

THE EXCHANGE

BRIDGING THE GAP

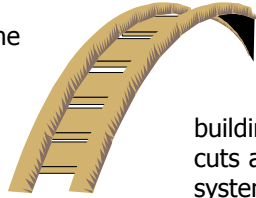
Have you ever stood on the rim of the Grand Canyon? Being in the presence of such an enormity of nature makes most of us feel rather small. The culprit of the vast split is way down at the bottom looking rather tame from a distance. Constant pressure from the Colorado River, however small, has literally worn down the rock over time.

Relationships remind me of the Grand Canyon. A small, petty, sometimes unspoken pressure between two people can erode creativity, spontaneity, civility, respect, friendship, and yes, even love until there is a huge gap with each person standing on opposite sides of the divide. What is beautiful in nature is ugly in human relations.

How do we reach out and touch that person who seems so far away? We've made attempts in the past...we've explained ourselves, written sound arguments that would make a debate coach proud, and perhaps sought the advice of others. Our conclusion is that the other person is unreasonable, uncaring, stubborn, and wrong. We can build up quite a list of justifications for the distance, can't we?

In our more honest moments, we recognize that our actions and words may have seemed careless or self centered. Yet, we sit on our side of the gap feeling hopeless that a bridge can never successfully be built.

Thankfully, there is a communication tool that can help. It is called a word-picture. Technically, a word-picture uses a story or object to activate simultaneously the intellect and emotions of a person, causing him/her to experience the words, not just hear them. It



involves both sides of the brain at the same time.

There are five steps to successfully building a word-picture. Warning: short cuts are not advised. Take your time and systematically bridge the gap.

1. Establish a clear purpose. Understand what you want to accomplish with your word-picture. Do you want to:

- Clarify thoughts and feelings?
- Praise or encourage the person?
- Correct someone?

2. Carefully study the other person's interests and then choose your story. If the person likes to garden, you may choose to tell a story about creating a flowerbed. If golf is important to him/her, then tell a story about a great game. Let your imagination soar if your person is into sci-fi and create a story that might rival Star Trek. If your relationship is based on several decades, tell a story about a time long ago. To summarize, the four basic story types are:

- Nature
- Everyday objects
- Imaginary stories
- Remember when...

3. Bridge from your story to your purpose. Get the person emotionally involved with the story that is interesting to them, and then bridge to your purpose.

In the Old Testament, Nathan the Prophet used a word-picture on King David to correct him for adultery and murder. Knowing that David used to be a shepherd, Nathan told him a rich man who had hundreds of sheep sent his servants to steal his poor neighbor's lamb, a household pet, in order to feed the rich man's company. David was outraged and

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What Our Clients Are Saying

"You received rave reviews for your talk. Many participants said it was the highlight of the entire program for them."

Barry Smedstad, Austell GA

"I have been looking for a workshop to teach me how to empower my customers. This is it! Finally, an effective method to ask 'empowering' questions that will enable my customers to help themselves."

Sue Ellen Hall, Chattanooga TN



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The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.

William James

LOOKING AHEAD:

- ◆ **The December issue of The Exchange will focus on Coping with Stress**
- ◆ **Giving the Perfect Gift**



Quick Tips:

- Collectively, as a team, let your leader know you appreciate a job well done. It can get lonely at the top.
- Read something each day to enhance your skills. Become an eternal student.
- On your drive home today, think of the little things your family or friends do for you that mean the world. Then, tell them.



To learn more about it, click here!

Bridging the Gap, cont. from page 1

demanded that the rich man be punished. Then Nathan used a bridge when he told the King that he was that man and Bethsheba was the lamb. The King wept and repented.

4. Rehearse your story. The world loves a good story, but only when it is well told and the teller remembers the punch line. Practice your story until you are really good at it.

5. Pick a convenient time to tell your story without distractions. Since you've put a lot of time into the thought, creation, and practice of your story and bridge, make sure the other person will be able to remain focused. Take them for a walk or go somewhere that you will have no interruptions.

Word-pictures take time; so did the issue that has left a gaping hole in your relationship. Invest in this person by spending the time to bridge the gap. You'll be thankful you did.

