



FLORIDA
**MASTER
GARDENER**

Welcome to the MG Webinar

Our speaker today is Wendy Wilber Statewide Master Gardener Coordinator



2018 MG Webinars

- January 25th at 1pm Wings of Florida a Butterfly Educational Program Samm Epstein and Dr. Jaret Daniels
- February 22nd at 1 pm Turf Grass update: Fertilizing and Selection Dr. Laurie Trenholm
- March 29th at 1 pm Tomatoes! Class for Successful tomato production Agent Larry Williams
- April 26th at 1 pm Customer Service for Master Gardeners Wendy Wilber
- May 31st at 1 pm Blueberries a MG update Dr. Jeff Williamson
- June 28th at 1 pm Groundcovers Dr. Gary Knox
- August 30th at 1 pm Snakes and reptiles in the landscape Dr. Steve Johnson
- Sept 27th at 1 pm Things that go Ouch in the Garden Agent BJ Jarvis
- October 25th at 1 pm Right Plant Right Habitat Agent Jane Morse
- November 29th at 1 pm Top ten Insect problems and Top ten disease problems
- December 13th at 1 pm The Art of Tea by Dr. Bart Schutzman



Master Gardener Webinars

Webinars provide a convenient and free professional development option for people who want to learn new strategies and tools without taking time off work and paying travel expenses. Each hour-long session will be recorded and available on our website to view whenever you'd like.

As of July 1, 2017, webinars will be facilitated in Zoom. For help, see "Getting Started" on Zoom.com. Webinars that were recorded prior to this date were in Adobe Connect and must be converted for you to access them. Please bear with us as we make the transition.

Upcoming Webinar

September 28, Thursday at 1pm » [Creating a Pollinator Garden with Youth Leaders](#)



Lynn Barber and Nicole Pinson, UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County

Lynn Barber is an agent in the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ program with UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County, specializing in water conservation, reducing stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution, as well as Florida-friendly landscape design and maintenance. Nicole Pinson is the Master Gardener program coordinator for Hillsborough County, and specializes in home landscapes and gardens, environmental horticulture, and also

leads the county's Junior Master Gardener Program.

- [Printable version of presentation \(pdf\)](#)

Objectives

Today we go over how to

- Communicate effectively with customers
- Create a positive impression
- Develop and maintain customer service standards
- Plan good customer service





Who are Customers?

Definition of a customer/client

Internal/external customers

Customers are people who need your assistance.
They are not an interruption to your job, they
are the reason you have a job.






Communicating Effectively with Customers

Definition:

What describes GOOD service and BAD service?

Good customer service is taking that extra step to help without being asked! It's all about attitude and skills.



Attitude Checklist

What attitudes assist in providing good service?

- Enjoy helping people
- Handle people well
- Care for your customers
- Give fair and equal treatment to all
- Be understanding of people with special needs



Skills for Customer Service

- Know about UF/IFAS and your County Extension Office
- Use up-to-date IFAS information (or other Land grant)
- Be a well educated Master Gardener
- Communicate well
- Be consistent, double check your answers
- Be organized
- Know your place on the team and be a team player

**UF/IFAS Extension
Master Gardener Volunteer
Desk Handbook**

UF | **IFAS Extension**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



**ALACHUA COUNTY
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**
2800 NE 39 Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32609
352-955-2402

Email:
www.solutionsforyourlife.com

@alachuacountymastergardeners



Revised March 2018



Greeting Customers

The purpose is to create and maintain a welcoming environment

- Be attentive, acknowledge a person as soon as they appear, even if you're busy
- SMILE!
- Establish eye contact
- Tell them your name
- Ask how you can help
- Give the customer your full attention
- Be polite and courteous



Nothing is so contagious
as enthusiasm. "

- Samuel Taylor Coler



A Positive Organizational Image

First impressions count and will affect the interaction. A customer will decide in the first 15 seconds if you are competent, prepared, approachable and efficient

You only have one chance to make a first impression!



