
THE S²COR⁴E

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In collaborative communication, it is common for participants with differing perspectives to clash and suffer difficulty in coming to an optimum decision due to lack of disclosure. Participants may withhold important information rather than open themselves to the possibility of loss of status. This paper describes a technique for monitoring twelve critical personal characteristics in order to promote open collaboration by creating sufficient safety.

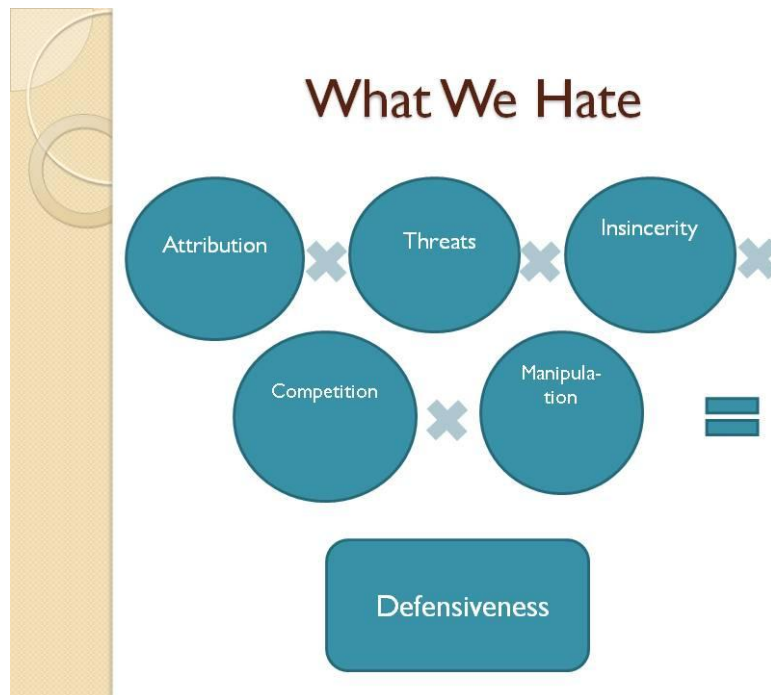
THE SCORE

There is a perspective that tends to bring out the best in our counterparts in a collaborative situation. I refer to it as **"THE S²COR⁴E"** because it is a useful mnemonic device for remembering the perspective's various components. Once you know **"THE S²COR⁴E"** and apply it in your work conversations, you will begin to see others responding to you differently and in a more favorable way.

(Five Dysfunctions of a Team - Patrick Lencioni)



The attitudes that alienate others in a conversation are fairly universal.

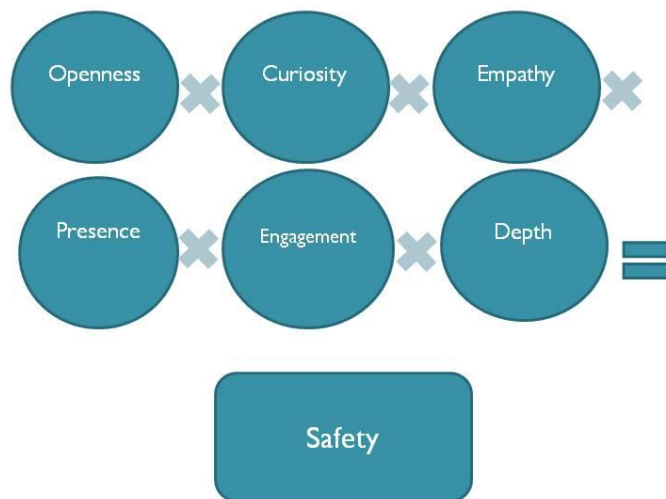


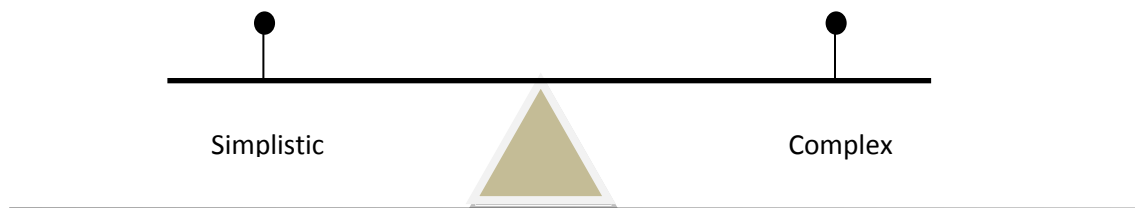
How Do These Cause Defensiveness?

