Straight Talk

Influence Skills for Collaboration and Commitment

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<u>Straight Talk</u> Self-Assessment

A Learning Resource to Expand Your Skills Development After Reading Straight Talk: Influence Skills for Collaboration and Commitment

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Straight Talk Self-Assessment

Straight Talk is a leadership and workplace competency consisting of interpersonal influence skills for getting the results you need while building a trusting work relationship. *Straight Talk* includes:

- *Assertive Speaking* to express your viewpoints openly, directly, and respectively;
- *Active Listening* in ways that invite open expression from other while ensuring accurate, empathic understanding of others; and
- *Conversation Formats* for step-by-step execution of critical day-to-day discussions at work and home.

This *Self-Assessment* addresses 7 Skill Sets, each with 6 items. The resulting 42 items gauge behaviors that are learned by reading *Straight Talk: Influence Skills for Collaboration and Commitment* (Matt Holt Books, 2022). After completing all items, download the *Scoring & Interpretation Report* to calculate your Skill Set and overall *Straight Talk* scores (go to www.BrandonPartners.com/StraightTalkBook). The *Scoring Report* also provides explantions and recommendations for your level of competence with each of the seven Skill Sets.

Directions for Completing Your Self-Assessment

Please rate yourself twice on all 42 items across the 7 *Straight Talk* Skill Sets. First, ask yourself which of these five levels of skill most accurately describes your effectiveness for that *Straight Talk* behavior BEFORE you read the book: 1= Poor, 2= Below Average, 3= Average, 4= Above Average, 5= Excellent. Next, rate yourself according to how well you think you will perform on that item AFTER having completed your reading of the *Straight Talk* textbook. Do not not leave any item unanswered. While the best answer may be obvious, be as honest as possible, so that you can discover your strengths and growth areas.

Please realistically assess your competence level on each item' behavior or attitude. If you have trouble answering an item, imagine how a co-worker or friend might rate you.

SKILL SET 1: STRAIGHT TALK MINDSET

These items relate to your level of personal accountability for positive workplace communication, and your commitment to being constructively open, direct, and respectful in your interactions.

1	2	3	4			5		
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Av	erage	E	xcelle	ent	
for hat wh	old myself fully resp constructive comm vits without excuses en the situation and olved make it chall	nunication s, even d people	Before After	1	2	3	4	5
com busi	ieve that positive w munication has str ness benefits for th nization.	ong	Before After					
	rive to always com nly, directly, and re		Before After					
agg	n aware of when I ressively harsh, sh nineering in my co	ort, or	Before After ion.					
• trig	ecognize situations ger me into being t nt or too nice.		DUIDIC					
I c pa	trive to both get th esire (instead of be ssive) <u>and</u> to main usting work relation	eing too tain positiv	Before e, After					

of being too aggressive).

SKILL SET 2: ASSERTIVE SPEAKING

These items involve how well you express your viewpoint when getting agreements, giving feedback, voicing ideas, or reacting to others.

1 Poor	2 Below Average	·		rage	1	5 Excellent		
place,	into account fact reasons, delivery iding how direct	, and risk lev		1	2	3	4	5
my bo expres witho	a communicating ody language and ssions look firm a ut becoming thre idating.	facial nd confider	Before at After					
vocal strong	a asserting my opi tone, volume, and g and convincing, ng openness to dis sue.	l rate sound while also	Before					
spec	arly express my id ific wording and are others underst pective.	examples to	n Before After					
is no word	content of my con on-judgmentally a led, to avoid trigg sisistance.	nd objective						
frec	en stating my vie quently check for son's understandi eement.	the other	Before After					

SKILL SET 3: ACTIVE LISTENING

These items involve how well you listen and show understanding of others' work needs, feelings, ideas, and reactions to what you say.

123PoorBelow AverageAverage	4 Above A	vera	ge	Ex	5 celler	nt
3. I set aside whatever else I'm doing to focus fully on others when they speak rather than multi-tasking.	Before After	1	2	3	4	5
4. During conversations, my body language and eye contact is attentive to others and their views.	Before After					
5. I convey that I'm following what others are saying through acknowledgements (e.g, "I see uh-huh," etc.) and open-ended questions.	Before After					
6. I paraphrase the others' statements in order to verify that I understand their viewpoints.	Before After					
.7. I demonstrate emotional empathy by stating my understanding of how others are feeling and by using facial reactions and tone of voice to match their mood.	Before After					
8. When using listening skills, I try to make sure I've fully heard the person's viewpoint and that they are ready to hear my reaction.	Before After	1	2 2	3 3	4 4	

