

# COMMUNICATING FOR ACTION

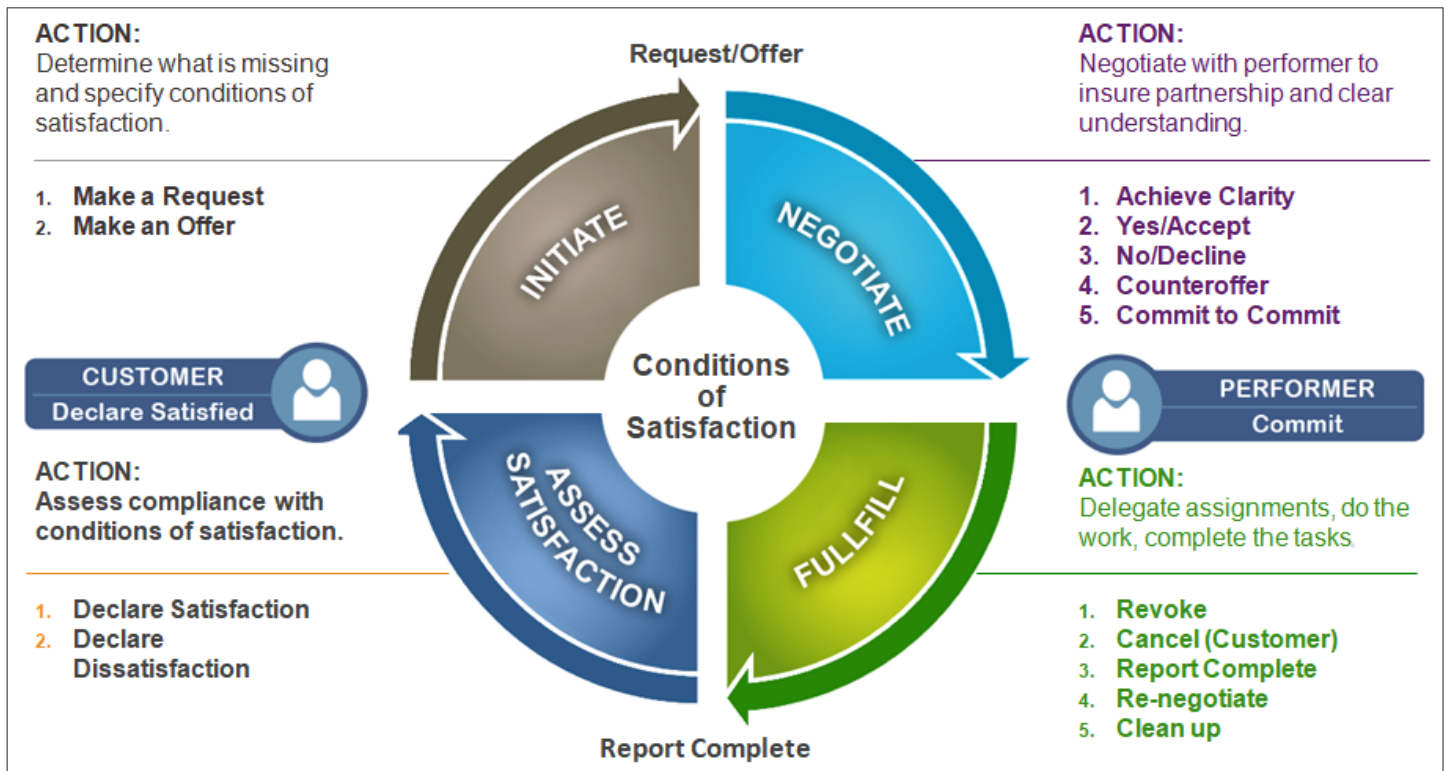
## Clarity

Clear is kind because it provides a real picture of what is happening. Being clear, rather than withholding or sugar-coating, creates the opportunity for a shared reality rather than anyone creating stories based on their assumptions or “ladder.”

What gets in the way of being clear?

## Commitment Based Leadership or Conversations for Action

In order to get things done in organizations we have conversations, verbally, through e-mail or messaging. We offer a four step model which encourages accountability. The process starts with a customer making a request of a performer. The performer can then negotiate and if a commitment is made, fulfills on the commitment. Then the customer determines if they are satisfied.



## Requests

A strong request happens when there is an identified performer, a specified timeframe for fulfillment, a clear articulation of the concern the request will address, a shared background of obviousness, and clear conditions of satisfaction (CoS.) CoS may include the priority, format, resources available, decision making authority, and anything else that isn't clear to the performer. Customers should always check their mood and be Above the Line before they make a request! They need to also determine whether something is a request or a demand. Expressing a demand as a request reduces trust.

What gets in the way of making clear requests?

## Negotiation

Any request has five possible answers: Yes, No, a Request for Clarity, a Counter Offer, or a Commit-to-Commit. We can make a counter offer when we can't fulfill on a request as stated and we suggest an alternative. We respond with a commit-to-commit by committing that we will confirm a Yes, No, or Counter Offer response within an agreed amount of time. This move give us time and space to reflect and determine what we can realistically commit to. Effectively managing our commitments builds trust, morale, reputation, and decreases stress. Leaders need to make negotiation permissible for staff. Leaders always need to ask themselves are they getting a real commitment or just compliance.

Which is the hardest response to a request for you to make?

## Fulfilling and Assessing Satisfaction

When we are fulfilling on a request we often rely on others, situations change, and breakdowns can happen. If at any time we cannot fulfill on a commitment we have made, we need to go back to the customer and re-negotiate with them – before the deadline. As customers we get to assess whether we are satisfied by how the performer fulfilled the request. This is often a time for appreciation and/or effective feedback - when we are Above the Line. We never complain to someone who cannot do something about the situation.



## PRACTICES

### Request Preparation Checklist

- What is a request that you need to make?
- Who is the customer? Who is the performer?
- What is the reason/context for the request?
- What is the deadline? Is it negotiable?
- What are your conditions of satisfaction?
- What conditions of satisfaction are assumed?
- What is obvious to you but maybe not to them?

### Negotiation Practices

- Don't automatically say yes unless you know you can complete the task 100%
- Practice more with:
  - Counter Offers.  
Sounds like:  
"I can't do \_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. However, I could do \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. OR \_\_\_\_\_ can do it for you by then."
  - Commit-to-Commit.  
Sounds like: