



Effective Communication for Leading Diverse Clinical Teams  
AAPM 2020  
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**Cancer Center**  
Making Cancer History®

# What is Effective Communication and How do you use it to Lead your Diverse Rad Onc Team?



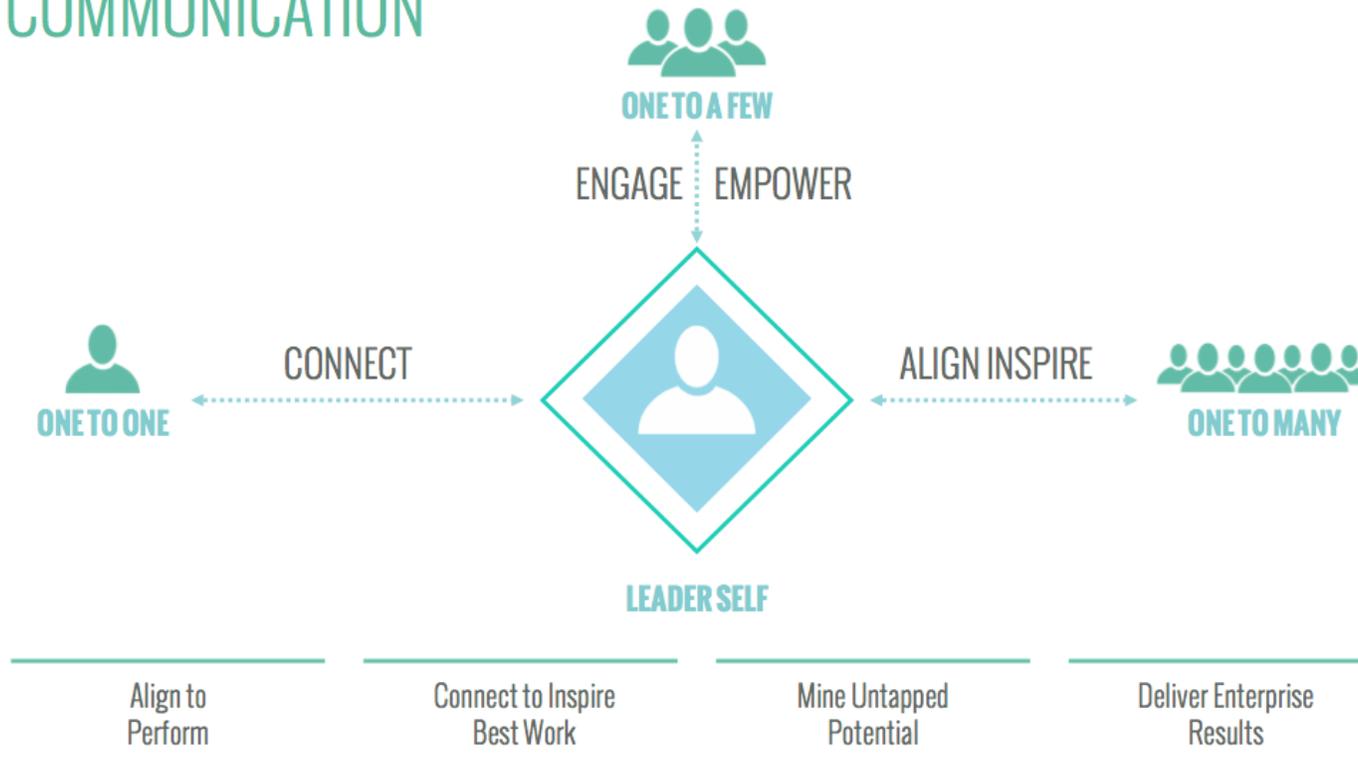
**The art of  
communication  
is the language  
of leadership.**

– James Humes

*institutesuccess*<sup>™</sup>

# Effective Communication is Essential for Leadership

## DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION



A group of business professionals are seated in a modern office lounge. They are gathered around a low table, some looking at laptops. The room has large windows that offer a view of a city skyline and a body of water. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, likely from the setting or rising sun. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

