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Communication Skills

Transferring information to produce a greater understanding

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Communication Skills

Being able to communicate effectively is one of the most important [life skills](#) to learn. Communication itself is defined as transferring information to produce greater understanding.

It can be done vocally (through verbal exchanges), through written media (books, websites, and magazines), visually (using [graphs](#), charts, and maps), or non-verbally (body language, gestures, pitch of voice, and tone). All of these means of communication skills are essential [Soft Skills](#) that are vital for a successful [Career](#).

Interpersonal Skills



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others and yourself to understand information more accurately and quickly.

In contrast, poor communication skills lead to frequent misunderstandings and frustration. In a [2016 LinkedIn survey](#) conducted in the United States, communication topped the list of the most sought-after soft skills among employers.

How to Improve Your Communication Skills

Here are some pointers to look out for when looking to improve your ability to effectively communicate with others:

1. Listening

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It is important to practice good body language, use eye contact, utilize hand gestures, and watch the tone of the voice when communicating with others. A relaxed body stance with a friendly tone will aid in making you look approachable to others.

Eye contact is important in communication – look the person in the eye to indicate that you are focused on the conversation. But make sure to not stare at the person as it can make him or her uncomfortable.

4. Confidence

Be confident in what you say and in your communication interactions with others. Being confident can be as easy as maintaining eye contact, maintaining a relaxed body stance, and talking with concision. Try not to make statements sound like questions and avoid trying to sound aggressive or demeaning.

5. Open-mindedness

In situations where you disagree with what someone else has to say, whether it be with an employer, a co-worker, or a friend, it is important to sympathize with their point of view rather than simply try to get your message across. Respect the opinion of others and never resort to demeaning those who do not agree with you.

6. Respect

Respecting what others have to say and acknowledging them is an important aspect of communication. Being respectful can be as simple as paying attention to what they have to say, using the person's name, and not being distracted. By respecting others, the other person will feel appreciated, which will lead to a more honest and productive conversation.

7. Using the correct medium

There are several different forms of communication to use – it is important to choose the right one. For example, communicating in person about serious matters (layoffs, salary changes, etc.) is more appropriate than sending an email regarding the matter.

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have good human relations skills – these are all part of having good communication skills. They help in being understood well and in helping understand the needs of those around you.

Poor Communication in the Workplace

Communication drives workplace success. Although the detriments of poorly communicating with others may not be apparent in the short term, it has a crippling effect on the workplace in the long term. Here are some signs of bad communication:

- Lack of specific communication
- Using the incorrect mediums to convey important messages
- Passive-aggressive communication
- Lack of follow-through and consideration
- Blaming and intimidating others
- Failing to listen

An example of poor communication would be the [RadioShack layoff notices](#) in 2006. The electronics chain laid off 400 employees by notifying employees by email. The company faced significant backlash following the move, with many surprised that it used email instead of face-to-face meetings.

Bad communication by Radioshack resulted from using the incorrect medium of communicating with its employees. The company's employees felt dehumanized and subsequently resented the company.

Related Readings

Thanks for reading CFI's guide to communication skills. If you want to improve your written communication skills, check our [Business Writing Fundamentals Course](#)

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