



Flexible listening - information exchange Contract

Submitted by marjan on 29 August 2011 - 6:40pm

Flexible Listening

Using 6 Listening modes^[1] in an Information exchange Contract

Workshop offered by **Marjan Tuk** op McCoCo 2011

Intro

When you would like to change your perspective on a challenge, have a problem with finding options or information for making plans or decisions, or simply would like to develop your thinking, you may want to use this info contract.

By switching between various listening modes, you can

- balance more effectively your feelings, thinking and will power in your balance of attention
- detect more easily the hidden opportunities in difficult and challenging situations
- develop more practical and effective ways of dealing with what life throws at you.
- At least 5 participants
- Each participant gets at least 20 minutes client time, including finishing time (5 minutes recommended).

Group session

Session steps

1. The worker agrees with the co-workers who is going to take up the Process-Facilitator and Note-taker roles (see 'Role Descriptions' below)
2. The worker clarifies his/her Confidentiality expectations
3. The worker introduces their issue to the co-workers
4. The group collects and shares information by questions and answers related to the 6 Listening colours
5. The worker: What is my Big Picture at the moment?
Is it complete? / Which Scenarios? / What could be my first steps? / How can the issue be redefined?

6. Finishing off the session: What was good about this session? What did I get out of it?
7. Coming out exercises.

Role Descriptions

The **Worker** is in charge. That means among others that the client can signal “Stop”, “Slow down” so the co-workers know that the worker needs space to digest or direct the information.

The Worker brings in a personal problem, challenge or dilemma into the group session.

Co-workers open up their backpack of experience and knowledge to support the worker. Co-workers listen empathetically, can ask questions and give additional information (no advice and no sympathy!).

Session Confidentiality: The worker decides if it is OK for a co-worker to provide him or her with additional information after the session, such as suggestions, book titles or other resources.

Before the co-worker actually refers back to the session, she or he checks out whether this is still OK with the worker. In any other way normal confidentiality applies.

When the co-worker contributes, they show one or more listening colour cards that reflect their listening intention.

- *A Note taker:* one co-worker makes a note of the answers of the worker.
When the worker is overwhelmed by a suggestion (question or information) or wishes to shelve it, the suggestion is going to be noted as well for future reference.
- o Resources as web addresses, book titles can be written on post-its and added to the notes.
- *A Process facilitator:* his or her role is
 - o to support the client staying in charge of the information exchange
 - o to keep an eye on the client having enough time to digest the information
 - o to suggest the other co-workers to listen with a colour not yet or not often used
 - o to monitor time.

The Six Listening Colours

The six colours are referring to the 6 Listening modes. Together they produce an effective way of listening to move things forward. You use them in the order you wanted it.



White

Collecting Facts & Verifying
Information

Listen for and collecting facts and information and verifying it. The views represented in a factual manner.

Participants make statements of fact, including identifying information that



Yellow

Being Positive and Optimistic

As listener you focus on dreams and identify potential benefits associated

You note the positive statements and facts that increase the likelihood of success. You might include identifying the key supports available that will benefit the cause. Looking to create justified statements in favour of the idea or issue. The



Black

Being Cautious

The listener identifies barriers, unrealistic thinking, hazards, risks and other factors from a rational perspective. This is critical thinking, looking for problems that could undermine achievement.

If the Black Listening mode is applied too early it can kill off enthusiasm,

If the Black Listening mode is not included, serious problems can develop



Red

Feelings, Emotions
& Intuition

As listener you focus on how positive and negative emotions, gut reactions and feelings give direction to future decisions.

Red focuses on people's inner worlds and on what is emotionally important about in principle observable external world.

Red listening represents the feeling realm, black, white and yellow belong



Green
New Ideas

In green the focus is on innovation, new ideas and identifying new possibilities in several ways, listening to the ones coming up from the speaker and sharing them from within.

Things are shared for the sake of seeing what they might mean for the issue at hand, without judgement.

More importantly, the listener focuses also on ways of creating new ideas, for example provocation, brainstorming, and lateral thinking.



Blue
The Big Picture

The Blue listener looks for the Big Picture that is needed to move the issue forward.

One of the things in this is designing thinking and listening processes that lead to the results. For instance, teaching fundamentals requires a Big Organisation to create a thinking, sharing and action process that is likely to produce trained coaches.


Also the Blue listener looks for how the presently ongoing contribution fits into the overall picture, what is needed in order to move things forward in a practical way.

[1] Inspired by Edward De Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' book ISBN 9780316178310.

Topics

CoColInfo Tags:

Literature tag: [More about Co-Counselling theory and practice](#) > [Advanced contracts](#)

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