SKILL SET 4: ADVISING AND GUIDING

These items relate to how well you help others explore and resolve problems, decisions, and dilemnas they bring to you.

l Poor	2 Below Average	3 Average	4 Above Average	E	5 Excell	ent	
advi unti und	en others approad ce, I avoid giving l I have fully expl erstood the issues	suggestions ored and s.	1 Before After	2	3	4	
the c	en questioning to on's problem, I pa other's answers to rersational and to ding like an inter	araphrase be more avoid	Before After				
prob ask a situa and/	ally understand so lem before giving bout the facts of tion, the person's or goals, and wha or considered so	g input, I the s problem at has been	Before After				
22. After sum wor I can	er exploring a pro marize, check rea k on solutions, ar n best be most he	oblem, I adiness to ad ask how lpful now.	Before After				
ord chee each	give advice or oth er to avoid mono ck the other's read n of my ideas. en giving input to	loguing, I ctions to	Before After				
adju am, expo prol	ast how directive a taking into accou erience level with olem, their motive ested I am in a spe	and detailed int their with the ation, and he	Before After DW				

SKILL SET 5: G.A.I.N.-ing COMMITMENTS

These items involve how well you forge clear, accountability-oriented agreements with others about needed results, actions, and requests.

1 Poor	2 Below Average	3 Average	4 Above Ave	rage		Exce		
I cle alon	en seeking a com arly explain what g with my reason efits of the agreem	I want, s and the	Before After	1	2	3	4	5
chec the	en seeking buy-in ogue versus a mor king for and para reactions along th ing on.	ologue by phrasing	Before After					
ado <u>r</u> firm	en forging an agre ot an assertive, res tone rather than pushy or too wea	pectful, and being either	Derore					
quest I'm r	uire about any co tions, or impedim equesting, and pr duce the concern.	ents to wha	Before					
discu sum that	en ending a comm ussion, I make sur marizes the agree we set any needed checking in, prov	e one of us ment and d next steps	Before After rt, etc.					
reco agre rer follo	low up on commi gnizing and appr cements that are k ninding others if ow though or do n t we discussed.	eciating cept, and by they forget	Before After					

SKILL SET 6: ROUGH CONVERSATIONS: **DEFUSING EMOTIONALITY**

These items relate to how well you conduct difficult conversations, in which emotions can become volatile and defensiveness can be triggered.

1 Poo	2 or Below Averag	3 ge Average	Above	4 e Average		5 Excel			
31. ¹	Before reminding an agreement or c	someone abou		0	1	2	3	4	5
5	someone's probler	n behavior, I		Before	1	2	3	4	5
1	prepare by writing rehearsing what I a clear, persuasive	will say to ensu		After	1	2	3	4	5
	f others get emoti			Before	1	2	3	4	5
]	luring conflicts or mentally calm m poised and profess	yself to remain		After	1	2	3	4	5
33. ^I	listen empathical	ly and fully to	a	Before	1	2	3	4	5
b	verson's reactions vefore reasserting hey get emotional	my point, even		After	1	2	3	4	5
34. ¹	f a person's reacti	ons to my feed	lback						
	re aggressive, em	• •	, or	Before	1	2	3	4	5
r	inreasonable, I sti espectfully with o noninflammatory	bjective,		After	1	2	3	4	5
	f a person derails a			Before	1	2	3	4	5
e	iscussion with def xcuses, I refocus oint instead of ge	us back to the	main	After	1	2	3	4	5
ľ	When challenging aising factors the considered, or say	other hasn't	a,	Before	1	2	3	4	5
r	equest, I first liste and state the merit equest before sur	n nonjudgmer s of the idea of	r	After	1	2	3	4	5

SKILL SET 7: CULTIVATING A STRAIGHT TALK ENVIRONMENT

These items relate to how well you strive to build a work climate of open, honest, respectful communication within the organization.

	l oor	2 Below Average	3 Average	Above	4 Aver	age	Ez	5 xcelle	nt
37.	prac com	courage my team ctice open, positiv imunication of id gestions, and feed	re eas,	Before After	1	2	3	4	5
38.	repo oper	ach and teach my orts how to comm nly and handle dif versations.	unicate	Before After					
39.	actio own	enly discuss my g on plans for impro communication othersd.	oving my	Before After					
40.	esta nori	ide and lead my to blish ground rules ns for positive munication.		Before After					
41.	duri oper	ularly ask my tear ng meetings to dis lly and constructi municating.	scuss how	Before After					
42.	invit cons	ucture team meet e open dialogue, tructive debate, a enting opinions.	-	Before After					