*For more information, the book *The Language of Love* by Gary Smalley and John Trent is recommended.*

SAYING "THANK YOU" AROUND THE WORLD

Albania	<i>Faleminderit</i>
Australia (English)	<i>Ta</i>
Bosnia, Yugoslavia (Croatian)	<i>Hvala</i>
China (Mandarin)	<i>Toa chie</i>
Egypt, Ethiopia, Israel (Amharic)	<i>Amesegunalhun</i>
Fiji	<i>Vinaka</i>
France	<i>Merci</i>
Germany	<i>Danke</i>
Guam	<i>Si yuus maasi</i>
Italy	<i>Grazie</i>
India, Bangladesh (Bengali)	<i>Dhanyabad</i>
Japan	<i>Arigato</i>
Middle East, North Africa (Arabic)	<i>Shukran</i>
New Zealand (English)	<i>Cheers</i>
Norway	<i>Takk</i>
Papua New Guinea	<i>Tángeyoo</i>
Romania	<i>Multumesc</i>
Russia	<i>Spasibo</i>
Spain	<i>Gracias</i>
Southeast Africa (Kiswahili)	<i>Ahsante</i>
Vietnam	<i>Cám ón</i>
Zambia, Mozambique	<i>Zikomo</i>

KEEP THOSE CARDS AND LETTERS COMING!

By Ben Cairns, M.A.

A seven year-old girl tries to get her "boyfriend's" attention by leaning across the piano as he plays a complicated Beethoven piece. Her name is Lucy Van Pelt. She bats her eyes at Schroeder, the seven year-old musical genius. Schroeder doesn't notice Lucy, so she withdraws in frustration. Later, on the playground, she snatches a football away right as Charlie Brown is trying to kick a field goal. He flies up into the air and lands flat on his back with a dense THUD. Stars circle above his dizzy head. "Good Grief!" is all he says.



Charles Schulz entertained generations of people across the globe with his PEANUTS comic strip, including me. He revealed our typical inner fears and doubts, while at the same time somehow managing to make them OK to laugh at.

Charles Schulz created for many years without realizing just how important his cartoons were to the millions of people who grew up anticipating the daily newspaper (for many, the first thing read was usually PEANUTS). After he was diagnosed with colon cancer, hundreds of thousands of cards and letters from all over the world poured in. Story after story about the difference he had made simply amazed Schulz. He was absolutely delighted and incredibly humbled.

Every month the communication coaches at TLC produce a newsletter, *The Exchange*. While it isn't the same as PEANUTS and has a circulation of approximately 5,000 instead of millions, we work hard to send something out that is truly meaningful. The calls, cards, and letters from across the country have delighted and humbled us. You, our readers, are very important to us. From the heart of our hearts, we thank you. Please, keep those calls, cards, and letters coming!



PICTURE THIS

By Vincent Ivan Phipps, B.S.

Often in communication, messages are clear to the speaker but are misunderstood by the listener. Word pictures help us express our thoughts so they are understood more clearly.



Here is a quick quiz to see how well you recognize some of the common expressions we say to help illustrate our points.

Directions: Translate the following oblique statements into commonly used terms we are likely to hear or say. For Example: *Continuous precipitation of felines and canines = It's raining cats and dogs.* Answers are on page 4.

1. Facileness as 3.14.
2. 1/100 of a dollar for your meditations.
3. I desire to donate a portion of my cerebellum.
4. A small piece of wood from an antiquated barricade.
5. Advance your crème de la crème inferior most extremity.
6. Abstain from gnawing an amount too large to be masticated.
7. Are you the owner of an amphibious creature within your esophagus.
8. Refusal of acquiring a sweet baked treat in accordance with gustatory devourment.
9. Ornithological creatures collaborating with mutual plumage aggregate concurrently.
10. Refrain from hurling the neonate in unison with the cleansing combination of oxygen and hydrogen.

ASK THE EXPERTS



Beginning this issue, we are including frequently asked questions that we receive during keynote presentations, workshops, seminars, individual coaching, and through the mail. We're using the Ann Landers format. We think you will be able to relate and if you would like to contribute, send your questions to: tlc@talklisten.com

Dear TLC, This guy in another department never listens. I don't have any reporting control over him and we need to communicate. How can I get him to listen?
Fed Up

Dear Fed Up,

Unfortunately, there is no 'draft' when it comes to getting listeners; it is a volunteer pastime. You can, however, increase the likelihood that he will choose to listen by investing time in planning your communication.

