

## The 4 Ups!

REAL and Effective Communication requires leaders to:

- Manage Expectations
- Involve Appropriately
- Facilitate Adoption
- Ensure Follow-Through

Sharpen a Culture of High Commitment. Realize Results through High Performance.

### 4 Ups!

Bring it Up!	Courageously
Talk it Up!	Candidly
Wrap it Up!	Clearly
Follow it Up!	Conscientiously

### Getting REAL

*“Mean what you say, say what you mean, but don’t say it mean.” – Unknown*

We call the 4 Ups the simple definition of REAL communication. We know that the absence of REAL feedback and communication is one of the single biggest obstacles to team performance, leadership coaching, and customer relationships. When a leader struggles to address the REAL issues, the REAL facts and the REAL feelings, they cannot build truly great organizations that sustain long-term growth, prosperity, and a contribution to the world. People crave feedback and grounded guidance, and Leaders who are unable to provide REAL feedback are an enormous liability impacting people and profit.



We have gained enormous experience working with leaders to effectively manage performance and have adapted the work of Stephen B. Karpman M.D. in his “Three Rules of Openness” to apply safe and successful conversation skills to Leader-as-Coach practices. The ability to openly address the interaction that takes place between coach and learner is to apply the skills of 4 Ups: Bring It Up, Talk It Up, Wrap It Up, and Follow it Up.

Although a simplistic process in theory, it provides a framework for implementing REAL feedback during coaching and other performance management conversations. Implementing the 4Ups varies greatly from individual leader to individual leader.

The theoretical position is:

1. All four skills are necessary for effective coaching, communication and problem solving, and it is up to leaders to find their voice and inspire others to find theirs.
2. Each of the 4 Ups requires a separate and distinct skill to facilitate REAL dialogue.
3. It is rare for a leader to be proficient at all four skills based on their natural [Attraction Powers](#) and Repellent Forces.
4. Aligned to our approach of Leadership Intimacy, it is important to understand the learner’s (person being coached) skill level in each of the 4 Ups.

### The Cost of Not Providing Corrective Feedback

Managers and leaders frequently miss opportunities to provide corrective feedback. They are afraid that giving unpleasant feedback could elicit a difficult-to-handle response and harm relationships. In reality, delaying or withholding corrective feedback will do more harm than good in the long run. The consequences of the uncorrected behavior often start to escalate. In addition, the manager might even build up unspoken resentment toward the other person that eventually hinders their ability to work together. The learner, meanwhile, is robbed of the opportunity to improve and may continue to under-perform. Before long, the overall team performance may suffer, since the manager’s silence may telegraph to other team members that the unacceptable behavior is really okay.

“A Remarkable  
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candor in the  
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Jack Welch

Withholding important feedback causes everyone to lose—you, the people you work with, and the organization as a whole. Because of your role as a coach, your perspective is highly valued. People look to you for support and guidance. Withholding feedback means you are expecting people to operate without the benefit of valuable information and direction.

Giving feedback is a task you perform again and again as a leader and as a coach, letting people know where they are and where to go next in terms of expectations and goals—yours, their own, and the organization’s.



Withholding constructive feedback, especially as it relates to the desired behaviors, is like sending people out on a dangerous hike without a compass. In today's rapid-paced, changing, and demanding workplace, it's easy to take a wrong turn.

Feedback is a useful tool for both indicating when things are going in the right direction and for redirecting problem performance. Therefore, your objective in giving constructive feedback is to provide guidance by supplying information in a useful manner, either to support effective behavior or to guide someone back toward successful performance, each ultimately helping them move to the next level of performance.

The leadership style in which you try to accomplish these goals will determine your success in the development and growth of your team and organization as a whole.

## The 4 Ups Explained



### 1. *Bring It Up!*

Some leaders are very good at introducing topics in conversation and coaching. Even those difficult or sensitive discussions seem to be easy for them to openly bring to the table. Sadly other leaders have little problem in voicing their opinions, although they do so aggressively and do not provide permission for others to do the same.

Even more are challenged by the lack of skill or perceived permission to tackle the tough conversations in REAL ways. They tend to shy away, may be afraid of being wrong, being punished, being mean, and avoid conversations all together. Some leaders think through the problems for weeks on end to make sure they address issues in just the right way, and business moves too fast to allow for this.

