

# Communication Styles



Linear	Circular
Direct	Indirect
Formal	Informal
Detached (Unemotional)	Attached (Emotional)
Idea-Focused	Person-Focused
Task-Focused	Relationship-Focused
Low Context	High Context



Understanding our own communication preferences, while exploring the preferences of others, can be a valuable tool for enhancing our ability to communicate..

**When there is a mismatch between the intent of our message and the impact on the receiver, a difference in communication style is often the issue.**

**Linear:** Get to the point, state issue explicitly, wordy communication wastes time

**Circular:** Use of context (story) to make the point, elegance in language, crass to clearly state point

**Direct:** State specifics, avoid ambiguity, honesty requires directness

**Indirect:** Specifically citing a mistake or voicing disapproval is impolite and disrespectful, subtle implication allows for "face-saving"

**Formal:** Status is important and acknowledged, follow strict communication rules

**Informal:** Few specific rules on what can be said to whom, use of first names

**Detached:** Calm, objective, impersonal

**Attached:** Passionate, strong feelings, personal stake in outcome

**Idea Focus:** Disagree and attack idea not person, person and idea totally separate

**Person Focused:** Disagreement is subtle, person/idea same, feelings important

**Task:** Accomplishing the goal/task is priority, feelings secondary

**Relationship:** Group harmony, relations priority, everyone should be heard

**Low Context:** Over-explain, many words, specific, precise

**High Context:** Under-explain, subtle nonverbals, understanding left to the receiver, over-explaining is insulting

