

“INVOLVE”: The Foundation for Fair Process Leadership Communication

Ian C. Woodward
INSEAD, ian.woodward@insead.edu

Elizabeth A. More
Australian Institute of Management Business School, elizabeth.more@aim.com.au

Ludo Van der Heyden
INSEAD, Ludo.VAN-DER-HEYDEN@insead.edu

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“Fair Process Leadership” (FPL) is an integrative approach to leadership that emphasises high levels of engagement and transparency with stakeholders, as well as objective evaluation of both outcomes and process. Research shows the presence of FPL generates trust, and leads to effective collaboration and collective commitment, both critical features for team and organisational performance. However, research has not thoroughly explored how FPL principles can be implemented systematically and practically in the workplace context, particularly in larger organisational settings. This paper presents the effective communication approaches and practices that are fundamental to deploying fair process leadership in organisational contexts. In this regard, our discussion reviews the research literature in the areas of fair process leadership; procedural and interactional justice; organisational communication; and leadership communication. Integrating these concepts and theories, the paper proposes a toolkit (INVOLVE) for effective fair process leadership communication “in action” – identifying a core principle and three crucial communication practices for leaders or organisations eager to instil fair process in their communication activities and beyond, in their culture. The paper also highlights implications for future research and development in this area.

Keywords: Fair Process Leadership; Effective Communication; Leadership Communication; Engagement; Procedural Justice; Interactional Justice; Organisational Culture.

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Executive Summary

“Fair Process Leadership” (FPL in short) is an integrative approach that supports effective leadership, particularly in situations emphasizing engagement and transparency with stakeholders, as well as objective evaluation. The “fair process” promise is a high level of commitment and trust, which are both necessary ingredients for high performance.

The complexity of FPL stems from the fact that it demands a multiplicity of leadership styles, with the consequence that FPL cannot be considered “natural” for any given leader, as some of the styles required for FPL will be natural for a given leader, but other styles will not be. Consistent application of FPL thus represents a significant commitment and effort, as well as training. In other words, FPL is not a natural talent for anyone; at best it is a competence to be acquired and developed.

When FPL becomes a defined aspiration for organizations (including their teams), effective communication approaches become fundamental to deploying FPL in the organization’s daily practice, eventually becoming an element of its culture. Effective FPL communication approaches, especially those that are role modeled by leaders, emphasise openness, inclusion, inquiry and clarity, rather than opaqueness, exclusion, advocacy and ambiguity or outright confusion. FPL communication effectiveness also requires a culture of deep and authentic engagement.

Recognizing that effective communication is fundamental for FPL “in action,” this paper canvasses a range of communication approaches that provide practical support for organizations and leaders eager to deploy FPL. These approaches combine to define a “fair process leadership in action” that answers the question the authors regularly confront when teaching on this topic: “Ok, I agree with the fair process concept, but how can I actually make it daily practice inside my organization?”

The authors propose specific leadership, team and organizational communication practices that ought to be utilised if an organization desires to achieve and sustain FPL in a practical manner. The result is an *effective FPL communication toolkit* that consists of one core communication principle and three specific communication practices together with a supporting diagnostic and assessment tool.

The *core principle* for effective FPL communication is to continuously **INVOLVE** – with a shared belief in the team or the organization to ceaselessly and effectively communicate with relevant stakeholders at all stages of the FPL cycle. The **INVOLVE** principle gives “a tone of voice” to fair process communication that is **respectful, open and objective**. It is the foundation of the toolkit.

To support the implementation of the **INVOLVE** principle and a broad based FPL practice, we further argue that organizations should adopt three crucial *communication practices* in their toolkit:

- **Active Listening and Constructive Dialogue:** productive behaviours for interaction, deliberation, decision-making and explanation;
- **Agreed Communication Protocols:** mutually developed and transparent communication rules with commitment and follow-through; and
- **Accessible Connection:** useful, convenient and readily available communication activities, formats and media to facilitate participation and engagement.

To assist leaders and organizations prepare for effective FPL communication and monitor the implementation successfully, a diagnostic assessment is provided in the toolkit – which can be calibrated over time as well.



Introduction: For Fair Process Leadership, Effective Communication is Fundamental

*“Fair Process? Listen well, ask more, tell less.
Actively engage and connect people and ideas through open communication.”*

The past twenty years witnessed an increasing focus by business executives, organizations and leadership scholars on improving employee engagement in the process of making and implementing decisions. This is especially so with the positive effect of employee engagement on commitment and on attracting, developing and retaining talent in global settings (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Guthridge & Komm, 2008; McGregor & Hamm, 2008). Furthermore, major organizational strategies have a leadership development component, devoted to learning and developing new capabilities in teams and leaders to engage people and ideas for intended positive business outcomes (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004).

Fair Process

While the field of leadership development is wide, one relevant area for discussion is the crucial role of *process methods* and their associated behaviours that contribute to organizational (and hence team and individual) performance. *Fair process*, as a leadership paradigm for organized collaborative engagement, emerged as an area for those looking to develop organizational and leadership behaviours in contemporary business performance (Greenberg, 1986; Leventhal, 1980).

The ground-breaking work of Kim and Mauborgne (1997; 1991) identified the strategic value and significance of fair process in global organizations. Their work emphasised the role of process in achieving business goals through employee commitment and collaboration. It encompassed the principles of “fairness and justice”, long established in legal settings, and which these authors helped import into strategic and organizational literature. They argued:

“Notwithstanding the importance of possessing an effective global strategy, it is our contention that the way in which these global strategies are generated—that is, the dynamics of the global strategy making process per se—may provide advantages to the multinational that are as real if not more real than the quality of the resulting global strategy content.

The theoretical heritage of our argument stems from the domain of justice-based

research which suggests that when the process by which decisions are made is viewed by those affected to be procedurally just, the higher-order attitudinal forces of commitment, trust, and social harmony as well as the lower-order force of outcome satisfaction result within organizational members.” (1991, p. 125)

For anyone interested in deploying fair process leadership in organizations (for example: business leaders seeking deeper employee engagement; human resource practitioners advising on organizational designs and policies; or business academics espousing fair process principles in executive education courses) a key question soon emerges. That question is: *Beyond having a fair process orientation, noble intentions, and a full commitment, how do we actually make this happen in our organization and our teams?*

Van der Heyden & Limberg (2007) and Van der Heyden, Blondel, & Carlock (2005) took a step in the direction of answering this question. They introduced an actual *process*, consisting of a sequence of five steps or stages, for implementing fair process leadership (this is sometimes referred to as the FPL cycle). It was remarkable that prior to this, the fair process literature, including the work of Kim and Mauborgne (1997; 1991), referred only to characteristics or process elements (such as engagement, explaining, setting expectations) that typically would not be addressed well inside organizations. Fair Process was thus associated with a tangible process that also provided a normative framework for organizations wishing to implement fair process.

In subsequent work, Van der Heyden (2013) observed the critical role of leadership in maintaining fair process, and hence coined the term *fair process leadership*, or *FPL* in short. The observation was simple: leadership change, particularly at the top, typically led to changes in fair process practice; conversely, fair process could only exist “live” if leaders espoused it and exemplified it. This thinking also recognized that fair process principles are closely related to leaders’ emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Van der Heyden & Huy, 2008).

This paper continues in the direction of implementation of fair process, by examining in greater depth one pivotal answer to the issue of implementation: the role of effective communication in fair process leadership. The paper proposes a toolkit consisting of one core principle and three key communication practices to make fair process leadership come alive inside organizations, so as to move beyond intent into pragmatic action.

At its heart, fair process requires a deep involvement of stakeholders in the process. Therefore, our paper explores the relationship between effective communication and leadership approaches and styles and the successful

implementation of fair process leadership that is authentically collaborative and perceived to be so by stakeholders. This is not an obvious or simple point as fair process leadership calls for a multiplicity of leadership approaches and styles, and fair process can be derailed due to the leader's or the organization's inability to master this multiplicity and the challenges it entails.

Paper Structure and Approach

Our integrative paper builds upon the academic research in the areas of fair process, leadership, distributive, procedural and interactional justice, organizational communication and leadership communication. The paper synthesizes aspects of these literatures, together with the specific research and pedagogical work of the respective authors. Its primary aim is to define and describe a range of communication approaches that support fair process in organizational practice.

Section 1 provides an overview of fair process leadership as defined by Van der Heyden et al. (2013, 2007, 2005). This section also presents the contextual setting for our subsequent consideration of effective communication approaches that support and allow implementation of FPL.

Sections 2 and 3 respectively outline key elements of effective communication approaches for organizations, their teams and leaders. These sections build upon the relationship of leadership models and communication (such as leadership-member exchange theory and emotional intelligence) as well as on the relationship of organizational and leadership communication to procedural and interactional justice. These sections build on the model development and research work (including by Woodward & More (2010)), which stresses the crucial roles of organizational communication processes, structures and practices when meeting stakeholder expectations for information and interaction.

Section 4 posits our toolkit for effective FPL communication. The foundation is the **INVOLVE** principle enacted, through three crucial *communication practices* for leaders and teams inside organizations (**Active Listening and Constructive Dialogue; Agreed Communication Protocols; and Accessible Connection.**) We also discuss how the suggested INVOLVE toolkit can be utilized by leaders, organizations and executive educators (including a simple assessment tool and diagnostic to assist with this).

In concluding and summarizing the paper, Section 5 also presents questions for further development and research in this area.

1. Fair Process Leadership

“It is not fair to ask of others what you are unwilling to do yourself. “

Eleanor Roosevelt

“Life may be unfair. But if we manage fairly, life will be fairer for all.”

Ludo Van der Heyden

As discussed in our introduction, research shows that fair process can play a significant role in achieving strategic and operational results in which stakeholders increase their respective level of commitment and engagement (Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Kim & Mauborgne, 1997; Kim, & Mauborgne, 1991; Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991; Korsgaard, 1995). The fundamental principles of this kind of fair process leadership (FPL) draw upon the concept of procedural justice as applied in law courts, which is further extended to other social settings (Leventhal, 1980), including business organizations (Greenberg, 1986).

What is Fair Process?

In simple terms, fair process will exist where the participants in the decision making process understand the process to be followed and the associated rules and modes of engagement, and perceive them to be fair with respect to all participants. Fair process becomes a reality when those expectations are also consistently fulfilled throughout the process.

Fair process should not be seen as a mere bureaucratic implementation of rules and procedures; nor is it a mechanical, prescriptive formula for business activity. It is a paradigm for team and organizational leadership, and follows a number of guiding principles. It allows for adjusting the process steps dynamically to the setting and context of an organization or a project. Fair process principles provide a means, rather than an end, towards engaged decision-making and implementation (Van der Heyden & Limberg, 2007).

