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Customer Relationship Lessons from the Top Golf Instructors in the World: *Introduction of the KT-Plex®*

Available Reports
KT-Plex® Technical Report
(this document)
KT-Plex® Executive Report
(click the link for this report)

Authors
Lee P. McGinnis, PhD, PGA
Brian C. Glibkowski, MBA, PhD
James Gillespie, PhD
Grace Lemmon, Doctoral Candidate

Contact Information
Lee P. McGinnis, PhD, PGA
Email: leem@semplar.com
www.semplar.com

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This study examines how expert golf instructors use knowledge and communication to create highly effective customer relationships.

We refer to our theory as the *Knowledge Transfer Circumplex* (**KT-Plex®**). Our theory sheds light on the relationship between knowledge and communication. Second, our theory defines six modes of communication utilized in customer relationship management (CRM): experiential, general, metaphorical, analogical, technical, and causal. These six modes of communication are organized around a circle (referred to as a circumplex structure).

We outline 9 implications of the KT-Plex® for service professionals interested in duplicating the customer relationship success of the world's top golf instructors.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This study was conducted utilizing in-depth interviews with 25 highly credentialed golf instructors, 24 of whom were ranked in either the prestigious *Golf Digest* Top 50 and/or *Golf Magazine Top* 100 lists. Interviewees represent the best of the best instructors, as there are over 25,000 golf instructors in the United States. The study determines how experts transfer knowledge and, in the process, create highly effective customer relationships.

The KT-Plex®

Based on the interview results, we developed a theory to explain how the world's top golf instructors use communication to facilitate client goals. We refer to our theory as the *Knowledge Transfer Circumplex* (**KT-Plex®**). Our theory unlocks the relationship between knowledge and communication. Second, our theory defines six modes of communication utilized in customer relationship management (CRM): experiential, general, metaphorical, analogical, technical, and causal. These six modes of communication are organized around a circle (referred to as a circumplex structure).

Customer Relationship Implications

We outline 9 implications of the KT-Plex® for service professionals interested in duplicating the customer relationship success of the world's top golf instructors.

Background

We conducted this study to learn more about how experts transfer knowledge to non-experts, particularly in terms of expert-to-client exchanges. To gain these insights, we focused on a specific industry setting: golf. We interviewed some of the world's most renowned golf instructors who are also highly skilled in knowledge transfer and customer relations. While many expert instructors train only the best, thus limiting their range, the expert instructors in our study teach a wide variety of individuals in terms of talent, knowledge, and ability. Their ability to adjust to a myriad of learning styles, experiences, abilities—coupled with their holistic focus on technical, psychological, and social skills—make these instructors valid and valued contributors of much more than golf. Business, teaching, and many other domains involving knowledge transfer and communication can benefit from these luminaries as well.

The goal of this study was to develop a coherent and simplified model of teaching and communication, so individuals in the golf industry (golf teachers, course managers and other business managers) and sales and marketing practitioners in other industries will have a better understanding on how to transfer knowledge and improve customer relations.

We interviewed professionals primarily belonging to the Golf Digest Top 50 and Golf Magazine Top 100, including several on both lists. We developed a model of knowledge transfer that emanates from these experts. Qualitative in nature, this model provides the depth and insight necessary to help people from various disciplines understand how to communicate more effectively.

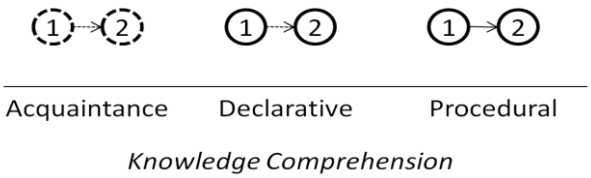
New Theory: The KT-Plex®

We set out in this study to discover the commonalities in communication and customer relationship techniques shared by the top golf instructors. The results indicated these experts are unparalleled communicators. In three steps we identified the Knowledge Transfer Circumplex (KT-Plex®).

Step 1: Knowledge Comprehension

Knowledge comprehension refers to level of understanding, representing a continuum defined by acquaintance knowledge (immature knowledge by association) and procedural knowledge (knowledge how to perform various skills) at each end point, with declarative knowledge (knowledge of facts) at the intermediate point. The knowledge comprehension framework is a well-established approach to learning (Shuell, 1986).

Our results suggested the golf-instructors associated procedural knowledge with more advanced knowledge. Specifically, problem solving was the most important role the golf-instructors identified for themselves. Succinctly capturing the importance of problem solving, one golf instructor said, "You have to help them understand why the ball goes where it goes." Analytically, problem solving can be represented as a cause-and-effect relationship between variables. The emphasis of understanding is symbolized by a causal model: circles 1 and 2 represent variables; the arrow path indicates the cause-and-effect relationship between variables; dotted lines indicate a nascent or lesser degree of understanding, and solid lines indicate a greater degree of understanding.



Knowledge Comprehension

Step 2: Personal Knowledge

Not all knowledge can be communicated equally. Under the personal knowing perspective (Polanyi, 1958), tacit knowledge is an inherently subjective knowing that resides in the individual (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2001; Roberts, 2000). In contrast, "explicit knowledge represents . . . objective knowledge" (Bolisani & Scarso, 2000: 118).

Tacit knowledge is typically shared in indirect ways such as through metaphors (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Martin, 1982), osmosis (Spender, 1996), learning by experience (Sobol & Lei, 1994), and by observing others (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In contrast, explicit knowledge is communicated verbally or nonverbally in a direct way (Bolisani & Scarso, 2000; Sobol & Lei, 1994).

The following examples of explicit and tacit communication were suggested by the golf instructors.

Personal Knowledge

Explicit

- "Right hand over left hand.
- "Hit it harder.
- "Slow down your motion.

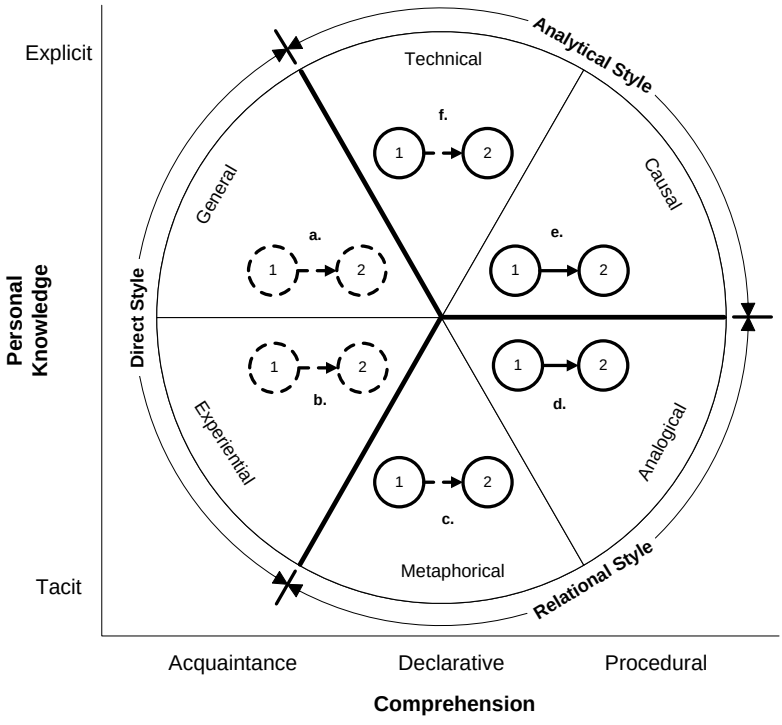
Tacit

- "'Golf swing is similar to throwing a Frisbee.' So what I do, it gives them a connection between what we are trying to do and something they have already done.

Step 3: Six Communication Modes and Three Communication Styles

Expert golf instructor communication is best represented as a circumplex in which six communication modes (general, technical, causal, analogical, metaphorical, and experiential) are ordered around the circumference of a circle. The ordering of the communication modes is determined by a two-by-two matrix: knowledge comprehension and personal knowledge, from steps 1 and 2. Consistent with a two-by-two matrix in which variables are plotted on X and Y axes, the circumplex structure takes this format a step further by postulating that variables are related to each other in a circular format. Specifically, all modes of communication are positively related to each other, and that the strength of the association between the variables increases commensurate with greater proximity of the variables to each other on the circumplex. For example, adjacent variables (e.g., experiential and general) are most strongly related to each other and opposite variables (e.g., experiential and causal), located at 180° from each other, have the weakest association. Finally, the individual modes of communication can be further clustered into three subsets called communication styles (direct, relational, and analytical).

The Knowledge Transfer Circumplex (KT-Plex®)



Comprehension Models (a-e) Note: The emphasis of understanding in each mode of communication is symbolized by a causal model: circles 1 and 2 represent variables; the arrow path indicates the cause-and-effect relationship between variables; dotted lines indicate a nascent or lesser degree of understanding and solid lines indicate a greater degree of understanding.

General Communication

Definition

Knowledge by symbols that represent basic human experiences.

Golf Instructor Examples

"Right hand over left hand"

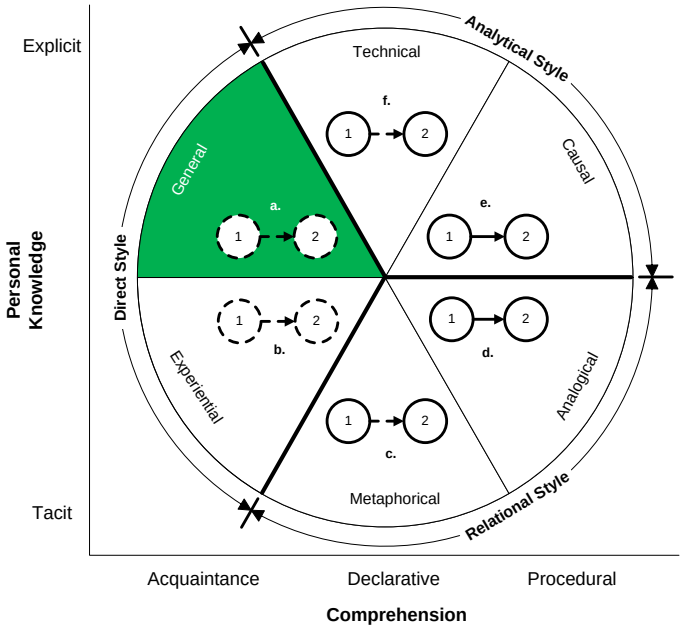
"Hit it harder"

"Slow down your motion"

Customer Relationship Insights

- Customers demand simple language; especially if the customer is a novice and the solution provider is an expert (such asymmetries of knowledge are usually associated with high-priced services).
- All new experiences are described using general language.
- General communication is the first step toward domain-specific learning (technical plus causal communication).
- It can help bridge the gap between tacit and explicit communication.

General communication is defined as knowledge by symbols that represent basic human experiences. The language is universal, in the sense that it applies across contexts and means the same thing to people of different backgrounds. Examples of general communication by the golf instructors included verbal communication: "right hand over left hand," "hit it harder," and "slow down your motion." No knowledge of the focal domain (golf) is required to understand general communication. We refer to this mode of communication as general because the terminology is generalizable across content domains.



Comprehension Model a Note: As depicted in model a, general communication is associated with acquaintance knowledge in that the object of understanding is the causal model (variable 1 and 2, impact path) but the understanding of this model is diffuse (dotted lines).

Experiential Communication

Definition

Experiential communication involves nonverbal communication of the sender, as well as structured experiences created by the sender for the benefit of the receiver.

