

**Measuring a Leader: Brown Bag Discussion on Communication Skills**

A brown bag discussion is an easy way to bring together local chapter members and other colleagues. How to organize one:

§Utilize conference space at your organization

§Create an Eventbrite for the event (click [here](https://drive.google.com/a/epip.org/file/d/0B7VaQurb8TIrd0hLV3lKMF9SVzA/view?usp=sharing) for instructions)

§Invite chapter members and local nonprofit/philanthropy colleagues

**Goals**

* Stimulate discussion and reflection among emerging leaders about their experiences with Communication skills( e.g., communicating ideas and concepts clearly, persuasively, and dynamically; expressing ideas clearly through both verbal and written means)
* Exchange tips, ideas, and resources for strengthening and practicing Communication skills

**Materials**

* Discussion questions (see sample questions below)
* Discussion Feedback form

**Leadership Roles**

* Facilitator
  + New to facilitation? Check out these facilitator guides:
    - [Facilitation: Tools of the Trade](http://www.epip.org/2014/12/webinar-recap-facilitation-tools-of-the-trade/) (Materials from one of our Wednesday Webinars)
    - [The Art of Facilitation, by National Community Development Institute](https://drive.google.com/a/epip.org/file/d/0B6lW6vMybwzwRHVOWVU0Y1VFV0k/edit?usp=sharing)
    - [Developing Facilitation Skills, from The Community Toolbox by the University of Kansas](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation/facilitation-skills/main)
* Reporter
  + Using the Discussion Feedback form, the reporter takes notes to share with the group and with EPIP National. By reviewing the Discussion Reportback, EPIP National can stay current on what matters to our members and connect you to follow-up resources.

**Program Structure**

A suggested agenda for a 1 hour brown bag might be:

1. Settling in and introductions: 15 minutes
2. Discussion (see sample questions below): 40 minutes
3. Wrap up/fill out Discussion Reportback form: 5 minutes

Depending on how much time you have, smaller groups (under 10)--can have the discussion within the whole group. If the group is larger, consider dividing up into smaller groups for the main discussion and concluding with report-backs to the large group

**Sample Discussion Questions (For a 40 minute discussion, choose 3-5 questions)**

1. What does successful communication look like?
2. Measuring a Leader provides examples of some skills:

* communicating ideas and concepts clearly, persuasively, and dynamically
* expressing ideas clearly through both verbal and written means

At this point in your professional life, what are the opportunities for developing these skills? What are the barriers?

1. How have you demonstrated Communications? For example, one might develop or demonstrate their skills by…  
   • [writing blog posts or opinion pieces](http://www.epip.org/2014/03/tips-for-networking-at-a-conference/" \t "_blank)  
   • [presenting at work or in their local communities](http://www.epip.org/?p=7130" \t "_blank)
2. Think about someone you admire as a great communicator. What makes them great--what gives their voice power?
3. What specific resources have you found helpful for developing your Communication skills? (Names of groups, books, classes, other resources)
4. What other skills or qualities would you add under Communications? Why?
5. ***Local chapter:*** What programs or activities has our EPIP local chapter organized that relate to Communication skills? What programs or activities can we organize related to these skills?

**DISCUSSION FEEDBACK FORM** (please email a completed form to your regional coordinator and Michael Barham-michael@epip.org)

* Date/duration/topic of discussion
* Who were the facilitator and recorder?
* How many people attended?
* Please provide a brief description/breakdown of who was in the room: E.g., chapter members, steering committee members, non-EPIPers, younger/entry-level (program assistants, program associates, etc), mid-level (program officers, program managers, program directors), senior (senior directors, etc)
* What were the main discussion points?
* Key takeaways?
* What resources were mentioned in the discussion?
* Any followup discussions or programs planned? Any lingering questions?
* Any comments or suggestions for future discussion guides?