Communication Matrix Information and Resource Page

The Basics

What is the Communication Matrix?

The Communication Matrix is an assessment tool designed to pinpoint exactly how an individual is communicating and to provide a framework for determining logical communication goals. It was first published in 1990 and was revised in 1996 and 2004 by Dr. Charity Rowland of Oregon Health & Science University. It was designed primarily for speech-language pathologists and educators to use to document the expressive communication skills of children who have severe or multiple disabilities, including children with sensory, motor and cognitive impairments. The original version for professionals is still available in print for purchase at www.designtolearn.com. It uses a concise format that is designed for rapid administration by persons familiar with the assessment.

(Source: Communication Matrix, communication matrix.org)

Reasons to communicate:

Design and Organization of the Communication Matrix

Four Reasons to Communicate

The Matrix is organized into four major reasons to communicate that appear across the bottom of the Profile: to REFUSE things that we don't want; to OBTAIN things that we do want; to engage in SOCIAL interaction; and to provide or seek INFORMATION. Under each of these four major reasons are more specific messages that people communicate: these correspond to the questions that you must answer as you complete the Matrix. The specific messages are arranged by level. To view the table click on the link below. View table

(Source: Communication Matrix, communication matrix.org)

Seven Levels of Communication

1. Level I. Pre-Intentional Behavior
2. Level II. Intentional Behavior
3. Level III. Unconventional Communication
4. Level IV. Conventional Communication
5. Level V. Concrete Symbols
6. Level VI. Abstract Symbols
7. Level VII. Language

Level	Refuse	Obtain	Social	Information
I	-Expresses discomfort	-Expresses comfort	-Expresses interest in other people	
II	-Protests	-Continues an action -Obtains more of something	-Attracts attention	
III	-Refuses or rejects something	-Requests more of an action -Requests a new action -Requests more of an object -Makes choices -Requests a new object	-Requests attention -Shows affection	
IV			-Greets people -Offers things or shares -Directs someone's attention to something -Uses polite social forms	-Answers "Yes" and "No" questions -Asks questions
V		-Requests objects that are absent		-Names things or people -Makes comments
VI				
VII				

(Source: Communication Matrix, communication matrix.org)

Research basis for Communication Matrix:

At this link you can download an article describing the development of the matrix and the research basis for the implementation and validity of this observation tool.

Link: https://www.communicationmatrix.org/ResearchBasis.aspx

Communication Matrix Test Drive

You can try out the Communication Matrix here. You will have access to all of the features of the main web site; however, all data that you enter will expire when you close your browser. **(Source: Communication Matrix, communication matrix.org)**

Link: https://www.communicationmatrix.org/TestDrive.aspx

Communication Matrix Community Of Practice website

Welcome to the Communication Matrix Community

Our Mission: To improve communication outcomes for individuals with complex communication needs by creating a vibrant and sustaining community around the assessment service www.communicationmatrix.org .

Why? Those of us who use the Communication Matrix may feel isolated because we are trying to address the unique needs of people who experience rare conditions that cause severe communication disorders. As teachers, therapists, family members and students, we need to share our insights and experiences to improve the ability of people with complex communication needs to participate fully in society.

How? We are co-creating a home for information, questions, discussions, experiences, assistance and examples to help us make the leap from assessment (using the Communication Matrix) to excellent teaching, and learning to support individuals with severe communication disorders.

Our Inspiration: We are excited by the approach called "educational design research"[1] that involves practitioners and researchers (and, we would add, participants and family members) working collaboratively to conduct truly useful research to solve real-world problems with scientific rigor.

Who are we? We are a small group of researchers, speech-language pathologists and educational experts who are passionate about creating an engaging and supportive community to improve outcomes for individuals with complex communication needs.

(Source: Communication Matrix Community, community.communicationmatrix.org)

Link: https://community.communicationmatrix.org/

Communication Matrix Community Promo video:

This short 5 minute video introduces you to Dr. Charity Rowland, the developer of the Communication matrix, and other practitioners who are finding a way to connect with other teachers, speech and language therapists, and parents across the world to share what they are learning form use of the matrix and strategies and materials they are using to address children's communication needs.

(Source: Communication Matrix Community, community.communicationmatrix.org)

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwG4EoYuhIg