Critical Team Skills for Today's Medical Assistants
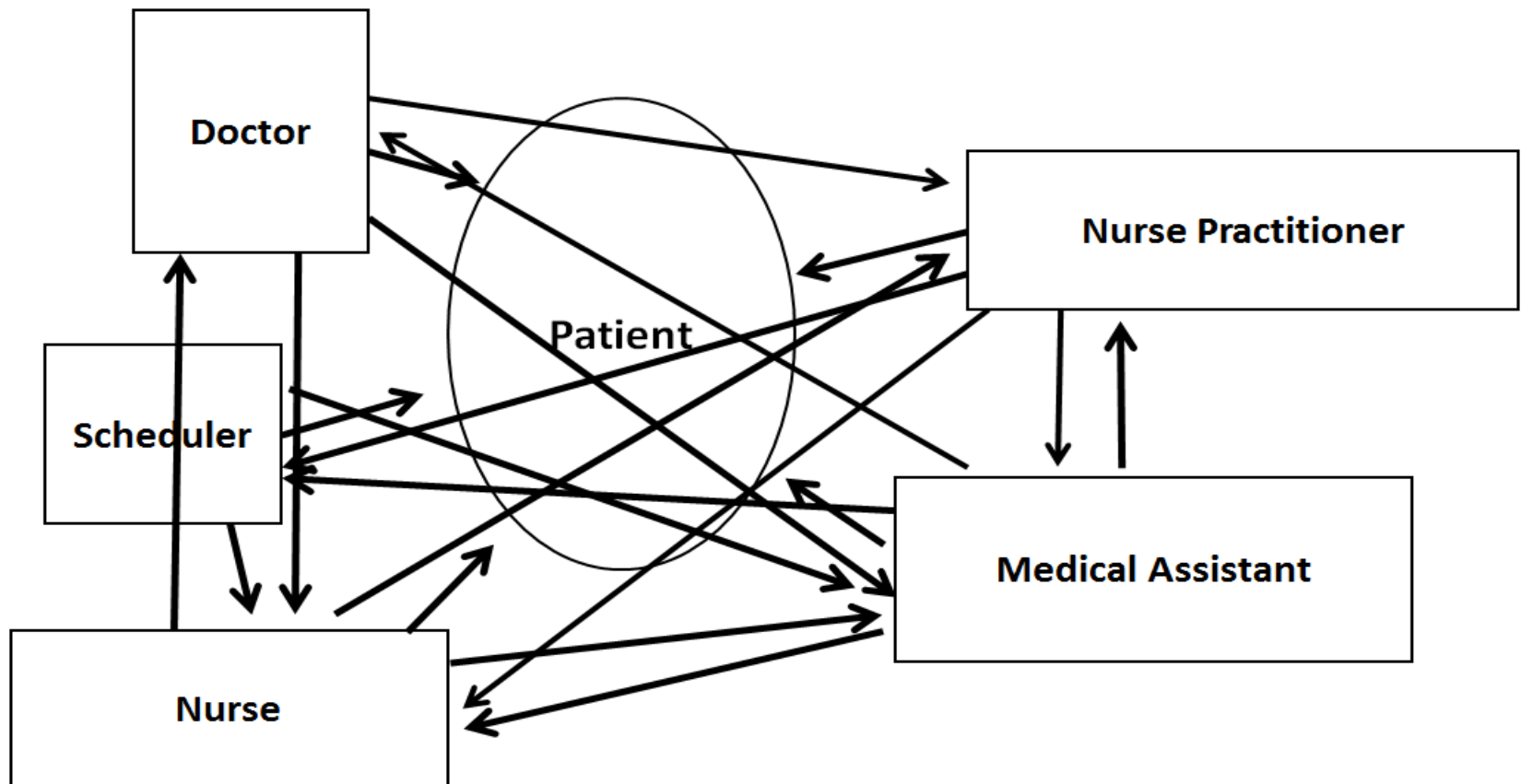
Paul Wallinger