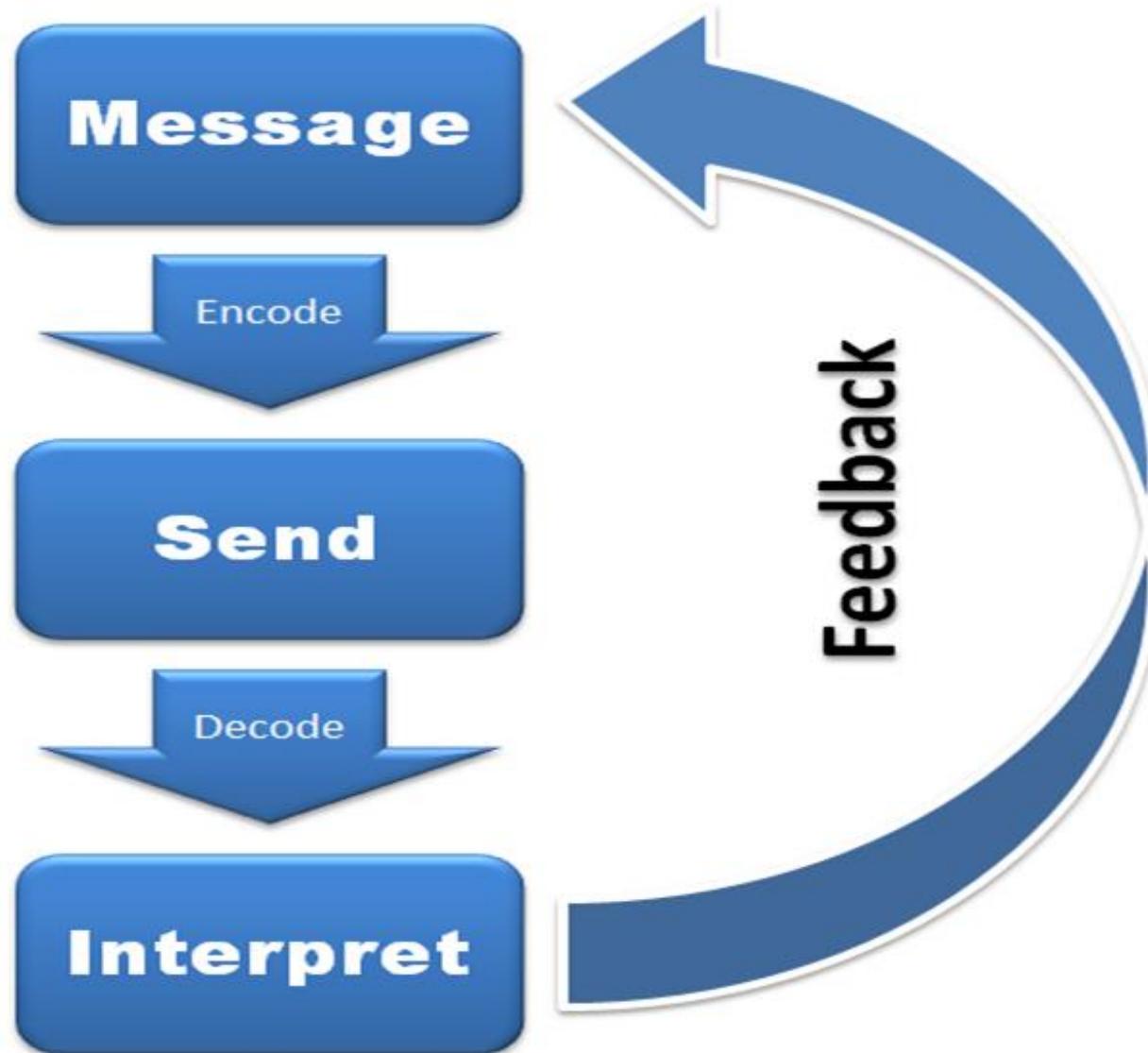
“Good communication is  
the bridge between  
confusion and clarity” –  
Nat Turner

