


# Can They Be Salvaged? Critical Conversations


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## Objectives

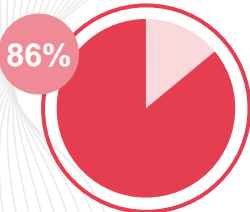


- Discover the elements of effective communication and the techniques to implement them
- Demonstrate the implications of body language, tone of voice & communication styles as they impact critical conversations
- Employ best practices and responses to the most common scenarios a practice executive faces

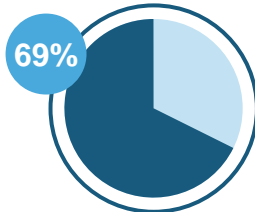
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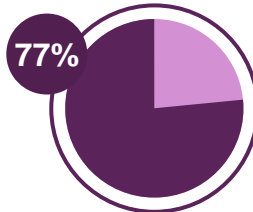
## How Are We Doing?



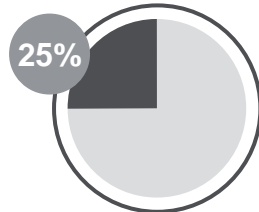
Workforce blames poor communication as the main reason for company failure



Employers feel uncomfortable communicating with employees



Well informed employees outperform others



Communication improves productivity



Flynn, Jack. 25+ Critical Communication in the Workplace Statistics

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## Communication Essentials

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## Keys to Effective Communication

Connect personally

Engage in the conversation

Ask the question you want answered

Listen for the answer

Listen to the question before starting your answer

Explain the why & why not

Explain the impact

Reflective listening



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## Communication Styles



### Passive

Seek to please others without respecting self or others



### Assertive

Respecting the rights of self and others



### Aggressive

Respect your own rights without concern for others



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# Be Assertive

Behavior & communication style	Confrontation & problem solving	Communicate with an aggressive style	Communicate with a passive style	Communicate with a passive-aggressive style
Action-oriented, firm	Confronts problems at the time they happen	Tone is curt & dismissive	Body language belies lack of confidence	Uses sarcasm, sly remarks & silent treatment, may become aggressive
Realistic in expectations, fair & consistent	Does not let negative feelings build	Set clear standards their behavior is unacceptable	One-on-one interactions, be patient	In-person conversations, what is driving the behavior
Attentive, confident, relaxed posture	Attacks the problem, not the person	Do not return the aggression	Ask open-ended questions	Set boundaries & remain calm



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## The Most Overused Word



- Is an apology necessary or even appropriate
- Rephrase - say thanks or ask a question
  - Thanks for waiting vs. Sorry for being late
  - May I ask a question vs. Sorry for interrupting
- Acknowledge mistakes, explain how you will correct them and do better & avoid "if" and "but"



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# Emotional Intelligence

## Self Awareness

- Emotional self awareness
- Accurate self assessment
  - Self confidence

## Relationship Management

- Developing others
- Inspirational Leadership
- Conflict management



## Social Awareness

- Empathy
- Organizational awareness
- Service orientation

## Self Management

- Emotional self control
- Initiative
- Optimism



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# Exercise Your Emotional Intelligence



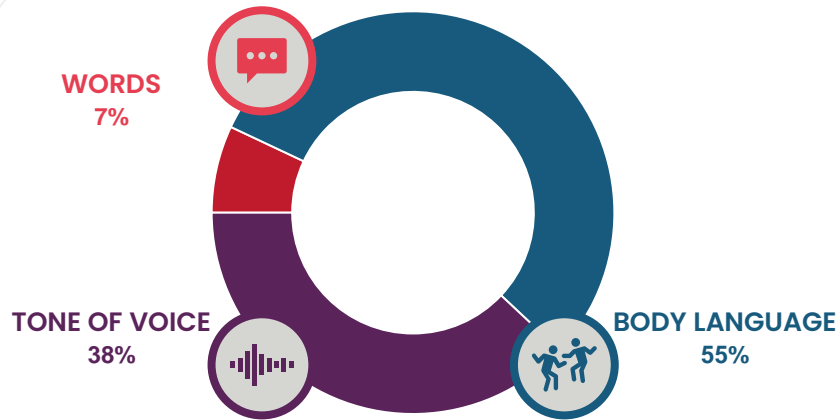
- Activate your thinking brain – take a deep breath
- Slow down the pace, lower your voice
- Stop trying to win, seek to understand
- Do not speak unless it advances the conversation
- Do not attack, explain how you feel
- Act like the person you want to be instead of your emotions
- Walk away