FLORIDA
**MASTER
GARDENER**

Presentation and Manner

- Logo shirt, badges, etc
- Personal hygiene
- Clothing – appropriate to the situation
- Hair – cleanliness and style
- Expression – facial expressions
- Tone of voice
- Body language
- Surroundings (Can they see a messy desk? Dead flowers in the vase? Eating your lunch?...)



Make Positive First Impression

- Be confident
- Knowledge - know IFAS and your County Extension Office and the services provided
- Share your sources-- books, documents, etc
- Follow up (don't just say you'll do something, do it)
- Promote other services





What to Avoid

- Saying 'I don't know' without saying "But I will find out"
- Telling someone to Google something
- Giving non Land grant biased information out
- Saying you don't know where a colleague is or saying they're at lunch/ toilet/ gone for coffee etc
- Leaving people on hold for a long time
- Ignoring people if you're busy
- Treating people unequally



Factors Affecting the Quality of Service

- Reliability
- Unbiased
- Confidence
- Responsiveness
- Efficiency
- Consistency
- Giving them what they cannot get on the internet
- Acceptance of and adherence to policies and procedures



Establishing Rapport

- Make the customer feel comfortable
- Make the customer feel important and valued
- Use empathy



Find out how You can Help

- How can you find out what people want?
- If you can't help, what should you do?
- Offer alternatives if possible
- If they have to wait, how would you handle it?

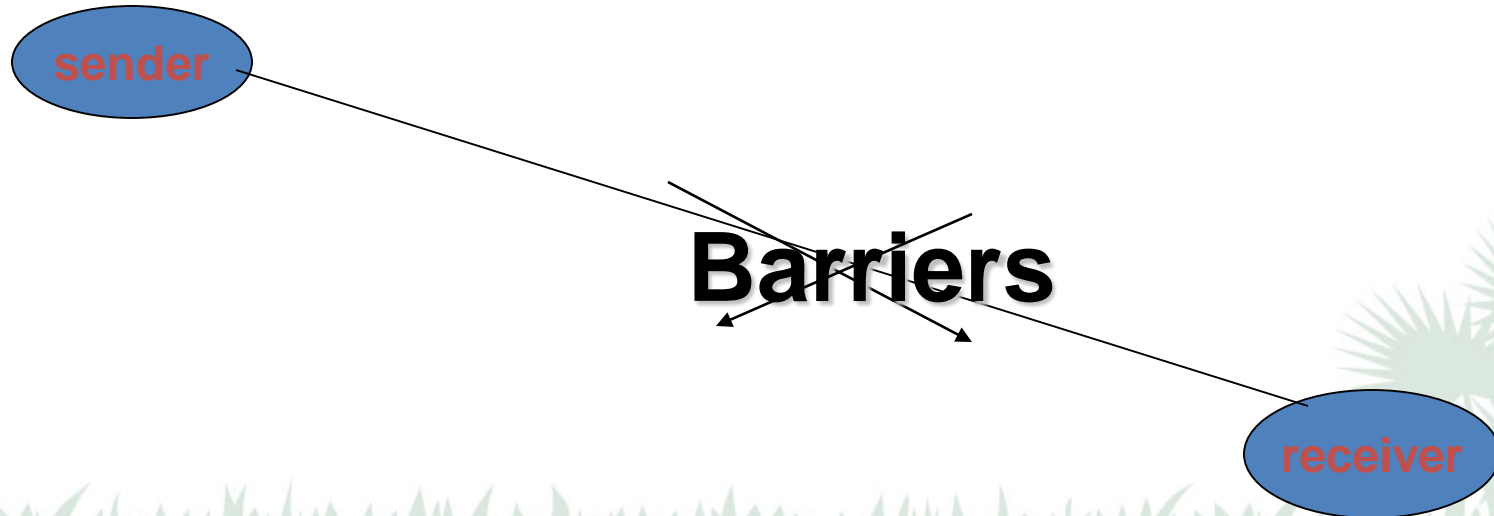
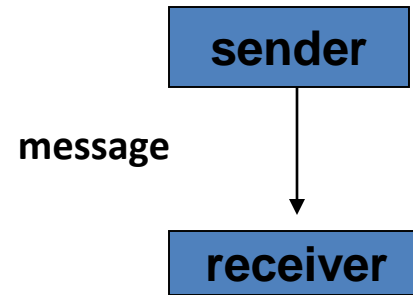




