

Focus On Facts

When and With Whom Might You Use This Tool?

Use this tool before engaging in potentially highly charged communications in order to separate reality from personal interpretation. This will assist you to stay focused on facts, which will invite less resistance in others and promote more productive conversations.

How to Use It

1. List things the other person does that bother you—things you wish they would quit doing. (Make sure you are only listing things they are doing and are not expressing judgments about them.)
2. Identify how you see the other person from the perspective of the box when they are doing these things. (These ideas you've listed are interpretations—your own views of another's actions.)
3. If you weren't in the box, how might you see this person differently?
4. When communicating, recognize that the items you've listed in Step 2 are merely your own interpretations. Stay focused on the items you've listed in Step 1, and stay open to alternative interpretations you might have if you were out of the box.

Observation: When people are in the box, they tend to center their communications around the interpretations they are making. They don't realize they are speaking about their own interpretations and not necessarily about reality. Your communications will improve to the extent that you can stay focused on observable, agreed-upon reality rather than on your own interpretations of that reality.

Focus On Facts

