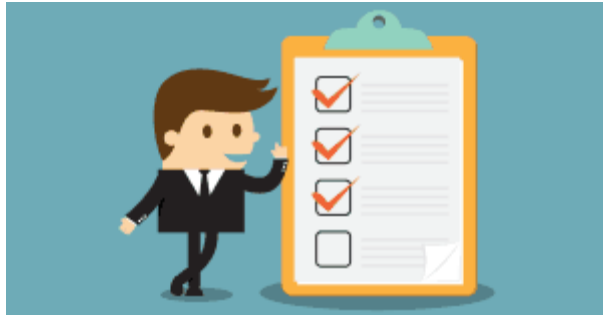


5 Cs of Effective Communication

By writing effectively, you can get your message across to your readers and help reduce the effort required to read your material. Follow these 5 Cs of communication to get the most out of your writing and effectively share the correct message:



- clarity
- cohesiveness
- completeness
- conciseness
- concreteness

Treating these five Cs as a checklist for your writing can help to improve communication with colleagues.

Clarity

Clarity is the first item on the list because it is the most part important of good communication. If your thoughts are not clear, your writing will not be clear, and your readers will not understand your message. Your readers might give up altogether or form an understanding that is contrary to your objective.

Keep the number of ideas in your sentences to a minimum, and don't add anything that obscures your message. Try to use facts and figures in your writing to have a greater impact. Be clear about your message and the information you wish to communicate. Clarity will help build trust with your readers.

Cohesiveness

Help your readers understand your message by leading them through your information so that they can see how it logically fits together. Don't lose your readers in a jumble of meandering sentences or competing ideas. Keep your ideas focused on your message.

A topic sentence is a useful way to state an idea; it acts as a headline for what to expect in a paragraph. The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of the

paragraph. The remaining paragraph sentences provide information that supports the topic sentence. Here is an example of a topic sentence with a controlling idea:

Building the pumphouse on the selected site will require innovative construction techniques.

Completeness

When presenting an idea, include enough information to prove your thesis (i.e., your topic sentence). Three supporting sentences and a concluding sentence are usually sufficient to complete the paragraph. The concluding sentence of the paragraph should summarize your main idea by reinforcing your topic sentence.

Depending on the use case, you might consider adding a call to action to your text. A call to action, or C2A, lets people know what additional actions you would like them to take. Example: *See Appendix A for the full report or Email me with your questions.*

Conciseness

Make every word count. Delete redundant words and simplify wordy expressions. Remove any filler words.

Here are some examples of redundant words:

Instead of:	Use
a distance of five kilometres	five kilometres
mixed together	mixed
until such time as	until

Here are a few examples of wordy expressions:

Instead of:	Use
due to the fact that	because
in close proximity to	near
is equipped with	has

Concreteness

Be specific in your meaning by using precise words. Avoid terms that are vague or abstract. For example:

Abstract	Less Abstract	Concrete
vehicle	car	a Ford Mustang
soon	within the month	by April 30

Use terminology consistently. If you initially refer to the warehouse as a warehouse, don't refer to it later as a storage facility or logistics centre. Changing terminology only distracts and confuses readers.

Effective Communication Skills

Time is often the biggest barrier to effective communication. People in a business setting tend to focus on completing tasks quickly and their written communication can suffer. We recommend treating the 5 Cs of communication as a checklist.

Remembering to be clear, cohesive, complete, concise, and concrete when communicating will help improve your writing. Of course, these principles also apply to verbal communication, where things like body language and eye contact can sometimes muddle a message.

Regularly practicing the 5 Cs will sharpen your skills and have you communicating effectively.