Craig Ogurek MSN, BSN, RN

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Todays Health Care Environment
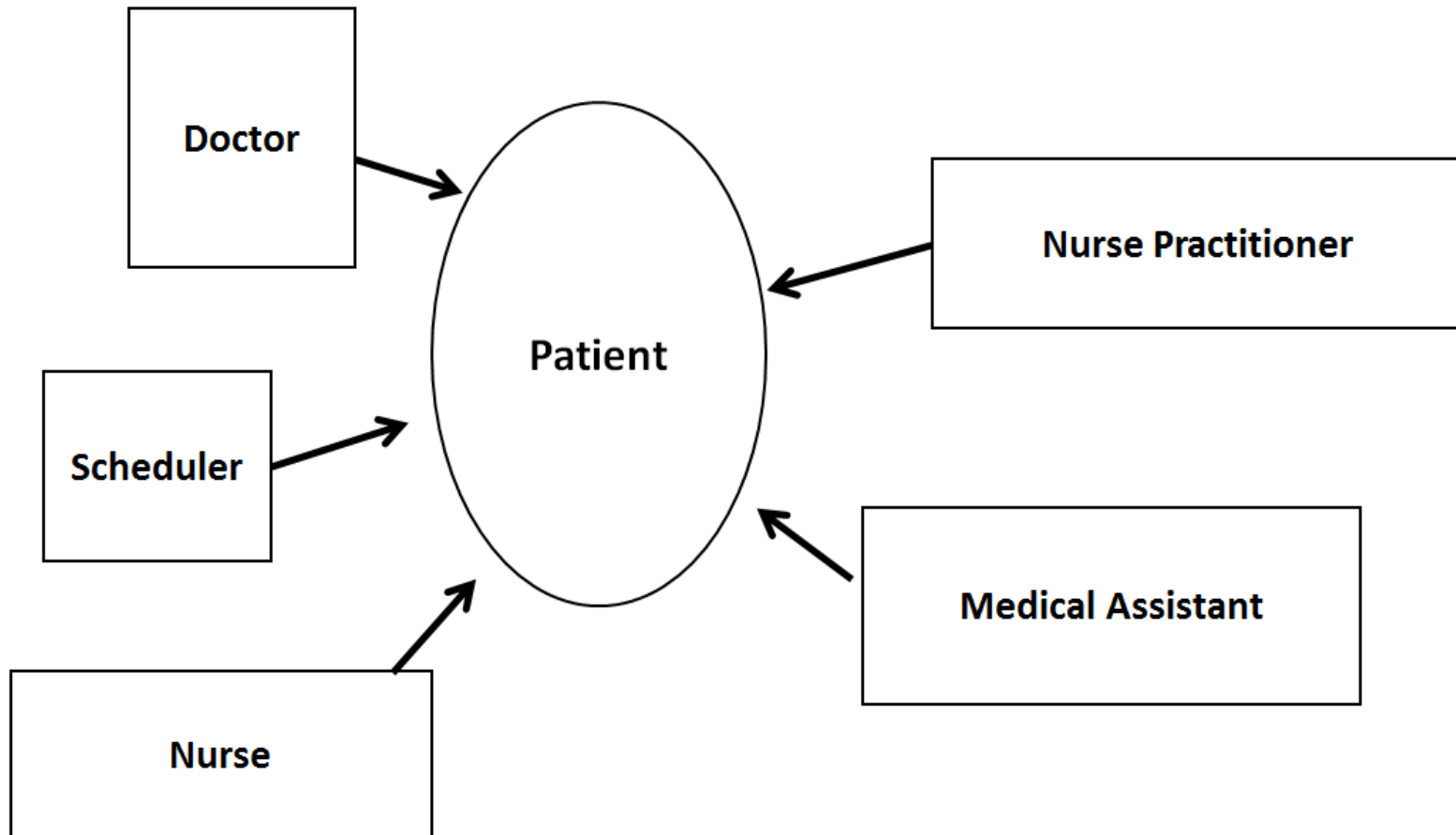
Today's Health Care Environment

What Skills Are Critical for Success in this Environment?

