



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Photo source: Unsplash/Jeremy Perkins

MOTIVATING FARMERS IN A TIME OF CHANGE

Building Confidence in Listening & Communication Skills

[Change] isn't optional.

Change comes to us, no matter how much we resist. Sometimes, we chase it. Sometimes, we avoid it. But it still comes. That is the nature of life. *-Lee H. Baucom*

Change Can Be Challenging

- Emotion
- Uncertainty
- Fear of unknown
- Ambivalence
- Loss of value
- Adaptability



Photo Credit: Unsplash/Tim Doan

Eliciting Change

- Business plan
- Farm succession plan
- Retirement plan
- Estate plan
- Enterprise change
- Off-farm employment
- Exit plan

Motivational Interviewing

Collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication

- Movement away from a state of indecision and uncertainty
- Strengthens personal motivation & commitment to goal
- Explores a person's own reasons for change
- Set in an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion

***Does not impose change that may be inconsistent
with a person's own values, beliefs, or wishes***

Source: Miller & Rollnick, 2013

2019 National Farm Business Management Conference
June 13, 2019 | Sheboygan, WI

Developed and presented by:
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Stephanie Plaster | Extension Ozaukee & Washington Counties

The Process: Facilitating Change



The Approach

- Focus on building rapport at the beginning
- Establish a safe environment to start the conversation
- Identify, examine, and resolve the feelings of uncertainty about change

Unconditional Positive Regard: the acceptance and support of a person regardless of what the person says or does. It is choosing to show genuine respect for the person as a human being and valuing them for going their best to move forward constructively. You are removing judgement from the situation and are addressing the problem, not the person.

“Feeling with” versus “Feeling for”: Empathy versus Sympathy

- **Empathy:** the awareness of feelings, needs, and concerns of others
 - ⇒ Reach beyond your own experiences
 - ⇒ Seek to understand from the other's point of view
 - ⇒ Listen actively and carefully
 - ⇒ Validate the other's perspective
 - ⇒ Don't take things personally
- **Sympathy:** the feeling of pity or sorrow at someone's misfortune

Communicating with Patience & Respect:

- Focus on the issue at hand
- Listen without reacting or interrupting
- Recognize the feelings behind the words
- Respond with clarity and compassion
- Learn to tolerate the discomfort of frustration

**Don't let the
issues ruin the
relationship**

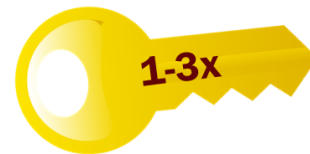


Listening: The most fundamental component of communication

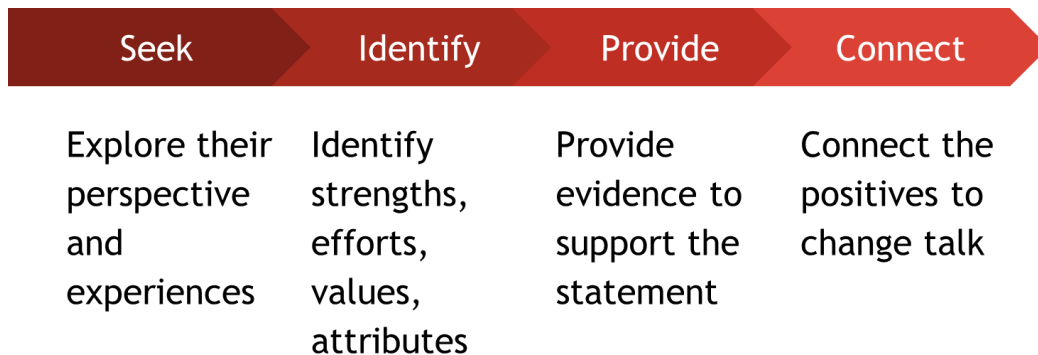
“The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.”

Active Listening: Using EARS *Source: EARS Cheat Sheet by Sue Eck Maahs

- **Explore:** Ask for elaboration
- **Affirm:** Provide appreciation, encouragement
- **Reflect:** Listening versus hearing
- **Summarize:** Recognize the discussion and repeat key points



Affirmation: recognize individual successes and contributions, building confidence in their ability to change

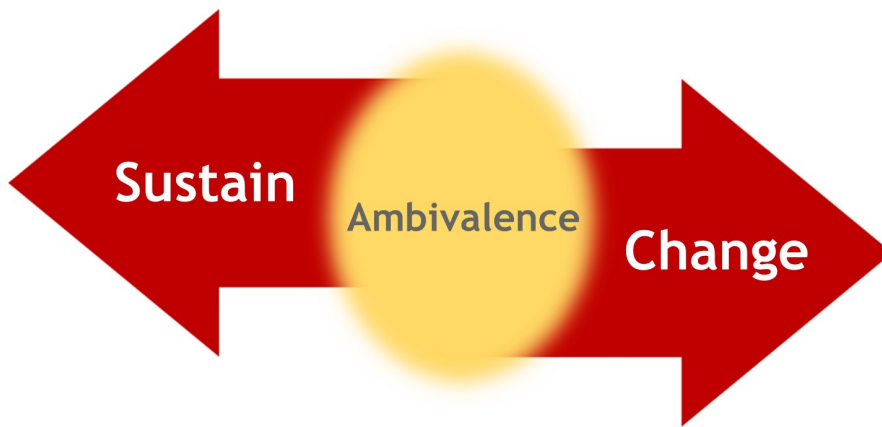


Roadblocks to EARS:

- Yielding to distraction
- Jumping to conclusions
- Interrupting
- Comparing
- Praising
- Overreacting
- Derailing
- Sympathizing
- Dreaming
- Preaching
- Advising
- Analyzing
- Mind-reading
- Judging
- Rehearsing
- Interrogating

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand. They listen with the intent to reply.” - Stephen Covey





Sustain: Person's own statements favor NOT changing (*maintaining the status quo*)

Ambivalence: The state of having mixed feelings or contradictory ideas about something or someone

Change: Person's own statements favor change (*self-motivating statements*)

Listening for Change: The DARN Talk

When the individual begins to talk about change

- **Desire:** I **WANT** to change
- **Ability:** I **CAN** change
- **Reason:** It is **IMPORTANT** to change
- **Need:** I **SHOULD** change

When you evoke a person's own desire, ability, reasons, and need for change, you are fueling the human engines of change.
 -S. Rollnick & W.R. Miller

Commitment

- Statements about the likelihood of change
- Agreement, intention, or obligation to future change
- Elicit a statement of response actions
 - ◊ Low level: I plan to, I hope to, I will try to
 - ◊ High level: I will, I am going to, I promise

Taking Steps



Photo credit: A. Bjurstrom

Advice

Ask—Give—Ask
 Ask permission | Give options | Ask for thoughts

This handout compliments the presentation and workshop developed by UW-Madison Division of Extension Washington/Ozaukee County Agriculture Educator Stephanie Plaster and Fond du Lac County Dairy & Livestock Agent Tina Kohlman for the 2019 National Farm Business Conference, Sheboygan, WI, June 13, 2019. References are included in the presentation and can be provided upon request.



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