Golf Instructor Examples

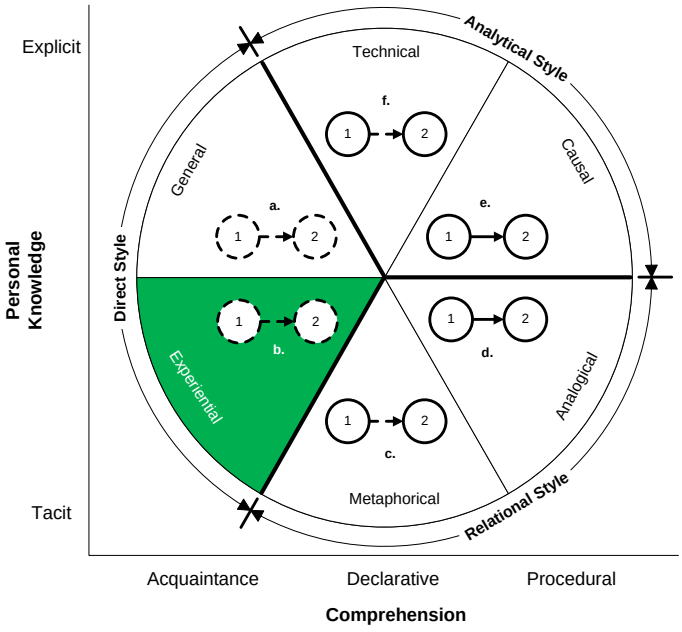
A student watching videotape of their golf swing.

Hitting golf balls on the practice range.

Customer Relationship Insights

- Most of our expert golf instructors agreed experiences were most important; we anticipate this finding will generalize to most industries.
- The golf instructors created "*structured experiences*" whereby their expertise (associated with analytical knowledge) was manifested as simple and appropriate experiences provided when necessary to increase customer learning.
- Credible customer experiences are associated with relational knowledge of customers. A best practice is to design experiences for your client and use metaphors and analogies to make connections to the client's worldview (as opposed to your world view).
- Latent experiences (e.g., brochures and company testimonials) are made salient with general communication. This is the classic "show and tell" approach.

Experiential communication is defined by recipient observation (e.g., a student watching videotape of their golf swing) or participation (e.g., hitting golf balls on the practice range). Experience is acquaintance knowledge, a building block upon which declarative and procedural knowledge can develop, but experience alone does not translate into expertise (i.e., procedural knowledge). Experiential communication is strongly related to general communication (i.e., they are adjacent on the circumplex) because both types of communication are instrumental given acquaintance knowledge. For example, a novice golfer would learn simple movements and use general language to describe these actions. Moreover, an expert golfer, undergoing a new experience, would also learn the new experience, using simple language. In our sample, the golf instructors self-identified high-quality direct style (experiential and general) communication as a hallmark of expert instruction. Deceased instruction expert Harvey Penick, author of the *Little Red Book* (1992) and acknowledged by many of the interviewees as the all time great golf instructor, exemplified the direct style.



Comprehension Model b Note: As depicted in model b, experiential knowledge is associated with acquaintance knowledge in that the object of understanding is the causal model (variable 1 and 2, impact path) but the understanding of this model is diffuse (dotted lines).

Metaphorical Communication

Definition
Knowledge of the domain experience in terms of another experience.

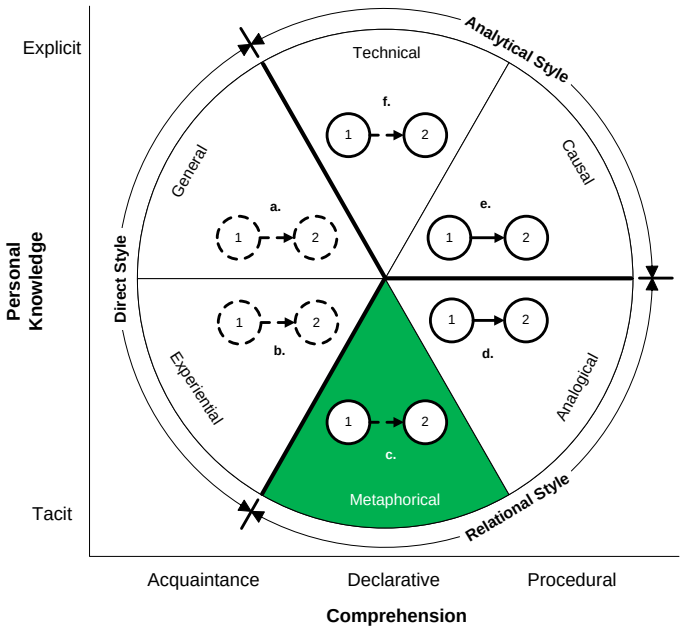
Golf Instructor Examples
Saying, "The value of the drive in golf is similar to the value of the second serve in tennis. They both force us to start the game."

Asking, "Are we going to remodel this house or are we just going to add things to it to make it better… like a paint job?"

Customer Relationship Insights

- Metaphors are made credible because they connect experiences in a focal domain (e.g., golf) with a second domain (e.g., baseball) allowing the customer to understand an important variable (e.g., balance). *Sales organizations should triangulate experiences related to their solution (the focal domain) with domains the customer is more familiar with.*
- A hallmark of customer-centered selling is to define the opportunity in terms of the customer's worldview. Metaphors allow the selling organizations to define important solution variables in terms of the client's terminology.
- Metaphors are the building block of cause-and-effect beliefs that can become analogies.

Metaphorical communication is defined as knowledge of the domain experience in terms of another experience. For example, one golf instructor said, "The value of the drive in golf is similar to the value of the second serve in tennis. They both force us to start the game." Additionally, several golf instructors made reference to how the upper body rotation prevalent in such sports as tennis and baseball as logical depictions for the shoulder turn necessary in golf's backswing. Metaphors are effective at conveying tacit knowledge, where the object of understanding is difficult to articulate or there is a lack of domain specific experience. In the former case, expert instructors would draw from a variety of base domains (e.g., other sports, business) in order to strike a chord in the target domain (e.g., golf).



Comprehension Model c Note: As depicted in model c, a metaphor emphasizes declarative knowledge of a variable (e.g., variable 1 or 2; solid lines), not the causal connection between variables (dotted line).

Analogical Communication

Definition

Cause-and-effect knowledge by comparison of the domain experience to another experience.

Golf Instructor Examples

"How is baseball related to golf?" Second researcher, "The swings are related." Interviewee: "Wrong, the golf swing is related to the baseball throw… the balance is the same for both."