First, pick the right time and place. Do not communicate when emotions are high. Rather, schedule a time 'out of crisis' and let him know the subject you wish to discuss. It is best for both parties to be prepared.

During the meeting, be sure to use relaxed posture and state your observation that you do not feel listened to. It may sound like this, "Bob, when we meet to discuss the project, I do not feel I am being listened to. This shuts down my ability to listen to other ideas. What can be done to correct this?"

Be sure you listen to what is being said. Ask additional questions until you arrive at some solution that both parties will contribute to. Before you leave this meeting, come up with a signal you can privately send him if you are feeling not listened to at the next meeting. Follow up with praise when the behavior is corrected.

Dear TLC, I work with a woman who is very nice, yet she is so negative that she pulls me down nearly every day. I hate to avoid her, but she is affecting my mood. Suggestions?
Bummed Out

Dear Bummed Out,

Arm yourself with positive affirmations before you get to work. One might be, "I am safe from negative words." Let her know that you're not comfortable to listening to negative things about other people, rather set aside perhaps one lunchtime a week to be a listener for her. Look for the positive slant for each negative statement. For instance, if she says, "Nobody appreciates what you do for them", respond with, "I appreciate your accuracy with the reports."

While negative moods are contagious, the good news is that positive ones are also. Your grumpy co-worker will eventually come around, and in the meantime, your positive energy will act as a magnet to bring out the best in other people as well.



Each day comes bearing its own gifts. Untie the ribbons.

Ruth Ann Schabacker

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful the thorns have roses.

Alphonse Karr



Be on the lookout for mercies. The more we look for them, the more of them we see.... Better to lose count while naming your blessings than to lose your blessings to counting your troubles.

Maltbie D. Babcock

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TLC WELCOMES NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

By Beverly Inman-Ebel, CEO

Nearly two years ago when TLC went from a sole proprietorship to a LLC, my wise older brother revealed to me that our father wanted to join forces and become the Chairman of the Board. I resisted. I was adjusting from being the only decision-maker to using a team approach and sharing ownership in my, rather 'our', business. Old habits die slowly. I had given about as much as I was willing to give. After all, those who know me best have sometimes called me a control freak.



I am very thankful that after years of being ignored, except for emergencies, my father is still willing to step in and help. I am so honored that I was chosen to be adopted as his daughter when I was only eight years old. Let me brag just a bit. His positive characteristics are numerous. My father

- Listens
- Has a passionate commitment
- Takes action
- Includes others in his plans
- Is absolutely creative
- Has a sense of humor
- Contains wisdom beyond comparison
- Forgives
- Directs his incredible staff to aid his children

While he was willing to continue to be my silent partner, when I stopped to consider exactly what I am thankful for, I knew I must announce his influence over me and his desire to make me a better person - to make TLC a better company. He is now our Chairman of the Board, effective October 16, 2000.

My father has many names; my favorite is "I AM." You are welcome to call him God, Lord, Yahweh, Provider, or many other names. It is not important what you call him, just call him....and live your dreams.

Remember to . . .

- Give informative compliments by telling people exactly what they did and how it helped you or others.
- Keep in touch with your communication partner on a weekly basis and thank them for their investment of time.

Featured Product: "Reflections" Audio Tape

Need a stocking stuffer? Want to thank someone in your life with an uplifting gift that will keep on giving? Consider our new audio tape by our CEO, Beverly, "Reflections." When she delivers this speech to live audiences, they laugh out loud one moment and get misty eyed the next. Christmas special: \$10, includes shipping!



Answers to "Picture This," from page 3.

1. Easy as pie.
2. A penny for your thoughts.
3. I would like to give you a piece of my mind.
4. A chip off the old block.
5. Put your best foot forward.
6. Don't bite off more than you can chew.
7. Do you have a frog in your throat?
8. You can't have your cake and eat it too.
9. Birds of a feather flock together.
10. Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.

TLC establishes long-term relationships with our clients. If we have helped you or if you believe our approach to change would work for someone you know, please communicate with us by email [tlc@talklisten.com] or phone [1-888-232-2873]. We work with individuals and groups on the following subject areas: attitude, listening, body language, voice, leadership, compliments and corrections, behavioral style, teamwork, effective meetings, public speaking, accent reduction and much more!