Adopting fair process in teams and organizations is actually remarkably challenging and surprisingly subtle. As one participant in our classes stated, “it is common sense, but not common practice.” It requires a definite cultural orientation and a persistence to adopt and make this cultural orientation live throughout the process. One explicit trade-off that needs to be managed is the time that needs to be taken to make inclusive and consultative decisions (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997).

At the same time, fair process leadership does not mean that urgency and the ability to deal with unexpected contingencies cannot be accommodated. Hence, fair process is definitely not procedural, in the sense of a pedantic application of a rigid set of rules. Indeed, fair process organizations establish agreed and transparent protocols *ex ante* to deal with urgent or emergency matters. The key – as always in fair process - is to ensure all understand and have a “voice” in the setting of the specific process elements, and the context or circumstances in which these are adopted.

Secondly, the situation may involve a necessary degree of commercial confidentiality (such as required by corporate necessities or market regulations) or other legal considerations, precluding a wider range of stakeholder involvement or the disclosure of information (Brockner, 2006). However, the process for decision-making and announcements can still be fair – provided that timely and comprehensive communication briefings and information are announced, planned for, and delivered as soon as the confidentiality restrictions are lifted.

Communication of such future restrictions and their discussion *ex ante* contribute to fairness as well. For example, if an announcement is made on a stock exchange of a major corporate initiative (such as a merger), then fair process suggests stakeholders hear about this through direct communication (in both “tell and ask” mode) with their leaders (simultaneously with the market release), with due attention to the impossibility of earlier announcements (for market fairness reasons). Unfair process would take the form of hearing the information through coverage in the next day’s newspapers, television, radio, or social media. The fair process element always holds two dimensions: a fairness element (transparency of information) and a process element (how the information is communicated).

Thirdly, dysfunctional types of politics, conflict and challenges exist in groups and organizations (Pfeffer, 2013) – even those with the highest level of positive values-based leadership behaviours (George & McLean, 2007). FPL is not a surreal “nirvana” which wipes away the complexity and challenges of all kinds of human interactions. However, the adoption of fair process principles as a mainstay of the operating practices inside an organization or group is likely to lead to significant reductions in the negativities affecting complex human challenges by systemically promoting a culture that is authentic, collaborative, healthy, and committed to fairness.

The 5 “E”s and 5 “C”s Model for Fair Process Leadership

In creating a methodology to translate fair process principles and objectives as described in the literature into leadership practice, Van der Heyden et al. (2005, 2008) developed a “*Fair Process Leadership*” model with a *process description* consisting of 5 steps (the 5 “E”s) and a description of *fair play* behaviours that the leaders need to demonstrate throughout these steps (the 5 “C”s) (see **Figure 1**). This model represents an interlinked cycle for decision-making, implementation and continuous review.

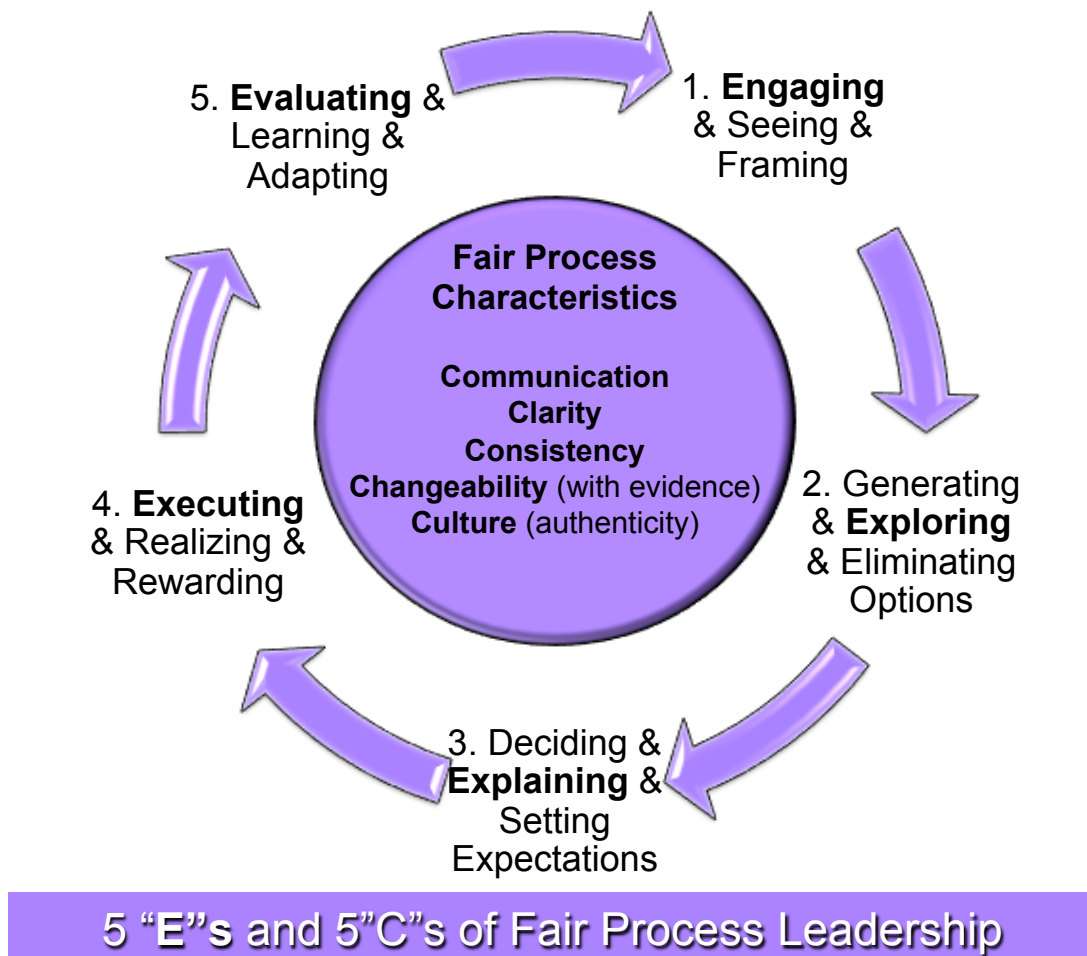


Figure 1: The Five “E”s AND “C”s Model for Fair Process Leadership

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Before we describe the steps of this dynamic cycle, we need to understand the behavioural requirements of the stakeholders at all stages of the cycle. These correspond to what the organizational literature has defined as “fair process” ever since Leventhal (1980) formulated them – even though, as we stated earlier, no process actually appeared explicitly in this definition. The five

complementary and mutually reinforcing behavioural characteristics of fair process are:

- **Communication:** the ability to give all actors a voice without fears or pressures regarding retaliation once that voice has been exercised;
- **Clarity:** the transparency of behaviours, interactions and exchanges by the actors of the process;
- **Consistency:** the uniformity in the treatment of actors, issues, and steps, including over time;
- **Changeability:** the possibility of 'correction' or changing actors' beliefs and also possibly changing the chosen course as a function of new evidence; and
- **Culture:** the commitment to 'do the fair thing' not just superficially, but deeply and authentically.

One contribution of the fair process literature is to link the presence of these characteristics to the adherence and acceptability of the decisions and outcomes of the decision-making cycle. The violation of one or several of the 5 "C"s generates rejection of the process and the outcomes it generates. Thus, explicitly and implicitly, our toolkit for applying fair process principles in business leadership practice calls for communication approaches that are aligned with the academic notion of "fair process."

Having described the "ambient oxygen" that needs to fuel the decision-making, implementation and evaluation cycle, we turn to the five stages of the FPL leadership model. These are identified as *Engage, Explore, Explain, Execute and Evaluate*. The reader will observe that each stage consists of more activities than is subsumed by the ordinary meaning of the verb identifying a single stage:

- **Engage:** Establish a process to involve and include relevant people (because they are stakeholders, are involved in implementation or have relevant expertise); ask them what they view the issue or the opportunity to be; seek their inputs in diagnosing and framing issues or questions for decision; and invite them to challenge your views, or prevalent views, and to make contributions before the decision is actually made, when influence in the decision and outcome are still a possibility.
- **Explore:** Generate and explore all options and their potential outcomes thoroughly and comprehensively as a group, or as various stakeholder groups. Through constructive debate over the pros and cons of the

options generated, the group eliminates those options that are neither promising nor capable of successful implementation, so as to simplify the examination of trade-offs and the identification of good options.

- ***Explain:*** At this stage, the leadership makes a clear decision, fully explains the decision and its rationale, and takes sufficient time and energy to develop understanding, especially amongst those being impacted. This is the time to articulate and clarify roles and responsibilities for implementing and executing successfully; and enunciate challenges, expected benefits, rewards and appropriate sanctions in case of haphazard execution of decisions.
- ***Execute:*** Ensure relevant people are clear on what all actors implicated by the decision are supposed to do; devote determined effort and focus in executing this decision; adjust and adapt if outcomes do not materialize according to plan, while informing and involving others to sustain coordination in execution; maintain rewards (or sanctions) in line with expectations formed and announcements made at the previous stage.
- ***Evaluate:*** Seek critical feedback from relevant stakeholders on the decision, the plan and the process followed to get there, by collecting feedback and analyzing lessons learnt, based on evidence – this objectivity and involvement can improve the process for next time and change the decision, approach or organization as needed.

Considering the intent and focus of the five stages of the fair process discipline, it is obvious that the quality and effectiveness of communication approaches, styles and practices will directly affect the efficacy of fair process leadership in both stakeholder perception and reality – as is demonstrated in the case example below. We note that in the FPL model, “Communication” as a characteristic is described as “voice.” We explicitly integrate this idea into our recommendations on an effective FPL communication toolkit and practices that we outline in Section 4. (To amplify, Appendix A provides a short case study of fair process in action and the relevant communication interactions).

2. Fair Process, Trust, Justice and Communication within Organizations

"We must all hang together, or assuredly, we shall all hang separately. "
Benjamin Franklin

*"Effective, vibrant communication is not the whole answer,
but teams will not own their answers without it!"*
Elizabeth More

A key dimension, which lies at the core of FPL communication and ties individual, team and organization-wide effective communication together in a spirit of trust, is that of organizational justice. Trust connotes answerability, certainty and dependability (Talula Cartwright, 2008). It refers to "expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that others' future actions will be beneficial, favourable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests" (Robinson, 1996: 576-599).

Trust, Justice and Fair Process

Effective communication, developing, articulating, owning and sustaining a vision, motivating employees towards shared organizational objectives, demonstrating integrity in their behaviour, believing in employees and respecting them are some of the leadership practices that create trust in organizational leaders (Gillespie & Mann, 2004). Trust enables an organization to operate effectively, reduces the chance that crisis strikes, and is essential in maintaining reputation (Cartwright, 2008).