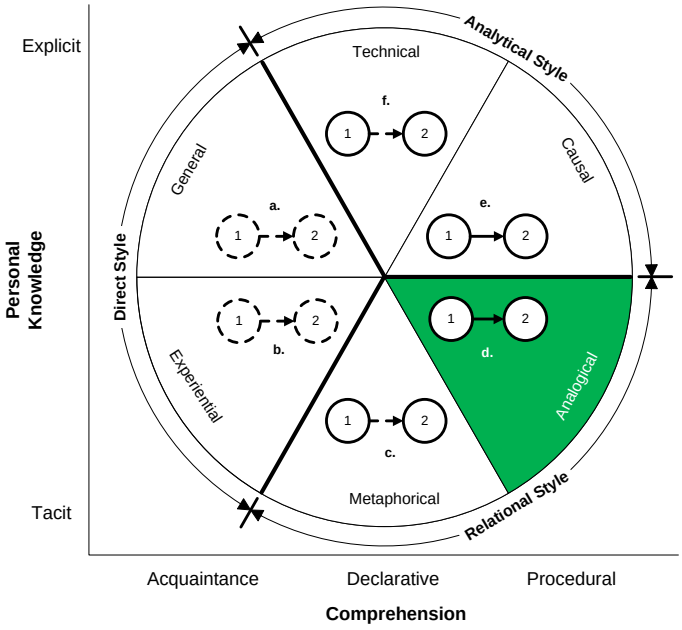
Customer Relationship Insights

- Almost all important ideas are 'sold' to the customer using the *analogical close.* In other words, when you connect your solution (the target domain) with the customer's implicit causal model associated with their world view (the base domain) you have 'closed the deal' and the client accepts your idea (as their own).
- Analogies are complex and require all variables related to your solution be first defined as metaphors; then, and only then, is it possible to add the important causal logic.
- Many analogies are false. *Harvard Business Review* has pointed out that firm strategy is usually based on analogies, and the structural characteristics (associated with variables and causal paths) are hardly ever tested (Gavetti & Rivkin, 2005). Analogies can be precisely specified using causal language for more precise conversations (and empirical testing) with customers.

Analogical communication is defined as cause-and-effect knowledge by comparison of the domain experience to another experience. For example, a golf instructor said:

> *"If you're a 5-handicapper on the tee for the 14th hole at even par (with five holes left: 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) you might be standing there going 'oh man, three pars and two bogeys, I'll be happy as a clam.' I'll tell them, 'you've got to keep the whip on the horse all the way to the end'… that is how a pro would be thinking."*

This analogy draws a structural comparison between horse racing and golf (e.g., sustained effort → success). Sports analogies (linking golf to a second sport) were especially prevalent among those golfers who were familiar with or played these additional sports. Analogical communication is strongly related to metaphorical communication (i.e., they are adjacent on the circumplex) because both types of communication focus on relating experiences in a base domain to the focal domain. Metaphors are often the building blocks of analogies.



Comprehension Model d Note: As depicted in model d, an analogy emphasizes the declarative knowledge of variables (variable 1and 2; solid lines), and the causal connection between the variables (solid line) associated with procedural knowledge.

Technical Communication

Definition

Knowledge of the focal object (i.e., hitting a golf ball) by symbols that represent domain specific experiences.

Golf Instructor Examples

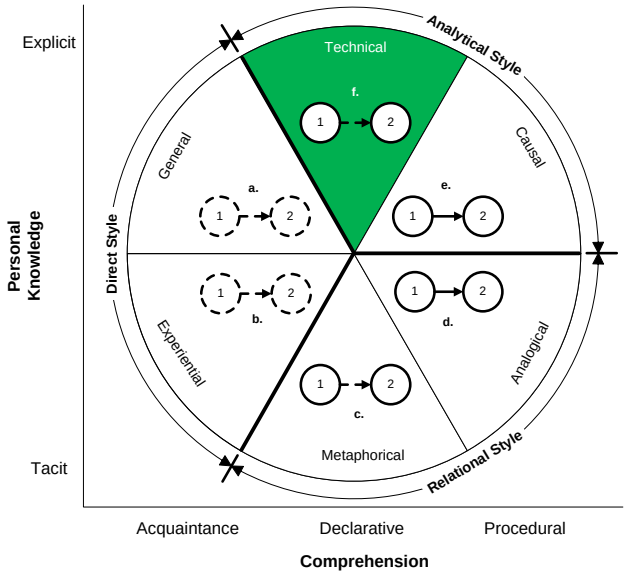
"Vardon grip" and "neutral grip"

"Low, medium, and high trajectories," "nine basic ball flights," and "angle of attack."

Customer Relationship Insights

- Complex solutions require technical communication that allows domain specific ideas to be communicated with precision.
- If general communication can be substituted for technical communication (and little meaning is lost), this is an effective communication strategy, especially when the customer is a novice in terms of solution comprehension.
- Organizations often get caught up with "insider terminology" for its own sake, or because you want to sound impressive. Many of the expert golf pros made this mistake when they were learning their craft. As a litmus test, use technical communication if, and only if, it is instrumental to explain how client needs are met (using causal communication).

Technical communication is defined as knowledge of the focal object (i.e., hitting a golf ball) by symbols that represent domain specific experiences. Examples of technical communication related to hitting a golf ball include "Vardon grip," "neutral grip," "low, medium, and high trajectories," "nine basic ball flights," and "angle of attack." In this mode, the sender uses language and symbols that are unique to the domain. This might also be referred to as insider language because those involved in the conversation or knowledge transfer need the domain specific background knowledge to understand each other. The expert teachers in our study knew the technical language exceedingly well and would adapt to this mode based on several factors, including the longevity of the relationship with the student or the skill level of the student. Through the course of several lessons the instructor could lace his or her teachings with these terms and thereby educate the student of their meanings over time. The advantage of this mode is that the conversation can rise to new heights wherein the accuracy and clarity of the material are very acute. This allows for quick and efficient knowledge transfer between the sender and receiver.



Comprehension Model f Note: As depicted in model f, technical communication emphasizes declarative knowledge of a variable (e.g., variable 1 or 2; sold lines), not the causal connection between variables (dotted line).

Causal Communication

Definition

Cause-and-effect knowledge using symbols that represent domain specific experiences.

Golf Instructor Examples

"We monitor their scores" and another discussed "intermediate goals."

