Communication:
The challenge of saying it right

Clara Fernández López, External Relations Manager UIA
„This is real!“

How we see –
and how we could see the world
This is real: our „perception“
„This is real!“

- we have 5 senses and a discursive intellect
- each sense only has a small scope of perception possibilities, which are combined by our intellect
- from where it deduces further realities (e.g. radio waves)
- we are not able to perceive anything else
- when we assume that we can perceive „the reality“, this is an anthropocentric error
„This is real!“

- We only perceive as much as we need in order to organize ourselves

- Our brain has a „processing speed“ of c. 1/5 sec

- >>> What we percieve, has already elapsed. . .

- We sit in our „brain-cinema“ – and we do not notice
Make a distinction!

- People believe, what they see and not, what is!
Believe it or not, these guys are all the same height.
...the red, horizontal lines – are or aren’t they parallel?
Make a distinction!

- People believe, what they see and not, what is!

- all perceiving always means: to distinguish
  - Retina neurons only „fire“ at distinctions
  - We only perceive, by distinguishing (see the „saccades“ of the eyes 3 x per second)

- we compare our perception with forms stored in our mind, we relate and assign

- and this is convenient...
Make a distinction!

- people believe, what they see and not, what is!

- all perceiving always means: to distinguish

- we compare our perception with forms stored in our mind, we relate and match

- this is convenient:

- and inconvenient: we already valuate while perceiving and overlook, that what we are seeing, could possibly be totally different from the form stored in our mind (experience)
Realities

• We feel forced to assign a certain order to what we perceive (to „register“, to assign forms)
• Otherwise our world would seem chaotic, ruleless, unpredictable, – extremely threatening
• Each person has a different and an own way of registering
• The different orders inevitably produce different realities
• As soon as we have assigned an order to what we have perceived, this order becomes self-affirming for us
Realities

• We search and find the self constructed order
• We unwrap the parcels, which we have wrapped ourselves
• This induces to the assumption, that things are **such**
• That they are genuine, unambiguous, etc.

• in „reality“ (?) they are the outcome from communication and from a self-created arrangement

• When we find ourselves in a new, unknown situation and are not able to relate it, at first we are helpless (Watzlawick: „confusion“)
Realities

• This confusion immediately activates a search for order
• If we are not immediately succesful, our search derives to border areas and to absurd explanations
• And in this misty confusion, we cling to the first explanation which seems acceptable enough for an order-building
• Confusion sharpens our perception for smallest details (> gives us a special responsiveness towards dangerous situations )
Then – what is real?

• because we distinguish and identify, out of the flow of our experiencing we „cristallise“ something perpetual, our own reality

• For us only exists, what we have identified and for this, we sustain its identification

• There are as many „realities“, as there are people
Then – what is real?

„our world“, which we identify

reality, which we do not identify

• There are as many „realities“, as there are people

• And thus it is perfectly normal, that the other one sees things in a different way!

• An attempt, to show him/her, that he/she sees things wrong, will regularly fail

• First we need to try to understand, how he/she sees things
Realities

• Conclusion:

• „the belief that one‘s own view of reality is the only reality is the most dangerous of all delusions“ (Paul Watzlawick, How real is real?)

• With a messianic charge this delusion becomes hawky

• „Reality is the invention of a liar“ (Heinz von Foerster)

• We need communication, to be able to synchronise our realities
The question is: What is communication?
Communication as incident and as creation

- The transmitter-receiver-modell: transmission of an information

- The Shannon modell: transmission of a signal
Communication as incident and as creation

- The right question is not:

  “Did you understand me?”

- but:

  „What did you understand?“
Mindful communication

• unbiased
• descriptive
• focussing
• open for other realities: “...and it could be completely different!“
• use all your options of perception
• all your senses are present
Mindfulness after communication

• Following communication:

• mindful monitoring of
  – reactions
  – responses
  – concerns
  – incidents

• being curious, open and without pressure of having „to be right“ (don‘t link this to your self-esteem)
Perceptions of „reality“

• There only is one reality

• There are two (or further) realities, but mine is true, yours is false

• There are two (or further) realities. In compliance with my own, I am able to see yours, even able to put myself into your reality – and thus I can understand

• There are two (or further) different views/perceptions. I can look at yours and mine with bird‘s eye view – and understand

• I implement my view, because I have the power to do so

• I will persuade you

• Acceptance of different views / perceptions. Mutual understanding by change of perspective.
  Understanding is not identical with agreeing to. But it is the basis for consensus

• Systemic view from the meta-level. Transformation
Should a conflict arise...
Remember Picasso, the chessboard(?), your parcels...be attentive and mindful 😊
UIA Associations Round Table Asia-Pacific 2015

THANK YOU!

Clara Fernández López, External Relations Manager UIA
Get together in groups of 4

- Assign to each of you a letter: A, B, C or D
- A: tells a short story (2 min) to B, C and D
- B: rephrases A’s story – what B has understood A was telling (2 min)
- C: tells what she/he thinks A’s feelings/emotions are (2 min)
- D: tells what she/he thinks A’s needs are (2 min)
- A: gives her/his feedback to B, C and D (2 min)
Get together in groups of 4

• Assign to each of you a letter: A, B, C, D
• A: tells a short story (2 min) to B, C and D
• B: rephrases A’s story – what B has understood A was telling (2 min)
• C: tells what she/he thinks A’s feelings/emotions are (2 min)
• D: tells what she/he thinks A’s needs are (2 min)
• A: gives her/his feedback to B, C and D (2 min)
Anyone (A, B, C, or D) willing to share?
THANK YOU!

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