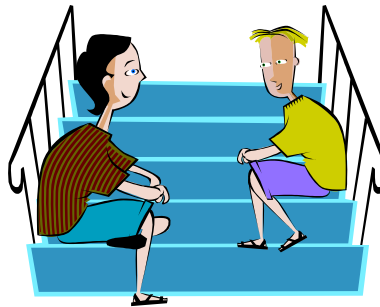


Interpersonal Communications: The Skills to Connect with Others

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This workshop was done for Phi Mu Women's Fraternity. It can be easily applied to any organization. Fraternities and sororities are well advised to better train their members on how to interact with others. Just because we are social organizations doesn't mean we know how to talk to people in a meaningful way.



What does 'Good Conversation' look like?

Imagine a world where good conversation happens. What does it look like?

How do we create an environment where Good Conversation occurs?

CONTRIBUTING

This is more often than not the easy part of a conversation. We know that conversations occur to convey information. In order to fulfill our responsibility as a conversationalist, we need to contribute. However, contribution can take on many forms that does or does not permit for the dissemination of information.

Good conversationalists can listen while generating their own thoughts to maintain a conversation. Being **PREPARED** to contribute is essential in hosting a good conversation.

LISTENING

The hard part about this is that not everything is interesting to us. However, we must appear interested in order to remain engaged in the conversation and present to the person that **THEY AS A PERSON** is interesting to us, even if they aren't talking about something interesting.

Listening requires us to not talk. Seems simple, but this also gives up control in a conversation. This may be harder during certain conversations than others, but you must practice it no matter what. Listening involves three equally important steps:

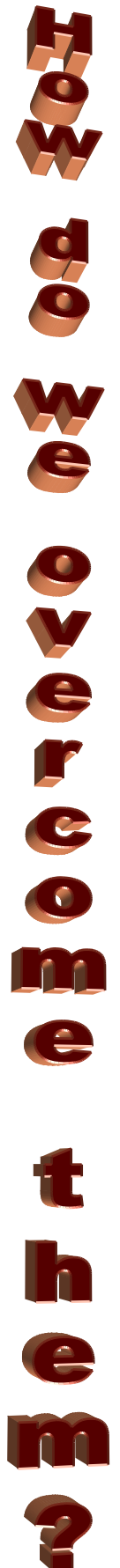
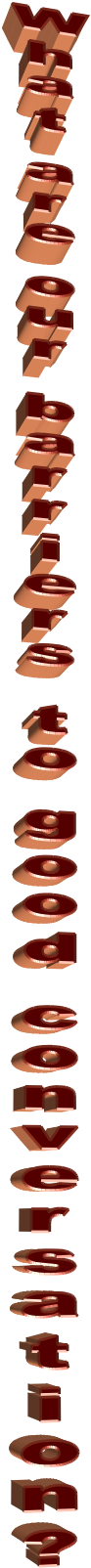
1. First, you must interpret what you actually heard. This can lead to understanding or misunderstanding.
2. Next, you will assess the information and decide how you will use it. You may want to ask questions for clarity.
3. Finally, based on what you have heard and your evaluation of it, you will react to it. Make sure that you have properly understood what they have said before you react.

Oftentimes the barriers that exist to “Good Conversation” are self-imposed, however this is not the case for all. These barriers include:

- Hesitation to disclose information about one’s self
- Misunderstanding about the differences between people and how to find common ground
- Physical Condition – hearing problems, fatigue, hunger, ability to process information quickly
- Emotional State – your feelings and your own agenda
- Personal attitudes – biases, opinions, prejudices, reaction to the style of other conversation partners
- Environmental Influences – noise, visual block, attention, interruptions

We can overcome these in many ways. They include:

- Practice on divulging information. How much are you willing to articulate to create good conversation?
- By educating yourself on differences in order to find commonalities
- By engaging in conversation when you have tackled any physical impediments that you CAN overcome and have gained assistance to help with those you cannot
- By keeping your emotions in check irregardless of a difference of opinion
- By removing any environmental influence that is distracting to you



You don't get a second chance to make a good impression: Selling yourself in 10 minutes

In addition to basic conversation skills both verbal and non-verbal, you should be prepared to carry a conversation. However, this does not mean dominating it. Much like you form an impression of someone in a short time, they may form it of you as well.



It is important that we can sell ourselves in ten minutes and sell our organization. In this short span of time, good conversationalists need to gather the following information about the person they are engaged in conversation with:

- Likes and Dislikes
- Hobbies and similar interests
- Immediate goals and aspirations

You can target these topics to whatever situation you are in.

How would we develop an understanding of these areas during recruitment activities?

Good conversationalists also must share similar information, but not while sacrificing the other person. As a facilitator of good conversation, your immediate goal is to get to know the person and retain information about them that will permit you to make an educated decision on that person for future interaction.

Personalities – how do you pull them in?

You will have the opportunity to interact with many different people. This itself proves to be a challenge when engaging in conversation. Here are a few types of people and how you should interact with them. Which one are you?

