**Today’s Topic: Communication Recovery – Six Step Model**

Have you ever said something unintentionally offensive and wished you could take it back? If so, you know how awkward it feels when communication goes awry. And it does from time to time. Even with the best of intent to be inclusive, you might say something biased, stereotypical, or exclusionary. You can choose to ignore it and hope no one notices. (Guess what – it was noticed!) Or, you can employ a strategy for recovery.

“Communication Recovery” involves acknowledging your mistake, sincerely apologizing, and then moving on in a more inclusive way. Communication Recovery is an underutilized skill. When things go wrong in communication, many people shy away from trying to recover. They are afraid of making things worse. They don’t know what to do. The good news is Communication Recovery is possible, it’s not that difficult to do, and it has a big payoff.

Communication Recovery allows you to acknowledge your mistake when things go wrong – when you have unintentionally demeaned, discounted, or excluded others. This gives you the chance to rebuild communication with your listener(s) and enhance your own credibility. Communication Recovery includes six quick steps and takes thirty seconds or less. It’s relatively painless.

1. **Accept the Feedback** – Give some sign that you are open to the input, such as listening to and thanking the gift giver.
2. **Acknowledge Intent and Impact** – The most important thing here is to recognize the negative impact of your statement or behavior on the listener, regardless of your good intent.
3. **Apologize** – Say “I’m sorry” or “I apologize,” and do so sincerely.
4. **Ask Questions for Clarification** – If you don’t understand the feedback you’ve been given, ask questions for greater clarity.
5. **Adjust / Change** – State or demonstrate what you will do differently. A clear sign that you’ve accepted the feedback is to not repeat the offense.
6. **Move Forward** – Recovery is a quick process. You don’t need to linger. Move on once the listener is ready.

Of all of these, Accept the Feedback and Apologize may be the most powerful. In its simplest form, recovery sounds like this:

> “Thanks for telling me. I’m sorry.”

Today’s lesson is from **OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts**: Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World

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For more information on this resource and other high-impact WALK THE TALK publications