Also, some leave it for so long that they then convince themselves that too much time has passed and they may as well not address the issue any more.

Others prefer solving problems themselves with little involvement from their team, and some expect others to just know that there is a problem, and they wait for them to bring up the problem. Granted, some leaders are naturally shy, but that should not be the excuse for shying away from providing candid feedback. Still others do not allow themselves to even attempt any REAL feedback. Fear stops them dead in their tracks and they Save it Up! Or even Blow it Up!



### 2. *Talk It Up!*

When a conversation is in full force, the objective is clear: points must be made, heard, and resolution should be accomplished. However for a variety of reasons, we get tripped up when we Talk it Up! And do not foster two-way dialogue as effectively as we could.



What happens?

1. We get Hooked—Triggers get in the way
2. We play Ring Around the Rosie—Talking around the REAL issue
3. We rationalize or intellectualize
4. We practice the Corporate Nod—Say the politically correct thing
5. Engage in the Water Cooler Meeting—Save the REAL conversation for the water cooler
6. Use the “YABUT” —Discount what others are saying
7. Have verbal diarrhea and engage in the monologue conversation
8. Have little or no skill in listening and hearing

### How to Talk it Up effectively

The Share-Ask-Combine-Confirm communication technique can be effectively used to influence other people in an involvement-oriented manner. Identify a situation to Talk it Up, and practice expressing each of the four steps below to carry out the balanced [accountability and engagement conversation](#) technique.

**Share** your point of view, suggestion, recommendations, thoughts, or expectations.

- Focus on the objectives of the conversation
- Be concrete and specific
- Be clear and succinct!

**Ask** for their point of view, suggestion or thoughts, or expectations.

- Directly ask others what they feel about or think about what you just stated
- Try statements like, “What do you think about my request?” or “What are your feelings about x?”
- Be sure to listen to their answers without judgment
- Be careful that you simply forget to ask at all!

**Combine** your points of view by actively clarifying what you have heard the other person saying.

- Use paraphrasing or reflection to test for understanding
- Don’t repeat back what you heard verbatim—nobody likes a parrot!
- Use a phrase such as, “So, you seem to be saying...” or “Did I get it right...?”
- Combine thoughts or ideas, “So, your idea is..., and I suggest adding...”

**Proceed** toward and summarize the areas of agreement and areas of disagreement.

- Briefly state the areas of agreement you both have expressed. And get agreement.
- Briefly state the areas of disagreement you both have expressed. And get agreement.
- If necessary, agree to disagree!
- Watch for indicators of defensiveness on your and the other person’s part
- Put some closure to your discussion by saying, “How do you believe we should proceed?” or “Are our combined thoughts a viable solution?”



What positive results can you get?

You empower, engage, motivate, make your team accountable, provide a space for development of others, and obtain all the information before laying down your viewpoint. You're a good listener, thoughtful, confident, inspiring, empowering, and engaging.



## 2. *Wrap It Up!*

Once a conversation has been Brought Up, Talked Up, Listened Up, and agreed to, it is time to Wrap it Up and gain heart-felt commitment by achieving mutual understanding, gaining agreement, and facilitating focus on personal interests.

Your Wrap it Up conversations require accountability talk skills employing a high level of the language of specificity. In every Wrap it Up conversation, you will be much more effective as a leader if you use a little script along the lines of, "So, we agreed that X will do X, on or by X date, at X time, with X outcome, and report back to X in X way?"

Rather than follow a script, you can also make sure you include all or most of the essential components of the Wrap it Up conversation by using the following checklist.

The language of specificity includes:

- Who owns the task?
- What will be done? (Use "will" rather than "try to," "should," or "might.")
- On what date?
- At what time?
- What will success look like in outcome-based language?
- Who will receive a report of completion?
- What form and content will the report contain?

Once you have learned this simple and direct technique of the Wrap it Up conversation, you will increase your likelihood of success. Where others may become angry, frustrated and defeated, you have an approach for getting commitment back on track.



## 4. *Follow It Up!*

We advocate to inspect what is expected, as many organizations perform poorly because of lack of follow-through. Successful leaders share clear assignments, hold people accountable, and establish a regular review processes to track progress. To get things done and Follow it Up means that leaders must inspect what is expected, both to drive for results and build motivation in people.



Make progress visible.

