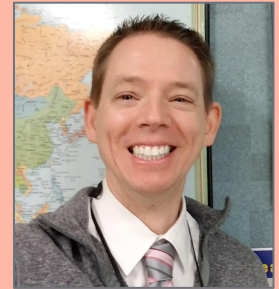


Brian Duffy

- K-12 Music Educator for 20 Years
- Percussion Artist
- School Administrator

I Value:

- Moral Leadership
- Compassion
- Courage
- Curiosity
- Integrity
- Interdependence
- Empowerment



Bojan Hoover

- K-12 Music Educator for 11 Years
- Percussion Artist
- Executive Director of River City Rhythm

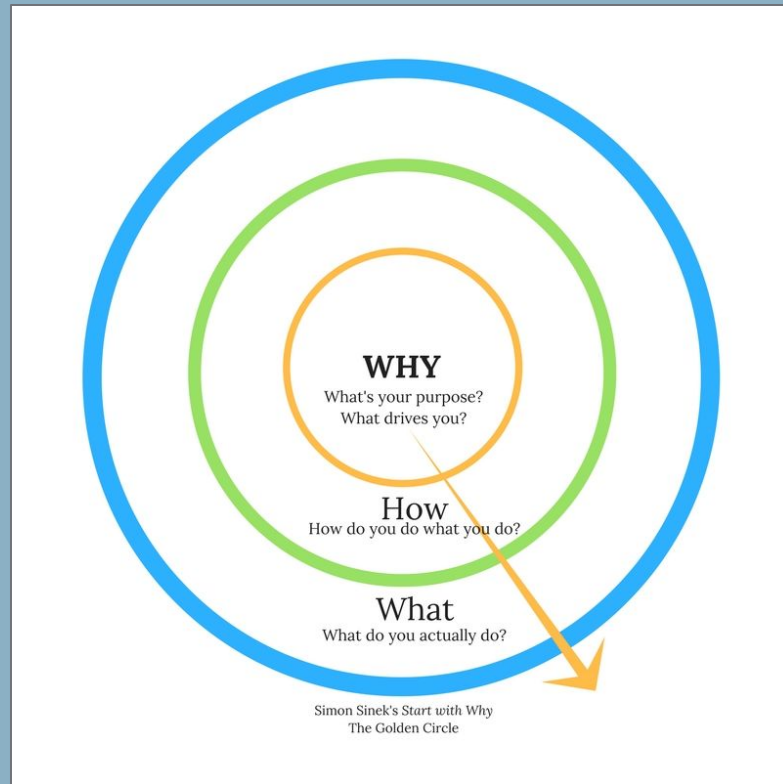
I Value:

- Community
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Excellence
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion



Our Goal Today

- ✓ Having the tools to develop authentic communication with your administrator(s) in such a way that you are able to **effectively advocate for arts education for all students** across a variety of situations and circumstances, is an essential tool for all music educators.
- ✓ In order to best serve the diverse educational needs of your students it is essential to **develop and nurture effective channels of communication** with your school administrator(s).
- ✓ This session will provide you with the necessary **strategies and skills** to communicate with your administrator(s), so that you can communicate effectively to foster student centered decision making.



Shared Assumptions as We Work Together Today

- ❖ The smartest person in the “room” today is the room, so let’s use each other as resources. Use the chat freely to interconnect so we can collaborate and support each other.
- ❖ There is important work ahead for arts education, so let’s use this time to help each other become even better advocates for arts education.

“*The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.*”
-George Bernard Shaw



Why Do We Communicate?

- ✓ Exchange of Information
- ✓ Gain New Skills, Form New Knowledge
- ✓ Problem Solving
- ✓ Social, Make Connections



Steps for Effective Communication

1. Am I emotionally ready to communicate?
2. Have I considered the topic fully?

Is this communication needed?

What's my purpose in this communication?

(information, skills/knowledge, problem solving, social/connections)

3. What Channel(s) of Communication should I use?
4. Did I prepare a succinct, effective communication?
5. Am I prepared for Next Steps/Follow-Up?
6. What does Closure look like?
What does Non-Closure look like?



1. What Emotions Am I Feeling?

Label your emotions

"Onward" by Elena Aguilar is an essential book for all educators



Where do my emotions fit?

- ★ Green Zone
- ★ Blue Zone
- ★ Yellow Zone
- ★ Red Zone



Hit the **Pause Button** until you're ready to communicate in a way that **helps** the situation.