- Technical

- Team

Technical + Team = *Successful Performance!*

What Skills are Critical for Success in this Environment?

- Technical
  - Draw Blood
  - Change Dressings
  - Take Blood Pressure
  - Set up Exam Environment
  - Charting

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What Skills are Critical for Success in this Environment?

- Team
  - Communications
  - Appropriate Behaviors
  - Control of Self
    - To Help Patient
    - To Help Others

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How do we get better at Team Skills?

- Need to be aware

- Need to have some tools

- Need to practice those skills

How do we get better at Team Skills?

- <u>Need to be aware</u>

- *Unconscious Bias*
  - An unintended, automatic positive or negative reaction toward something or someone

Unconscious Bias

- We all have biases that can impact our interactions with people and our decision making processes.

- Bias can impact how we work as a team and ultimately the patient experience.

- We must become aware of our own biases and learn how to minimize the impact they have on our behaviors

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Demographic Changes

- By 2055, the U.S. will not have a single racial or ethnic majority.

- Asia has replaced Latin America (including Mexico) as the biggest source of new immigrants to the U.S.

- Millennials, young adults born after 1980, are the largest U.S. generation

- The share of American adults who have never been married is at an historic high

- U.S. population growth is largely due to birthrate among immigrant populations

- The population is aging at a rapid rate

What Are Some Common Biases?

- Age Bias
- Racial Bias
- Weight Bias
- Socio-economic Bias

Could these biases impact the care you provide a patient?
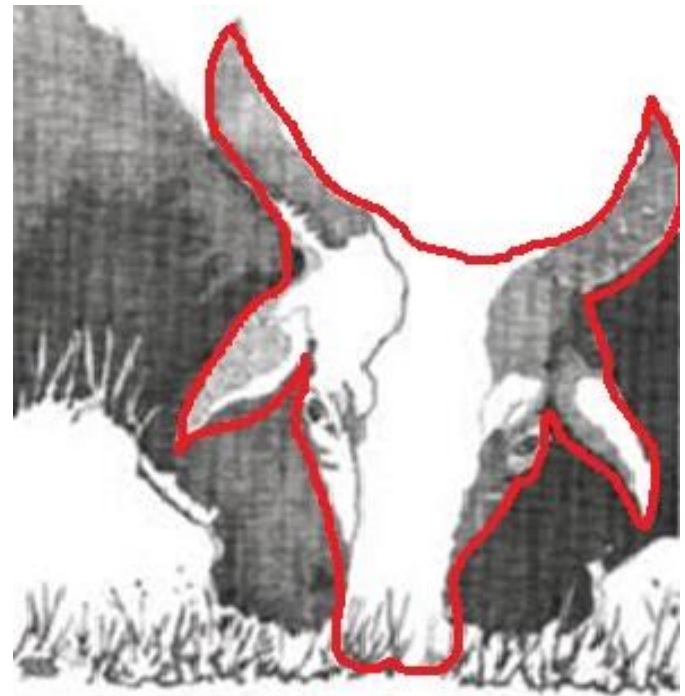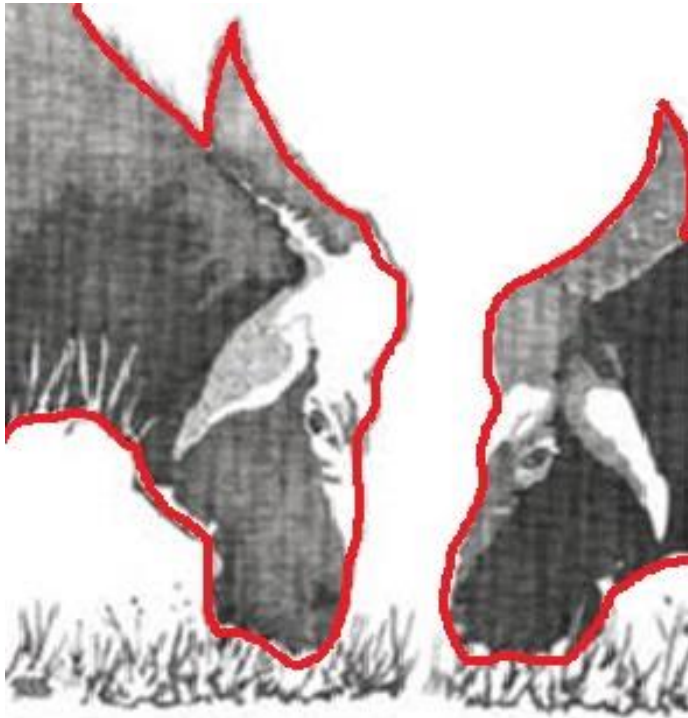
What Does This Mean for Patient Care?

