

Psychological First Aid* – Digital or Face to Face – The difference.

Graham Roper – June 2020

Previously I have written of “Awareness or Outcome” needs based training, (June 2020). <https://www.linkedin.com/in/graham-roper-48b36087/detail/recent-activity/shares/>

Following on from this, the question was raised; can ‘Psychological First Aid*’ training can be completed by digital platforms?

There is of course a place for digital training in raising awareness, however to achieve the outcomes required requires a face to face process.

Unlike some mental health first aid programs, Psychological First Aid* doesn't require a full day of face to face training. It is delivered in a facilitated, directed, outcome driven process, In half the time*.

Rather than describing my own rationale for a face to face, foundation, outcome driven process, here is a collection of rationale from research. (not my words, but do look for key words that fit the context of Mental Wellness).....

***Face-to-face** communications are more productive than other modes of **communication**. ... **Face-to-face communication** allows for better rapport and trust-building than audio or written communications which can make the difference in reaching agreement, ensuring that each party understands the other*

*Face to **face** interaction is still by far the most powerful way to achieve business goals. Having a personal connection builds trust and minimizes misinterpretation and misunderstanding. (Forbes 2018)*

Text alone lacks...paralinguistic cues that reveal uniquely human mental capacities, thereby enabling dehumanization if readers do not compensate for the absence of these cues.”

And...

“If mutual appreciation and understanding of the mind of another person is the goal of social interaction, then it may be best for the person’s voice to be heard.”

Pros of face-to-face communication

Allows reading of body language. ...

Builds trust and transparency. ...

Enhances productivity. ...

Allows discussion and conclusions. ...

Con’s

Finding appropriate time. ... (Same for both in the context of PFA)

***Cost** of facilitating a meeting. ... (Costs not defined, cost over outcome, face to face has better outcomes)*

Advantages of face to face communication in business are.

Effective communication

Face to face communication is effective as it includes facial expressions also.

Instant feedback

Face to face communication gives instant feedback. Doubts and misunderstandings are cleared on the spot. So immediate feedback.

Informal and direct

Face to face communication is simple, direct and informal. The impact of face to face communication increases because of Participation and team spirit.

Confidential

In face to face communication, all secret and confidential matters are revealed to the trusted person privately.

Delicate situations

Face to face communication is very useful to handle delicate situations like strikes by [employees](#), rivalries in groups, tensions in a family, etc.

Creates more motivation.

*Makes it easier to sense what a person is really thinking.
Creates a bond.*

Can read body Language. An authority on body language, James Borg says that human communication consists of 93% body language and paralinguistic cues, while only 7% consists of words. Body language speaks a lot louder than words; you can gain a better understanding of how a person is feeling than you would otherwise be able to through other forms of communication.

Creates value. The more face to face communication you can have the better. You'll have their attention 100%, and your message is guaranteed to be heard.

Builds relationships. In a survey by Forbes that spoke to 760 business executives, 84% preferred face to face communication. Out of those, 85% said their reason was that it builds stronger, more meaningful business relationships. Respondents of the survey also said face to face meetings are best for persuasion (91%), leadership (87%), and engagement (86%).

Less misunderstandings. How many times has an email been misunderstood, misread or perceived by another party to be rude when it's not? Face to face meetings minimise the risk of miscommunication compared to email or over the phone.

Unified Communications

Shows body language.

Builds relationships.

Values the other person.

Boosts effectiveness.

Protects confidentiality.

Enhances trust and credibility.

*Establishes **more trust** than other modes of communication.*

*Is more likely to be perceived as **credible**.*

More productive than other modes of communication.

More efficient than other modes; there is less likelihood for misunderstanding or misinterpreting.

*Allows for **better rapport** and **trust-building** than audio or written communications which can make the difference in reaching agreement, ensuring that each party understands the other, and closing a sale.*

*89% of American workers say email, text and voicemail **get in the way** of their workplace relationships.*

87% of American workers say email is **not an effective way to resolve workplace confrontations**.

67% of senior executives say their organization would be **more productive** with face-to-face communication.

SUMMARY:

The main advantages of face to face communication are that one can read the body language; it adds value, builds relationships, and creates lesser misunderstandings....

You will also find these outcomes described..... *more productive, for better rapport, most powerful way to achieve, minimizes misinterpretation and misunderstanding, best for the person's voice to be heard, Instant feedback, Informal and direct, Confidential, Delicate situations, Creates value, More efficient, Builds relationships, [Unified Communications](#).....)*

Developing a foundation of knowledge, understanding, tolerance and acceptance of psychological behaviours, that we interact with on a daily basis, requires all elements of learning to be applied.

Given the nature of the topic (mental health), face to face interactions are pivotal in achieving desired outcomes.

Resources:

<https://psychcentral.com/>

bizhub

Article Junction

<http://management-ebooks.com/news/>

starmedical.co.uk/

<http://insightsfromanalytics.com/>

* Psychosocial First Aid is a 4-hour face to face program. Other available mental health first aid programs range from 7 to 16 hours.