"You have to help understand why the ball goes where it goes" (i.e., understand cause-and-effect).

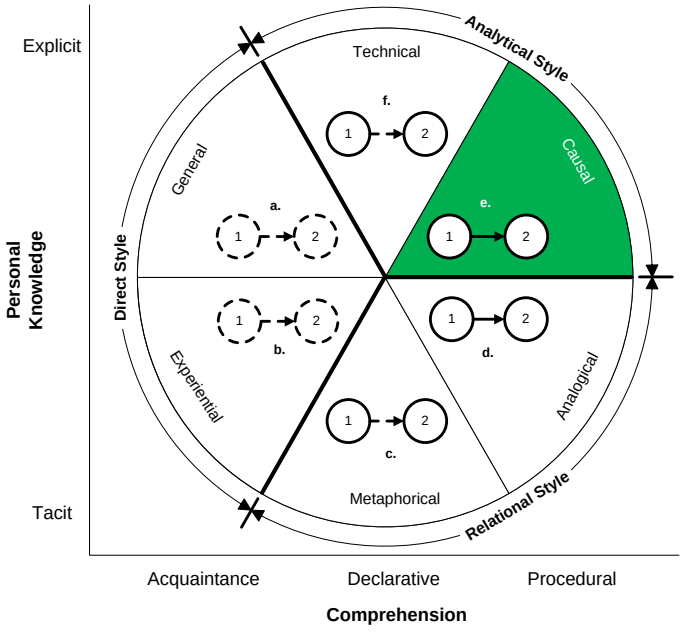
Customer Relationship Insights

- For a customer to become an expert, they must understand cause-and-effect. Organizations that sell expertise, or provide consulting services must be able to communicate causally with customers.

- Few customers have the desire or ability to become experts (associated with causal understanding). For example, the expert golf instructors said many of their PGA and LPGA tour player clients (those that make a living playing golf) cannot tell you why they are successful—in other words, they do not understand cause-and-effect. For these clients, expert golf instructors decompose their cause-and-effect knowledge into general communication and experiences that fix their clients' problem.

- Causal models represent value chain or strategy. The overlapping value chains between the sales organization and customer should be modeled and managed systematically in CRM software.

Causal communication is defined as cause-and-effect knowledge using symbols that represent domain specific experiences. Like analogy, causal communication is focused on procedural knowledge because both modes of communication identify cause-and-effect relationships (see model d and e). But unlike analogy, the language used in causal communication is more explicit, allowing the receiver to use language that is more unique and central to the focal domain, in this case golf. Therefore, an advantage of causal language (domain specific language) is that it is more precise. Second, no meaning transfer is needed from one domain to the other, allowing for quicker material absorption, application, and potentially progress as compared to analogical communication. Causal communication is strongly related to technical communication (i.e., they are adjacent on the circumplex) because technical communication is the foundation of causal language, paralleling how general language is used to create technical language.



Comprehension Model e Note: As depicted in model e, causal communication emphasizes the declarative knowledge of variables (variable 1and 2; solid lines), and the causal connection between the variables (solid line) associated with procedural knowledge.

KT-Plex® Implications

Golf is arguably the most challenging and complex sport requiring knowledge, skill, patience, and determination. The development and maintenance of high-quality customer relationship is also challenging and complex. As revealed by the KT-Plex®, the secret of knowledge and communication can be harnessed to achieve unparalleled customer relationships—just like the golf instructors in our expert study. We present the top nine implications of our research for customer relationships.