First Impressions

What Do You See?

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Two Cows? One Cow?

What Do You See?

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Ways We Can Overcome Bias

- Practice slowing down and being mindful of our own thoughts so we can begin to see things differently

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Communication, What We Say Matters

That is not my patient

You'll have to…

You're wrong about…….

I can't do that

I can't believe you haven't been helped yet.

Communication, What We Say Matters

That is not my patient	Here is how we handle that.....
You'll have to...	I'm sorry that happened, what can I do to help?
You're wrong about.......	I'll find out who the RN is for ___
I can't do that	I won't be able to do that because...
I can't believe you haven't been helped yet.	Let me see if I can clarify this situation for you.

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Communication, What We Say Matters

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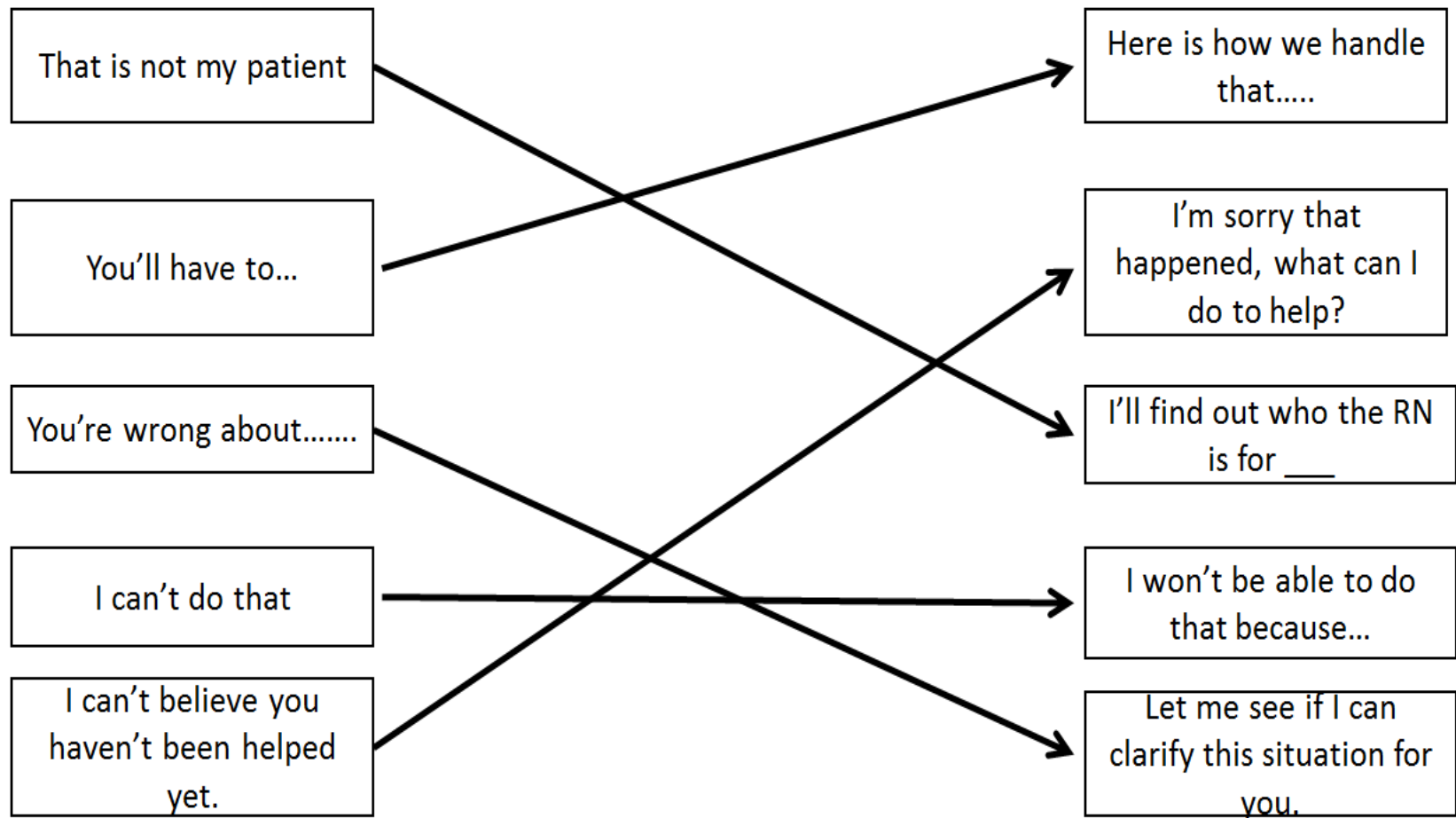
Communication, What We Say Matters

