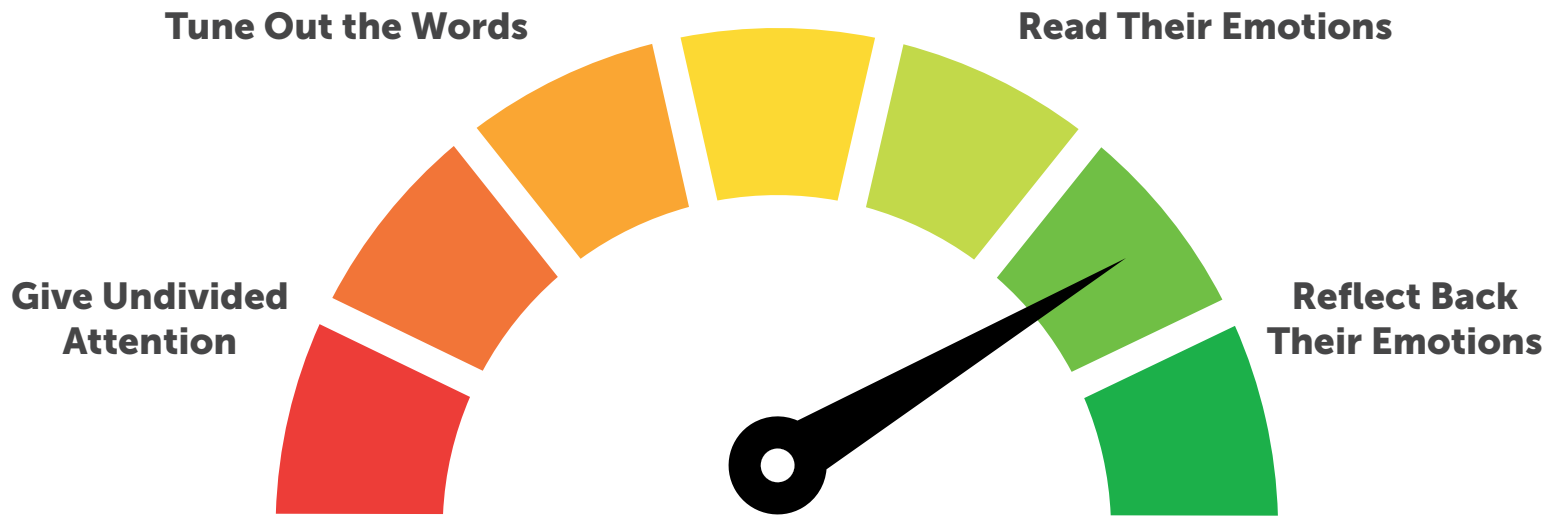


De-escalation Dial: Turn Tension into Trust



Focus on FOUR things:

- 1. Give the person your undivided attention.** Keep screens out of sight. Make eye contact.
- 2. Tune out what they're saying.** To avoid being triggered, ignore the words. It's not their words – it's their emotions we care about.
- 3. Read their emotions.** What's happening with their eyes, the corners of their mouth, eyebrows, the tone of their voice, the rate of their breath, their posture, their energy. What could they be feeling? What else?
- 4. Reflect back their emotion with the same emphasis as their escalation.** Label their emotions with your words. It's okay to guess. "You're so angry, you could hit the wall! You can't believe they disregarded you like that, it makes you feel enraged! Then, on top of that, you feel afraid of how out of control you feel! It's like you could explode! And deep down, you realize you're terribly sad, because you feel like you don't matter to them, and that makes you feel alone."

Tips to Foster Collaboration:

Making Space for All Voices in Meetings

Assign Roles to Participants – Leverage the talents of everyone and enhance engagement by assigning timekeeper or notetaker roles (or other roles). It can be helpful to do this when you send the calendar invitation, but if you didn't, it's okay to ask at the meeting start.

Start Meetings with Questions – Ask a question to get people to share something playful, unique, or interesting. This creates connection before you dive into the content of the meeting. Consider additional questions to center and align the focus on the Meeting Mindset and Goals. Be sure to collect responses from a variety of people, not just the vocal ones.

Use Pre-Meeting Questions to get Asynchronous Feedback! Here's space to synthesize.

Note Card/Whiteboard Feedback – Gives everyone a voice without having to speak up in a group. Pass out blank cards or use web tools like Whiteboard or Mural, then ask a question and give everyone time to write. Collect written responses and share feedback anonymously with the group.

