
Be An Effective Communicator

To be successful, your ability to set and reach goals, to know where you want to go, and to know what you want to accomplish are certainly important. Having goals gives you direction and benchmarks. However, your ability to achieve your goals will be related to your ability to communicate with others.



The process goes full circle. You need communication skills to achieve your goals. You need goals to become successful. Your goals will help keep you focused and lead you to a positive attitude and a healthy self-image. These traits, of course, have a direct influence on your ability to communicate.

Your ability to understand and apply the basic principles of effective communications will directly influence your results in achieving your goals and the achievement of many personal goals. Regardless of your knowledge and desires, it's impossible to achieve productive relationships if you cannot communicate your thoughts and ideas to those around you.\

We communicate every day with different types of people in different types of situations. In order to understand how to get your message across, it's important to examine four fundamental principles of a successful interpersonal communication.

1. The human mind functions in a very orderly fashion. It can only concentrate on one thought at a time. If you attempt to communicate a number of ideas rapidly and in an illogical sequence, the listener's mind will have great difficulty trying to follow and understand what you're saying. Communicate your thoughts and ideas in a logical and understandable sequence. Talk at a speed that is easy to follow. Watch body language indicators that evidence understanding.



-
2. Our minds convert words into pictures. Because words mean different things to different people, the responses that they produce may not be the same for everyone. The level of education, the region of the country that a person hails from, the ethnic group to which they belong, and many other factors determine what mental pictures crystallize in a person's mind. Understand and recognize the needs of others. Use words that elicit an understanding in harmony with those needs.
 3. Too many words clutter up communications. Keep it simple and to the point. When we fail to condense our communication, we leave the door wide open to time-consuming misunderstandings and undesired responses. This is especially unfortunate if we need an immediate reaction to our communication. Keep your communications as simple as possible. Use short, easy to understand words and sentences.
 4. Actively listen to other people for content *and* feeling. Have they been listening to you? Have they *heard* what you've said? Do they understand? Become more conscious of how and what you communicate, what the other person hears, and how they react. Intersperse your comments with questions that elicit feedback to ensue you're being both heard and understood.

Communication is the exchange of ideas between two people. It involves more than "telling". Effective communication involves understanding. It's a two-way process. What are you doing to become the communicator you need to be to achieve your goals?