Additionally, leaders trusted by their employees can communicate their views and perspectives clearly and more easily throughout the organization (Cartwright, 2008). Trust therefore helps in developing effective communication in organizations, and the converse is true as well.

Communication as a central feature of fair process is inextricably linked with organizational justice theory, a subject that is itself centered on *perceptions* of fairness within organizational processes and how employees are treated by organizations in terms of a 'just and fair manner' (Greenberg, 1987, 1990). The quality of communication by a leader improves fairness perceptions and perceptions of leader trustworthiness (Kernan & Hanges, 2002).

Folger and Cropanzano (1998) identified three types of organizational justice theories:

- (a) *Distributive justice* – refers to the fairness of the *outcomes* of decisions. For example, some people prefer an equity-rule, where rewards are allocated in proportion to the contributions made, yielding unequal outcomes, causing others to insist on equal shares.
- (b) *Procedural justice* – refers to the fairness of *processes* used to come to and implement decisions. For example, it is considered fair to allow workers the opportunity to provide inputs to the decision maker, just as defendants in court are provided with a counsel and a “voice”.
- (c) *Interactional justice* – refers to the fairness of interpersonal treatment and adequacy of information.¹ For example, individuals ought to be treated respectfully, regardless of whether they are guilty or not.

Organizational justice research shows the above three types of justice are important indicators of trust in a leader-follower relationship (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Additionally, organizational justice theory (Greenberg, 1990) offers a cognitive view explaining the impact of features of change initiatives on the acceptance of the intended change (Paterson & Cary, 2002). According to this perspective, employees evaluate the circumstances that impact on their well-being and respond positively if they perceive fairness in the consequences of decision making (distributive justice), in the organizational procedures adopted (procedural justice), and the care they get from the decision-makers (interactional justice) (Paterson & Cary, 2002). Procedural fairness is shown to be particularly important in change situations such as mergers (Tyler & De Cremer, 2005).

The fairness of the procedures managers use to implement the merger is a factor motivating employees to be more accepting of the changes resulting from the merger. In contrast, unfair treatment during change initiatives has been found to contribute to employees’ emotional withdrawal, to undermine their change commitment, and to induce departures from the organization (Bernerth, Walker, Walter, & Hirschfeld, 2011). All other forms of justice besides distributive justice are associated with work motivation (Jasková, 2015). This is because organizational justice creates an environment where employees see fairness in domains such as communication, resource distribution and decision-making and have the freedom to express their voice (Jasková, 2015).

¹ Scholars have distinguished interactional justice into two distinct sub-categories. The first is ‘interpersonal justice’, which refers to the dignity and respect that one receives from others. The second is ‘informational justice’, which refers to whether one receives explanations and social accounts for events. (Colquitt, 2001).

Fair Process and Communication inside Organizations

When employees are provided with knowledge about decisions and are given a 'voice' to communicate their concerns, their perceptions of fairness improve (Bies & Shapiro, 1988; Konovsky, 2000; Lind & Tyler, 1992). Giving 'voice' can also address their individual expectations, thereby making sure that the same behaviours are interpreted in the same way across the organization (Klaussner, 2012), besides giving employees a sense of 'control' (Hoogervorst, Cremer, & Dijke, 2013). Empirical research has demonstrated the role of fairness evaluation in predicting important organizational outcomes.

There is a clear nexus between effective communication approaches and fair process, particularly in the procedural and interactional justice dimensions. As Saunders & Thornhill (2003: 363) explain, what promotes procedural justice is "consistent application of organizational procedures; the avoidance of self-interest in the application of procedures; accuracy in their use based on reliable information; scope to evaluate the application of procedures and alter outcomes where necessary; allowing for the representation of differing interests; and the adoption of ethical standards through their use." Procedural justice centers more on approaches adopted by organizations (Barclay, Skarlicki, & Pugh, 2005), whereas interactional justice is located in perceptions of effective interpersonal communication in explaining and justifying decisions made, and the manner in which these are implemented, which again points to fair process.

In essence, when involved, interactive and quality participation occurs in decision-making within a culture of communication openness, there is over a decade's research demonstrating a positive effect on employee satisfaction and commitment (Kim, 2005).

Many similarities can be found between fair process literature and organizational justice literature. For example, just as the fair process literature demonstrates an impact on organizational outcomes, so too does the organizational justice literature (e.g. Latham & Pinder, 2005). Moreover, as organizational justice is a social construct, so too is fair process, both being gauged within the social context of the organizations in which justice is being evaluated (Pearson, 2009). In addition, with regard to their focus on the nature of participation in the organization's decision-making, both are tied by the influence of organizational structure (one that does or does not enable participation in decision making) and the system of internal communication (closed or open).

What is important here, are the findings that demonstrate how central cooperative communication is, and the types of interpersonal communication and activities facilitating the joint achievement of the goals of work groups. Again, the link with justice and fair process communication is made in research revealing that “as subordinates believe communication becomes more cooperative, they tend to perceive greater fairness in distributive outcomes and procedures” (Lee, 2001 as quoted in Kim, 2005: 71).

The recent global financial crisis provides a clear and present reminder of the importance of, and need for effective, timely and engaging communication with and between stakeholders – internal and external – in teams, corporations and markets. For example, research focused on that crisis, demonstrated significant gaps in communication performance by leaders and organizations during the peak periods of that crisis (Rouse & Schuttler, 2009; Weber Shandwick, 2008; Woodward & More, 2010). Notably, this research demonstrated that clear, consistent and transparent communication processes were not systematically applied, nor accompanied by robust communication messages and consistent leader visibility during the “crisis”. These kinds of approaches would not be consistent with a fair process view of either leadership or communication. These inappropriate approaches appeared to result in lower levels of understanding and motivation, together with higher levels of anxiety and disengagement by employees and other stakeholders.

Teams and Fair Process

Beyond the specific circumstance of dealing with a “crisis”, is the broader operation of organizations, and the functioning of teams, where effective, collaborative and fair communication processes affect engagement, commitment and meaning. As Conrad & Poole (2002: 3) state:

“People can learn from their experiences only if they understand the situations they face and the communicative strategies that they might use to manage them effectively. [...] In short, understanding organizational communicative processes is itself empowering.”

In an increasingly complex business world, where real-time collective multiple skills, experiences and judgments are required in our organizations, teams can often achieve better results than the individuals combined (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Katzenbach, 1993; Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). However, all too often teams underperform, despite all the extra resources they have (Hill, 1982). This is due to team problems such as unprepared team members, poor coordination, faulty decision-making, or high interpersonal conflict (Steiner,

2007). These challenges are often approached in an unreflective and unsystematic way that can lead to teamwork being less efficient and effective, and arrive at poor results through negative group dynamics (Janis, 1982; Moorhead, Neck, & West, 1998).

For teams to overcome these problems and achieve high performance, they need to pay attention to the critical and inter-related aspects of team cooperation: goal clarity and commitment; role clarity and complementarity; team processes for information flow, decision-making and conflict resolution; and developing stronger, positive and professional interpersonal relationships. This is commonly known as the classic GRPI model (Goals, Roles, Processes, and Interpersonal Relationships) (Beckhard, 1986). Teams need effective communication interactions to facilitate each of these dimensions.

In our research, we have identified another dimension beyond GRPI that characterizes high-performance and high-commitment teams, which is a sense of shared “Purpose and Passion”, and which has also been suggested in the works of Colenso (2000) Kur (1996) and Sharp et al. (2000). It refers to the team members’ collective reason, commitment, and values—both emotional and rational. The articulation and communication of the team’s purpose and passion is likely to foster engagement and motivation within the group, which are required for sustained high performance. Therefore, we suggest that teams and organizations focused on achieving sustained high performance through this “GRPI model Plus” (Goals, Roles, Processes, Interpersonal Relationships, Passion & Purpose) would likely seek fair process as an integrated part of the dynamic and collaborative teamwork.

Effective communication in FPL, therefore, would support a range of best practices for achieving the highest levels of team performance: sharing aims and objectives; holding mutual trust and dependency; encouraging an environment of open expression (of thoughts/feelings and disagreement); appropriate consensus decision-making; and a real understanding of membership boundaries and interdependencies (Senior & Swailes, 2007).

FPL communication would also encourage knowledge sharing in contrast to dysfunctional communication, characterized by fear, control, and secrecy – communication approaches leading to the Groupthink effect ² or organizational communication disasters such as NASA’s approaches,

² Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon that occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because group pressures lead to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement. Group members try to minimize conflict and reach consensus decision without critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints, by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences (Janis, 1982).

revealed in the post mortem of the Challenger accident in 1986 (where the Presidential Commission found NASA lacked systemic openness in its communication flows around safety and engineering issues) (Janis, 1997).

Moreover, fair process and its associated communication practices, which we describe in Section 4, can play a crucial role in diminishing dysfunctional political behaviour in organizations. Uncertainty generally increases political behaviour, which could be reduced by open communication, cooperation among work groups and including people through authentic participative management (Nelson & Quick, 2008). Indeed, fair process enhances group engagement and positive group behaviour like cooperation, because it instills among group members a feeling of inclusiveness, and promotes strong feelings of group affiliation (De Cremer, Tyler, & den Ouden, 2005).

Other research demonstrates the substantial impact of teamwork on organization performance and what makes it effective across attitudinal, behavioural, operational and financial dimensions, for example: Bolman & Deal (2009); Delarue, Van Hootegeem, Procter, & BurrIDGE (2008); and Linstead, Fulop, & Lilley (2004). These scholars highlight that high-performing teams develop a common commitment to the way in which people will work together and will hold themselves collectively accountable.

In their seminal article, "The Discipline of Teams", Katzenbach & Smith (1993: 113) stated, "the specificity of performance objectives facilitates clear communication and constructive conflict." Furthermore, they highlighted key differences between a working group and a high-performance team – the contrast between a group (running an efficient meeting to discuss, decide and delegate), and a team (encouraging open-ended discussion and active problem-solving meetings, where members discuss, decide and do real work together). In their contrast of teams and groups, the team orientation is much closer to fair process in practice.

We argue that, at the team and organizational levels, when fair process is deployed and supported by effective communication approaches, then individuals are much more likely to be engaged as partners rather than as employees. In such a process people are offered opportunities for continuous learning, challenges and opportunities for personal growth; and these organizational members find such engagement provides its own rewards (Marcum, 2000). As Hamel (2008: 56-7) puts it:

"There seems to be something in modern organizations that depletes the natural resilience and creativity of human beings, something that literally leaches these qualities out of employees during daylight hours. The culprit?"

