

10

Ways To Improve Your Communication



Listen more than you speak. This means trying to understand the other person, even if we disagree with what they're saying. Often we're only half listening, waiting for our chance to speak. When our attention is with our own thoughts, we're not listening.

1



Check your nonverbal communication. A relaxed and friendly tone encourages others to speak openly. Look the person in the eye to show you're focused on them and pay attention to their nonverbal signals, as this can indicate how they're really feeling.

2



Ask questions. This not only shows you're listening, but confirms you understand the other person. You can also use questions to gather additional information but make sure your questions relate specifically to what is being said.

3



Offer positive feedback. If your co-worker does something well, tell them. This encourages open communication. Having a positive attitude in general will open the door for effective communication prompting people to respond more positively.

4



Provide clear information. Plan your written communication to ensure you're sending the right information and the right amount so people understand what you're saying. And always plan what you want to say before speaking to avoid miscommunication.

5



Simplify complex information. Break it down into logical sections, use meaningful subheadings and use main point summary sentences followed by specific information.

6



Keep your sentences short. They should be about 15 to 20 words. If they exceed 30 words, consider splitting them into two separate sentences. If you need to re-read a sentence to understand it, it's probably too long.

7



Write in plain English. Keep your communication simple and clear, using contractions to imply speaking. If you must use jargon or industry-specific terminology, ensure you explain it. Don't assume your reader is familiar with these terms.

8



Decide which channel is best. Remember the purpose of your communication, your audience and your desired outcome. The higher the concern to the receiver, the greater the need for personalised communication.

9



Check your email etiquette. Think before you send, reply all or CC everyone – do they really need to know? If not, avoid inundating a list of people with unnecessary emails.

10