

Communicating for Yourself

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

It is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern, since our most basic task is to evaluate the reasons and evidence that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). Expression. In *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most* (2nd ed., pp. 185–200). Penguin Books.

Optional: Babcock, L., & Laschever, S. (2008). Why you need to ask. In *Ask for it: How women can use the power of negotiation to get what they really want* (pp. 1–16). Bantam Books.

Questions

1. According to Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen, why is it important for you to be able to express yourself during negotiation and conflict resolution?
2. What advice do Stone et al. give for figuring out what exactly you should say and express to the other party?
3. What three guidelines do Stone et al. suggest for ensuring that the other party listens and responds productively to what you are trying to say? How can you verify that they actually understand what you have said?

The optional reading by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever goes into a little more detail about the costs of not expressing oneself, or, as they put it, the costs of not “asking for it”.

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.