

# SAY WHAT YOU FEEL DIRECTLY AND SKILLFULLY

You may be inclined to point out that saying what you feel isn't always easy. It's not. Once you learn how (and when) to do it, however, it is a valuable skill with tremendous benefits. Like any skill, practice will make it easier.

## PRINT THIS PAGE TO COMPLETE THIS EXERCISE

Pick one work situation where you have felt upset, but didn't communicate it to anyone directly. Give the situation a title.

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Now jot down a few sentence in the space provided describing the situation (who, what, where, did you complain to someone not involved?)

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## AVOID THE TEMPTATION

Have you ever been tempted to tell Person B about a problem situation you are having with Person A? Tempting, isn't it? But, if you tell Person B, you may have noticed that your relief is only temporary. Even though you spent time telling Person B about the problem, normally that individual is not in a position to solve it for you. Chances are Person A may not ever know how frustrating you find the situation with him or her unless you involve them directly.

We do not get a sense of closure when we tell the wrong person. We therefore maintain our urge to tell someone else or to repeat ourselves. Check this out for yourself. Can you think of someone who complained to you about someone else, and then expressed the same complaint over and over? Such a scene is time wasting and very tiring. Also, the problem never seems to get solved. When you say what you feel directly (even if it isn't easy), it will clear the air and you will feel more energized.

Simply being direct is not enough. Your communication needs to be delivered with skill. Blurting out exactly what you feel will normally not serve you or the other person. Neither will an amateurish, “You make me mad.” Find the right time. Use the right skills. The next several steps will help you learn how to communicate directly and skillfully.

### GIVE YOURSELF A HEAD START

Think about the situation you described above. Using the streamlined format listed below will help you practice a response so you will be ready the next time a situation similar to the one you described occurs.

“I feel frustrated about (specific observable event)

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“Will you please (specific observable action)?

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Rehearsing what you will say out loud to yourself helps. Practice your planned response with someone who respects you, but is not directly involved in the situation. Ask for feedback about the reasonableness of your message and your voice tone.

Don’t lose momentum. When the situation crops up again, think about what you want to say and then communicate directly with the person involved.

Commit yourself to saying what you feel directly and skillfully. Develop your skill through practice. Other people will appreciate it and respect you for it. You will also feel better. Every time you are successful at direct communication, the easier it becomes to do it again. Also you are preventing burnout when you communicate directly.

Please return to the course.