- Fear
- ANGER
- Embarrassment

We don't mind, and in fact look forward to, having conversations with people that exhibit other specific characteristics ("THE S²COR⁴E"). Working with people that know "THE S²COR⁴E" can be among the best experiences we have at work because they are productive, low-friction, high-output activities.

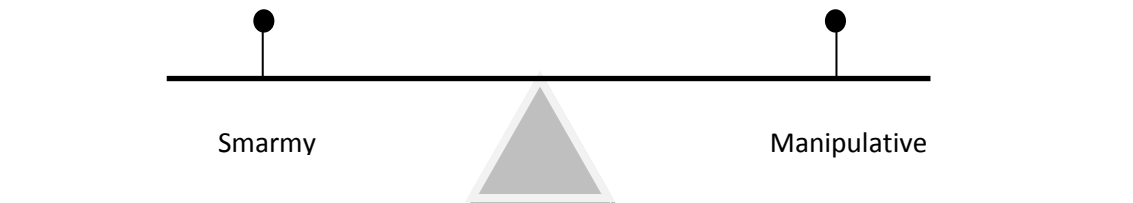
Productive Communication





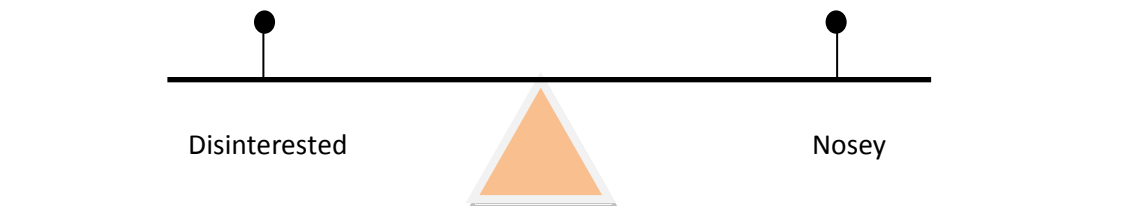
Simple

Simple language (or 'plain talk' if you prefer) is necessary to keep the other person engaged and present in the conversations. Complicated issues need to be stated in plain language so that your counterpart feels safe in contributing their ideas. Over simplification is a different way to alienate a person by talking down to them.



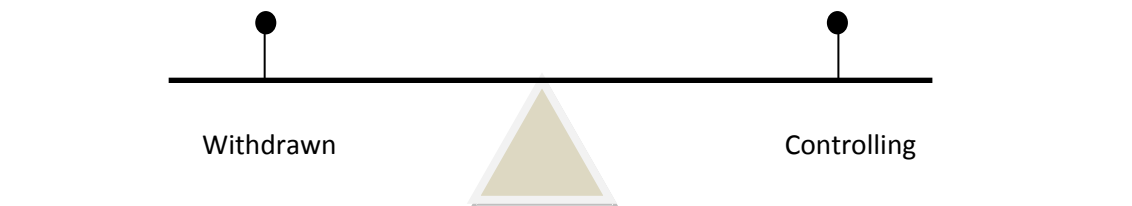
Sincere

Sincerity is behaving in a manner consistent with your feelings. This needs to be done with respect and high purpose. For instance, without hurting another person's feelings and for the good of your organization, you will need to tell just how you feel. It is an unabridged connection between your feeling and your actions that portray authenticity.