Round-Robin Responses – Gives everyone a turn. Let everyone speak on a topic for one minute by going around the table. It may feel odd at first, but if you use it often, people learn to expect it and appreciate the invitation to speak. Anyone may pass if they have nothing new to add to the discussion.

Breakout Groups – Form small groups to discuss a topic. This helps encourage introverted participants to contribute since they won't face the pressure of everyone's attention at once. Ask a volunteer to report out for the group as needed.

You Have the Floor – Keeps one person speaking at a time. Use a tool such as a stapler, or an icon online, to indicate who the speaker is. Only the speaker speaks, everyone else is a listener. Pass the floor as needed.

Give Time for Thought – Everyone processes differently. It can be generative to take a 60-second pause so participants can think before discussion.

Make Space for Healthy Debate – Sharing different perspectives is important – it helps refine your ideas. When there are different opinions, focus on the interest behind the idea not the position itself. Speaking about the goal or intention helps the group find creative solutions and common ground at the same time.

OUCH: When things get heated ... turn tension into trust with the De-Escalation Dial!

Tips for Masterful Meetings



Decide

To meet or not to meet?
That should be the question!
(See reference.)



Organize

Complete Meeting Capture and review materials.



Prepare

Complete Meeting Planner
(1 week to 1 month before meeting.)



Attend

Engage fully in your meetings. See them as opportunities for shared achievement. If you are leading the meeting, use strategies to guide your team to their core objective and measure of success!

To Meet or Not to Meet?

How to choose a mode of communication that best meets your needs:

Start here: Consider the urgency, complexity, and purpose of the communication, as well as how many people are involved and the relationship with the recipient(s).

Meetings are important for complex or sensitive issues that require in-depth discussion, brainstorming, problem-solving, or decision-making; building relationships or fostering collaboration (like mentorship or supervision), giving or receiving feedback (feed forward!), and taking a retrospective look at something. Meetings help ensure everyone is on the same page. **ASK: Is there a risk of not meeting?**

Text/Slack/Teams messages work for prompting immediate, well-understood actions between two or more people. Use for urgency, informality, simple updates, clarifications, or quick questions.

Phone calls work for prompting immediate, poorly understood actions. Use for discussion, clarification, building rapport, sensitive issues, or items requiring personal interaction. Usually these are for one-on-one communication.

Emails work for reminders, calendar invites, updates, and one-way information sharing (including documents and pre-meeting info), especially when a record is necessary. Remember: Email is not urgent. Response times may be 24–48 hours later.

Postcards work for quick, simple information or timely reminders.

Letters can work as reinforcement alongside other channels, but consider writing on the outside of the envelope to help the letter get noticed.

We have choices for how we communicate. Decide, don't slide ... into the most efficient route!

Juggling Priorities Without Dropping the Ball



The Problems:

- Too much to do
- Disorganized
- All work, no balance
- Busy and unproductive
- All meetings, no work

The Solution:

An effective system for increasing productivity

Breaking It Down

1. Capture

- Reduce unnecessary inputs.
- Choose a few (1–3) capture tools.
- Be sure the capture tools are easy, available, and reliable.

2. Specify

- Identify if there is a “next action” to be taken. If not, is it trash or something to file?
- Specify what exactly is the next physical, observable activity required to move the situation along. Use an action verb!

3. Prioritize

- Sort tasks into categories:
 - **Do Now** — If an item takes two minutes or less, do it right away.
 - **Do Soon** — Put the task on your calendar or atop a list you view regularly and then complete it as soon as appropriate.
 - **Delegate** — Ask yourself, “Am I the best person for this job?”

