

## From Transaction To Transformation—A Journey Of Communication

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Our lives are a collection of transactions. We exchange goods and services of all types in our personal and professional lives. Transacting is fundamental to our existence. For example, without the exchange of oxygen for carbon dioxide our lives would end. Transacting is a life skill. The give-and-take of transactions forms a fabric of living. Transactions are episodic. They are individual occurrences. Once executed, their purpose is in complete without association or legacy with a larger goal.



Communicating is a transaction. From birth we communicate in multiple ways. Our communications have power and influence. They are generative, producing and reproducing ideas and concepts that transform us and nations. Our utterances are causal, stimulating other actions. As a result, the cause-and-effect of our communications creates sequential chains of meaning. Our lives reflect a communications patchwork composed of countless causal chains of communication. Often, we can't tell if we're initiating a communication transaction or are a link in a causal chain of communication transactions. However, if we understand the structure of communicating we can harness the power and potential inherent in the causality associated with each communication transaction. To do so requires careful management of communications processes and the channeling of the associated energy toward achieving desired goals. Moreover, through our careful management we may be enabled to transform our communications into dialogues that have the transformative power to influence large-scale global change.

We enable ourselves and others through transforming communications into transformational experiences. Collective causality is a powerful force that if left unmanaged can enable or disable the best intentions. Let's explore communicating as a transaction and consider how we can guide these transactions so they can transform to our personal and professional lives

### Communication As Transaction

When we think of a transaction what topics immediately come to mind? For most people, transactions are associated finances, real estate or other exchange of goods or services. Instead, let's consider transactions related to communications. When communicating, we construct, package and deliver messages in a multitude of ways. While the messaging may be different per communication, in every instance a simple communication model is present, enabling or disabling the construction of meaning for parties involved. This infrastructure provides mechanisms for transacting communications. The communications process begins with Party A encoding a message with meaning and transmitting it to Party B. Upon receipt of the message, Party B perceives and decodes the message in an attempt to deconstruct its meaning while simultaneously constructing meaning for them. Once meaning is constructed, Party

B can respond to Party A's communication. The communication transaction is now complete, right? Not so fast!

### Communication As Process

Messaging is a complex and nuanced process. As playwright and essayist George Bernard Shaw observed, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." In the previous example, Parties A and B may have engaged in a simple communication transaction. On face, both parties seem to occupy a shared field of experience inhabited by symbols and artifacts common to them including similar languages, beliefs and goals from which they can construct meaning. Next, they may share similar cultural backgrounds and sensory perception filters enabling them to process information. If accurate, Parties A and B have a common process platform for engaging in effective and accurate communications. As a process, communication is easily understood. However, as a transaction a number of key influences may not be evident.

### Communication As Miscommunication

The second century Stoic philosopher Epictetus wrote "First learn the meaning of what you say, and then speak." In communicating, meaning is made by each party; the construction of meaning is not in the message but in the person who receives it. Unfortunately, we often don't recognize the multi-dynamic communications occurring when we're speaking. For example, all behavior and action constitutes non-verbal messaging. When people are communicating verbally, there are numerous other modes of communication occurring simultaneously amplifying and detracting from what is being said. We communicate with our eyes, bodies and objects. When speaking, what we say through our behavior may form a discordant counterpoint resulting in our providing mixed messages to receivers. As a result, communication can be miscommunication.

Communication fuels thought and drives action. Coaching can enable you to become a skilled and effective communicator.

Get coached and transform communication transactions into causal communications chains enabling personal and global transform.

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