Communication is a 2-way Process

Communication skills involve:

- Listening to others (Receiving)
- Asserting/ Expressing (Sending)



The Communication Equation

What you hear

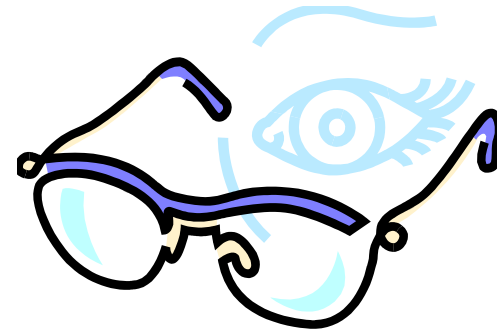
- Tone of voice
- Vocal clarity
- Verbal expressiveness



40% of the message

What you see or feel

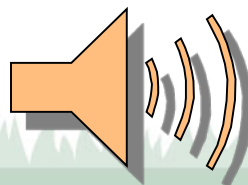
- Facial expression
- Dress and grooming
- Posture/ Body Language
- Eye contact
- Touch
- Gesture



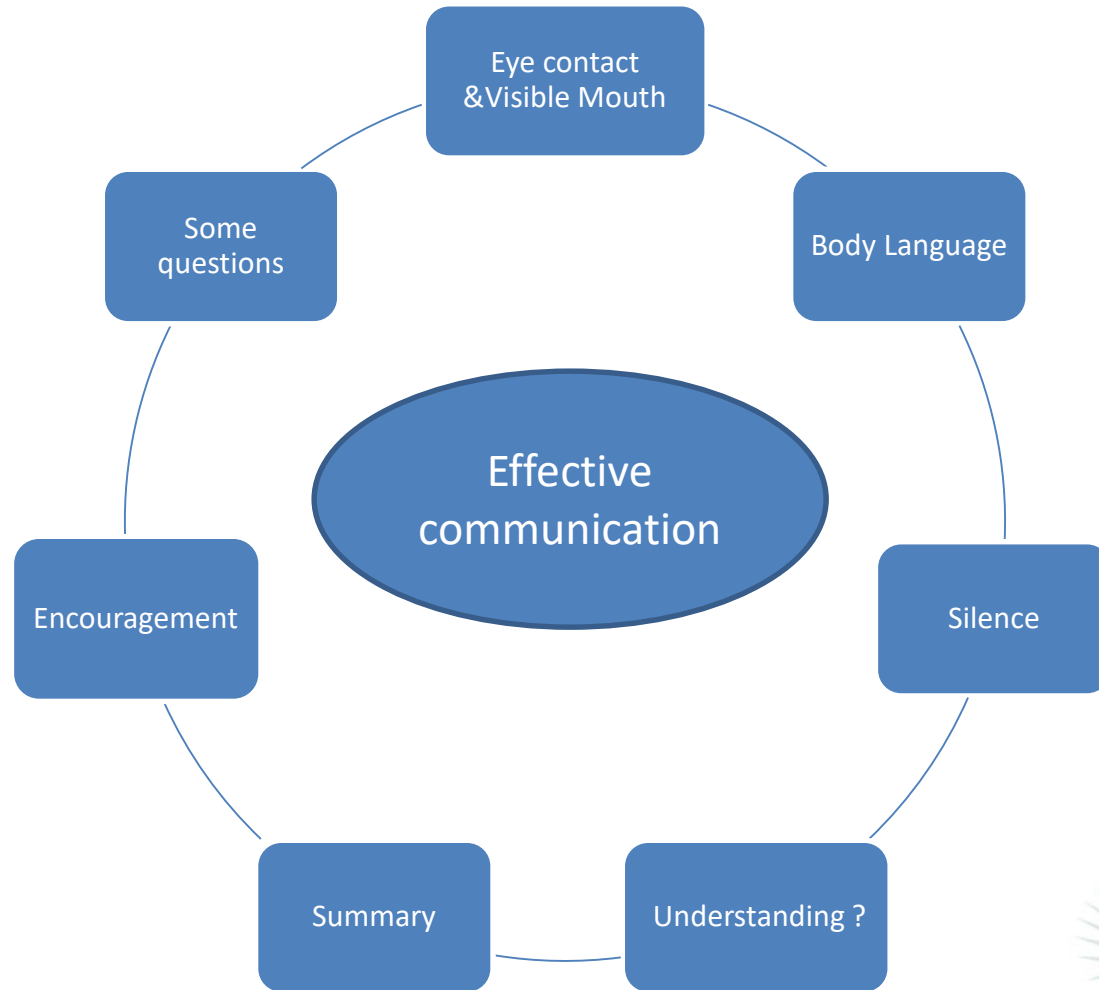
50% of the message

WORDS.....

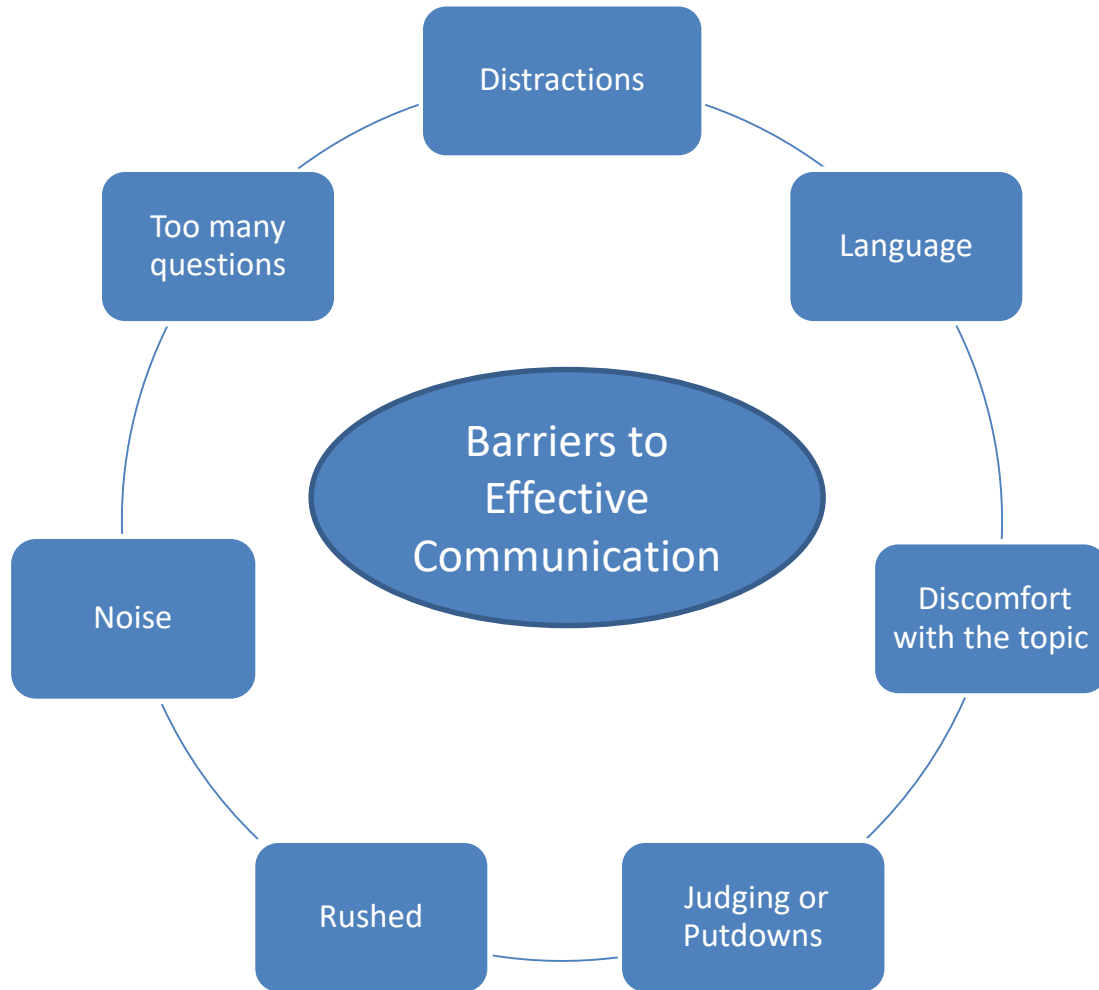
ONLY 10% of the message!