1 – Communication styles simplify and clarify

2 – All six modes of communication are important

3 – Experiential communication represents a first among equals

4 – Honor thy request

5 – Renaissance ready

6 – Expertise is a verb

7 – Less is more

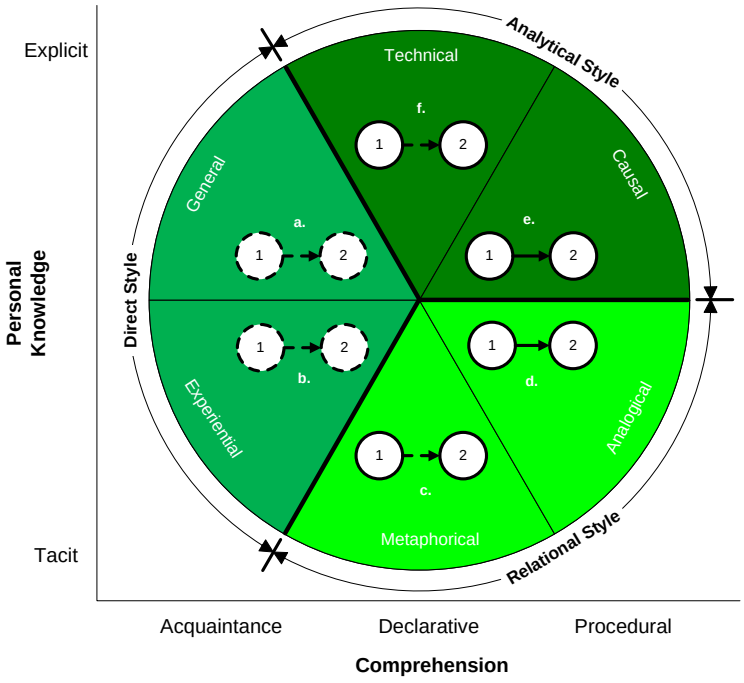
8 – Emotional intelligence enables

9 – Unparalleled customer relationships

1 – Communication styles simplify and clarify

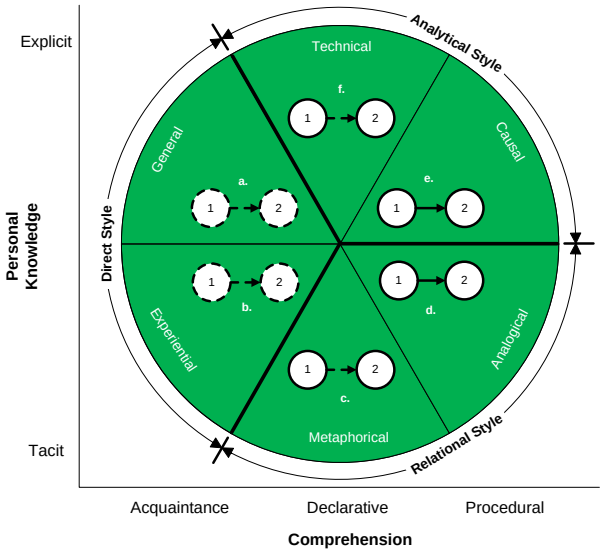
In harmony with the different communication modes, one can broaden this suggestion to understanding one's communication style. We introduce three communication styles: direct, relational, and analytical. Direct styles use experiential and general communication modes, meaning that the recipient prefers or needs to understand the processes without the aid or help of references or connections drawn between domains. This is a very basic understanding and should be used on those with low domain knowledge and few references to related activities. The relational style should be used on recipients who need and can draw from other experiences in a base domain, to make sense of the target domain. For example, if the KTA and recipient both have deep experiences in other fields such as business or sports (base domains), these can be used to aid in understanding golf (the target domain). With an analytical style, the recipient wants deeper, domain-specific understanding of how something works. They will not be satisfied with simply showing how to do something (associated with the direct style) or connections to another domain (associated with the relational style). Instead, they will want to know how and why it works as well.

Additionally, KTAs across the organization will vary in preferences for each style as well as abilities to use each communication style.



2 – All six modes of communication are important

In order to be an effective communicator and knowledge transfer agent (KTA) across a breadth of customer groups and constituents, it is vitally important to understand how all modes of communication in the KT-Plex® work. The KT-Plex® illustrates three gradients of understanding (acquaintance, declarative, and procedural knowledge) that are associated with different forms of communication that are appropriate depending on the level of knowledge customers have and desired level of learning. For example, novices need experiential and general communication. If a learner has little domain specific knowledge, yet the teacher (or KTA) prefers or insists on using domain-specific language (i.e., technical), the recipient will become confused, overburdened and ultimately turned off by the instructor, choosing instead to either drop the activity or seek someone else who can understand how to communicate in more harmonious manner. Additionally, the modes of communication are complimentary in that adjacent modes of communication should be used in combination to triangulate and maximize learning. For example, technical communication should be used to describe, with precision, domain specific concepts (e.g., Vardon grip, or overlapping grip) paired with general communication to make sure new terms are understood (e.g., the Vardon grip means overlapping the little finger of one hand over between the first two fingers of the other hand), and causal language should be used to assure technical terms are associated with their role in causal sequences (e.g., If the Vardon grip is done properly, the two hands should work in unison rather than against each other creating more clubface consistency).



3 – Experiential communication represents a first among equals

The golf instructors all emphasized high-quality experiences. We believe the primacy of experiences generalizes to many industries. Experiences are associated with acquaintance knowledge, the most immature knowledge on the KT-Plex®. Stated differently, when expert organizations want customers to learn something new, they design experiences to transfer knowledge. Unfortunately, high-quality experiences are very difficult to create and often misunderstood. Consider the golf industry, where several of the expert golf instructors indicated industry wide practices for training devices are often misguided. For example:

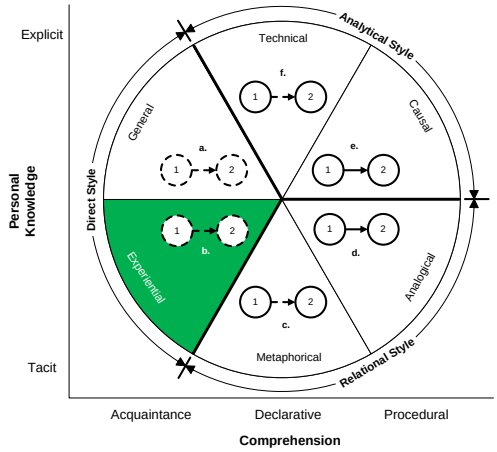
"The problem is too many people went out and hit thousands and thousands of balls in a [training device]. You know what they became? They become really good at hitting golf balls in the [training device]. They did not get better at golf."

High-quality customer experiences solve problems for customers in novel ways that were not anticipated. For example:

> *"People think practice is on the driving range… practice is working on posture in front the mirror in your hotel room. [My clients say] 'Oh I love this. Yeah, I can do that in my hotel room, on the plane, in my office. I love that.'"*

Finally, the more radical the learning is, the more experiences are emphasized, and a premium is placed upon the ability of experts to design structured experiences for customers that are accepted as valid. For example, one golf instructor described valid experiences that entail self-discovery:

> *"You let them self discover what you already know they need to do. This is especially true of tour players. They are not open to information. They have to embrace it and really think that is their own."*



4 – Honor thy request

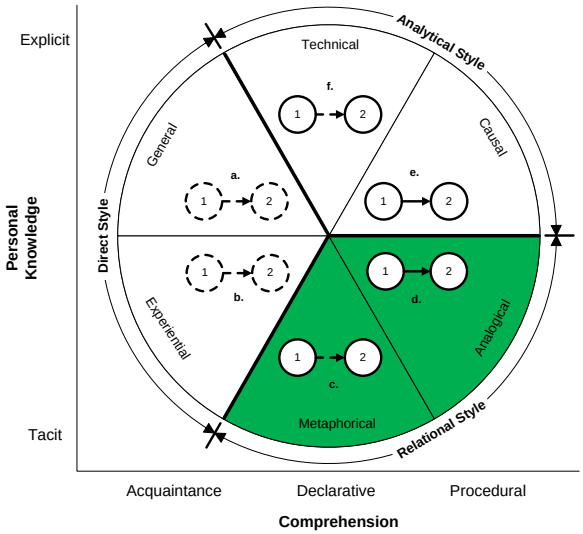
The golf instructors in our study clearly position themselves as being customer-oriented. The instructors use an approach that puts the student's preference for and way of learning at the forefront of the process. A client-oriented approach adds to the student-centered approach by focusing, too, on the goals identified by the customer and working to facilitate those goals in the most efficient and seamless way possible. Through formal and informal means, the professionals in our study establish rapport with their students that then leads to an approach that their clients' desire. These expert professionals do not impose their styles for teaching in a one-size fits all format, strongly opposing method teaching at all costs. In terms of the KT-Plex®, the selling organization should focus on the mode(s) of communication the client prefers.