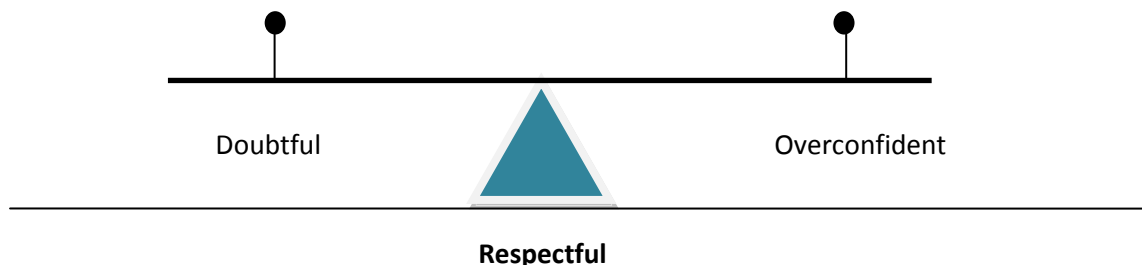
Curious

Curiosity is the state in which you continue to ask questions about why your counterpart holds a given belief until you understand why as fully as you can.

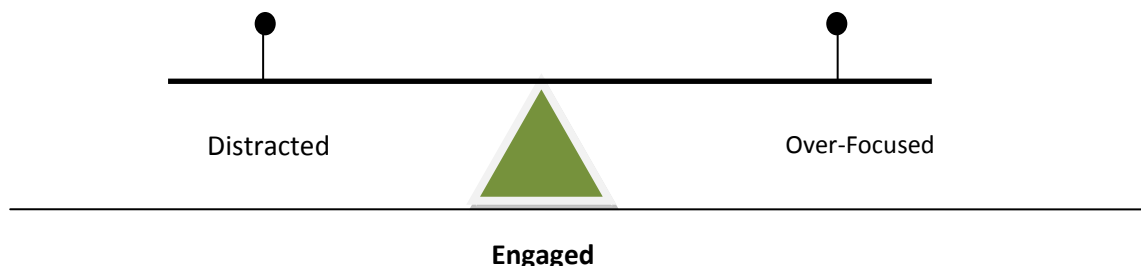


Openness

Openness is the state in which you believe that your counterpart might be right and you might be wrong even if nothing you have heard YET indicates it. You are willing to be persuaded; even hopeful to be persuaded because if you are, it means you didn't bail out too soon but held on until the ONE important piece of information was finally put into the collaborative "pot".



Respect – Four kinds of respect at work in collaboration and they are unilateral – your counterpart does NOT have to share them. **1) Respect for content** – you respect that the thing you are talking about is worth talking about and that, since it is natural for people to have different perspectives on most things, respect that your current understanding of the content is ALWAYS just a starting place and that your mind could be changed at any moment IF you are successful in finding a piece of mind changing information. **2) Respect for process** – you respect the fact that Plato and Aristotle argued over the principles contained in these lessons and that Aristotle and countless great minds since have refined them to the state they are in now. That most of the time, if we follow the principles of communication that we are learning, we will come to the very best answer. That advocacy is NOT the best way to resolve business issues, but collaboration yields better decisions and preserves and promotes good relationships. **3) Respect for counterpart** – you respect that the counterpart (in the absence of diagnosed mental illness) is a rational human being and is doing their best to stay with you in the collaboration. The difficulties they seem to have are simply differences which they lack the skills to overcome but YOU POSSESS. You maintain curiosity about their perspective and you NEVER assume that they are malicious in their intention unless you have strong evidence. You treat them as if their ideas COULD be exactly correct, because you can't determine otherwise until you fully understand them. **4) Respect for self** – You respect that you are intelligent and have skills in communication that others desperately need. You share them. You don't allow yourself to bully or be bullied, manipulate or be manipulated, judge or be judged. When your counterpart violates these rules, you address it with compassion understanding that they don't know any other way, or they would use it.



Engagement is the state in which you are really invested in your counterpart – you want nothing more than for all the information to be surfaced and a GREAT informed decision to be made. You are not distracted from the discussion, either by things going on around you, by the voice in your head, or by your desire to interrupt.

Tentativeness

Humility

Empathy

Simplicity & **S**incerity

Curiosity

Openness

Respect for Content, Process, Counterpart, & Self

Engagement

THE S²COR⁴E

High Performance Communication In San Diego

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Fig. 1—People ruining their business

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