Management principles and processes that foster discipline, punctuality, economy, rationality, and order, yet place little value on artistry, nonconformity, originality, audacity, and élan. To put it simply, most companies are only fractionally human because they make room for only a fraction of the qualities and capabilities that make us human. Billions of people show up for work every day, but way too many of them are sleepwalking. The result: organizations that systematically underperform their potential."

Fair Process: "Problem Definition without Bias"

Where organizations and teams engage beyond their boundaries, fair process principles are relevant and needed to avoid chaos and reduce bias. By way of example, one interesting parallel to the leadership, management and communication issues in fair process is to consider the work of the consulting industry sector. Here, operational processes and communication practices become absolutely critical to undertaking consulting assignments as significant (yet external) stakeholders and as trusted advisers and partners.

Consider the issue of "Problem Definition without Bias."

Individual biases affect problem definition for the consulting engagement, potentially leading to solutions to the wrong problems. In ground-breaking classic research, Kilmann & Mitroff (1979) identified two key reasons:

- 1) The management team defines the problem (and sometimes proposes a preferred solution) and then it chooses a consultant who does not, cannot, or is not asked to change or question the proposed approach, irrespective of whether the right problem is being addressed.
- 2) Any individual consultant is biased towards a particular type of solution that he/she is familiar with, thus biasing the problem definition to fit with the preferred solution (e.g. someone with a psychology background may be more likely to seek human causes to lower efficiency issues, whereas an engineer may look for operational or system constraints).

Yet, for a successful outcome from the consulting assignment, there is an underlying need for transparent and unbiased discussion of the problem and the range of potential solutions, as well as access to, or engagement by stakeholders who have the specific knowledge to assess the problem from different perspectives. Kilmann & Mitroff (1979), in their research, suggested

that to address the problem definition issue, the consulting process should start at and cover the process of sensing the problem and defining it, as well as the more usual discussion of solutions, implementation and evaluation. Their model for engagement from problem definition to solution is found in Figure 2 below. Its structure is inherently similar to many of the principles of fair process discussed in our paper. In each stage there would be the need for significant communication engagement and knowledge-sharing that is open, collaborative and clear, and an orientation by the participants to build and sustain trust as members of an aligned team seeking a common objective (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997).

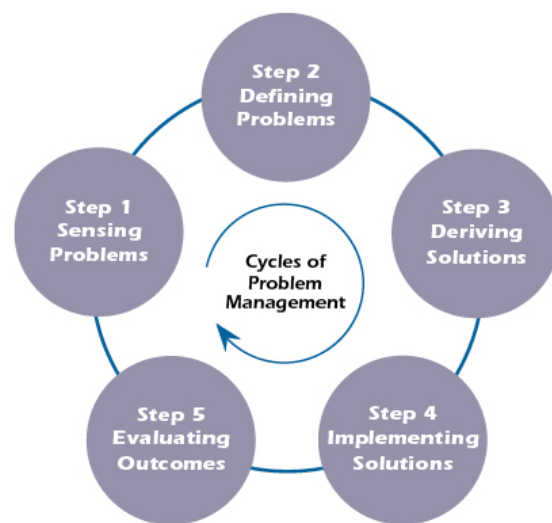


Figure 2: Cycles of Problem Management
(Kilman & Mitroff, 1979)

Nevertheless, when compared to the full fair process cycle (5 “E”s and 5 “C”s – see Figure 1), the consulting/problem solving process identified by Kilman & Mitroff (1979) does not make the decision phase explicit. This is a critical phase for fair process leadership, typically enacted by organizational leaders or leadership teams.

The literature on decision-making also offers another closely similar model when positing an effective decision-making process. Russo & Schoemaker (2002) identify a set of iterative steps, which includes the following: Framing; Gathering Intelligence; Coming to Conclusions; and Learning from Experience. We can see that the two models (Kilman & Mitroff, 1979; Russo & Schoemaker, 2002) share similarities with the fair process leadership model outlined in section 1 – the importance of: (1) ‘framing’, ‘sensing’, ‘defining’ the problem; (2) ‘exploring’, ‘deriving’ solutions; and, (3) ‘evaluating’, ‘learning’ from outcomes. However, missing from the two previous models is again the ‘decision-making’ element, which we consider an equally, if not more critical

step when studying leadership. We stress that fair process leaders, rather than just 'coming to the decision', need to communicate the *explanation* of both the rationale for the decision, as well as a statement of *expectations* for the proper implementation of the decision (Van der Heyden, Blondel, & Carlock, 2005).

Communication Protocols

Considering the evidence on team performance and communication, and the potential implementation of the communication approaches for fair process discussed in this and the succeeding section, however, one has to consider the increased complexity of larger size and more diverse teams and stakeholders (O'Toole, Lawler, & Meisinger, 2007).

In this regard, we argue that transparent, mutually agreed and developed communication protocols, together with structured participation, should be emphasised in such contexts, including such practices as: team or meeting role clarification and definition; clear agenda and expectation setting in comprehensive briefing arrangements; organized activities for brain-storming and debriefing; as well as explicit systems or processes for information sharing, conflict resolution and decision-making (Avadikyan et al., 2001; March, Schulz, & Zhou, 2000).

At the same time, organizations and teams are comprised of individuals. There are direct communication relationships between people working towards common goals and objectives (Myers, 2009; Sias, 2008). Nowhere are these relationships at a deeper potential connection (or disconnection) than where the communication is personal and interpersonal (Harris & Nelson, 2008). This is especially the case in the communication approaches and behaviours demonstrated by leaders towards the people with whom they seek to engage in a fair process. Having a desire for fair process and even developing organizational or team communication systems and capabilities can all too easily be destroyed by inappropriate individual leader communication attitudes and behaviours (Kramer & Crespy, 2011). The perception by followers of how these leaders operate is likely to have a major bearing on whether people believe they are actually engaged and involved in the process (Cho & Dansereau, 2010; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). This is the direct and personal face of leadership communication in fair process – to which we turn in the next section.

3. Effective Communication Enables Leadership

“The problem with communication is the illusion that has been accomplished.”

George Bernard Shaw

*“Leaders are seen, heard and felt –
through their messages, listening, behaviours and actions.”*

Ian C. Woodward

Fair Process and Leadership Communication Theory

Leadership research establishes that effective communication is an enabling feature of leadership in practice (Barge, 1994; Hackman & Johnson, 2013; Woodward & More, 2010). From writing and reading, speaking and listening to conversation and reflective thinking, behaving and interacting – leaders and followers create dynamic and continuous interactions amongst themselves and with other stakeholders – personally and virtually. The quality and efficacy of this communication activity can - or cannot - result in an effective engagement of stakeholders in fair process leadership (Kernan & Hanges, 2002). A key observation is that the leader (as a role model) influences both the perception and reality of fair process (Mayer et al., 2007).

Effective communication is achieving the desired outcomes and objectives of communication exchanges in a specific context or situation that leads to shared understanding and satisfaction for the participants in those exchanges (Chidambaram & Jones, 1993; Larson, 1978; Parks, 1985; Qureshi, Liu, & Vogel, 2006; Spitzberg, 2003). In fair process leadership, effective communication would necessitate desired outcomes that emphasise openness, inclusion, inquiry and clarity; in contrast to opaqueness, exclusion, advocacy and ambiguity or outright confusion. Communication effectiveness requires deep and authentic engagement – and fair process leaders do well to clearly role model effective communication behaviours.

There appears to be limited literature linking fair process leadership directly with leadership communication theory, in contrast to the substantial research that links procedural justice and, more recently, interactional justice, with organizational communication – as discussed in the previous section. However, a substantial number of studies on fair process reveal links with specific variables (from the fair process and justice literatures) that might be considered dimensions of organizational and leadership communication. As

exemplars, we consider leader-member exchange (LMX)³ theory, where communication satisfaction, trust for supervisor/management, and trust for the organization are extremely important. We will also consider the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) as it is viewed in the leadership literature as a core variable that contributes to effective leadership in organizations.

Leader-member Exchange Theory (LMX)

Many LMX studies find the extent to which employees “voice” or directly participate in decision-making (Folger, 1977) determines employees’ perceptions of procedural justice (e.g. Jepsen & Rodwell, 2009; Torka, Schyns, & Looise, 2010). In turn, other studies find justice to be linked to outcomes such as communication satisfaction. For instance, Fournier (2008) found a positive relationship among interactional justice, communication satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviours. Aggarwal-Gupta & Kumar (2010) found communication satisfaction to be strongly related to all the three components of organizational justice (procedural, distributive, interactional).

Furthermore, research shows that perceptions of procedural justice in organizations are influenced by the extent to which leaders engage in a particular type of interpersonal communication, such as rapport management (Campbell, White, & Durant, 2007), managerial empathy (Patient & Skarlicki, 2010), and interpersonal influence tactics (Yamaguchi, 2005). Yamaguchi (2005) found that *hard interpersonal communication tactics* (i.e., a high-handed manner, demand/order, warning, and threat) were associated with perceptions of procedural injustice, whereas, *rational interpersonal communication tactics* (such as reasoning, promise, commitment, question, and self-disclosure) and *soft interpersonal communication tactics* (such as a friendly manner, praise, flattery, and sympathy), were associated with the alleviation of perceptions of injustice. This author further explains that, since hard and directive interpersonal communication tactics reflect the attitudes of insincerity and lack of respect to others and ignore others’ opinions, they can promote feelings of injustice, whereas rational and emotionally intelligent interpersonal communication tactics can develop perceptions of procedural justice.

In the organizational and leadership communication literature, hard tactics accord with elements of a defensive communication climate modeled by leaders, and the rational and emotionally intelligent tactics accord with

³ LMX theory outlines aspects of leader follower association where high quality associations are centered on trust and mutual respect where as low quality are developed on fulfillment of contracts (Horner, 1997).

elements of a supportive communication climate (Gibb, 1960). Moreover, organizational and leadership communication literature reveals that perceptions of equity, and trustworthy management, are enhanced by management communication openness or transparency (e.g. (Butler, 1991; McCauley & Kuhnert, 1992; O'Reilly & Roberts, 1977). Employees' perceptions that the organization is characterised by preferentialism and inequity were found to be overcome by management communication openness, provided that this communication openness is consistent across all organizational members (Wanguri, 1996).

The fair process literature indicates that employees' perceptions of their managers' trustworthiness is influenced by perceptions that their managers provide accurate and forthcoming communication, adequate explanations, and timely feedback on decisions. For instance, Aggarwal-Gupta & Kumar (2010) found the amount of information received was an important element of perceptions of interactional justice. Similarly, the communication literature provides evidence that an individual's estimations of the accuracy of information received from superiors is significantly related to trust (Guzley, 1992; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974; Thomas, Zolin, & Hartman, 2009).