Conflict Resolution Strategies

- Express feelings without blaming
- Focus on the issue, NOT your position on the issue
- Focus on areas of common interest
- Communicate your feelings assertively, NOT aggressively,
  - Use I statements and own your experience

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Conflict Resolution, My Experience Cube

O What am I **OBSERVING** What am I **seeing** and **hearing**	**T** What am I **THINKING**? Judgments, Ideas Beliefs & Values Interpretations
W What is it I **WANT**? Desires Wishes Dreams, Hopes	**F** What am I **FEELING**? Mad, Sad Glad, Scared Hurt, Happy

# Experience Cube, Observations

- **Observations:**
  - This is observable, objective data. The facts.
  - Keep it simple, clear, and direct
  - Statements not Questions
  - What a video camera would capture

Just the facts, mam. Just the facts.

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Experience Cube, Thoughts

- Thoughts
  - Assumptions you are making about the situation
  - Stories that you are making up about the observable facts.
  - Helpful language:
    - In my experience…
    - How it occurred to me was…
    - The assumption I made around that is…
  - Things you need more information or clarity on
  - Listen and ask questions
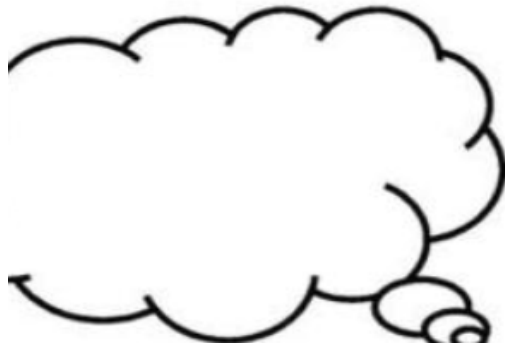
Experience Cube, Feelings

