

Assessment Institute Webinar Series

Webinar #2: *Forming the Foundation for
Collaborative Relationships*

June 4, 2025



RELATE:
***Forming the Foundation for
Collaborative Relationships***

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Roadmap for today:

Collaboration Playbook: Part 2- Developing your game plan

Why are
relationships
important in
assessment?

Signs that
RELATE
strategies
are needed

What are the
RELATE
strategies and
microskills?



Interpersonal skills and dispositions are critical to successful assessment work!



Morrow et al. (2022)

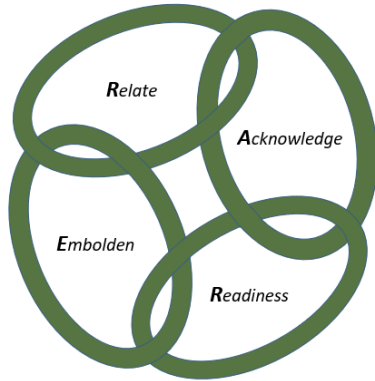


Interpersonal Skills

- Collaborating (94%)
- Developing relationships (92%)

Dispositions

- Collaborative; Honest (97%)
- Helpful; Trustworthy (96%)
- “Patience”; “Flexibility”; “Thick skin”



RARE Model

- Four components of effective interpersonal assessment practice; each includes a set of strategies and microskills
- Informed by humanistic and postmodern counseling theories
 - Person-centered, solution-focused, motivational interviewing, positive psychology, narrative theory
- Premise: relationships are integral to nurturing positive assessment culture

What makes connecting with our assessment partners challenging?



- Colleagues might be burnt out
 - YOU might be burnt out!
- Turnover / mobility
- Competing initiatives
- Budget constraints
- Current state of higher education

Self-awareness is a prerequisite to RELATE

- Your thoughts, feelings, and values impact your interactions.
- Our values:
 - Human approach vs. Transactional
 - Take time to attend to others, but take care of yourself first
 - Transparency builds trust
 - Consistency provides an anchor, especially during tumultuous times

What do you value most in collaborative assessment work?

65 responses



Signs that *RELATE* is needed

Not responding to my emails/outreach

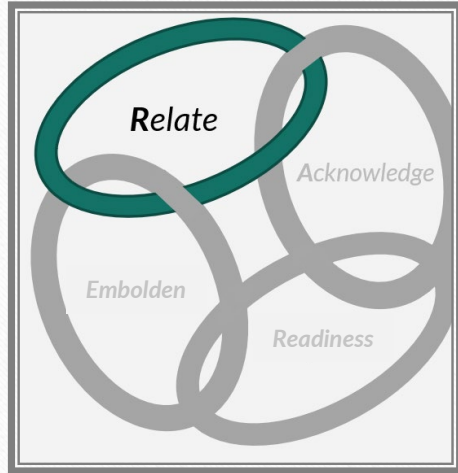
Viewing assessment as threat to academic freedom

Perceiving assessment as busywork disconnected from daily operations

Focusing on compliance over meaningful improvement

Limited sharing of assessment practices due to perceived unique contexts

R - Relate



- Establish a trusting relationship to work effectively toward goals
- Grounded in humanistic counseling theory (Rogers, 1950)
- Person-centered, non-directive approach
- Genuineness, unconditional positive regard, and empathy
- Most essential component of the *RARE Model*

Interpersonal Strategies to RELATE



NON-VERBAL
COMMUNICATION



ACTIVE
LISTENING



EMPATHY



EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE



OPENNESS

Strategy #1: Non-verbal communication

- What is non-verbal communication?
- Purpose / WHY is it important?
- What are some micro-skills I can use in this scenario to support the collaborative relationship?



Strategy #2: Active Listening

- What is active listening?
- Example / scenario
- What are some micro skills I can use in this scenario to support the collaborative relationship?



Strategy #3: Empathy

- What is empathy?
- Purpose / WHY is it important?
- What are some micro skills I can use in this scenario to support the collaborative relationship?

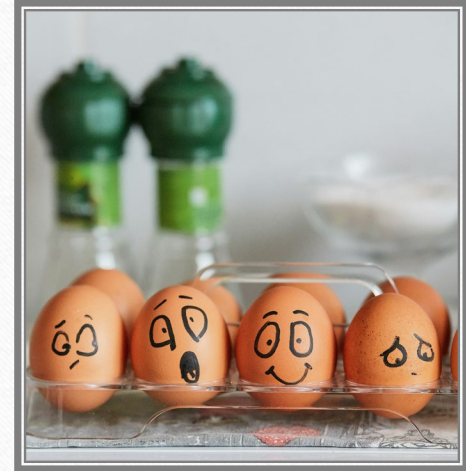


Answer in the chat:

*What does it feel like for you, to be
seen and heard by a colleague?*

Strategy #4: Emotional Intelligence

- What is emotional intelligence?
- Purpose / WHY is it important?
- What are some micro skills I can use in this scenario to support the collaborative relationship?



Strategy #5: Openness

- What is openness?
- Example scenario
- What are some micro skills I can use in this scenario to support the collaborative relationship?



How to apply the *RARE Model* at your institution:

Collaboration Playbook

Clucas Leaderman & Polychronopoulos, Designing a collaboration playbook, The RARE Model, 3

Part 2: Planning Your Play

Based on the assessment partnership, which strategy are you considering implementing?	Ex: Active Listening and Curiosity
What are the benefits of focusing on this strategy right now?	Ex: I don't know much about what's going on in their department, how engaged they are, etc., so it would help me to learn more about their own perceived strengths and room for improvement
What barriers do you anticipate (internal or external)?	Ex: I'm naturally shy, so it's hard for me to reach out to people that I don't already have a connection with; this liaison also does not respond to my emails
Who are allies or natural assessment champions who can be a resource for you/your assessment partner?	Ex: My colleagues in the Physics department have faced similar challenges and are communicating regularly, and can be a resource for the Math liaison

How future webinars can support you:



Address your specific needs through the collaboration playbook



Adapt the strategies to work in different contexts



Develop assessment leaders at your institution



Expand your assessment partnerships and conversations

References and Resources



Save the Dates!

August 20th @ 3:00p EST

- *Acknowledge: Redefining Assessment Partnerships*

September 17th @ 3:00p EST

- *Readiness & Embolden: Nurturing a Reflective and Supportive Assessment Culture*

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