



The Speech Clinic®



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How does your audience understand and perceive you?

1. The meaning or interpretation

What controls the individuals in an audience are the meanings they associate to what the speaker says and how (s)he says it. This is shaped by their own personal psychology and their world view. In other words, by the beliefs and values that they have created.

Example of different interpretation of the same message:

- a) (S)he is punishing me for not having done it
- b) (S)he is challenging me for not having done it
- c) (S)he is acknowledging me for having done it by criticizing the others

All this affects the meaning of what they hear. Meanings are virtually unlimited.

2. Meanings affect emotions

Once the meaning has been established, each individual will develop a pattern of emotions which they associate to that meaning.

Example linked to the example above:

- a) Repulsion
- b) Motivation
- c) Satisfaction

3. Emotions affect Motions

Depending on the emotions stirred up by what you say the individual listeners tend to show their feelings. This may be in the form of a variety of postures, facial expressions, attention etc.

4. Motions can be read

When maintaining eye contact with your listeners and carefully studying them while speaking, you will be able to discover the way they understand and perceive you by reading their physical and mental attitudes. Every reaction will tell you whether they agree, reject or are indifferent. Be careful not to let you be dragged down by negative attitudes in the audience.

How to deal with that will be explained in a later letter. Meanwhile remember:

Meaning —→ **Emotion** —→ **Motion** —→ **Reading**

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