

Working Well With Auditees: Strategies for Effective Communication

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Audience Survey

What's the most common reaction you get from agency staff when you arrive on scene to begin an audit?

A.



B.



C.



Learning Objectives

Share ideas and knowledge on how to:

- Maintain productive auditee relationships
- Communicate effectively with agencies throughout the audit process
- Teach newer audit staff these skills

In the Beginning: Auditee Communication During Planning and Survey

Entrance Conference

- **Before:** Discussion of basic audit process and logistics
- **Now:** Strategic opportunity to educate agency leadership about auditing standards and the basis for audit findings

New Entrance Conference Agenda

- Yellow Book
- Reasons for audit
- Scope areas and agency suggestions
- Audit evidence
- Next steps

Handling Tough Questions at the Entrance Conference

- Who on your team is an expert in our program field?
- Our program is not nearly as big as, say, Medicaid. Why are you spending resources to audit us?

Audience Comments

- How does your agency encourage effective agency communication at the beginning of an audit?

In the Thick of Things: Auditee Communication During Fieldwork

Build Ongoing Auditee Relationships

- Identify key staff
- Establish routine communication
- Put yourself in their shoes

Conducting and Sharing Key Analyses

- Understand what is required (criteria)
- Prepare clearing documents with agency staff in mind
- Request written responses

Fieldwork Conversations: Advice for New Auditors

- What if they like agency staff as people?
- What if they *don't* like agency staff as people?

Audience Comments

How do you teach new auditors to communicate effectively with auditees during fieldwork?

When Things Get Real: Findings

Communication at the Findings Clearing

- Provide written findings in advance of formal meeting
- Prepare reactive messages
- Focus on audit evidence
- Focus on solutions
- Let agency staff vent

Defending Your Findings: Coaching New Staff on Assertiveness

- Prepare talking points ahead of time
- Trust your work
 - Yellow Book standards
 - Multiple levels of review
- Trust your knowledge of a program
- Remember that you're not alone

Audience Comments

What advice do you have for communicating findings to auditees?

General Tips for Effective Communication with Auditees

Insights Discovery Color Analysis

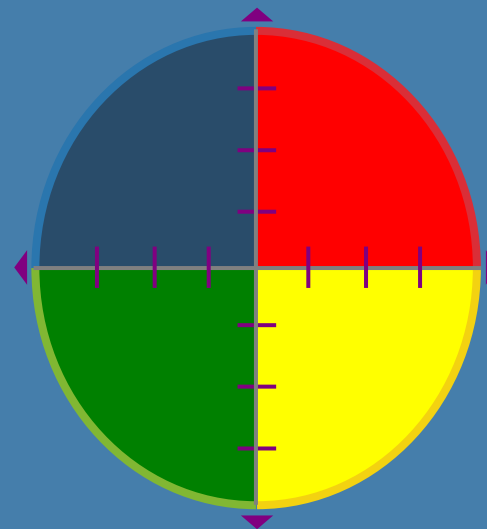
THINKING
Focus on the Task

Formal
Detached
Competitive

Impersonal
Objective
Correct

Informal
Considerate
Caring

Personal
Involved
Accommodating



Focus on the Relationship
FEELING

Insights Discovery Color Analysis

Eight Types Team Dynamics – Approach to Task



Methods of Communication

- Phone vs. email
- Verbal vs. writing

Dealing With Difficult Auditees

- You can't change them; you can only change you
- Accept that some people won't like you
- Focus on the larger purpose of your work
- Find ways to laugh about your experience

**Questions or
comments?**



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