



Podcast 11

How to express ideas/information more clearly?

Hello everyone

with this podcast I will explain the difficulties of verbal speaking, the tools to cope with these difficulties and we will do some practical examples.

When you are communicating verbally with people:

- attention spans are short
- attention is maintained by the musicality and the rhythm of speech
- people are attracted by stories

For example, if we have to explain a particular training plan to a group of athletes, it is useful to:

- prepare a speech that is brief with few technicalities
- get people's attention by using the following expressions: this point is important... this is of great interest to you... please, bear in mind... this can be useful to you... etc.
- use some questions related to the argument to focus the attention of the people and to break the rhythm of speaking
- fix well at the beginning and end of speech the points or the outline of what we intend to communicate, and which must correspond to what people need to remember
- use practical examples to illustrate the speech through real examples, preferable from the life of the group you are working with
- use visual images to figure out some practical examples or concepts
- use intonation to structure your sentences
- emphasise important concepts by punctuating the words well
- repeat certain concepts to create interaction and help attention
- making eye contact is essential even for a few seconds: try meeting each participant's gaze
- maintain a friendly reassuring facial expression

This last point is very important. Do you know that our facial expressions are the highest product of our evolution as humans? Evolution has created in humans a unique system for social engagement. This system gives us the possibility to avoid harmful confrontations with other humans, to interact even though we do not know each other, to avoid dangerous situations and to facilitate our sociability. We share with all vertebrates a series of nerve fibres running through our bodies from the bottom up: the so-called Vagus nerve.

All these connections make what is known as social engagement.





By social engagement we mean this unique human ability to monitor the situation and the people, interact with the environment and other people. Social engagement allows us to foster dialogue, play, relationships: think about it when you are showing distrust, a sensation of detachment or anger related emotions.

Do you know that it is possible to control this vagal component? By breathing and posture.

In the same way, we can transmit information to the brain that everything is going well, simply by assuming a correct posture. And when everything is going well, our voice is stable and audible.

In the front part of our brain there are neurons called mirror neurons. They are called in that way because they receive information from what we see. They are used to copy the movements of others, to anticipate them, to learn by them. But also, to decide if the environment is peaceful, if we are safe, if those who are speaking to us are ok. And to replicate those sensations within ourselves.

Thus the effectiveness of our messages also depends on:

- abdominal breathing, slow, with exhalations longer than inhalations
- posture.

Posture is relaxed, providing space for the diaphragm to go up and down. The chest is open, shoulders are straight, legs are slightly open. If we are sitting, the body is seated comfortably, the feet are well placed on the ground, the spine is straight, and the head is well supported by the neck muscles.

Let's see how to apply this information with a simple example.

Let's imagine that we have to explain to our Yoga class a new practice that we have never offered before.

The practice is very different, so it requires time for a theoretical explanation of how to approach it. Also imagine that, as happened in reality, not all people are very fit and some of them are rookies.

We can feel nervous and uncomfortable. A general feeling of being in the public eye and at the same time wanting to give an impression of seriousness and security. The voice starts to shake. The risk is to be less clear on how to express concepts and all this is reflected in poor communication, because the brain is concentrated on these signals and not in the right words. Despite any modern multitasking thinking, we still can do only one thing after another.