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## How People Hear Us



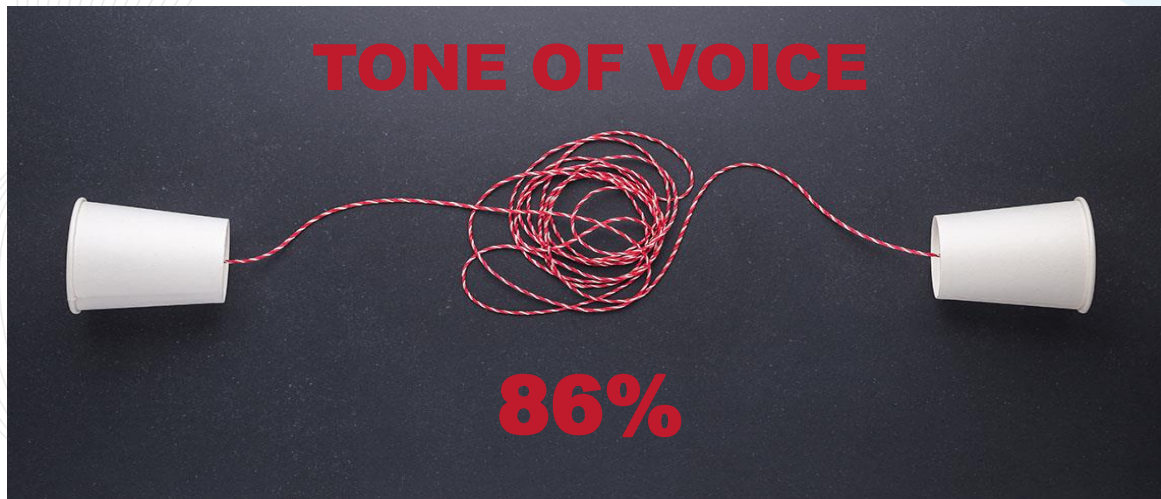
## Effective Body Language

- Body orientation
- Remove physical barriers
- Arms open
- Lean forward
- Nod head
- Slow, steady breathing
- Pause before responding
- Eye contact
- Choose the right level





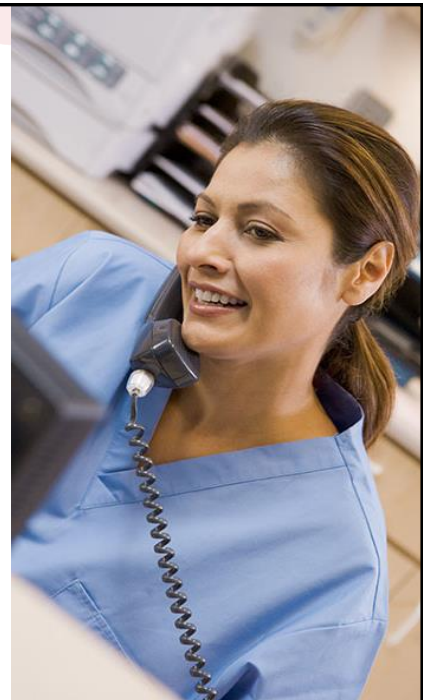
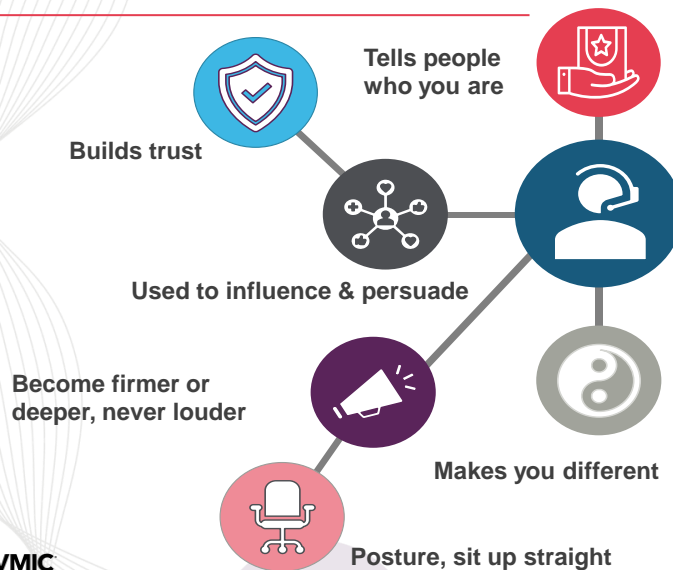
## But How Do They Hear Us On the Phone?



SVMIC Risk Evaluation Data 13

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## Tone of Voice



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## Which Is Better?

