

THE THREE C'S OF LEADERSHIP

Communication leaders increase productivity, reduce conflict, and strengthen teams. Three powerful techniques are:

1. **Acknowledge** Everyone wants to be heard. Too often, we shift the topic of conversation to address our issues without affirming our listener's concerns. If we acknowledge what we heard first, our listener will be much more inclined to hear us.
2. **Focus on Interests vs. Positions** An interest is a core goal. People may agree on interests, but hold very different positions. For example, a team may want to develop new customers. Acquiring new customers is an interest. A specific way to acquire new customers (e.g., a print advertising campaign) is a position. Communication leaders stay focused on achieving core goals rather than investing in positions.
3. **One @ 100%! Principle** In conflict, we typically focus on where we disagree. Leaders in communication find the one thing they can agree on and agree with it 100%! This greatly decreases resistance and increases collaboration. Once we have connected and reached common ground, we can more successfully resolve differences.

Confidence is the second powerful leadership quality. Confident leaders balance certainty with humility. They are neither arrogant nor timid. Gaining confidence is like driving on a long trip. There are five keys to success. You need to: stay alert (*mental*), fill up on fuel (*emotional*), keep your foot on the gas (*behavioral*), engage your passengers (*relational*), and not get lost (*spiritual*).

One "stay alert" technique is:

Remember Accomplishments Often we focus on past failures. Worrying about past mistakes does nothing to help us succeed. Focusing on achievements recalls important strategies and skills that we can use to generate new accomplishments. It will increase competence and confidence.

To "fill up on fuel":

Engage Helpful Passengers Do your passengers question your driving and complain about the view? Minimize time with those who drain energy and confidence. Be intentional about surrounding yourself with those who will encourage and motivate you.

Coaching is the third core leadership skill. Powerful leaders coach instead of manage. Managers direct, control, and retain responsibility. Coaches motivate, empower, and transfer accountability. When working with a team a leader-coach will:

1. **Ask vs. Tell**
2. **Collaborate vs. Determine**
3. **Facilitate vs. Instruct**
4. **Empower vs. Control**

The leader-coach develops loyalty, motivation, and results by gathering information and empowering solutions that emerge from team knowledge, skill, and commitment. Outstanding leaders lead with *communication*, *confidence*, and *coaching*. **About the Author** Barbara A. Kay, MA, LPC, RCC, and her colleagues at Advantage Coaching & Training work with individuals, teams, and corporations to promote achievement, leadership, and fulfillment. Barbara and the ACT team provide individual coaching, team facilitation, public classes, products, and assessments. You may contact Barbara at barb@advantagecoaching.com. To learn more, visit www.advantagecoaching.com or call 630-293-0210.

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