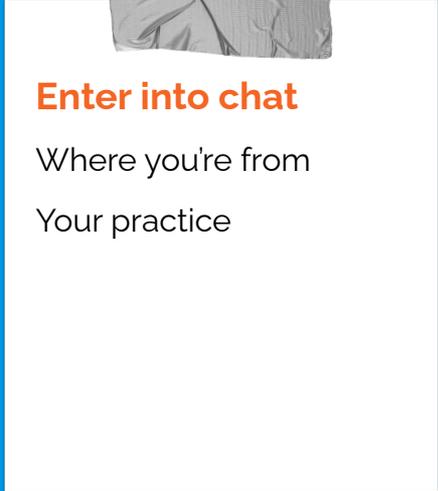

The Secret to Decoding What Clients Want

Powerful hacks to use today

Celine Teoh & Agnes Le

Welcome!

Tell us a little bit about yourself



Enter into chat

Where you're from

Your practice

Next, Let's breathe



Tip

Most of us are super busy and just transitioning from another activity

This is just a quick hack to help us be present

Before we start

- Experiment
- Participate
- Q in the chat
- Context matters
- Presentation will be shared

—

We're curious: What brings you here today?



Enter into chat

Why do you want to
know how to decode
what clients want?

Here's the secret up front

It's about taking into account the emotional side of the equation



As consultants, we tend to think about problem-solving in a rational way

But clients are human; they make decisions based on emotions and underlying needs

A video that you might relate to



—

Did that seem familiar?
Who resonated with that?

—
**The key to the
emotional side**

Listening & empathy

(Tactical) Empathy

Listen to understand another person's perspectives & feelings and make them feel understood ...

with the purpose of building trust and influencing them.

—

Agenda

- Empathy misses
- Empathy hacks
- Role plays



Listening is important

The time required to reach conflict resolution is cut in **half** when each negotiator agrees, before responding, to **repeat what the previous speaker said**

Source: Marshall Rosenberg, Nonviolent Communication

Listening is like driving

Everybody thinks they're above average

But most of the time, there's room for improvement*

*If you're great, you get to show off today and we get to learn from you!



10 Empathy Misses

→ **Fix It**

→ **Correct it**

→ **Interrogate**

→ **Console**

→ **Tell a Story**

→ **Minimize**

→ **Defend it**

→ **Sympathize**

→ **Educate**

→ **One up**



10 Empathy Misses

→ **Fix It**

→ **Correct it**

→ **Interrogate**

→ **Console**

→ **Tell a Story**

→ **Minimize**

→ **Defend it**

→ **Sympathize**

→ **Educate**

→ **One up**

Activity

Guess the Empathy Miss



Put your guesses
in chat

- Fix it
- Interrogate
- Tell a Story
- Defend It

Three hacks

Don't be fooled by their simplicity... they're elegant and easy to remember

1. Mirror

Repeat one to three words from the last thing the client says

2. Label

Identify the client's feelings & needs

3. Request

Confirm what action the client is requesting to fill their need

Hack #1: Mirror



What to do:

- Repeat last three words said by client + curious upward inflection?

Example:

- “We’re contemplating a bigger China presence”. “Bigger China presence?”

Why?

1. Data gathering
2. Building rapport (mirror neurons)
3. Calming them down (try it with your teenagers!)



Hack #2: Label

What to do

- Say “It sounds like...?” + a guess at the underlying need (repeat)

Examples

- “It sounds like it’s important to you that this part of the project is finished in a month?” (need: efficiency)
- “It sounds like you want to make sure that your department owns the relationship with the consumer?” (needs: autonomy, power, status)

Hack #2: Label



Why label?

- Needs (and feelings) are universal. It's easier to understand someone if you understand their needs
- Reveals our understanding while asking for corrections from the client



Hack #2: Label

Common Client Needs (workplace friendly):

- Autonomy
- Certainty
- Competence
- Collaboration
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Fairness
- Meaning
- Respect
- Safety
- Status
- Trust
- Understanding

Hack #2: Label



Q: I can't say touchy feely stuff at work!