All communicators could learn from our teaching professionals by taking their "mass customization" approach to a new level. Not only should the selling organization give their customers what they want in an individualized format but not impose their own desires in an overly self-involved or imposing manner. They need to learn how their customers learn, utilizing the knowledge communication mode that best fits their client's style for acquiring information. It is also important to know that not all students or knowledge recipients want to become experts. Some just want enough to get by in order to not embarrass themselves. Knowing what the client wants is often the client's prerogative and should not be discounted.

5 – Renaissance ready

Michelangelo is a renaissance person, an expert in many areas including painting, sculpting, architecture, poetry, and engineering. The professionals in our study, by and large, displayed remarkable knowledge across a wide variety of areas. For example, one golf instructor had a personal library of over 2,500 interdisciplinary books. Many were self-described students of the game of golf, reading and devouring materials from other expert golf instructors as well as materials from other expert coaches in other sports, such as tennis, football, and basketball. They were also quite adept at psychology, business, and in some cases biomechanics. They also indicated a desire to take lessons from other expert instructors (and, in some cases, inferior instructors) in order to build their teaching repertoires.

A renaissance approach is instrumental to all aspects of knowledge transfer, but especially important to relational communication. The expert golf instructors were adept at describing important concepts in golf (the target domain) in terms of multiple base domains (e.g., other sports, business) that clients were more familiar with. Relational communication is highly effective because target domain concepts are described in base domain terms the client already accepts to be true. A second advantage, relational communication is highly efficient because there is no 'learning curve' (e.g., no learning by experiences has to be undertaken); instead metaphors and analogies made connections between new ideas (in the target domain) to already established beliefs (in the base domain). In other words, if you love baseball, and the golf instructor can analogically communicate how golf is related to baseball, by extension you will love golf as well. This powerful lesson can be applied by all organizations seeking high-quality customer relationships: use relational communication to convey your solution in terms of the client's worldview and knowledge base.



6 – Expertise is a verb

We asked each golf instructor about their expert credentials. We wanted to understand how their status and awards related to their ability to attract customers. Not surprisingly, the golf instructors recognized that credentials were a factor that brought clients to their door. However, the golf instructors indicated that they left credentials at the door with their clients; in their view expertise represents action (a verb). In short, the expert golf pros have a direct and immediate impact that demonstrates their expertise. The expert golf pros demonstrated their expertise in all six modes of communication related to the KT-Plex®. For example, two golf instructors describe their impact in the following ways as it relates to experiential communication associated with KT-Plex®:

> *"I've got 5,6,7 drills… I listen and I keep working on one until I find one that works."*
>
> *"It happens so fast… there are a lot of lessons where in 5 minutes a player shoots a ball and says 'holy smokes where has that been, I've never done that.' That's cool."*

Other golf instructors described their expert ability to adaptively find the proper general communication or metaphorical communication:

> *"You may have to say the same thing 20 different times before they understand it. There isn't any set way to say anything."* [related to general communication].
>
> *"If one metaphor does not work, I try another one. I can quickly tap different metaphors until I find the right one."*

More generally, the expert golf instructors constantly looked for ways to demonstrate their expertise in all communication modes as necessary. For example:

> *"If their doing their part and they're not improving it's my fault. That's when I got to think of finding a different way to make them play better, finding something different that can help them."*

7 – Less is more

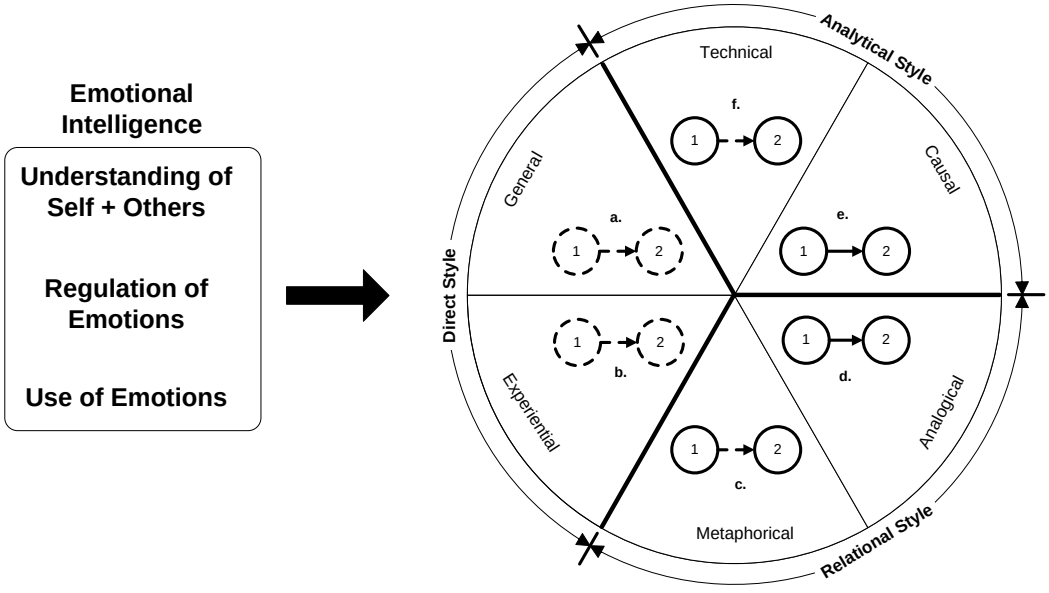
Another important implication of this study is the prudence the experts in our study demonstrated in regard to the amount of information they attempted to transfer. The old adage that less is more certainly holds true in this context. Comfortable with their styles, expertise, and knowledge our professionals claimed that they focus on parsimony, only allowing the most important and crucial information to be transferred. Though they explained that early in their careers they were inclined to over teach and provide too much information in order to substantiate their knowledge and pay, they learned over the years that it is best to give their clients meaningful information they could grasp and remember. Diffusion of innovations literature (Rogers, 1995) indicates that the more complex an innovation, the less likely it will be adopted in the short term. Our experts seem to understand this notion implicitly, refusing to offer too much to their clients, even though the temptation is there to provide a lot and appear more expert. Making the changes in small increments or in portions the client can digest based upon close scrutiny not only makes the client feel competent (a component toward intrinsic motivation (see Ryan and Deci, 2000)), but also helps them make changes that are more seamless. The smooth operator understands how to evoke change effortlessly. All communicators should understand this progression.