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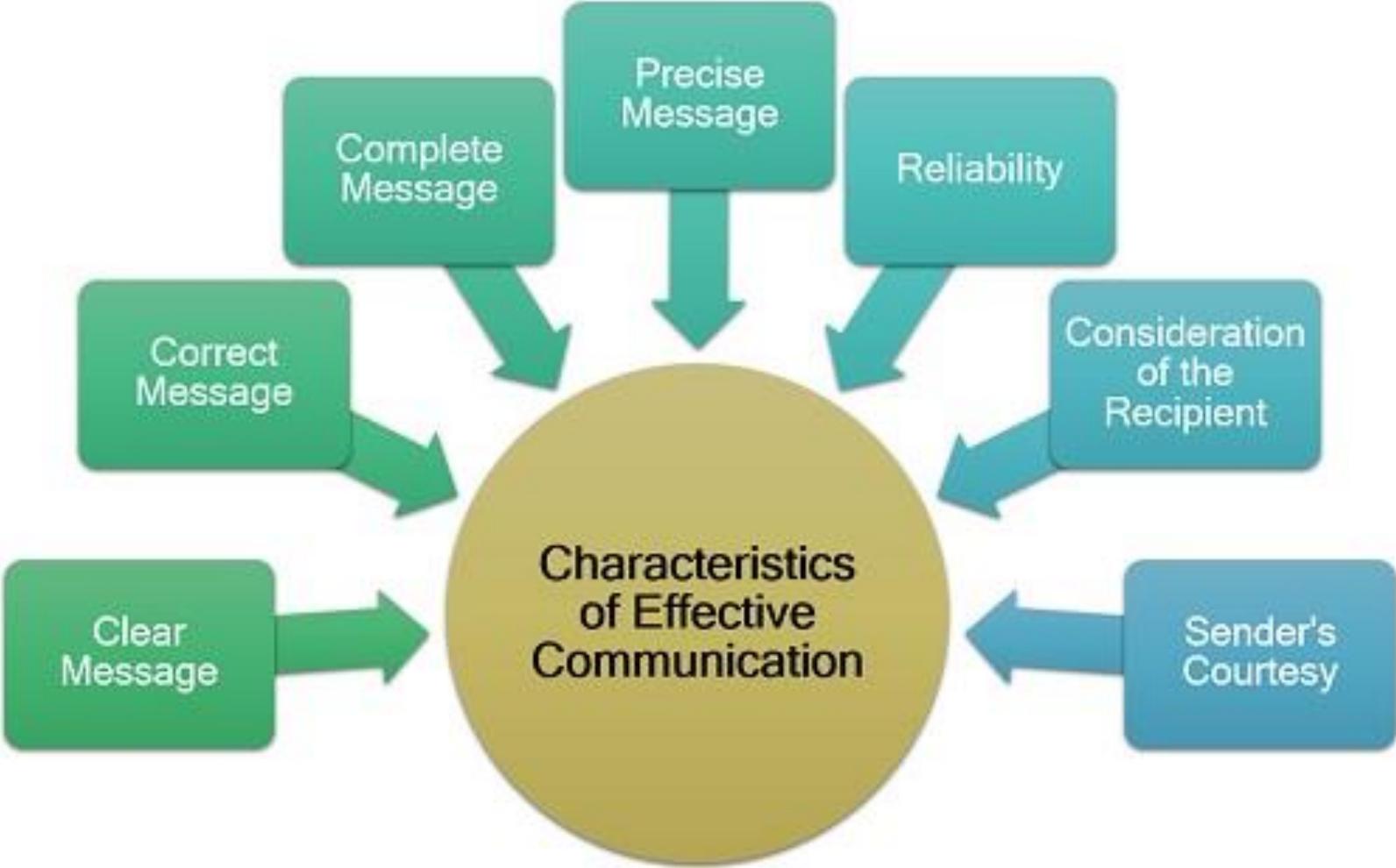
# Effective Communication Defined

- Communication is simply the transfer of a message that is both received and understood.
- Effective communication requires that not only is the message received, but it is also understood and acted on in the desired manner.
- This implies for communication to be effective, it may necessitate coaching, persuasion, encouragement and leadership on the part of the person sending the message.

