

CHAPTER FOUR

Communicate, Connect, and Relate Successfully to Others

“Every day is my best day; this is my life. I’m not going to have this moment again.”

~ Bernie Siegel



Hot Air Balloon Ride in Napa, California

Our success depends greatly on how well we communicate in our personal and professional lives. When we communicate openly, positively, and effectively, we inspire connections and build sincere, strong, sustaining relationships. Our ceiling of success then becomes like the old expression, *The sky's the limit.*

“The problem with communication is the illusion it has been accomplished.”

~ George Bernard Shaw

Communication Breakdowns

It is important to know the breakdowns that get in the way of communication in order to avoid them. Personal truths is the

number one breakdown in communication. When we interact with others, we are always coming from a place filled with our own experiences. Our expectations differ because of our unique and individual beliefs, opinions, and assumptions based on our experiences. These expectations become our personal truths upon which we base judgments of right and wrong. To help you remember the concept, see the first letters of each word; it spells out the word *B.O.A.T.* **B**eliefs, **O**pinions, **A**ssumptions, therefore, are **T**ruths based on our experiences.

We all have unique and individual experiences, yet we expect each other to think, act, and respond the same. These are some false expectations that can get us into trouble. Others must behave in the same manner as we do or their behavior is wrong. Another person's behavior must mean the same as ours if we did that same behavior. We get in a disagreement because others disagree with our opinions. These are examples of expectations based on personal truths. Once we understand that our personal



B.O.A.T. - Marina in Sausalito, California



17-Mile Drive, Monterey, California

truths (how we judge the world by what is right and wrong) are based on the unique and individual experiences we have, we can no longer believe that our answer is the only right answer.

The *Poison Triangle of Mistrust* is another breakdown that is lethal to communication.

This happens when one person has an issue with a second person and takes that issue to a third person. In many cases it's because we don't want to hurt that first person's feelings, and we don't realize the full implications of our action. Many of us may refer to this as gossip or talking behind one's back.

It is important to understand that if you are on the receiving end of gossip, you are just as responsible as if you are the initiator. You play a fifty-fifty role. If the gossiper has no one to tell, the gossip stops. To prevent gossip, avoid talking to a third person regarding the question, concern, or conflict unless the third person is responsible for conflict resolution. If you take

it to another person, you will create the *Poison Triangle of Mistrust*. If you turned the tables around and someone was talking about you, you would no longer trust that person or even want to talk to him or her.

Action Plan

⚙️ Understand and Respect Personal Truths

- * Listen to their truths.
- * Share your truths.
- * It's never about who is right or wrong.
- * Agree on a third answer that works for both of the truths.
- * It is important that we as individuals make a personal commitment to be *open, respectful, and understanding* of each other's personal truths; it is what will enable us to communicate and interact effectively with others.

⚙️ Avoid Poison Triangle of Mistrust

- * Talk directly to the person with whom you have a question, concern, or conflict.
- * Ask to set up time to meet.
- * Avoid talking to anyone else about the issue.
- * Avoid having a negative attitude.
- * Use the phrase, “This didn’t work”—don’t personalize.
- * Listen calmly.
- * Share both sides.
- * Discuss and come to a solution.
- * Hold each other accountable.
- * If not resolved, all parties involved get together with whomever is responsible for conflict resolution.