8 – Emotional intelligence enables

The ability to communicate knowledge is enhanced by one's emotional intelligence (EI). EI entails the ability to understand oneself and others, regulate emotions, and use emotions (Law & Wong, 2004). Goleman (1995) refers to EI as the master aptitude because it profoundly affects or interrelates with so many activities. Our results indicate that the professionals in our study have a high degree of emotional intelligence. High EI enables a communicator the ability to establish rapport and gain crucial insights into a recipient's knowledge base and then deliver information in a way that allows for maximum understanding and absorbability. For example, one golf pro described the role of emotional intelligence in the following way:

> *"[When I was less experienced] I thought I knew what they wanted. You have to listen to what the student wants. I realized all learning is self-paced."*

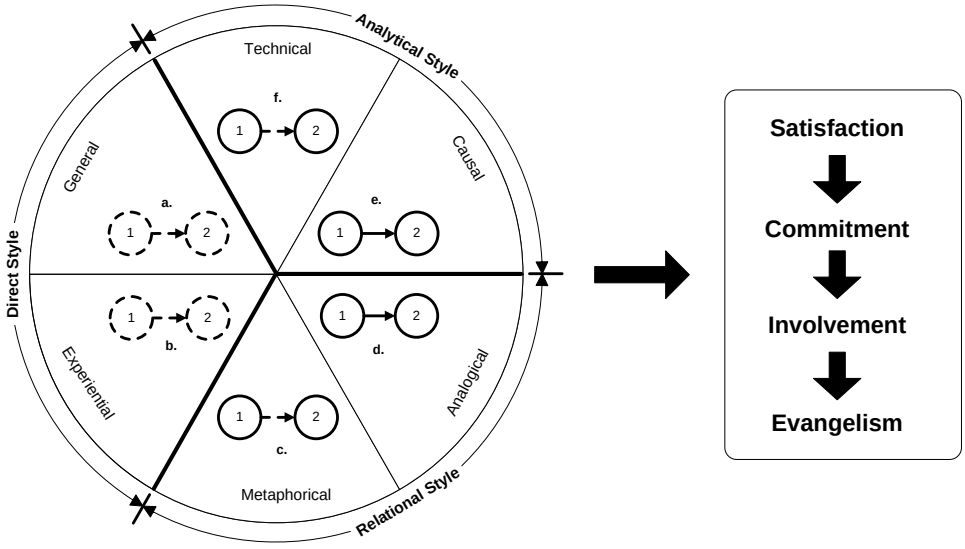
Another example, most of the experts signified that they adapt to whether their students were audio, visual, or kinesthetic learners. As it relates to the KT-Plex® emotional intelligence allows the expert golf instructors to simultaneously better understand their own knowledge base as well as the knowledge base of the customer and preferred mode(s) of communication.



9 – Unparalleled customer relationships

The fruits of the KT-Plex are unparalleled communication adaptability and therefore optimal customer relationships. Customer relationship success can be defined in terms of increased satisfaction, commitment, involvement, and evangelism.

Desired Outcome	Definition	Expert Golf Instructor Example
satisfaction	buyer needs met	*"Well, you figure it out what they want... And then try to get them one step closer to their achievement."*
commitment	blurring of buyer and seller identity (attitude)	*"When they commit to the process … commit to learning the process and rehearsing the process over and over, the end results completely take care of themselves."*
involvement	positive buyer actions toward seller (behavior)	One expert referred to another expert's students: *"[His students] were so bought in, if they were told to jump on one leg they would, and they would believe it."*
evangelism	positive buyer actions to promote seller to other buyers (behavior)	*"I think ultimately that the pupils did most of that [promoting]. I couldn't tell you the last time that I ran an ad or anything."*



About the Authors

Lee Phillip McGinnis (leem@semplar.com)
Lee is a member of the PGA of America (elected July of 1999). He has worked at courses/clubs in the Sun Valley, Idaho area, the Monterey Peninsula, and Lincoln, Nebraska. He earned his PhD from the University of Nebraska and conducted his research on women in golf, focusing on the social and psychological aspects that help (and discourage) women from becoming enduringly involved. His research in this area has appeared in the *Journal of Sport Management*, the *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, the *Journal of Service Research*, and *Leisure Sciences*. Lee has been a marketing professor for the last nine years, with positions at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, Boise State University, and currently at Stonehill College near Boston. Lee is a managing director at Semplar Scientific.

Brian C. Glibkowski (bglibkowski@semplar.com)
Brian is Executive Director of SUMMIT (Sustainable Management and Measurement Institute) at Stonehill College, a professor of business at Stonehill College, serves on the board for the Center for Healthcare Innovation, and is a managing director at Semplar Scientific. His research focuses on performance management approaches that bridge macro and micro approaches. His research has appeared in *Personnel Psychology*, *Leadership Quarterly*, and he is a frequent presenter at national academic conferences. His educational background includes University of Illinois at Chicago, PhD; Loyola University Chicago, MBA.

James J. Gillespie (jgillespie@semplar.com)
James is President of the Center for Healthcare Innovation, professor of business at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a managing director at Semplar Scientific. His research has appeared in *Academy of Management Review*, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *Strategic Management Journal*. James serves on the Board of Trustees at La Rabida Children's Hospital, and the Board of Directors at i.c.stars. His educational background includes Northwestern, PhD; Harvard, JD; Princeton, MPA.

Grace Lemmon
Grace is a Visiting Professor of Management at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on the employer-employee relationship, specifically how team structure and HR practices influence employee perceptions of organizational promises. Her research has appeared in *Academy of Management Journal* and *Organizational Dynamics*. Her educational background includes the University of Illinois at Chicago and DePaul University, Chicago.

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SUMMIT at Stonehill College

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