Effective Communication Skills



Barriers to Effective Communication



How to Listen to Customers

Active listening = Attending skills (being ready)

- Attend to immediate needs (if you need to finish something before giving your full attention)
- Being available
- Eye contact
- Attentive posture
- Concentration



Following Skills

This opens the door to further communication

- Invitations
- Questions
- Encouragement
- Empathetic Silence





Questioning Skills

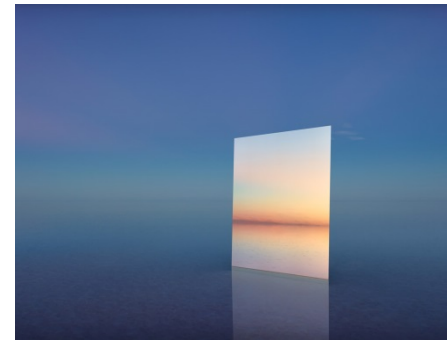
- Open Questions
- Closed Questions
- Paraphrasing
- Check for Understanding



Reflective Skills

Keeps the door open for further communication

- Paraphrasing
- Reflecting Facts
- Reflecting Feelings
- Reflecting Silence
- Summarizing
- Choosing your Words
- Useful Phrases
 - It sounds like..., It seems that..., If I follow..., what I hear you saying.....



- Try to look at each problem as if for the first time
- Ask questions about the problem as if for the first time
- Use fresh eyes
- Even if you are sure what the problem is.
- Do your detective work



Think about your Voice

Do you

- Become loud when angry or upset
- Speak faster when nervous
- Speak slowly when tired or bored
- Have a cheerful voice
- Have a warm understanding tone of voice
- Find it easy to talk to people you don't know
- Control your tone in most situations
- Sound bossy, weak or unsure
- Have a clear and easy-to-hear voice
- Speak in a very formal or very trendy manner?



Think about how you might modify your voice in certain situations



Body Language for a Positive Result

Smile

- Introduce yourself (if appropriate) or wear a name badge
- Shake hands if appropriate
- Lean forward
- Be aware of cultural differences




Telephone Skills

- Know how to use the phones
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Smile (you can hear it in your voice!)
- State your name and IFAS _____County Master Gardener
- Write down the caller's name and use it
- Don't say rude things while someone's on hold
- If they're explaining something use words to show you're listening (ok, yes ...)
- Have pad and pencil ready to take notes or messages (check spelling and message content)
- Don't eat or drink while on the phone
- Don't have your cell phone ring





Email Communication

- Write clearly and concisely
 - Refer to their call, date and question
 - Be friendly without being too informal
 - Check your spelling and grammar
 - Use bullets if possible
 - Make sure you've answered their question or request or explained what is happening with their request
 - Always link or include the appropriate EDIS documents or other IFAS materials
- 



