

Four Communication Styles Every Physician Leader Should Know

Use the four archetypes below to inform your communication strategy for an upcoming change initiative. If you don't know a stakeholder's preferred communication style in advance, use the questions at the bottom of the page to adapt your approach in the moment.

Stakeholder Type	Characteristics	Points to Emphasize
Fact finder <i>What's the bottom line?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-driven • Wants projected results • Seeks confirmed, valid data in support of decisions • Responds to concisely articulated concepts • Apt to query assumptions and underlying analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data • Summary of evidence • Methodologies employed in calculations • Citations • Confirmations • Projected results
Architect <i>How does it work?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work plan-driven • Wants to know timelines, work plans, and protocols • Perceives interrelation between multiple timelines or activities • Focused on sequence and next steps • Seeks details about practical impact of plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline • Work plans • Job descriptions • Protocols • Projections of impact to other activities • Feasibility studies
Strategist <i>Why are we doing this?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy-driven • Wants alignment of plan with existing goals • Responds to connection to "big picture" goals • Requests proposals for expanded timeline or broader scope of activities • Understands drivers of strategic action within the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of purpose • Alignment of plan with existing goals • Confirmation of senior leader support • Previous adoption by best-in-class institution(s)
Diplomat <i>Who wins, who loses?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship-driven • Wants assurances of key stakeholder support • Seeks consensus opinion across constituents • Assesses impact on current and future relationships • Identifies individual motivations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assurance of key stakeholder support • Potential impact on human capital • Preferences of individuals involved



Questions to Redirect Your Communication Style in the Moment

- What information would you like to see about this change?
- Is this what the group is looking for?
- What are your concerns about this?
- How can I help advance the group's consideration of this change?