- Eliminates emotion, but tone will be inferred
- Provides a record
- Control over delivery but little control over receipt or redistribution
- Groups & large amounts of info
- Feedback requires effort

### Written Vs. Verbal

- Control body language & tone of voice
- Confidentiality
- Time sensitive
- Location choice
- Difficult conversations
- No opportunity to edit
- Allows feedback



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## Critical Conversations & Communication Techniques

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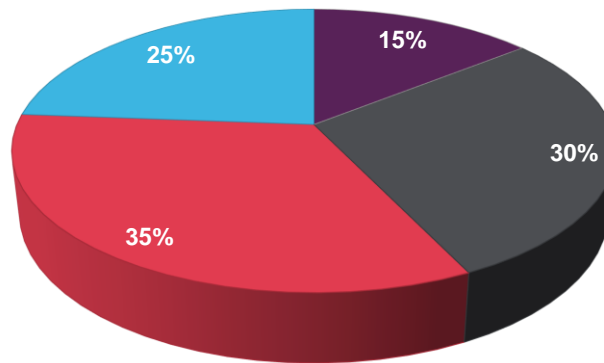
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## Your Players



## General Population - DISC



■ Controlling ■ Attention Seeking

■ Approval Seeking ■ Perfectionism

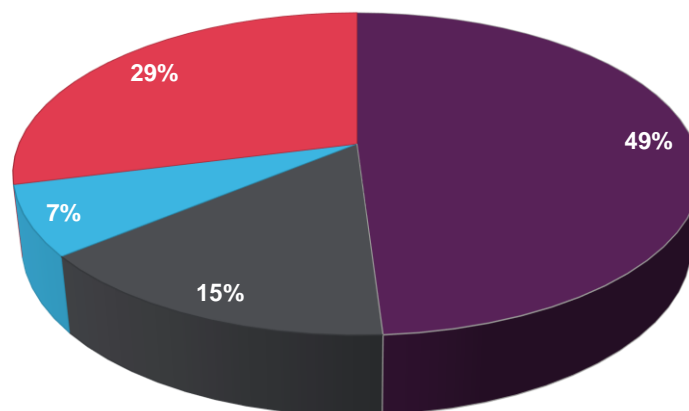
D=10-15% I=25-30% S=30-35% C=20-25%



Extended DISC 19

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## Physician Population - DISC

