

# Mission Control: Mastering the Art of Clear Communication

## Lesson Overview

In this lesson, you will learn how to give instructions that are impossible to misunderstand. Whether you are leading a Boy Scout troop on a hike or managing a team in a future job, the ability to "brief" others clearly is a superpower. We will focus on the **3 C's of Communication: Clear, Concise, and Complete**.

## Learning Objectives

- Identify the three essential components of an effective instruction (The 3 C's).
- Demonstrate the ability to give complex directions using only verbal cues.
- Practice active listening by asking clarifying questions to ensure a "mission" succeeds.

## Materials Needed

- Two identical sets of small building blocks (Lego) or random household objects (e.g., a spoon, a red marker, a rubber band).
- A folder or a "barrier" (to prevent the speaker and listener from seeing each other's work).
- Paper and a pen.
- A timer (phone or kitchen timer).

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## 1. Introduction: The "Telephone" Disaster (The Hook)

**Think about this:** Have you ever been told to "go get the thing from the place near the other thing"? Did you find it? Probably not! In the Scouts, if a leader gives vague directions during a rainstorm, the tent might fall down. In the real world, if a boss gives vague directions, the company might lose money. Bad communication leads to frustration; great communication leads to success.

**The Goal:** Today, you aren't just a student; you are a "Mission Controller" training to lead your troop.

## 2. Instruction: The 3 C's of a Perfect Briefing (I Do)

When you are teaching Scouts or anyone else a new skill, follow these three rules:

- **Clear:** Use specific words. Instead of "put that there," say "place the 2x4 red brick vertically on the left corner."
- **Concise:** Don't use 100 words when 10 will do. Keep it short so people don't lose focus.
- **Complete:** Make sure they have all the info. Does the listener know *\*when\** to start and *\*what\** the finished product should look like?

*Example of a Bad Briefing:* "Draw a house with some windows and stuff."

*Example of a Great Briefing:* "Draw a square in the center of your page. Add a triangle on top for a roof. Put two small square windows in the middle of the house."

### 3. Guided Practice: The "Blind Drawing" (We Do)

Let's test the 3 C's together. We are going to do a quick drawing challenge.

1. Sit back-to-back with your teacher or a partner.
2. The teacher will describe a simple object (like a tent or a campfire) using the 3 C's.
3. You must draw exactly what you hear. You cannot look at the teacher's paper!
4. **Reflection:** Compare the drawings. Where did the communication break down? Did the teacher use "vague" words? Did the student assume things that weren't said?

### 4. Independent Application: The Master Builder (You Do)

Now, it's your turn to lead the troop. You are the Mission Controller.

#### The Challenge:

1. Set up a barrier (like a large book or folder) between you and your partner.
2. Using 5-10 Lego bricks or household objects, build a "Secret Structure." Do not let your partner see it.
3. Give your partner identical pieces to yours.
4. **The Mission:** Using only your voice (no pointing!), instruct your partner on how to build the exact same structure.
5. **Rule:** Your partner can ask "Yes" or "No" questions, but they cannot show you what they are building until the end.
6. **Success Criteria:** At the end of 5 minutes, lift the barrier. If the structures match, the mission is a success!

### 5. Conclusion & Recap

**Summary:** Being a leader—in the Scouts or in a future career—isn't about being the loudest; it's about being the clearest. When you use the 3 C's, you save time, reduce stress, and help your team win.

#### Review Questions:

- Which of the 3 C's was the hardest to follow during the Lego challenge?
- How does "active listening" (asking questions) help the person giving the directions?
- How can you use this tomorrow if you have to explain a game or a chore to someone else?

### Assessment

**Formative:** The teacher observes the "Blind Drawing" and "Master Builder" activities, noting if the student uses specific spatial language (left, right, on top of, perpendicular) rather than vague terms (here, there, that thing).

**Summative:** The student will write a "60-Second Briefing" for a Scouting skill (e.g., how to tie a square knot or how to pack a backpack). The briefing must be under 10 sentences and include all 3 C's. A third party should be able to follow the written instructions to complete the task.

## **Adaptability & Differentiation**

- **Scaffolding (Struggling Learners):** Provide a list of "Direction Words" (Horizontal, Vertical, Parallel, Adjacent) to use during the Master Builder activity.
- **Extension (Advanced Learners):** Increase the complexity of the "Secret Structure" to 15+ pieces, or introduce a "distraction" (play background music) to simulate a loud Scouting environment.
- **Digital Option:** If doing this remotely, use a shared digital whiteboard or describe an image found online for the partner to recreate.