2. Have I fully considered the situation that I am going to communicate about?

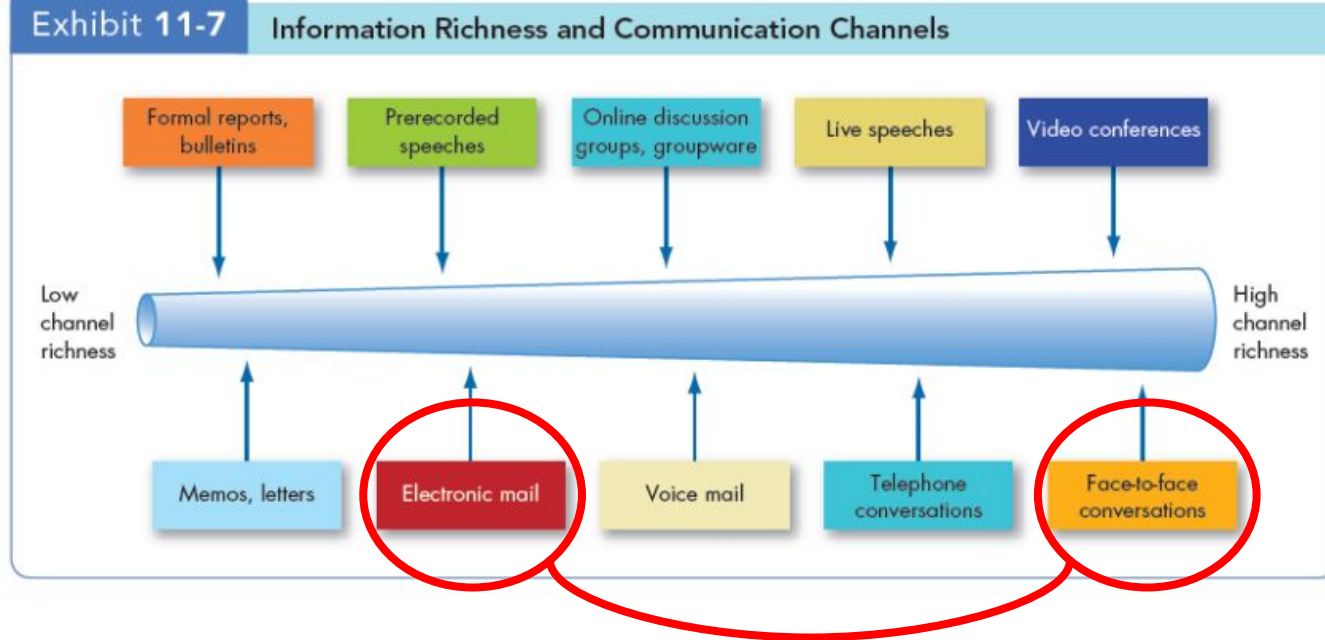
- ❑ What's my purpose in this communication?
- ❑ Is there an actual need to communicate?
- ❑ If responding to a communication or decision that was made by my administrator: What are 3 reasons why this person may have made the decision they did?
- ❑ What have I done to problem solve already? Have I collaborated with others? What can I bring to the table to help?
- ❑ What are the systems our school/district use to communicate concerns, problems, ideas, etc. (department leader, building leadership team, assigned admin etc.)?
- ❑ Ask yourself: My problem would be solved if.....
- ❑ Is my concern one that is student centered or is this a personal concern?



3. Channels of Communication

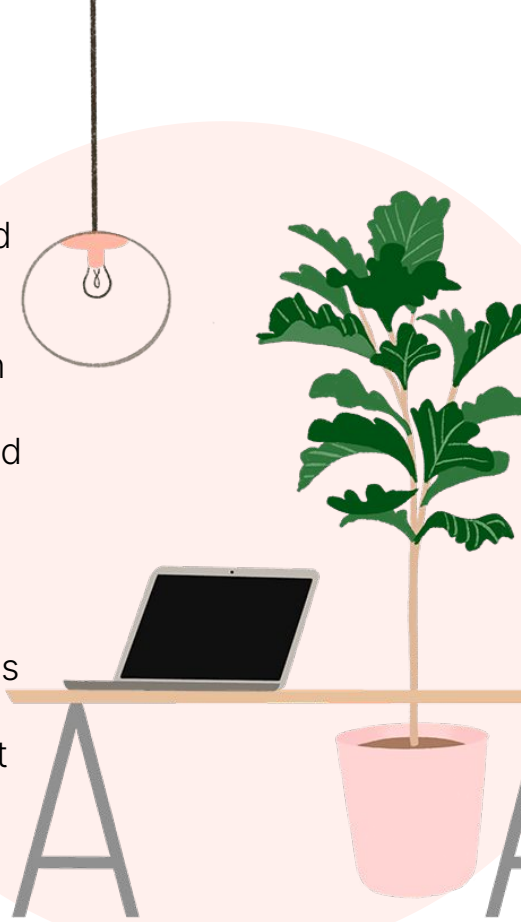
Exhibit 11-7

Information Richness and Communication Channels



4. Create Effective Communication

- ❑ Am I communicating clearly why this communication is needed?
- ❑ Is my communication the appropriate length?
- ❑ If looking to schedule an in-person meeting, am I giving them enough lead time and information so that the meeting is productive (Again, what is the purpose of this initial communication?)
- ❑ Is my communication student-centered? Speak about students more than you speak about programs and adults.
- ❑ Does my administrator have enough background knowledge to understand what I am communicating about?
- ❑ How does my communication fit within our department/school/district strategic priorities (equity, opportunity gaps, inclusion, SEL, etc.)
- ❑ When discussing money and time, be mindful of school/district timelines and constraints. Balance your desire to dream big with the current realities of the moment. Increase your awareness of the bigger framework.
- ❑ What solutions/ideas am I bringing to the table? How do my ideas support student learning? How do they benefit students?
- ❑ What data do I have to support my assertions/ideas/concerns?
- ❑ Should someone else review this communication or my plan for communication before I initiate it? Does my communication have positive intent?