Other important elements linking fair process and leadership communication include approaches to feedback, as well as the influence of organizing structures (supported by systems and policies). For feedback, consistency has been reported to be the strongest predictor of distributive and procedural justice, and constructiveness as the strongest predictor of interactional justice (Chory & Westerman, 2009).

With structure, Kim (2005) found that more positive perceptions of internal communication occurred in organizations with organic organizational structures (relationship-based, knowledge seeking and flexible); and that such structures were also positively related to trust for the organization. Yamaguchi (2005) found the relationship between interactional justice and supervisory trust was stronger in organic organizations; and that procedural justice was perceived with stronger organizational support in mechanistic (hierarchical, rules based) organizations.

Emotional Intelligence

The literature on emotional intelligence (EI) also provides evidence of the relationship between effective communication, fair process, and effective leadership. Since fair process by nature contains high levels of interaction between leaders and other individuals, EI—or emotional awareness - and

emotional regulation become important factors affecting the quality of interaction (Wong & Law, 2002). Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee (2000) introduced “communication skills” as part of the “social skills” in their conceptualization of EI. However, we argue that there is a strong presence of effective communication in other dimensions of their EI model as well. Research illustrates a significant relationship between communication skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy (Jadhav & Gupta, 2014; Metts & Planalp, 2011).

Overall, the concept of EI has been related to leadership effectiveness and success (Walter, Cole, & Humphrey, 2011). This is because EI enables leaders to accurately identify and understand others’ emotions, which makes them better at grasping others’ problems, influencing their feelings, and addressing their concerns effectively (Humphrey, 2008).

In line with this research, EI can also help leaders to generate and maintain follower confidence, cooperation, and trust (George, 2000); guide teams through situations rife with ambiguity, confusion, and conflict (Pescosolido, 2002); and provide a climate of inspiration and cohesion resulting in effective team performance (Prati et al., 2003). In addition, EI has been linked to transformational leadership (Bass, 2002) and charismatic leadership (Walter & Bruch, 2007).

FPL, Communication Concepts and Theories

We argue that there is significant potential to achieve fair process using appropriate organizational and individual leadership communication approaches. Wu, Loch & Van der Heyden (2008) explain that six characteristics (which appear in the left column of Table 1 below) are considered to engender a perception of fairness in those affected by a decision process (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997; Leventhal, 1980; Lind & Tyler, 1992). These conditions are closely associated with various elements of organizational and leadership communication concepts and models (which appear in the middle column of Table 1). The right-most column of Table 1 provides information on related organizational and leadership communication dimensions.

Table 1: Achieving Fair Process: Overlap with Organizational and Leadership Communication Theory

Requirements for achieving fair process (Wu, Lock, & Van der Heyden, 2008)	Organizational and leadership communication concepts	Organizational and leadership communication dimensions/instruments/frameworks
Consistency of procedure (Across persons and time)	Awareness in Communication Rhetoric and Performance Theory	Communication Intelligence Framework – Rational and Structural Qualities*
Suppression of bias by the decision maker	Emotional Intelligence (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness – able to assess oneself and others candidly and realistically ▪ Regulation – able to manage feelings and impulses and find ways to control and channel them in useful ways 	Communication Intelligence Framework – Rational Qualities*
Transparency (explanation of the decision logic and accuracy of information given)	LMX Communication openness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceptions that management adequately explains its decisions. ▪ Perceptions that management and co-workers willingly provide job- and organization-related information ▪ Perceptions that info received from co-workers and management is relevant to the receiver, timely, accurate, and clear (i.e., receiver-orientation) Choice of appropriate communication channels	From the Communication Satisfaction (CS) research**: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal feedback ▪ Organizational integration ▪ Corporate perspective ▪ Communication climate From the communication climate Literature ***: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openness of sending ▪ Openness of receiving Receiver-orientation
Engagement of those affected (being listened to with the possibility of influencing the decision, and the possibility of correction through, for example, appeal procedures)	LMX (particularly, voice) Supportive communication climate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceptions that one is taken seriously, valued ▪ Freedom from the need to be defensive, so freedom from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – threat – judgment – deception – attempts to be controlled – have views forced upon one 	From the communication climate literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supportiveness ▪ Equality ▪ Provisionalism From CS research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervisory communication – openness to ideas, offering of guidance, listening and paying attention ▪ Communication climate Communication Intelligence Framework – Awareness and Emotional Characteristics*

Representativeness (Consideration of views of all parties involved)	Emotional Intelligence (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Empathy – aware of others’ feelings and emotions; thoughtfully considering them along with other factors in the decision-making process; openness about diversity and the differences between cultures ▪ Social skills – ability to read and understand different social situations, able to manage conflict and enhance collaboration among groups of people 	Communication Intelligence Framework – Awareness and Emotional Characteristics*
Ethicality (compatibility of procedure with moral values)	Emotional Intelligence (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness – able to understand guiding values or unspoken roles among people in teams or organization ▪ Foster an emotional climate to allow connections and solidarity among people in organizations ▪ Openness - regarding other’s feelings, beliefs and actions; openly admit mistakes, faults, and confront unethical behaviour in others Authentic Leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on transparency, positivity, and high moral standards 	Impacts of ethical work climate on organizational communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hosmer (1996; 1994a; 1994b) ▪ Ruppel & Harrington (2000) ▪ Guzley (1992)

* “Communication Intelligence” as a leadership communication model is referenced below
** The Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire is still quite widely used as a research instrument
*** The ICA Communication Audit Questionnaire also widely used in the field

Beyond theory are the actual communication behaviours of leaders and followers. In practice, business executives participate in various forms of communication activity throughout their day – almost continuously, in many formats, and across an impressive array of tasks (Turner, Qvarfordt, & Biehl, 2010). The perception and reality of fair process is affected by communication approaches of those who create, coordinate and lead the process (Campbell, White, & Durant, 2007; Cobb, Folger, & Wooten, 1995). One perspective of leadership and communication then is to consider the facets and qualities that distinguish effective communication between and amongst leaders and followers – particularly how leaders listen and respond to people and whether these relations are mediated by fair process (Johnson & Bechler, 1998; Kramer, 1997).

Communication Intelligence

In his studies of leadership communication, Woodward (2015) looks at how eight communication elements combine to demonstrate a kind of “communication intelligence” for leaders that is credible, connected and interactive.

The “Communication Intelligence” model (see Figure 3 below) combines four mindsets for leadership communication (the what) with four clusters of communication qualities, techniques and characteristics (the how).



**Eight Communication Intelligence Elements:
Four Mindsets and Four Technique Clusters**

Figure 3: Communication Intelligence for Leaders

- © Ian C Woodward 2015

Combining these “communication intelligence” elements, effective interaction between leaders and people, both within and outside their organization or setting, creates a platform for achieving relevant meaning, connection and results. It also underlines the multiplicity and complexity of effective leadership communication interactions. Effective leadership communication is essentially open, authentic, and clear. It is interactive and dynamic. It recognizes that trust is built through the quality of relationships, and that relationships will be stronger when communication is effective, inclusive, and accessible. And that such communication is the result of a deeper understanding of mindsets and techniques.

For example, the “Message” mindset of “communication intelligence” is reflected in fair process leadership communication through: seeking clear and open message exchange amongst stakeholders; striving for comprehension

and clarity; and finding an appropriate balance between listening, inquiry and advocacy (asking and telling), leading to constructive dialogue.

Another example is the “Expressive” qualities and techniques cluster where: active listening would be on display (focused, yet engaged, verbal and non verbal communication); a certain level of personal disclosure would occur; storytelling would be used; and the display of expressive non-verbal communication (such as voice tone and energy) would create a perception of trustworthiness, openness and personal credibility/authenticity. (See Appendix B for further information on “communication intelligence” including links between its 8 elements, as well as the needs of fair process leadership communication.)

These “communication intelligence” elements are consistent with the principles of fair process leadership and emotional intelligence; if enacted by leaders they are likely to lead to role modeling behaviours for open, collaborative and clear communication and interaction. These are fundamental to effective fair process in practice, and support trust building and commitment, as discussed previously.

Balancing Inquiry and Advocacy

The issues discussed in this and the previous section on leadership and organizational communication are significant for FPL, and will be reflected in our suggested toolkit for effective fair process communication.

However, there is one crucial and specific matter for further consideration, as it affects almost every fair process step and activity – the balance between inquiry and advocacy in the communication practices of a leader. In simple words – it is about the balance between “asking” and “telling” (Schwenk, 1984; Senge, 2006).

While leaders (especially results-driven managers) may develop strong advocacy communication skills during their careers, they need to place more emphasis on inquiry for fair process. In practice, this means active listening and participating in constructive dialogue. For example, when deploying the fair process step of examining decision options, listening to the range of views is essential. This capacity for active listening and constructive dialogue is also at the heart of emotional intelligence models and theories, which emphasise awareness, empathy and deep interaction (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

There is extensive literature to support active listening as a leadership and communication competence (e.g. Robbins & Hunsaker, 2005). Active listening is essential communication behaviour for leaders – as a demonstrable adjunct to the words and actions that elicit commitment and employee engagement. In addition, it is a feature of the culture of organizations that show high levels of engagement (Fisher & Ritchie, 2015). Trust is also a crucial element of employee engagement, in which active listening and responses are perceived as part of management making and keeping promises (Carmeli, Dutton, & Hardin, 2015). Furthermore, active listening (as a balance between inquiry and advocacy) is highlighted as a prime contributor to team learning capacity development, where dialogue contributes to shared understanding and decision-making (Senge, 2014).

We argue that fair process participants need to demonstrate and support active listening and constructive dialogue. This is not to suggest that critical thinking and constructive conflict should be avoided and replaced with simple consensus (Schweiger, Sandberg, & Ragan, 1986). Effective listening is characterised by respectful questioning and commentary. Views are expressed with courtesy, objectivity and evidence rather than as a dictate or unsupported assertion. The atmosphere is professional and respectful, not demeaning nor deferring.

If we consider the imperative for balancing inquiry and advocacy in fair process (active listening and constructive dialogue) and then apply the “communication intelligence” model discussed earlier, we might expect examples of leadership communication such as:

- In advocacy – creating strong impact, presenting relevant, clear and well-organized messages in a compelling and expressive way, supported by appropriate evidence and visually appealing images to participants in the process, while recognizing bias and preferences.
- In inquiry – creating deep dialogue by active listening with question asking, rephrasing for clarity, and structurally including all participants, visualizing and collating ideas from others, and emphasizing positive emotion in problem solving through constructive debate in an environment of mutual trust and respect.
- Except for the third step in the 5E FPL model (being ‘Deciding, Explaining, and Expectation’ setting), which necessitates leaders to rely more on their advocacy communication skills, there is a need to tip the fair process communication balance towards inquiry (asking and listening) communication more than advocacy (telling).