- **Clearly describe how you are feeling**
  - During the situation how did you feel? How do you feel now? (e.g. Sad, Mad, Bad, Glad, Afraid)
  - Ensure that you "own" your feelings: do not blame the other person for "making you" feel this way
  - Use language that is appropriate for the environment
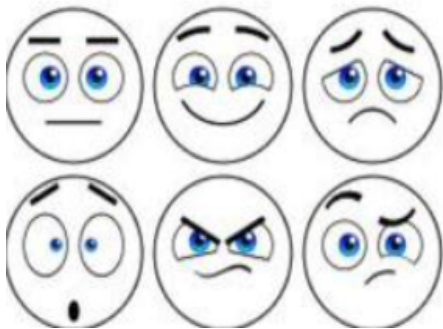
Experience Cube, I

- Your wants can be about awareness; understanding; behavior change. Remember it is up to the other person if they CHOOSE to do what you want. They have the CHOICE.
  - Examples of wants:
    - I want you to understand the impact this has on the team
    - I want you to understand and follow safety rules - be in compliance
    - I want you to arrive for work on time; I also want you to know what the consequences are if you don't
    - I want you to work with me to find a solution to this issue

- Listen and hear clearly what others want

- Look for mutuality – goal is to problem solve together

Communication, What did you say?

ACTIVE LISTENING

1. Pay Attention

2. Withhold Judgment

3. Reflect

4. Clarify

5. Summarize

6. Share

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Active Listening Exercise

- Person One talks for 2 minutes

- Person Two, Actively Listen with no interruptions, then Summarize what was said.

❑ Switch Roles

- Person Two talks for 2 minutes

- Person One, Actively Listen with no interruptions, then Summarize what was said.

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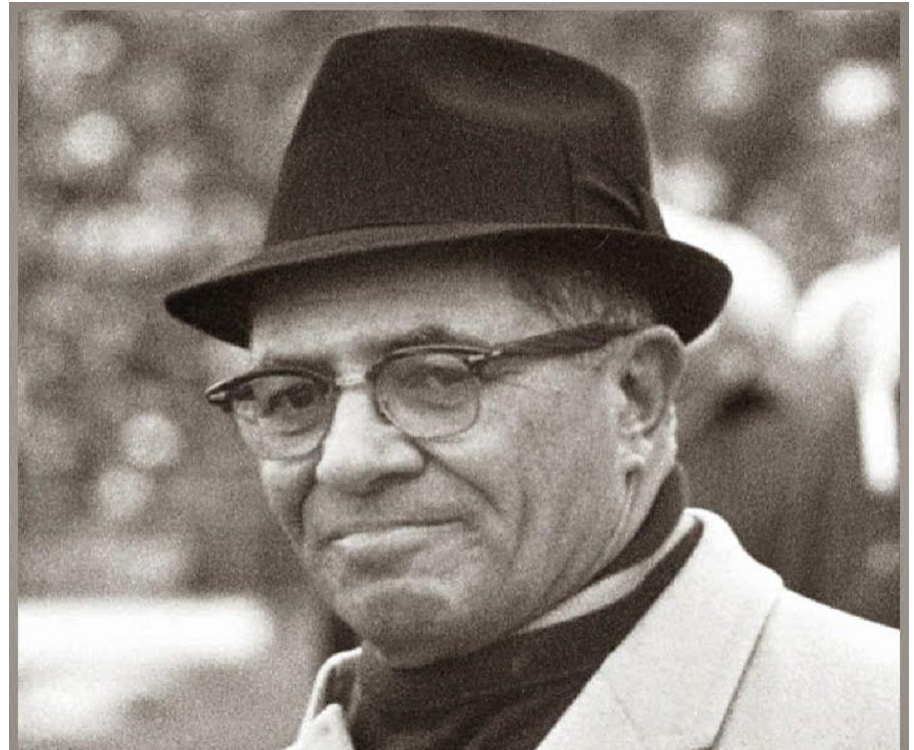# What Skills Are Critical for Success in this Environment?

- Technical

- Team

Technical + Team = _Successful Performance!_

"Individual commitment to a group effort--that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

--Vince Lombardi