# Effective Communication Cycle



# Effective Communication Characteristics





A. Blakaj,<sup>1</sup> L. Wootton,<sup>1</sup> J. Zeng,<sup>1</sup> M. Nyflot,<sup>2</sup> E.C. Ford,<sup>3</sup>  
and M.B. Spraker<sup>1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>University of Washington, Seattle, WA, <sup>2</sup>University of  
Washington Radiation Oncology, Seattle, WA, <sup>3</sup>University of Washington  
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## Findings

- 1002 out of 4617 (22%) safety events involved communication
- 400 were randomly analyzed
- 20% were potentially severe
- **62%** of communication events were due to written communication errors; 32% were verbal errors
- Absence of communication involved in 50% of events

## Roles Responsible for Communication Errors

Abstract 3300; Table 1

Variable	N (%)
Person sending	
RO physician	154 (39%)
Therapist	102 (26%)
Dosimetrist	43 (11%)
Person receiving	
Therapist	189 (47%)
RO attending	157 (39%)
Dosimetrist	65 (16%)
Patient	36 (9%)

# Barriers to Effective Communication



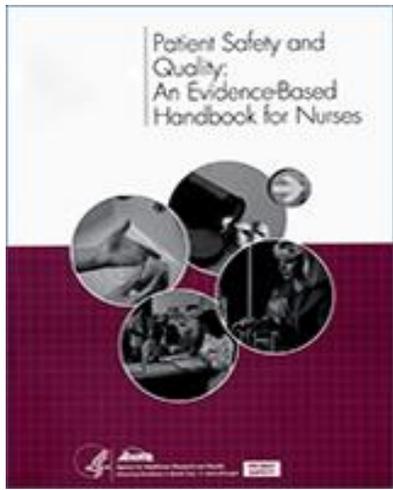
# Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses

Ronda G Hughes , editors.

Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2008 Apr.  
*Advances in Patient Safety.*

PMID: 21328752 NBK2651

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- Communication failures are the leading cause for sentinel events reported to the Joint Commission between 1995 and 2004
- Effective clinical practice requires effective communication
- A common barrier to effective communication is hierarchies
- Cultural differences can exacerbate communication problems
- An **interdisciplinary** approach to teamwork is generally more advantageous than a multidisciplinary approach since in a multidisciplinary approach each team member works independently of the others based on their discipline and formulates separate goals.

## Conflict pressure cooker: Nurse managers' conflict management experiences in a diverse South African workplace



there are six standards of a healthy work environment:

- nurses who are proficient in both communication and clinical skills
- team members who pursue and foster true collaboration
- effective decision-making evident in valued and committed partners in policy
- appropriate staffing to ensure a balance between patient needs and nurse competencies
- meaningful recognition of the value that nurses and others bring to the organisation
- authentic leadership where nurse leaders fully embrace the imperative of a healthy work environment, authentically live it and engage others in its achievement.

TABLE 1: Demographic profile of participants ( $N = 13$ ).

Variables	$N$	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	3	23
Female	10	77
<b>Age</b>		
35–44 years	2	15
45–54 years	10	77
55–64 years	1	1
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor's degree	7	54
Honours degree	1	1
<b>Language</b>		
Setswana	4	31
Sesotho	2	15
isiZulu	1	1
Pedi	1	1
Afrikaans	1	1
Venda	3	23
Ndebele	1	1
<b>Nationality/race</b>		
Black	12	92
White	1	1
<b>Management experience</b>		
0–5 years	6	46
6–10 years	4	31
11–15 years	3	23
<b>Hospital experience</b>		
6–10 years	3	23
11–15 years	4	31
16–20 years	3	23
21–25 years	3	23
<b>Department or unit</b>		
General	3	23
Paediatric	1	1
Intensive care	4	31
ER	1	1
Primary healthcare	2	15
Theatre	1	1
Mental health	1	1

# Summary

- Effective leadership requires effective communication
- Communication barriers are common but they are surmountable
- Authentic leaders who invest in their staff can address these challenges