4. Create Effective Communication

- ❑ Does my communication use pluralistic language (options)? Am I only communicating in absolutes? Is there distorted thinking in my communication?
- ❑ What style of voice am I using (credible or approachable)?
- ❑ Be mindful of the role culture plays in communication. Always be aware of how you present yourself, in particular non-verbally. How is your administrator presenting to you non-verbally?
- ❑ What visuals can I prepare? A third point can be of tremendous help in guiding a conversation.
- ❑ How will I manage my motions if/when I encounter feedback, criticism, conflict? Monitor your emotional intelligence.
- ❑ What kind of person do I need to be in this conversation today? Am I prepared to be a listener? Is my mindset open for a solution that hasn't been found yet, one that I have not yet considered? What am I willing to compromise on? What commitments am I willing to make?



5. Next Steps/Follow-Up

- ❑ What's our plan for moving forward?
- ❑ What are our next steps? What are the timelines we have established?
- ❑ Well-defined action steps (who is doing what & by when) help with momentum and can maintain clarity for all. They hold everyone accountable.
- ❑ Remember that your ability to follow through builds trust (and this goes both ways of course).



6. Closure & Non-Closure

- ❑ What will closure look like for this topic? Do we both agree that we have closed this discussion? Have we clearly documented our agreements?
- ❑ Are we tabling this topic for now and agreeing to discuss this again at a later date? If so, when? Is my administrator open to me initiating this discussion again at a later date?
- ❑ What will I do if the decisions made from our communications fall outside my values and beliefs (in this situation and/or persistently)?



Review:

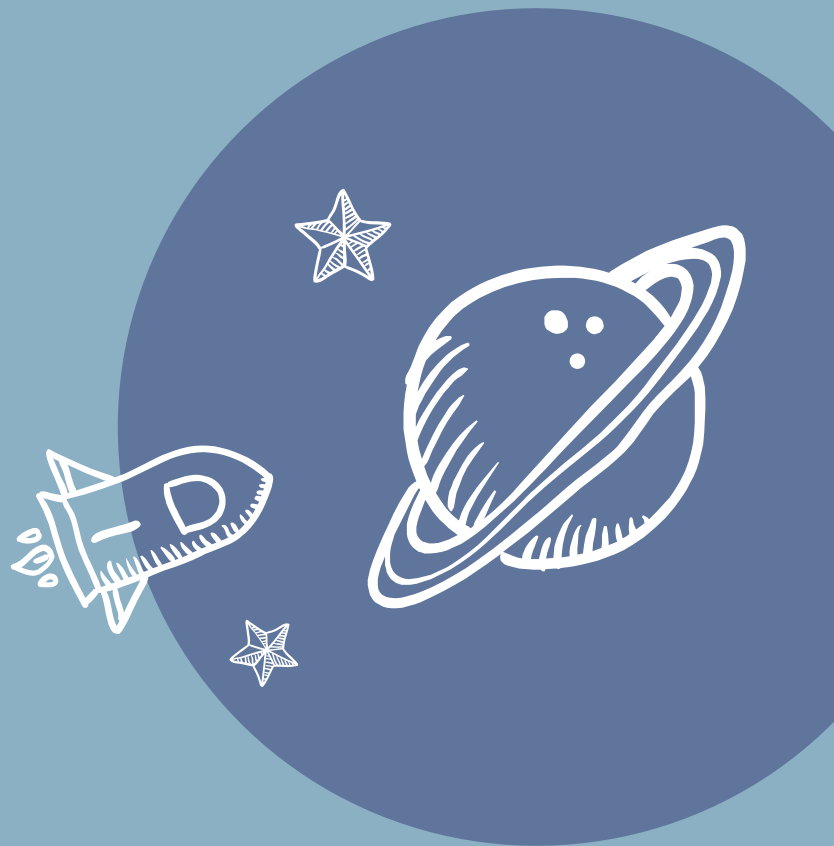
Steps to Effective Communication

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Questions?

- ✓ Are there topics presented today you want to explore further?
- ✓ Are there unexplored topics you want to discuss?
- ✓ Are there specific scenarios you are encountering in your position that you want to talk through/discuss?
- ✓ What other questions might you have for us?



Thanks!

Any questions?

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