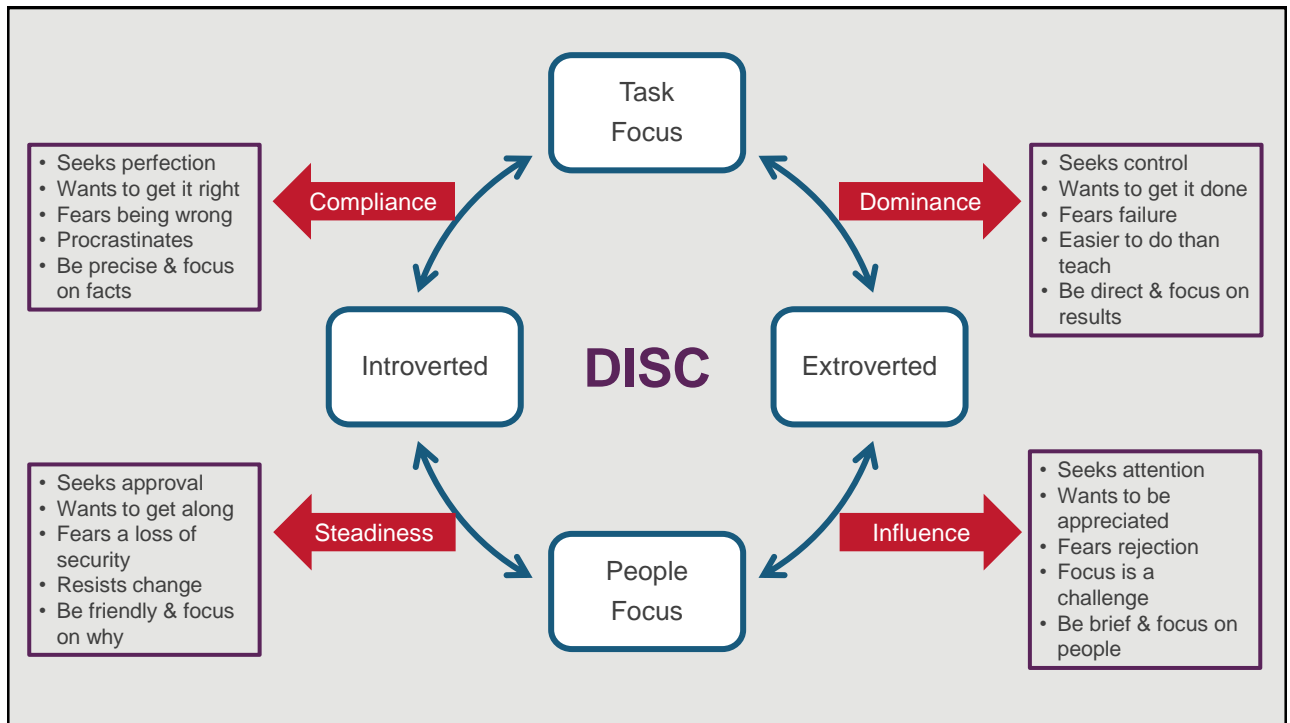


■ Controlling ■ Attention Seeking ■ Approval Seeking ■ Perfectionism



Extended DISC 20

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## Generational Factors

Characteristics	Preferences	Considerations
<input type="checkbox"/> Baby Boomers - optimistic, competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Generation X - skeptical <input type="checkbox"/> Millennials - realistic <input type="checkbox"/> Generation Z - dream job	<input type="checkbox"/> Baby Boomers - face-to-face, phone <input type="checkbox"/> Generation X - email <input type="checkbox"/> Millennials - digital <input type="checkbox"/> Generation Z - face-to-face	<input type="checkbox"/> Getting it done & accomplishment vs. praise & acknowledgement <input type="checkbox"/> Does it really need a meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Consider office layout & arrangement <input type="checkbox"/> Implement a social media policy

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## Communication Techniques - Physicians



Tell me what you want...

Let me confirm what I heard...

My recommendation is...because...

I have said all that to say this...

Let's move this conversation to your/my office...



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## Competent & Confident



Be direct, concise & precise

Outline options & ask to choose

Use bullet points as a summary, attach support as a document

Do not ramble or overwhelm with detail



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## Physician Directives

Dr. Jones, I am happy to let Dr. Smith know you need to talk with him, but that is a conversation you need to have directly. I believe me getting in the middle of this could make things worse.

Go tell Dr. Smith that he needs to...



I understand you are frustrated with Suzy Slacker, but we do not have the documentation to terminate her without risking a potential claim. Let me follow the necessary steps to deal with her and protect you.

I want Suzy fired today!



Dr. Lecter, I understand what you want me to do but we need to talk about this. I am sure you realize that could be construed as fraud. It not only puts you at risk but me and the entire practice as well. Help me understand why you want to do this.

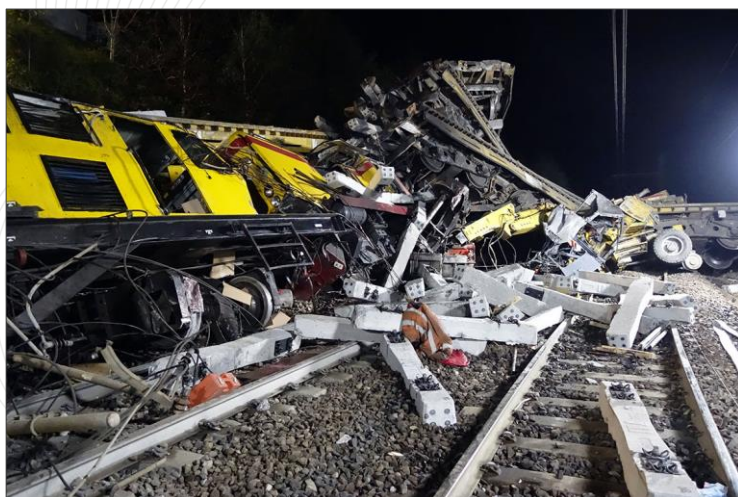
Go ahead and bill it.



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## When It Goes Off the Rails



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### Have the conversation



- ☐ What is missing
- ☐ What do you need
- ☐ Where am I failing
- ☐ Express your needs
- ☐ Is this going to work
- ☐ Be true to yourself

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## Communication Techniques - Staff

Let's solve the problem, but let's not make it worse by guessing...

I am expecting...  
vs.  
I am waiting...

Help me understand...  
vs.  
Why did you do...

In the future, I expect...  
vs.  
Do not do this again...

Actually...  
vs.  
No...