4. Focus

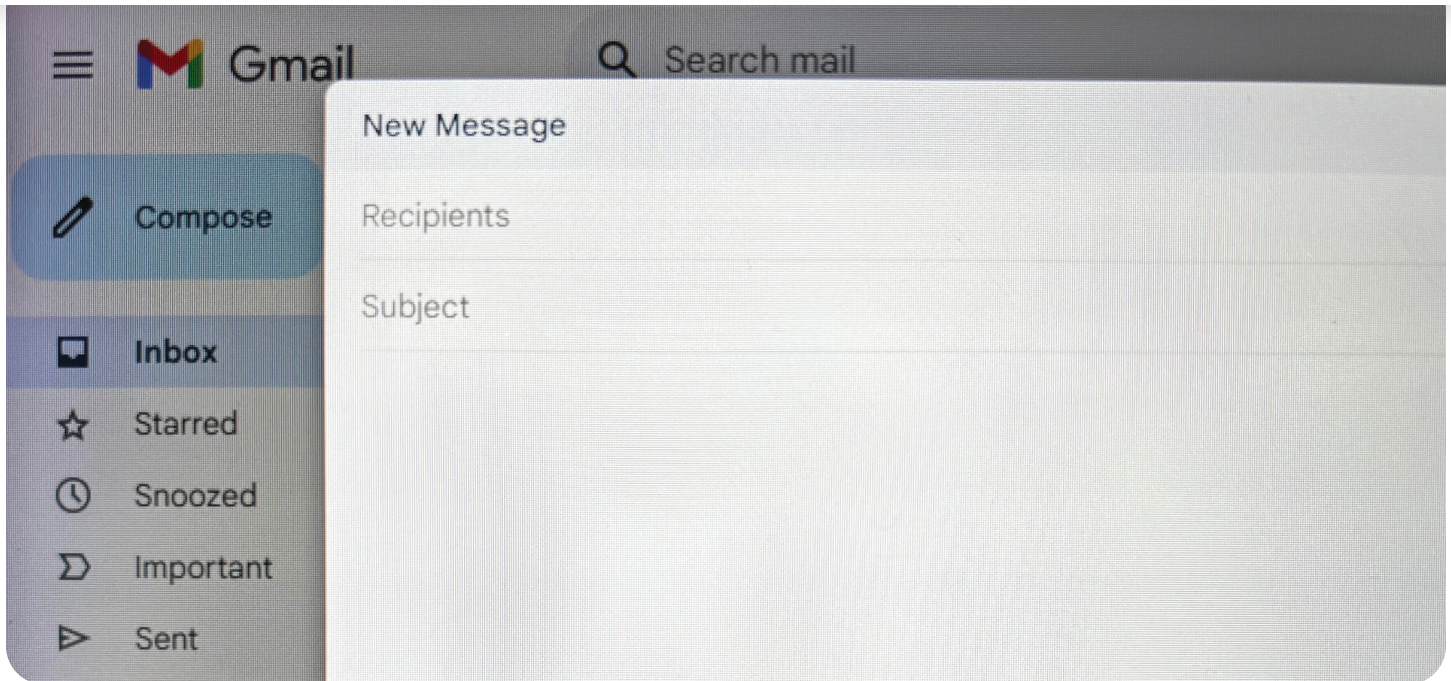
- Use your calendar only for things that are firm and fixed such as:
 - Time-specific actions (e.g., meetings or appointments)
 - Day-specific actions (e.g., call Juan on Thursday to wish him a happy birthday)
 - Day-specific information (e.g., Manager out of the office)
- Block time for tasks to ensure focus
 - “Do soon” tasks
 - Recurring or important tasks you want to protect time for (e.g., “Capture + Sort at 9 AM Mondays,” or “Email response window”)

5. Review

- What do I need to capture and specify? (Include a brain dump.)
- What do I need to know? (Review your lists and calendars.)
- What do I value and wish for? Is it in my life? (Don’t forget to dream!)
- Schedule on your calendar a review once a week or so.

Say It Right, Write It Tight

The Art of Effective Emails



Should this be an email or not?

If it's urgent, it is **not** an email. Urgent matters require a quick, dynamic response.

Emails are for reminders, calendar invites, sharing information, updates, or documentation.

Subject Line

- **Make the subject line a summary of the email** (i.e., "Housing Update")
- Limit to 40 characters so it can be easily read on a phone.
- When needed, use **action-oriented** phrasing and cues for next steps: "[Action]: Review Updated Housing Plan by Friday"

Body of Email

- **Brevity is Beautiful.** Make it short and sweet.
- **Avoid jargon and acronyms** when communicating with recipients or family/caregivers.
- **Start with what's most important.** If there's an ASK or TASK, put it first.

• Don't make them hunt for it.

- Use sub-headings and formatting (like highlighting, bold text, color) to move their eyes to critical information.
- Use bullet points, or numbering for structure. This makes it easy to reference later.

Read and Review

- **Before you hit send, read it out loud!**
- Are there typos? Is it too wordy? Did you include the attachments?
- Confirm you are sending it to only those who need it.
- Avoid using "reply all" unless necessary.
- If something takes more than a paragraph to explain, follow up with a phone call.