Therefore, we argue that leaders will need to “listen well, ask more, tell less” if they want to role model effective fair process communication and to make their stakeholders genuinely feel involved. In this regard, Appendix C maps the balance of inquiry and advocacy (asking and telling) for a leader at each stage of the 5 “E”s fair process model that was outlined in Section 1.

So, in addressing the question we posed in the introduction, of putting fair process into practice (in organizations, teams, and leadership), we now posit some communication approaches that should assist leaders, stakeholders and educators to translate fair process intention into action. The next section, therefore, provides a usable menu to achieve this – in essence; it presents a toolkit to INVOLVE people fairly in all dimensions of the fair process by employing effective and pertinent communication practices.

4. INVOLVE – The Foundation for FPL Communication

*“Tell me and I’ll forget;
show me and I may remember;
involve me and I’ll understand.”*
Ancient Chinese Proverb

Effective communication, as defined and noted in the previous section, is a central characteristic of fair process leadership and organizational justice in practice. In earlier sections, we highlighted the crucial role of effective communication in creating and deploying fair process by individuals, teams and organizations. This section therefore presents an integrated fair process communication approach.

We have taken elements of the theories, models and ideas covered in the fair process leadership literature, together with organizational and leadership communication, to synthesize this toolkit (see Figure 4 below).

The toolkit starts with a communication principle, supported by key communication practices. The core principle, like the title, is a simple and compelling fair process message: **INVOLVE**. The toolkit is designed as a practical menu for individuals, teams and organizations to be effective in their communication approaches for fair process.

The toolkit does not cover every communication activity (nor does it direct toward specific contexts or business communication needs), but focuses on a critical set of communication capabilities that we see as essential communication conditions for fair process to work in any circumstance.

The INVOLVE Principle

The **INVOLVE** principle is the foundational belief, conviction and value to encourage effective communication that demonstrates fair process for all those involved. Individuals, teams and organizations subscribing to the **INVOLVE** principle would seek to include and engage relevant stakeholders with effective and transparent communication behaviours and activities, at all stages of the fair process decision-making, implementation and review cycle. The **INVOLVE** principle gives “voice” to fair process communication which is respectful, open and objective.

The **INVOLVE** principle requires participation through positive communication behaviours to demonstrate fair process in reality and perception. Furthermore, the level of stakeholder involvement in determining how communication activities will be undertaken (such as team meetings, record keeping and reporting, information exchange) is in itself one appropriate performance measure for effectiveness in fair process communication.

At every level - individuals (including leaders), teams and organizations – the **INVOLVE** principle would be characterized by communication behaviours and activities that are open and authentic rather than hidden or opaque; inclusive rather than dictating; and clear rather than confused.

We contend that the **INVOLVE** principle is both a pre-condition for, and an aspiration of, those operating fair process that employs effective communication. These should be embedded in the architecture of the business and operating process and be modeled by its stakeholders, especially leaders. These engender an environment for fair process involvement.



Figure 4: INVOLVE – Fair Process Effective Leadership Communication
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INVOLVE: Three Communication Practices

To adopt, encourage and internalize the **INVOLVE** principle; we argue that the toolkit requires a range of relevant communication practices. At their heart, these should be predictable and transparent; promote and facilitate engagement; as well as increase understanding and genuine involvement.

Therefore, our **INVOLVE** toolkit highlights three crucial communication practices:

- **Active Listening and Constructive Dialogue** [productive behaviours for interaction, deliberation, decision-making and explanation; as well as an appropriate balance of inquiry (asking) and advocacy (telling)];
- **Agreed Communication Protocols** [mutually developed and transparent communication rules with commitment and follow-through]; and
- **Accessible Connection** [useful, convenient and readily available communication activities, formats and media to facilitate participation and engagement with internal and external stakeholders].

While there are many beneficial communication practices, we concentrate on these three practice areas (with their associated tools and applications) that directly support the fair process cycle to *engage, explore, explain, execute and evaluate*.

The practices need to be applied across individual, team and organizational levels. Table 2 below provides examples to illustrate these practices. Appendix D, building on the table, outlines in further detail the range of communication approaches, activities, styles and practices that could be utilised.

Why is it important to ensure that these fair process communication practices operate across all three levels (individual, team, and organization)? To create a fair process team and organization requires more than the individual leader or a few members who value or exhibit fair process behaviour. Rather, the team or organization needs to develop communication norms, routines, or processes that induce the consistent application of fair process. Teams and organizations can develop and improve fair process communication, and in doing so, boost their work effectiveness, positive organizational culture, and overall performance.

Table 2: Examples of Effective Communication Practices for FPL

	Active Listening and Constructive Dialogue	Agreed Communication Protocols	Accessible Connection
Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotionally intelligent conversation. Focused and respectful Listening. Question asking to develop ideas and understanding. Technology devices do not become distractions. Use of demonstrable evidence to support advocated positions and ideas. Use of appropriate non-verbal behaviours (eye contact, voice, and facial expression) to convey engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement with, and commitment to the creation and execution of team communication rules. Role models the team rules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will subvert individual frustration when someone is taking longer to make a point in a Telecom. Actively seeks and gives constructive feedback on individual communication habits – especially as these relate to agreed approaches in the team’s protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the ability to use, and access to the agreed formats and media of communication. Understands and respects the communication preferences of others in the team and promotes the forms of communication agreed by the team in its protocol. Once decisions are made, communicates these to relevant stakeholders quickly, and takes the time to answer questions.
Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings (in-situ and virtually) where debate is constructive. Team members are allowed to complete their statements without interruption and ideas are given a “fair” hearing. Counter viewpoints are presented to debate the issue constructively, rather than be seen as a personalized attack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team members understand the overall fair process being used, and each of the steps within the cycle. Team collectively creates and implements a short and defined protocol covering issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting rules for agendas, timekeeping, reporting, and debriefing activities. Agreed approaches for email and text exchange. Agreed approaches for team conflict resolution and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team members have equivalent access to technology. Team members are notified and pre-prepared for important team discussions and events. Team members have similar information available to them to be able to explain opinions or decisions to others. There is a convenient system for knowledge-sharing and dissemination.
Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect, Integrity, Transparency and Trust are corporate values. Using fair process is obvious, not sacrificed to other short-term objectives. Using evidence is an obvious quality in making and taking decisions. Corporate and organizational communication that is frequent, timely and clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization has clearly defined communication rules, systems and procedures; yet these are flexible enough to allow teams to adapt to undertaking the fair process steps in their own situations. Creating and using communication protocols are seen as important and valuable tools within the organization’s teams and units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant media and technology are available, and people are trained to be able to use these effectively and efficiently. Corporate communication systems and practices are clear and timely. These take account of different knowledge needs, competencies, and levels in the organization.

We contend that these practices are critical enablers of fair process because they increase predictability; assist in developing understanding and comprehension; promote and facilitate engagement; and enhance genuine involvement by the participating stakeholders. More importantly, they promote transparency and commitment that build trust. In addition, these practices assist in achieving an appropriate balance between inquiry and advocacy – between asking and telling.

Together, these three communication practices represent an integrated and comprehensive set of communication approaches, activities and styles designed to be open, collaborative and clear – and provide a dynamic platform to **INVOLVE**.

These should be applied in perception and in reality by vigorously supporting fair process management and leadership as it plays out in the work place. These communication practices secure the base of fair process engagement – by translating intention into a visible, tangible and transparent communication culture.

We recognise that not all of the examples described in Table 2 for the three fair process communication practices will be applicable in every situation or organization. In addition, on first reading, these may appear to be overly prescriptive in process application (for example, the Communication Protocols).

Our intent was indeed to be prescriptive, and turn rhetoric into organizational reality. Hence our decision to present a toolkit that is also a proactive checklist for assessing whether the communication approaches in an organization (and inside its teams or by its individual leaders) are more or less likely to result in perceptions and reality of fair process being alive inside the organization.

Diagnostic

To underline a diagnostic element in our toolkit, Appendix E contains a simple diagnostic questionnaire to assess the readiness (from a communication perspective) of organizations to deploy fair process, set against the communication practices we recommend. The questions in this diagnostic tool are a natural extension of our discussions in the various sections of this paper.

This tool, and a discussion around the outcomes of the assessment, would act as a guidepost for implementing the INVOLVE principle as well as increasing sensitivity towards, and commitment to, fair process. In addition, having created a base-line benchmark for fair process leadership communication, teams and leaders inside the organization could calibrate their results over time to assess progress.

In summary, our recommendation to fair process leaders is:

INVOLVE

Be respectful, open and objective.

Listen actively – ask more and tell less.

Discuss and decide constructively and clearly.

Develop and role model the mutually agreed communication protocols.

Connect in accessible ways and means for all involved.

5. Conclusions and Opportunities for Further Research

“These people ask for just the same thing, fairness, and fairness only.

This, so far as in my power, they, and all others, shall have.”

Abraham Lincoln

Fair process leadership (FPL) that improves engagement and commitment is dependent upon behaviours and approaches (Van der Heyden et al., 2008, 2013; Leventhal, 1980). Our work demonstrates the centrality of communication behaviour and approaches.

We believe that the implications of our work for future research on effective FPL communication are many. First, and foremost, empirical tests of the propositions presented in the paper must be conducted. Do our three communication practices (active listening and constructive dialogue; agreed communication protocols; and, accessible connection) invariably help leaders to be perceived as fair and effective? Does the implementation of such practices (whether at individual, team, or organizational level) result in better performance over sustained periods of time? Although our research and field work suggests all three practices are essential, there should be testing of whether there are any hierarchies of needs in the practices (i.e. are constructive dialogue and active listening sufficient to achieve FPL without agreed protocols?)

Second, it is important to reiterate that justice is contextually sensitive (Pearson, 2009). People evaluate justice through their perceptions based on their norms and values. A process that is considered fair in one cultural context may not be in another. That leads to a caveat. Specific aspects of effective communication practices for fair process leadership may differ across cultures (Ryan & Wessel, 2015; Tyler, Lind, & Huo, 2000; Vogel & Mitchell, 2015). Therefore, future research should investigate how and under what circumstances effective communication practices for fair process leadership should be used in different cultural settings with different values, expectations, and interaction styles.

