

Effective Communication



Effective communication is about more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. As well as being able to clearly convey a message, you need to also listen in a way that gains the full meaning of what's being said and makes the other person feel heard and understood.

Effective communication sounds like it should be instinctive. But all too often, when we try to communicate with others something goes astray. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts ensue. This can cause problems in your home, school, and work relationships.

For many of us, communicating more clearly and effectively requires learning some important skills. Whether you're trying to improve communication with your spouse, kids, boss, or co-workers, learning these skills can deepen your connections to others, build greater trust and respect, and improve teamwork, problem solving, and your overall social and emotional health.

Barriers to effective communication include:

Stress and out-of-control emotion. When you're stressed or emotionally overwhelmed, you're more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behaviour. To avoid conflict and misunderstandings, you can learn how to quickly calm down before continuing a conversation.

Lack of focus. You can't communicate effectively when you're multitasking. If you're checking your phone, planning what you're going to say next, or daydreaming, you're almost certain to miss nonverbal cues in the conversation. To communicate effectively, you need to avoid distractions and stay focused.

Inconsistent body language. Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. If you say one thing, but your body language says something else, your listener will likely feel that you're being dishonest. For example, you can't say "yes" while shaking your head no.

Negative body language. If you disagree with or dislike what's being said, you might use negative body language to rebuff the other person's message, such as crossing your arms, avoiding eye contact,

or tapping your feet. You don't have to agree with, or even like what's being said, but to communicate effectively and not put the other person on the defensive, it's important to avoid sending negative signals.

Steps to remove barrier of communication:

✓ **Clarify Ideas before Communication:**

The person sending the communication should be very clear in his mind about what he wants to say. He should know the objective of his message and, therefore, he should arrange his thoughts in a proper order.

✓ **Communicate According to the Need of the Receiver:**

The sender of the communication should prepare the structure of the message not according to his own level or ability but he should keep in mind the level, understanding or the environment of the receiver.

✓ **Consult Others before Communication:**

At the time of planning the communication, suggestions should be invited from all the persons concerned. Its main advantage will be that all those people who are consulted at the time of preparing the communication plan will contribute to the success of the communication system.

✓ **Be Aware of Language, Tone and Content of Message:**

The sender should take care of the fact that the message should be framed in clear and beautiful language. The tone of the message should not injure the feelings of the receiver. As far as possible the contents of the message should be brief and excessive use of technical words should be avoided.

✓ **Convey Things of Help and Value to the Listener:**

The subject matter of the message should be helpful to the receiver. The need and interest of the receiver should specially be kept in mind. Communication is more effective in such a situation.

✓ **Ensure Proper Feedback:**

The purpose of feedback is to find out whether the receiver has properly understood the meaning of the information received. In the face-to-face communication, the reaction on the face of the receiver can be understood.

But in case of written communication or some other sort of communications some proper method of feedback should be adopted by the sender.

✓ **Consistency of Message:**

The information sent to the receiver should not be self-contradictory. It should be in accordance with the objectives, policies, programmes and techniques of the organisation. When a new message has to be sent in place of the old one, it should always make a mention of the change otherwise it can create some doubts.

✓ **Follow up Communication:**

In order to make communication effective the management should regularly try to know the weaknesses of the communication system. In this context effort can be made to know whether to lay more stress upon the formal or the informal communication would be appropriate.

Similarly, suggestions can be invited in respect of the medium of communication (oral, written and gestural) to know as to which medium would be more effective and appropriate.

✓ **Be a Good Listener:**

It is the essence of communication that both the sender and the receiver should be good listeners. Both should listen to each other's point of view with attention, patience and positive attitude. A sender can receive much relevant information by being a good listener.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS YOU NEED TO SUCCEED IN THE WORKPLACE



According to career coach **Hallie Crawford**, *“How well you communicate impacts efficiency, effectiveness, trust between employees, your brand, and how you come across as a professional, and much more.”*

Here are seven essential communication skills every employee and boss needs to own.

1. SHOWING RESPECT

“Being respectful of other people’s space and time is important—especially if you need to talk about a touchy subject,” says Crawford. And while we may not think of showing respect as a communication skill, it is, because respect comes down to how we talk and listen to people. “Avoid talking down to someone, this does not foment a positive environment at work. Respect the other person’s feelings and strengths and perspective,” says Crawford.

2. ACTIVE LISTENING

“Active listening is an essential part of any job,” says Jacinto. Being a bad listener—such as someone who interrupts or doesn’t make eye contact when another person speaks to you—can compromise your position at work. If you don’t listen well, “You might not understand the full objective for a project or the tool you were just trained on,” she says.

3. DISPLAYING POSITIVE BODY LANGUAGE

You may not realize it, but “your body language communicates more than words,” Crawford says. So Crawford encourages you to be aware of the overall energy you emit with actions and movements. Ask,

“Are your arms crossed, or do you avoid eye contact?” Crawford says. If you do, try to correct these behaviours by uncrossing your arms and making eye contact.

4. BE WILLING TO ASK QUESTIONS

When you’re a new employee at a company—or if you’re a recent college graduate—you might be afraid of asking questions of co-workers or your managers. But the ability and willingness to ask questions is a crucial communication skill. Asking questions “helps to clarify things at work, whether you are talking about a project or a problem with a co-worker,” says Crawford. If you’re a leader at work, this applies to you, too: “Instead of giving direction, try asking questions to guide someone to a correct conclusion,” she says.

5. UNDERSTANDING EMAIL ETIQUETTE

In 2019, most of the communication we do is via email or another online platform. “There’s always that one person who is too detailed and sends a novel back to you,” says Jacinto, who adds, “don’t be this person. Know how to break up an email, add bullet points, and be concise.” Jacinto recommends asking yourself, “Does the receiver need all this information,” before hitting send, or even, “Would this be better as a phone chat instead?” Jacinto says.

6. REMAINING OPEN-MINDED

Staying open-minded is a very important communication skill—especially for entry-level employees, Crawford says. “If an employee is an entry-level or new to their position, it’s important for them to be able to connect with his or her coworkers and understand the corporate culture of the organization,” Crawford explains. How do you do that? “Be open to new ways of doing things, and don’t shut down if your new team members have a different process or methodology for completing a task than you are used to,” Crawford instructs.

7. A WILLINGNESS TO GIVE FEEDBACK

This communication skill “is important for senior-level employees to help their employees and business to grow,” says Crawford. “This doesn’t always mean correcting mistakes—it could be commending someone for a job well done.” But what about when you do need to call out someone’s mistake? “If you do need to correct mistakes, make sure to commend an employee first,” Crawford says. “This makes it easier to accept any negative feedback.”

The bottom line is that good communication isn’t just about being able to more accurately and concisely present information and ideas. It’s also not just about mitigating conflict or creating a more positive team environment. Communication is integral to sales, client relationships, team development, company culture, employee engagement and buy-in innovative thought