





Using the Information Wheel:

A Cheat Sheet

There are five key pieces of information in any given moment of human interaction:

1. Facts or Sensory Data
2. Thoughts
3. Feelings
4. Wants
5. Actions

Each is separate but interacts with the others.

Sensory data (Sensations) are the “facts” that we experience

Includes: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch

External data: The data you gather from other people

- Verbal- what you hear them say
- Non-verbal -facial expressions, gestures, movement, posture, scent, tones, words

Internal data:

- Intuitive sensations-memories, associations, dreams, intuitions
- Bodily sensations- goose bumps, a chill, fatigue, stomach tightness, headache

Thoughts

Meanings you make out of the sensory data you receive

- Beliefs, interpretations, expectations
- Words that signal thinking processes-assumptions, benefits, conclusions, evaluations, guesses, reasons, ideas, impressions, judgments, metaphors, needs, objections, opinions, predictions, principles, values



Feelings

Your spontaneous physiological responses to your interpretation (thoughts) of sensory data

Six basic emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, surprise

Wants

Your desires for yourself and for others, short or long term, general or specific

- B What do you want for the business?
- O What do you want for the other people/person involved?
- S What do you want for your SELF?
- S What do you want for other stakeholders?

This are: Aspirations, dreams, drives, goals, hopes, intentions, longings, objectives

Inclinations to act, to move towards or away from someone

Note: If you want something FROM someone else---it goes in YOUR "want for SELF" section.

Actions

What you say and do - your verbal and non-verbal behaviors - past, present, and future.

- Actions result from how you process sensory data, thoughts, feelings, and wants
- Activities, agreements, commands, commitments, contracts, promises, words

Actions to be done by someone else is NOT an action, but a want for your SELF. Please be sure to put it in the right place!



Applying the Information Wheel:

1. For in-the-moment personal processing in the midst of group work
2. To get clear among staff members about troublesome interaction patterns or issues
3. To teach people
 - ❑ The differences among sensory data, thoughts, feelings, wants, and actions
 - ❑ A way to be more aware and self-reflective
 - ❑ A way to listen and help another explore an experience or issue
 - ❑ About diversity, differences, varied life experiences
 - ❑ To resolve conflict
 - ❑ To make better decisions
4. To examine communication problems
5. To analyze a personal issue
6. To examine self-talk

After “listening actively” to the person speaking, ask yourself these questions, then check with them to confirm that you “got their message”.

- What have you seen, heard?
- What do you think is going on?
- How are you feeling?
- What are your wants? What are the other person’s wants?
- What will you do? What have you been doing? What will they do moving forward?

Adapted from: Core Communication: Skills and Processes, Miller, S. and Miller P. 1997, Interpersonal Communication Programs