Guaranteeing Return Business

- Leave a positive impression, smile
 - “Thank you for coming in”
- Check that customers have everything they need
 - “Is there anything else I can do for you?”
- If you’ve said you’ll follow-up, do so
- Invite them to upcoming classes or events
- Invite them back or to tell their friends
- Walk them out
- Say Goodbye



Customers with Special Needs

- People for whom English is not their first language
- People with disabilities
- People with limited mobility
- People with children



Planning Good Customer Service

- Be prepared with man power (when are your busy times?)
- Reporting procedures
- Observe and report customer needs
- Be proactive in improving service
- Market your program
- Have processes and procedures for dealing with difficult situations BEFORE they happen and make everyone is trained.



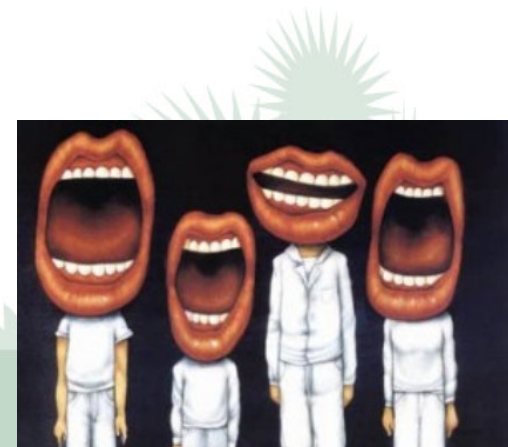
Dealing with Difficult Behavior

- Label the behavior, not the customer
- Listen
- Don't get defensive
- Don't take it personally
- Find out what the customer wants
- Discuss alternatives
- Take responsibility for what you CAN do
- Agree on action



The Talkative Customer

- Ask closed questions
- Limit the time available for them to interrupt (don't have long pauses)
- Provide minimal response
- Smile and be pleasant, but don't encourage them
- Stand up
- Wind up – thank them for coming, walk them to the door but don't be rude or dismissive



The Angry Customer

- Listen carefully without interrupting so you understand the problem
- Empathize in a broad way
- Stay calm and remain polite
- Don't escalate the problem
- Don't take it personally, be defensive or blame others
- Propose an action plan and follow it
- Seek support if you are scared, if you can't agree on a solution or if the customer asks to see "whoever's in charge"



The 'Know It All' Customer

- Acknowledge what they say
- Compliment them on their research
- Be generous with praise
- Don't put them in their place no matter how tempting
- Don't try to be smart – you can't win!
- Ask them questions and use them to improve your knowledge



The Indecisive Customer

- Find out what they really want
- Ask them for the options
- Reflect back to them what they've said
- Assume control gently and point out the best course of action from what they've told you they need
- Be logical
- Confirm a plan of action with them
- Maybe even put it in writing

Please choose
the best answer:

I have trouble making decisions:

rarely

~~sometimes~~

all the time

← THIS ONE!

The Suspicious Customer

- Establish your credibility
- Ensure you know your material
- They will try and catch you out so don't guess or tell them something you're not sure of
- Be careful what you say
- Be polite
- Don't take it personally, they often don't trust anyone!



*Treat others as you would
expect to be treated*





Our Objectives were to review how to

- ✓ Communicate effectively with customers
- ✓ Create a positive impression
- ✓ Develop and maintain customer service standards
- ✓ Plan good customer service
- ✓ <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/HR/HR00500.pdf>

Customer Complaints and Types of Customers¹

Allen F. Wysocki, Karl W. Kepner, Michelle W. Glasser, Derek Farnsworth, and Jennifer L. Clark²

If you would like to take the 4 question quiz for CEU credit

You can find it here https://ufl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eaJw0pEi0GGFxcx and

I will send this link to your coordinators