Third, matters get more complicated as we attempt to extend the analysis to the circumstances where a team or organization is composed of individuals from diverse cultures. We argue that in such culturally diverse settings, implementing fair process is critical if the team and organization are to leverage the potential benefits of the diversity of perspectives and views among different groups of people (DiStefano & Maznevski, 2000). However,

the conditions that may foster or impede this are not clearly understood. For example, we hypothesize that the effect of the team's cultural diversity on its performance depends on the degree to which team members engage in the effective communication practices proposed here. We postulate further that, for such effective communication practices to occur in this situation, team members must possess a certain level of 'awareness' of cultural differences that exist in the team. Future research could test these speculations, and/or explore them with respect to other forms of demographic diversity such as generations or gender, which are also a feature of today's organizations (Woodward, More, & Vongswasdi, 2015).

Fourth, given the multiplicity of questions and level of effective communication practices proposed, there is potential to engage with leaders and practitioners concerned with fair process leadership in systematic action research projects.⁴ In this research approach, scholars would engage with practitioners and their peers in systematic reflection and draw lessons from their everyday practice. For leaders striving to implement effective communication practices for fair process leadership, the question would revolve around the enablers and challenges to such work. One conclusion, for example, of an action research project is the importance of presenting FPL as a means to an end, and not simply as a goal in itself.

Such research would facilitate a process of systematic action and reflection amongst scholars, practitioners, their organizations, and their stakeholders (Reynolds & Vince, 2004). The results of such studies would be contextually rich, and could help leaders recalibrate their implementation of different communication activities and protocols according to what is appropriate to their situation and dynamics environment.

Finally, we argued that fair process leadership, as an aspiration must be founded on a desire to achieve effective and inclusive communication – to engage and involve. Even if the aim for a leader or manager is not to institute fair process leadership per se – the INVOLVE toolkit proposed should lead to communication behaviours and outcomes that are positively engaging in any case.

⁴ One such instance of this kind of research is a 5-year study of a Canadian telecom operator utilizing FPL that is currently being developed the time of publication of this paper by one of the co-authors.

Appendices

Appendix A: Fair Process Leadership in Action: A Case Study Where Effective Communication Matters (*Author Case Study Example*)

Consider what happened in 2012/13 within the Department of Innovation at Magotteaux, an international foundry company situated in Belgium. They had rolled out two strategic projects –the Beads project and the Grains project – with very different results and effectiveness. Having been exposed to FPL, the Director of Research investigated how these two projects had been implemented over 18 months after project kick-offs. He also measured and compared the key performance indicators of each project.

The contrasts could hardly have been starker. The result of the Beads project revealed a very good performance—scoring a high level of team motivation and trust. Its project team members shared common goals and exhibited high solidarity within the team. They were involved in frequent direct interaction, sharing ideas and information, resulting in high creativity and innovation. On the other hand, those involved in the Grains project rated all the above indicators—team motivation, trust, knowledge-sharing, group solidarity and creativity – as very weak. In other words, performance was seen as poor.

The divergent results startled the Research Director given the fact that the two projects were within the same organization, with the same project leader, and had overlapping membership. Looking deeper, with the benefit of the FPL framework, the Research Director clearly saw that what accounted for the difference in outcome was the degree to which “fair process” was followed in planning and implementing each project.

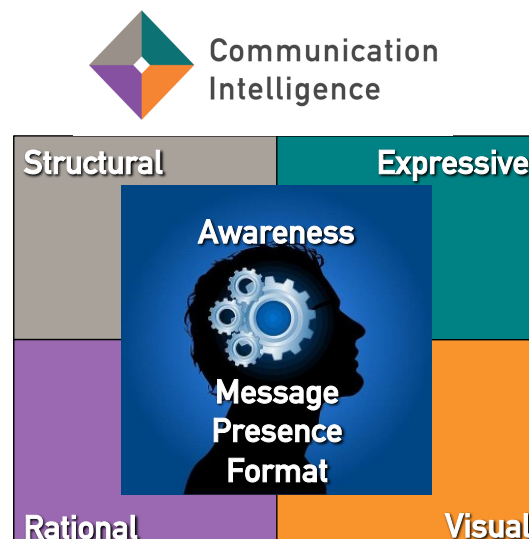
In the Grains project, communication was poor or almost non-existent. Project leaders told the team that the business problem was that they had to test four new grains, and that this was not negotiable. Members had no opportunity to give their input. This ‘do as you’re told’ approach meant that no exploration of options took place because the frame was set and this left no room for changes.

At the start of the Beads project, the leader presented the business problem to the team (i.e. the need to cut cost), and people were engaged and encouraged to give feedback. The team then brainstormed to identify 59 cost-reduction ideas. They also set the template to measure the ideas’ success. They held quarterly meetings where progress was reviewed. In each of the fair process steps, the Beads project emphasised effective communication approaches, including active listening and constructive dialogue, agreed communication protocols, and people with accessible connections. Consistent with fair process theory, the Beads project showed superior performance.

Appendix B: Communication Intelligence in Fair Process Leadership Communication

“Communication intelligence” is a model for effective leadership communication developed by Professor Ian C. Woodward that fully integrates eight elements (four “mindsets” and four “technique clusters”) to achieve effective communication for leaders. These eight elements sit underneath a person’s cultural background, and their individual personality trait of extraversion/introversion – as all eight elements are present in all cultures and are found in both extraverts and introverts.

“Communication intelligence” applies across the different kinds of communication situations – public, group, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (with self). The mindsets and technique clusters have clear links to fair process communication.



“Communication intelligence” integrates four mindsets (the things we need to think about for effective communication); and four clusters of communication techniques and qualities (the ways we need to undertake communication activity to be effective). These clusters are closely related to the four major communication preference styles Woodward’s research has identified in people. People with high levels of “communication intelligence” use all the mindsets and use techniques from all four clusters, particularly those that are natural for them, while they can gain effectiveness by learning the techniques from the other clusters that are less natural for them.

The four mindsets in “communication intelligence” inter-related to fair process communication are:

- **Awareness:** of self, others, context and purpose. This refers to a person’s ability to be deeply aware of the communication needs and preference styles of those involved in communication as well as oneself; and also be aware of the situation and intent or purpose of the communication activity (e.g. informing, inquiring, influencing, persuading, entertaining, motivating, inspiring).

For fair process communication, the “awareness mindset” is reflected in a desire to involve others and to take account of the diversity effects that may influence the communication interactions.

- **Message:** the core meaning and content of the communication, supported by structure and appropriate details, as well as message relevance and clarity.

For fair process communication the “message mindset” is reflected in clear message exchange amongst stakeholders, striving for comprehension and clarity, and in an appropriate balance of listening, inquiry and advocacy (asking and telling) that leads to constructive dialogue.

- **Presence:** beyond the words – the nonverbal (e.g. body language and gestures), paraverbal (e.g. sound/tone of voice) and visual, symbolic or expressive features.

For fair process communication the visible presence of leaders and followers directly affects the effectiveness of the interactions and is reflected in such things as open body postures, respectful and measured, yet expressive voice tone, and visual communication devices (charts and the like) that are stylistically owned by the participants.

- **Format:** the choice and use of communication formats, media and repertoire that are “fit for purpose and situation” (e.g. behaviours, spoken, written, listening, thinking/reflection, novels, text, email, instant messaging, video and the like).

For fair process communication the “format mindset” is reflected in a willingness to use communication activities, media and technologies that are available to all, as well as appropriate for the purpose at each stage of the fair process cycle.

The four clusters of communication techniques and qualities in “communication intelligence” and their relationship to fair process leadership are:

- **Rational:** techniques and qualities that affect the logic, factuality, knowledge level, intellectual substance, idea clarity and simplicity of language for comprehension in communication.

In fair process communication, “rational” qualities would include being objective and constructive, using verifiable evidence and attempting to suppress or recognise bias.

- **Structural:** techniques and qualities that affect the language or sound clarity, consistency, order/flow, construction, precision and levels of detail and accuracy in communication.

In fair process communication “structural” qualities would include methods for agenda setting, organizing information, discussion preparation and sequencing participative debate.

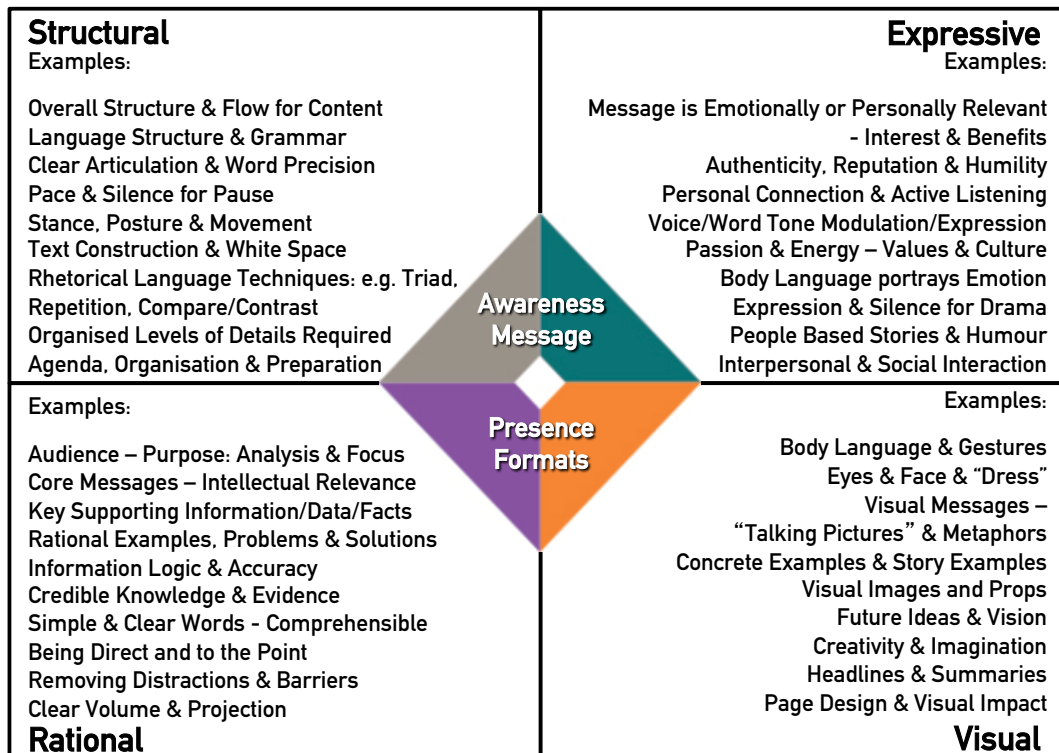
- **Expressive:** qualities that affect the expression, emotion, interactivity, personalization and authenticity of communication.