Unfortunately, most leaders don't understand the advantage of showing visible progress toward goal achievement. These leaders understand the need to set clear goals, provide incentives and recognition, and support their team, but do not fully appreciate the power of people seeing and experiencing tangible progress and small wins. Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer, authors of *The Progress Principle*, explain how managers can foster progress after rigorous analysis of nearly 12,000 diary entries provided by 238 employees in seven companies: People's "inner work lives" (how they feel inside) profoundly affect their performance—and the most powerful motivating factor is seeing tangible progress whilst performing meaningful work.

A disciplined Follow it Up approach is not about micromanaging, rather, paving the way for a sense of progress, being able to provide empathetic support, and avoiding unwanted surprises of unmet expectations. It is a continuous cycle of implementing, evaluating, adjusting, implementing, and so on. One of the advantages of engaging with Align4Profit is our commitment to provide participants with actionable tools. One such tool is a Follow it Up! Checklist, a downloadable file in our [Member Area](#). Are you thinking about engaging with one of our [Six Leadership Developmental Solutions](#)? Don't hesitate to contact us at [info@align4profit.com](mailto:info@align4profit.com)

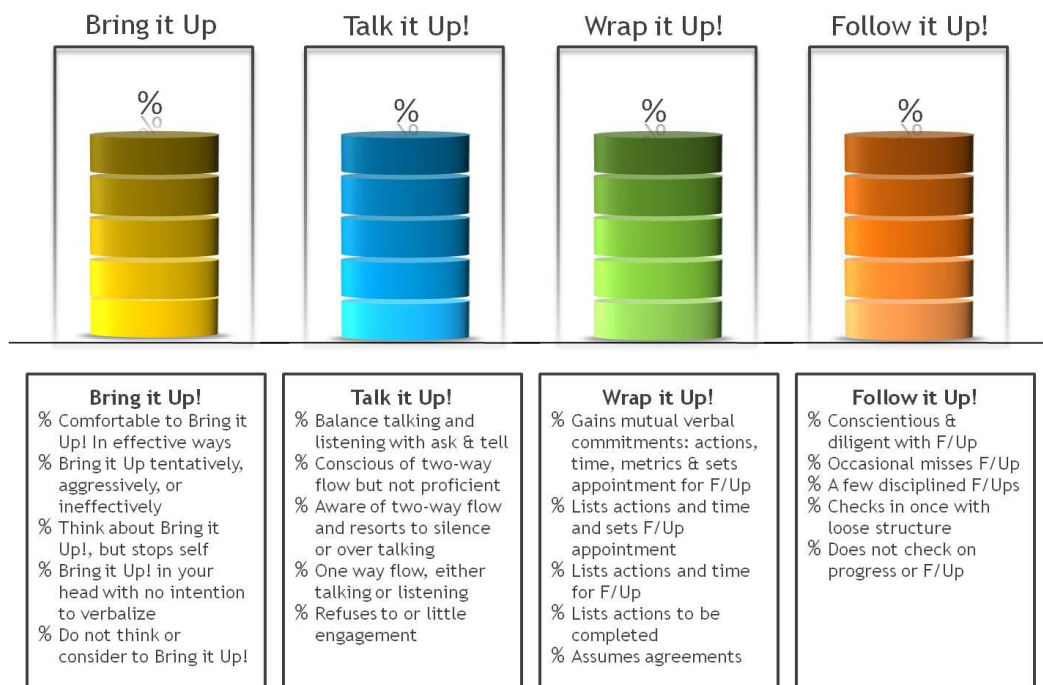
### The 4Ups Skill Scales

Place the 4Ups Skill Scales, below, between leader and learner and discuss where each thinks the other falls. Generate a list of how each will recognize their own shortcomings during conversations and agree how they can remind each other to make full use of the 4 Ups effectively.

Leader or learner, for example, may easily get emotional and unskilled at Bring it Up. The other may jump too quickly to problem resolution, and not use Talk it Up well.

By reviewing the 4 Ups scale you will be able to create awareness of how the 4 Ups may hinder effective collaboration. We all know awareness is the key to facilitating change.

### 4Ups Skills Scale





**What now?** If you want to demonstrate greater proficiency in using the 4 Ups, contact us to learn more about the [Leadership Development Solutions](#) that may be right for your specific situation. We look forward to hearing from you. [info@align4profit.com](mailto:info@align4profit.com) 972-608-0400