- Use business-friendly labels: “concerned” instead of “scared”
- Remove the words “feelings” and “needs”: “Are you frustrated?” not “Are you feeling frustrated?”
- Turn the label word into a phrase: “You want to make sure all stakeholders weigh in” not “You need fairness”
- Add softeners “So”, “Perhaps”: “So it sounds like perhaps you are concerned about...”; leaves space for them to correct you

Hack #2: Label



Q: What if I get it wrong?

A: That's OK! They'll correct you. And your guess will make them think

Q: What happened to labeling feelings?

A: Feelings are often less acceptable than needs in work settings

Q: Do I have to do this?

A: Just enough! Purpose trumps connection. So create the minimum amount of connection to enable the purpose. Unless you need to repair a relationship

Tip: Refer to the ***Cheat Sheet for Consultants*** for more details



Hack #2: Label

“It sounds like...?”

Hack #3: Request



What to do

- Say “And you’d like...” + A specific action +?

Example (Label + Request)

- “So, it sounds like it’s important that activist employees have their voices heard. And you’d like help creating a comprehensive employee listening strategy that might incorporate a shadow board?”

Why?

- We have to move from understanding to action, so you know how to meet their needs

Source: Chris Voss, Marshall Rosenberg, “NonViolent Communication”

Hack #3: Request



Tips

- Positive framing: what-to-do, not what-not-to-do
- Clear and specific: “Send weekly safety stock reports” not “Report on inventory regularly”
- If the client says “No”, there’s another need that is preventing them from saying “Yes”. Ask “What else is important here for you?”

— **And One Tip: The 70% rule**

- Client talks 70% of the time
- When consultant talks, 70% of time should be questions & reflections

Three hacks

1. Mirror

Last three words

2. Label

"It sounds like..."

3. Request

"And you'd like..."

Role Play #1: Mirror, Label

You're about to: Have a short meeting with head of an underperforming business unit to get data about sales

Goal: Get them to agree to share raw transaction-level records from past 3 years, tagged with demographic, behavioral data

Success: Getting the data in a usable database within a week, voluntarily



Instructions

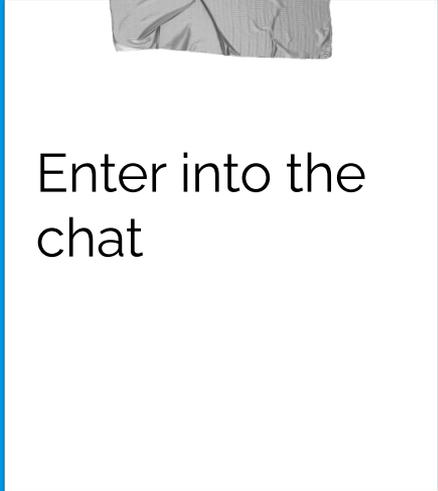
Volunteer

1 minute, then someone else takes the baton

Agnes will help you if you get stuck

Debrief Role Play #1

What is one takeaway
or learning that stood
out for you?



Enter into the
chat

Role Play #2: Pitch

- Breakout room pairs
- Quickly pick a role: Client, Consultant, or (if in trio) Observer
- We won't switch roles, but you'll learn a lot in any role
- Make the situation realistic. Clients will flip at different levels of empathy
- Assume you have the skill set to serve the client



In breakouts

Read ONLY your role
(it's no fun
otherwise!)

3 mins read

7 mins role play

5 mins debrief

Debrief: Role Play #2

What did you notice or learn?

Instructions

Put your answer in the
chat

Q&A

If there's time

Instructions

Put your question in the chat

If we can't get to it live, we'll answer in email after

Closing

What is one takeaway
or learning that stood
out for you?



Tip

Everybody gets to go
Name the next person
Put your hand up in
reactions until you've
had your turn



Next steps

Pick a low-stakes situation each day, and **practice!**

Fill out our survey so we can hear your feelings and needs

We will send out resources and slides



Thank you!

This was a 101: There's a lot more where that came from: tools, frameworks, training

If you or your clients have needs around practice, techniques, offsites, contact us!

celine@celineteoh.com

agnes@agnesle.com