

River Running

leadership in motion

Volume One

Facilitator's Guide

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Whitewater rafting terminology adapted from WetDawg,
Global Headquarters for Adventure Water Sports.

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Class I/II Runs

- I: Easy and regular waves, a clear route, few or no obstacles.
- II: Still easy, a clear route, but the swell is bigger. Only a little steering is needed.

--International River Classification System

From the first moment you paddle through the shallow waters on your way to the magnificent canyons, two things are obvious:

- 1) You're definitely in for an adventure.
- 2) You're glad you're not alone. It's too cool not to be able to share it with someone. And it's too hard to get it done by yourself. Success requires each member in the raft, a lot of teamwork, communication, and focus. These are the basics to any leadership undertaking. And that's exactly where we push off the shore and strike out toward these first four river runs on our journey.



Put-in:

Starting place of a river trip where you put your boat on the river to begin a run.

Run One

Intentional Communication

Leader Intro:

Leaders know how to use their words powerfully. In this lesson, you will:

- Teach students about the value we place on words.
- Equip students to communicate effectively as leaders.

The skill of intentional communication is basic to leadership. Many students don't realize they could improve their effectiveness as a leader merely by becoming a better communicator. In preparation to teach this topic, listen to the way your students communicate. Ask yourself, "How can I help them be more intentional about their communication?" Be sure to read **Learning How to Use Value Statements** (page 14) as part of your initial lesson preparation.

Activity: Animal Cracker Round-up

Purpose –This activity will help your students see how intentional communication can help them accomplish their goals. The challenge for them will be describing something that they have never seen. Utilize this time to identify the good communicators and those students who could work on this skill.

Instructions –You will need to buy a bag or box of animal crackers for this game. You may want to sort through the crackers to get a few groupings that are the same and be sure to have one person with a cracker that doesn't match anyone's. Start by giving each participant an animal cracker. Instruct the students to keep the cracker in their hands behind their backs and don't look at it. Each person must now feel the shape of their cracker and find others who are holding the same shape. They have

to describe the shape to others and form teams who all have the same cracker. After all the students feel they are in the right groups, have them look at their crackers and see if they made the right decision.

Now you can lead a discussion about the power of communication while enjoying a snack of animal crackers. Ask them the following questions:

1. What made this task difficult?
2. What were some of the roadblocks to effective communication?
3. What were some of the things that made your communication successful?
4. What does this activity teach us about using effective communication?

Video Clip: Princess Bride

The hero of the story, the man in black, matches wits with the head villain in a struggle for the princess. This story is a great illustration of what happens when we are not effective in our communication.

Opening Scene – The man in black comes up on a table with the head villain and the princess.

Closing Scene – The villain dies from the poison.

Discussion Questions:

- What did the villain communicate?
- What made his communication so ineffective?
- How can we avoid these communication pitfalls?

From the Student Guide

Run One Intentional Communication

Being able to communicate effectively is essential for successful leadership. A good communicator focuses on using few words to deliver a powerful message. By choosing words carefully, the leader ensures that encouragement is sincere and criticism is constructive. Think back to the last important conversation you had with a leader you respect. What about that conversation is memorable to you? Chances are that leader chose his or her words carefully and used them in a powerful way.

On November 19, 1863, our country held a ceremony to honor the fallen soldiers of the battle of Gettysburg. As a nation gathered to mourn the loss of sons and fathers, Edward Everett, a popular speaker of the day, and President Abraham Lincoln were called upon to speak to the crowd. Everett was well respected for his speaking abilities and gave an impassioned two-hour speech. When he finished, President Lincoln stood to say just a few words. No one expected much from Lincoln's speech that day. In fact, he only spoke for two minutes. However, in that short speech, Lincoln captured the heart of the American people.

"The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address

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Everett admitted to Lincoln later, "I wish that I could flatter myself that I had come as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes." Lincoln's words shaped the course of American history. They prove the power of intentional communication. An effective leader knows that communication is a powerful tool.

Definition:

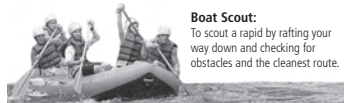
Intentional Communication is the leadership skill of purposefully using words to impart information or ideas so that others adopt a common vision.

Discovery Questions:

1. How often do you think about the words you will use when talking with a fellow teammate?

2. How can poor communication contribute to problems in relationships?

3. In your leadership role, are you using communication skills to get the most out of your team members? Explain your answer.



Boat Scout:

To scout a rapid by rafting your way down and checking for obstacles and the cleanest route.

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4. What are some ways to identify a breakdown in communication on your team?

5. What do you need to do to improve your communication skills?

From the Source:

Nehemiah is a great example of a leader who valued intentional communication. In this passage, Nehemiah is trying to convince the remnant of Israel that they can rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, a monumental task. Read Nehemiah 2:11–20 and answer the following questions.

1. What does Nehemiah do to prepare to speak to the people?

2. What does this passage show us about Nehemiah's communication skills and leadership ability?

3. What steps does he take to inspire the people to build the wall?

4. How does Nehemiah respond to criticism? How does 1 Corinthians 4:13 instruct us regarding criticism?

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From the Heart:

"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer." -Psalm 19:14

Action Steps:

1. Make a list of steps you can take to increase your communication skills.

2. Who will you find to help you in this area?



Put-in:

Starting place of a river trip where you put your boat on the river to begin a run.

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Learning How to Use Value Statements:

What we believe, our values, truly shape who we are and what we do. If you believe that you can handle driving on an icy road, you will probably try. If students believe that they can earn a 4.0 GPA, they will probably achieve it. If we believe that Christ is returning soon to take us home, we will live our lives differently.

This section is designed to help students examine the values that play an important role in who they are. It will also help them decide how they should live in light of them. Creating a value statement puts what a person believes in writing. It says what he or she knows. It tells what the person understands. It defines his or her feelings. Then, most of all, it reflects what a person is committed to doing as a result. Most value statements begin with something like this: "I believe...", or "I understand that...", or "I think that...", or "I will..."

In this way, students will continue to develop a healthy view of who they are and who God has created them to be. This part of the study is their chance to rethink, respond, and rejoice over what the Lord is doing in their life.

Evaluation is the key to personal growth. Therefore, the way to get the most out of this section is to:

1. Encourage students to be totally honest with themselves and the Lord. If we are honest about our weaknesses, then we can bring them to the Lord. Jesus said, "When you are weak, I am strong." Because we are open to His working in our lives, He will begin to shape and mold us into His children.
2. Follow up, follow up, follow up. Holding students accountable to what they say they believe is essential. It may be as easy as having each member comment on their Action Steps and/or Value Statements at the start of each lesson. It may be more personal, a phone call, encouraging note, etc. Whatever you do to encourage action and accountability will increase the effectiveness of this entire study.

From the Student Guide

Value Statement:



Write out your personal value statement about Intentional Communication.

Example: I understand that intentional communication is a key to my success as a leader. I know that the more I develop in this area, the more leadership opportunities I will have. I will remain committed to growing in this area.

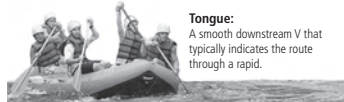
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Tongue:

A smooth downstream V that typically indicates the route through a rapid.



Boat Scout:

To scout a rapid by rafting your way down and checking for obstacles and the cleanest route.