

From diatribe to dialogue – Part 3 Attitude – listening – responding



In part 1, I looked at the 4D's and in part 2 I looked at some core characteristics

In part 3, I will look at some questions to ask yourself about your attitude, how you are listening and how you are responding

Attitude – am I looking for success through competition or success through cooperation?

- Am I open to learning about the lives, values and beliefs of others?
- Do I have a healthy level of curiosity?
- Can I can suspend judgments in favour of listening with open heart, mind, eyes and ears?
- Am I concerned to find solutions to shared problems?

Listening – am I listening to respond, or listening to understand?

- Am I staying focused on the exchanges without being distracted by my environment?
- Am I showing respectful and attentive body language when in dialogue with others?

- Am I processing what I hear to ask questions that clarify, challenge and seek a deeper understanding?
- Am I reflecting before speaking again in order to avoid spontaneous responses that might be ill-thought through?

Responding – am I speaking “here & now” or from “there & then”?

- Am I speaking for myself and not on behalf of others in dialogue (using ‘I’ instead of ‘we’)?
- Am I asking questions that are open-ended and that seek meaning and significance?
- Am I articulating how I feel on hearing something from someone else?
- Am I challenging others in the dialogue in a way that is respectful and open?

Being able to maintain dialogue and not “attack back” requires a lot of confidence and a lot of control to stay committed in a challenging situation.

It’s not easy and we can all “lose it” on occasions; we can momentarily “switch off” and lose the thread, we can get carried with giving too much supporting information, we can listen less to someone because we consider that they don’t know what they are talking about, etc. We all have our “preconceived ideas”, our “certainties”, our “truths” and putting them to one side is difficult; the first steps are recognising that they exist and that others also have their preconceived ideas and truths

Like all skills it needs “purposeful practice” to become competent

Dialoguing is not easy, – together we can, maybe, find a common truth

“A world without dialogue is a universe of darkness. If people don’t get together and share views and exchange ideas, they

remain unaware, ignorant, and unconscious."

Erik Pevernagie

If you would like help on your journey to dialogue, do not hesitate to contact me at boblarcher@boblarcher.com