Sheila Shyness

Sheila won't look you in the eye and is not very talkative. She is particularly not forthcoming about herself. When you ask questions she gives limited answers.



Sheila will need you to engage her. Ask her questions and offer information about yourself. Be assured that she is taking it in. Engage her in a discussion that she feels comfortable with. Ask open ended questions that require her to dialogue.

Talkative Tara

Tara can talk all day. She may be talking for the sake of talking, so monitor where the conversation is going. Be sure to redirect her to get the information you want. If you would like to share more info about yourself, then ask questions to her that may permit that. If you cannot get a word in edgewise, then diffuse her with questions and comments.



Tara may dominate conversations and it is likely that she has no problem sharing info about herself. When this happens, make sure that you ask questions that best permit you to get to know her in the short span of time that she will permit you to talk.

Ultimately we hope that everyone has good conversation skills. However, this is not true. Understanding the type of talker that you are and how that complements or hinders another's style is important. Ideally, we hope each person will be able to permit us to have a discussion and not dominate or let us dominate our interaction.

Talking about Your Organization

Now it's time to take your (new) skills at conversation and apply them to your organization. First, we must know what we're talking about.



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The Creed of Phi Mu Fraternity

*T*o lend to those less fortunate a helping hand.

*T*o think of God as a protector and guide of us all.

*T*o keep forever sacred the memory of those we have loved and lost.

*T*o be to others what we would they would be to us.

*T*o keep our lives gentle, merciful and just,

*T*hus being true to the womanhood of love.

*T*o walk in the way of honor, guarding the purity of our thoughts and deeds.

*B*eing steadfast in every duty small or large.

*B*elieving that our given word is binding.

*S*triving to esteem the inner man above culture, wealth or pedigree.

*B*eing honorable, courteous, tender,

*T*hus being true to the womanhood of honor.

*T*o serve in the light of truth avoiding egotism, narrowness, and scorn.

*T*o give freely of our sympathies.

*T*o reverence God as our Maker, striving to serve Him in all things.

*T*o minister to the needy and unfortunate.

*T*o practice day by day love, honor, truth.

*T*hus keeping true to the meaning, spirit and reality of Phi Mu.

Can we talk? Knowing Phi Mu

Now, it is not expected of you that you will recite chants of Phi Mu”dom”, however, you need to be able to talk about how you as Delta Beta practice these things.

How do you practice these ideals?

In Scholarship?

In Service and Philanthropy?

In Social?

In Development?

With our alumna?

With our campus involvement?

Can we talk about who we are as an organization to others?



How do we talk about this?

We need to shape our conversations to explain who we are as an organization. There is to ways to do this:

- 1. Be prepared to talk about Phi Mu as an organization**
- 2. Be prepared to answer questions about Phi Mu as an organization**

Activity:

How do we sell Phi Mu and talk about it?

What are questions that they may have? How do we answer them? What questions should we be asking?

Once we compile the questions and

One group is going to act out potential new members. One will be active Phi Mu members. Each person will have an assignment about what they need to ask about and how they will act.

Recruitment Strategies

- **“Be Real”**
- **Sell your organization through selling yourself**
- **Know the organization – what is Phi Mu and how do you sell your product**
- **Know how to answer the tough questions**
- **Use the team approach – introduce PNMs to each other as well. Talk with a few at once to engage all in the conversation.**
- **Use “Good Conversation” techniques**
- **Practice Listening and Contributing prior to recruitment to become an expert; help others to assess how they speak and have them assess how you can be better**
- **Overcome your own fears about conversation**
- **Help the PNM overcome their fears through making them feel relaxed**
- **Have confidence that you will succeed**

Presentation Outline

Interpersonal Communication Strategies and Activities

Overview of strategies (10 minutes)

- **What is interpersonal communication?**
- **Tips for Language and Conversation**
- **Tips for Non-verbals**
- **What does Good Conversation look like?**
- **What are the barriers to GC? How do we overcome them?**
- **Difficult Personalities to converse with**
- **Selling yourself**

Application of strategies (15 minutes)

- **Three minutes to prepare**
- **Selling yourself in 10 minutes**
- **Break into contributors and listeners – first three minutes one is C and the next three is an L**
- **Four minutes to process**
- **What are some good questions that people asked you? Likes and Dislikes? Hobbies? Goals and Aspirations?**

Talking about Phi Mu

Overview of strategies (5 minutes)

Brainstorming (10 minutes) – how do we connect creed to how we sell Phi Mu?

Application (25 minutes)

(10 minutes) How do we talk about Phi Mu? What are some questions that a PNM would have? That you would have?

(10 minutes) Break into teams of five. Two are Phi Mu's, Three are PNMs. Have slips for them to select

who they will be. Have them plan their approach as active members.

What questions did you ask as PNMs? How did you answer them? Did they do a good job?

Go over recruitment strategies

Active Members

Plan out the kinds of questions you want to ask the PNMs. Develop a gameplan to determine who will talk and how the two of you will interact throughout the dialogue.

PNMs

Think of one question each that you need to ask the active member. Evaluate how they engaged you in the discussion and how they answered your questions.