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## Friendly & Approachable

Do not be too aggressive

People focused interactions & solutions

Honor the social aspect

Consider greeting

Explain the why – what is the goal

Explain the how – what is their role

Confirm understanding & details via email

Provide time for acclimation & change



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# The Inevitable

## Staff Conflict

Remain neutral & unbiased	Avoid taking sides & seek to understand each perspective
Listen	Have the parties express their concerns & feelings
Identify the issues	Look below the surface
Fix the problem	Focus on solutions not blame
It may not be over	Follow-up



Mary Kelly, PhD, CSP, CPAE, CDR, US Navy (ret)

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## Staff Requests & Problems

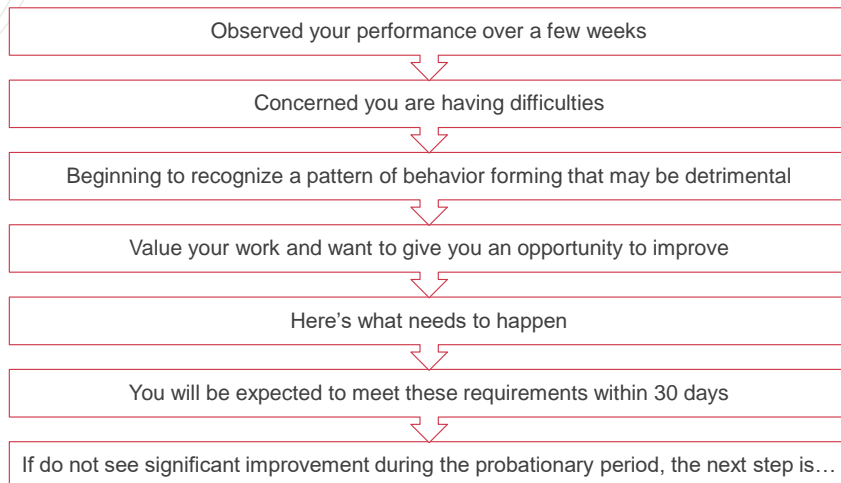


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## Not Meeting Expectations? What to Say



## Communication Techniques - Patients

If you want to wait over there, the nurse will be with you in a minute.  
vs.

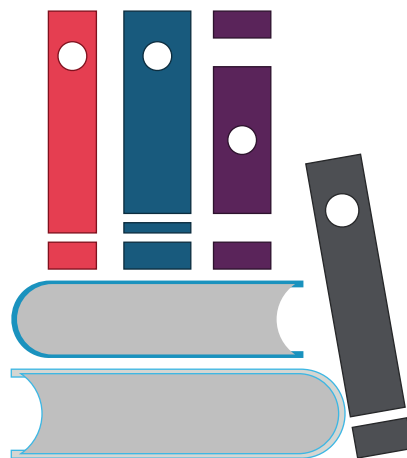
If you will please make yourself comfortable in the lobby, the nurse will escort you to the exam room as soon as possible.

I can  
vs.  
I can't

Here is what I would like to do  
vs.  
What do you want me to do?

## Combating Low Health Literacy

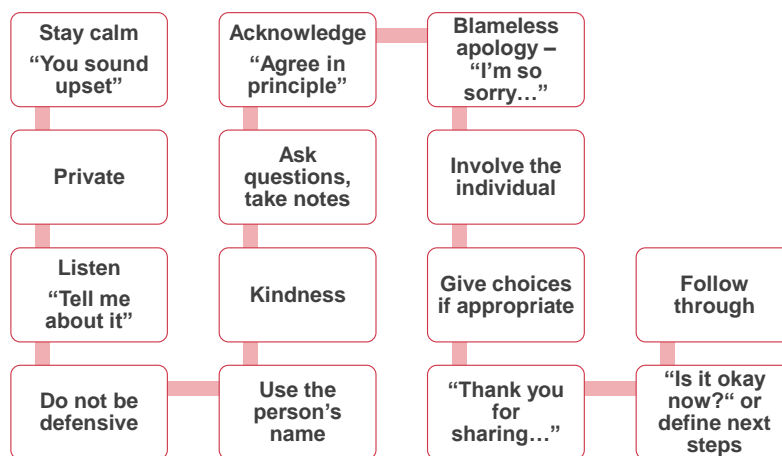
- ◆ **Use the Teach Back Method**  
Questions that begin with "how" or "what"  
Do you sometimes have difficulty understanding...
- ◆ **Acknowledge the difficulty**  
I understand  
I know this is confusing, I have a tough time too
- ◆ **Speak in plain language**  
Nothing written over the 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
Alternate teaching methods/tools
- ◆ **Watch for the signs**  
Forgot, got busy, did not have time, etc.  
Frustration, noncompliance



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## Complaint Resolution



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## Delivering Bad Information

**S**etting  
**P**erspective  
**I**nformation  
**K**nowledge  
**E**mpathize  
**S**trategize



Baile, Walter; Beale, Estela 35

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## Takeaways



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