

Managing communication errors in the workplace:  
From conflict and revenge to forgiveness and reconciliation  
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**Basic Model**  
Triggers/Offenses → Sensemaking & Blame → Desire for Revenge or Desire for Forgiveness

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**Types of Offense**

<u>Goal Obstruction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interference with job support</li><li>- competition</li><li>- insufficient resource allocation</li></ul>	<u>Damaged Reputation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- wrong or unfair accusations</li><li>- insults</li><li>- unnecessarily public criticism</li></ul>
<u>Breaking of Rules &amp; Social Norms</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- formal rule violations</li><li>- breach of contract</li><li>- norm violations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- shirking job responsibilities</li><li>- broken promises</li><li>- lying</li></ul></li><li>- corrupt authority</li></ul>	

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**Hanlon's Razor**

Never attribute to malice that which can be explained by stupidity

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**Actor-Observer Bias**

Whether one is the actor or observer (of an actor) affects where s/he sees the cause of the actor's action.

Actors look at the situation

--> blame situational factor

Observers look at the actor

--> blame actor

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**Actor-Observer Bias in Conflict**

Own mistakes & aggressions

--> blame on *situation*

Each *other's* mistakes & aggressions

--> blame on *other's personality or intentions*

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**Takeaways**

1. Avoid Communication Error #1: Treat people with respect. No insults.  
*Speak when you are angry, and you will make the best speech you will ever regret. - Ambrose Bierce*
2. Avoid Communication Error #2: Talk to the Perpetrator
3. Avoid Attribution Errors.  
*Never attribute to malice that which can be explained by stupidity.*
4. No Gossip.

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**More Vengeful People**  
*"Collectors of Injustice"*

- men
- young people
- high negative affectivity
- belief in norm of reciprocity
- obsessive
- chronically angry
- high, but unstable, self-esteem
- hostile attribution style

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