

The Five Styles of Communication

UNDER PRESSURE

In stressful situations, most people default to a certain communication style. The good news: effective communication under pressure doesn't have to be intrinsic. It's a set of skills anyone can learn.

THE OVER-EXPLAINER

Buries the point in qualifiers and backstory.

Signature phrase:

"So just to give you some background on how we got here..."

Consequence: By the time the ask arrives, the audience has disengaged or formed their own conclusion.



THE HEDGER

Softens every position until it has no edges.

Signature phrase:

"It's just a thought, but maybe we could consider..."

Consequence: Perceived as uncertain or uncommitted. Others take credit for cleaned-up versions of their ideas.



THE AVOIDER

Withholds difficult messages until the situation forces it.

Signature phrase:

"I didn't want to bring it up because..."

Consequence: Problems compound in silence. When they inevitably surface, trust is damaged.



THE AGGRESSOR

Confuses certainty or volume with persuasion.

Signature phrase:

"I've already told the team how this is going to work."

Consequence: Compliance without commitment. People perform their duties while waiting for the idea to fail.



THE COMPOSED COMMUNICATOR

Leads with the point, holds the position, and makes space for pushback without losing the thread.

Signature phrase:

"Here's what I'm recommending, and here's why."

Consequence: Decisions get made. Alignment holds. Ideas stand up to resistance.