In fair process communication “expressive” qualities would include active listening (where mind, verbal and non verbal communication is focused); a certain level of personal disclosure; storytelling; displaying expressive non-verbal communication (such as voice tone and energy); exhibiting behaviours engendering a sense of trustworthiness, openness and personal credibility/authenticity; and role modeling.

- **Visual:** qualities that affect the appearance, visuality, conceptuality, creativity and symbolism of communication.

In fair process communication, “visual” qualities would include active idea generation, producing graphical or visual representations of ideas and messages, as well as non-verbal gestures supporting listening and engagement that are clearly on display to others.

There are literally thousands of communication tools and techniques spread across these four clusters and used in the various formats of communication. Some examples to illustrate communication techniques in each cluster are provided below:



Adapted from Source:
Woodward, I. C. (2015)

Understanding Communication Preference Styles Guidebook: 2nd edition.

Appendix C: Balance of Leader Inquiry and Advocacy

Balance of Inquiry (asking) and Advocacy (telling) – Combining the INVOLVE Principle and Practices with the FPL 5 “E”s and 5 “C”s FPL Model



Figure 5: INVOLVE – “Ask and Tell”:
Fair Process Effective Leadership Communication
© Woodward, More and Van der Heyden, 2016

Appendix D: Three Core Effective Communication Practices for Fair Process

The following is a more comprehensive list of examples of the three core effective communication practices for fair process leadership (extended from Table 2 in Section 4).

Three Core Effective Communication Practices for Fair Process:

1. Active Listening and Constructive Dialogue:

(a) Individuals

- Active Listening Practices
 - Emotionally Intelligent conversation.
 - Focused and respectful listening.
 - Deep Inquiry: Question-asking – emphasis on asking more than telling.
 - Capacity for self-control; abstaining from distractions and multi-tasking during conversations (e.g. refrain from checking email whilst on conference call).
 - Evidence-based critical thinking – use of demonstrable evidence to support advocated positions and ideas.
 - Solution-focused rather than critique-first statements whilst maintaining analytical legitimacy, logic, and respectful "devil's advocacy".
 - Giving and receiving honest feedback.
- Communication Intelligence Behaviours for Constructive Dialogue
 - Message clarity and relevance.
 - Nonverbal and presence skills built on awareness of self, others, context, and purpose including eye contact, gestures, voice, and facial expression which conveys a strong sense of interest and engagement and is appropriate to context such as culture and accepted social mores.
 - Communication format – from encoding in speaking and writing to decoding through listening and thinking, as well as adopting and utilizing efficient and effective communication media or technologies for information collection, evaluation or

dissemination (for example, knowing when face-to-face discussion or a telephone call is more appropriate than email).

- Leadership-level (Role Modeled) Behaviours
 - Personal reflection and feedback habits are clearly modeled to colleagues.
 - Communication behaviours consistent with the values and expectations of fair process (such as active listening, mutual respect).
 - Visible leadership that is open to, and available for, stakeholder conversation and dialogue.

(b) Teams

- For meetings (in-situ and virtually), ensure that the interpersonal and physical environment is conducive to producing constructive debate
- Cultivate team climate where members feel free to speak out/express opinion/provide honest feedback.
- In meetings, team members are allowed to complete their statements without interruption and ideas are given a “fair” hearing. Leaders or facilitators should take the role of encouraging everyone to contribute to the conversation or share their perspectives before making a decision.
- Counter viewpoints are presented to debate the issue constructively, rather than be seen as a personalized attack.
- Break teams into “natural” teams (3 to 7 members) for creative thinking and problem solving; compare team answers and establish commonality first; then examine, explore and contrast the differences.

(c) Organizations

- Transparent monitoring, evaluation, reporting and reward systems – without these the organization communicates intention rather than actuality.
- Respect, integrity, transparency and trust are corporate values.
- Using fair process is a key organizational principle that should not be sacrificed to achieve seemingly urgent short-term objectives (unless itself the result of a fair process engagement).
- Using evidence is an obvious quality in making and taking decisions.
- Corporate and organizational communication that is frequent, timely and clear.

2. Agreed Communication Protocols:

(a) Individuals

- Involvement with, and commitment to the creation and execution of team communication rules.
- Role models the team rules
 - Subverts individual frustration when someone is taking longer to make a point in a Telecom.
 - Actively seeks and gives constructive feedback on individual communication habits – especially as these relate to agreed approaches in the team's protocol.

(b) Teams

- Team members understand the overall fair process being used, and each of the steps within the cycle.
- Team collectively creates and implements short and defined Communication Rules, Systems and Agreed Modes of Operation with respect to:
 - communication situations (such as agendas, timekeeping, discussion rules, reporting, and debriefing activities).
 - communication exchange (for information, knowledge sharing or updating progress).
 - communication formats (agreed technology types and standardized format principles such as timeliness of email response expectations and content dissemination rules.
 - principles or approaches for team conflict resolution and feedback.
 - allocation and clarification of spokespeople, secretariat and meeting facilitation roles.
 - expected behavioural and linguistic norms for interpersonal communication within the team – to support the attitude of involvement and value for mutual respect.
- Structured Participation with Specific and Organized Procedures for Team Activities, Goal Setting and Role Clarification required during aspects of the Fair Process cycle:
 - briefing methods for team events and projects;
 - conducting brainstorming;
 - undertaking debriefing; and

- planning for communication activities during the decision explanation, execution and evaluation phases of the fair process cycle.

(c) Organizations

- The organization has clearly defined communication rules, systems and procedures; yet these are flexible enough to allow teams to adapt to undertaking the fair process steps in their own situations.
- Creating and using communication protocols are seen as important and valuable tools within the organization's teams and units; and encourage collaborations and engagement among diverse teams across functions in the organization ('inter-team communication').

3. Accessible Connection

(a) Individuals

- Employees and fair process participants have the ability to use, and access to, the agreed formats and media of communication.
- Demonstrates understanding of, and respect for, the communication preferences of others in the team (particularly in diverse teams, as communication preferences usually vary across generation, culture, and gender) and promotes the forms of communication agreed by the team in its protocol.

(b) Teams

- Team members have equivalent access to, and ability to use technology.
- Team members are notified and pre-prepared for important team discussions and events. Team members have similar information to be able to explain decisions to others.
- There is a convenient system for knowledge sharing – purposeful for projects and teams, as well as in the organization. In particular, there is a need to create a technology infrastructure that can support both the sharing atmosphere, and an on going record of the knowledge, which can be useful for application of the shared knowledge later on.

(c) Organizations

- There are effective organizational communication systems and media:
 - Efficient and readily available Communication Systems and formats, such as a mix of appealing and efficient Media and Technology, that these are readily available to those involved, together with training to be able to use the systems/media effectively.
 - Strategic external and internal communication designed to promote understanding, meaning, commitment and desired actions or outcomes – where the Fair Process overall approach is well understood and articulated across the organization.
 - Decisions or outcomes of the process are announced quickly and effectively to all stakeholders, and time is taken to answer questions.
 - Corporate communication systems and practices are clear and timely. These take account of different knowledge needs, competencies, and levels in the organization.

Appendix E: Fair Process Leadership Communication Diagnostic

This is a questionnaire to assess readiness of organizations, teams, and leaders to deploy fair process. It can be taken by individuals and/or teams – with collective results. An initial benchmark score can then be re-tested over time to assess progress and calibrate expectations and perceptions.

Instructions: For each question – give a score between 1 and 10 where 1 is very poor and 10 is exceptional. Description of scoring is given in the next page. We recommend that the assessment be taken at various times in the process of implementing fair process in which leaders, teams, and organizations can recalibrate effective communication preparedness and performance over time.

Question	Individual/ Self	Team	Organization
1. Clarity of Goals and Objectives: When I/we work with others is the context clearly specified, including the goals and objectives pursued?			
2. Shared Values: Do I/we present myself or ourselves in a way that ensures we represent respect, integrity, trust and inclusion at all times ?			
3. Trusted and Available Leaders: As a senior leader myself, am I, or are our senior team or organization leaders, open, trustworthy and active listeners who are available to people in the team or organization when I am/they are needed?			
4. Active Listening in an Inclusive Environment: Do I/we show and clearly display effective interpersonal communication styles that emphasise active listening, inclusion and awareness of individual differences ? When I/we work with others is the environment created open and participative ?			
5. Constructive Dialogue: Do I/we demonstrate communication based upon constructive dialogue and interaction when we communicate with one another? That is, do I/we listen and ask more than we tell?			
6. Giving Time and Respect: Do I/we always display mutual respect and give time to others to express opinions and to fully explain decisions ?			
7. Protocols and Procedures: Do I/we use agreed and clear protocols, procedures or rules of engagement to support effective communication in my/our organizational groups or teams?			
8. Processes: Do I/we use structured and clearly understood processes to ensure I/we generate ideas, plan for informing others of my/our decisions, and debrief on progress in a timely and relevant way?			
9. Systems: Do I/we have the communication systems and technologies at hand that are easily accessible by all who need to know information in a timely way?			
10. Evaluation: Do I/we use open and transparent evaluation information processes and systems as well as make rewards for individuals and teams based on objective measures and agreed business approaches or outcomes?			
Segment Total X/100			
Add three segment columns above and divide by 3 – total is out of 100 – to give an overall result integrating self, team and organization.			

Scoring (*this can also be calibrated over time*)

Score %	Fair Process Leadership: Effective Communication Preparedness and Performance
80 to 100%	<p>Strong</p> <p>Individuals, teams and organization are highly oriented towards implementing fair process leadership in communication practice. There is demonstrable evidence of open, inclusive and clear communication culture and practices reflected in behaviours and values. Core principle is to INVOLVE with Deep Engagement.</p>
60 to 80%	<p>Moderate to Strong</p> <p>Individuals, teams, and organization are well positioned to implement fair process leadership in practice. There is demonstrable evidence of open, inclusive and clear communication culture and practices emerging as capabilities. Implementing fair process would reinforce these approaches. Core principle is Emerging Engagement with potential to INVOLVE.</p>
30 to 60%	<p>Low to Moderate</p> <p>Individuals, teams and organization will find difficulty implementing fair process leadership in practice. Substantial effort in building open, inclusive and clear communication culture and practices should be built as leadership and management capabilities. However, implementing aspects of fair process leadership (especially at team level) may be a beneficial catalyst to building these capabilities in tandem. Core principle is Inconsistent Consultation.</p>
0 to 30%	<p>Very Low</p> <p>Individuals, teams, and organization will find considerable difficulty implementing fair process leadership in practice. Fundamental work in building open, inclusive and clear communication would be a precursor to implementing fair process leadership. Core principle is Direct Compliance rather than deep and authentic Engagement.</p>

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