**Communications Skills**

Meaning, Examples, Types, Importance and Training

Whether we realise it or not, we are communicating ALL the time. And, given the number of platforms and devices that we use as we live out our daily lives, and the multi-tasking our routines call for, most of us are pretty good communicators.

Examples of Communications Skills

Does your typical day look like this?

All these are examples of communication skills.

* You share quality time, chit-chatting with your family before you leave for work;
* you use an app to call a cab as your car is in the garage;
* catch the news on your tablet in the cab while also sneaking a peek at your Facebook timeline;
* then you attend a slew of meetings at the office;
* reply to a flood of emails;
* video-conference with clients on another continent;
* let your smart phone order you lunch;
* spit some unprintable words at the moody coffee-maker in the pantry;
* and finally share some much-needed banter with your colleagues as you car-pool on the way back home.

And, oh, how could we forget? Even though a dinosaur in this digital age, there’s the office grapevine that makes car-pooling that much more fun!

What are we getting at? Well, since the *definition of communication is the act of transmitting a message, opinion, information, instructions, feedback or even gossip*, we are saying something to someone pretty much every waking moment.

And since most of us spend a large part of each day working, in a work environment, structures or otherwise, business communication forms a large part of what we are saying.

What Is Business Communication? Why is it important?

Communication is the lifeblood of any organisation. Whether it’s issuing simple instructions at work, sorting out a tricky situation with a subordinate, lifting flagging morale, working out a better way to meet productivity targets, briefing your team on customer feedback after a product launch, or as CEO, getting your employees to buy into your company’s vision – communication is the pivot of any business venture, from start-up to global corporation.

Business Communication vs General / Social Communication Differences

Business communication differs greatly from regular communication. It refers to communication that takes place in a work environment, and is meant to achieve the common goal of getting the job done and doing it effectively.

Business communication could be internal, that is, within the organisation between colleagues or between departments; or it could be external, for instance, a brand-building campaign for a company to shore up its image.

It could also include communicating with vendors, partner organisations, prospective clients or just the public at large.

There are many career tracks that are based almost entirely on business communication skills, such as marketing, customer care, corporate communications, public relations, brand management, advertising and event management.

While the parties at the sending and receiving ends of the communication differ, each of these career domains revolves around getting a certain message across and getting it across to a very specific target audience.

The number of platforms that we use for business communication has exploded in recent times. Whereas telephone and email were once the most oft-used mediums, now online meetings, videoconferencing, teleconferencing, voice messages and even web chat and instant messaging are par for the course.

When it comes to a company targeting a large audience, videos, powerpoint presentations (PPT), blogs, apps, social media and television come to the rescue. And, with all these platforms available at the tap of the finger, let’s not forget where it all began – good, old-fashioned face-to-face communication!

Types of Business Communication Skills

Speaking

Speaking or verbal communication is perhaps the most frequently used way to get a message across at the workplace, and it includes meetings, presentations, workshops, in-person interviews, and telephonic and video conferencing.

It’s direct, it costs nothing, and it’s instant. It is also effective because it allows the receiver to pick up on critical non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, tone, pitch and body language.

This communication skill is best used in situations where establishing a personal connection is important, such as conflict-resolution scenarios, team-building exercises and while selling a product. But as more and more businesses go global and they work with partners, clients and customers all over the world, verbal communication is losing out to digital platforms.

Read [how to improve your speaking skills](http://www.careerizma.com/skills/speaking-skills/).

Writing

This is another powerful business communication skill, which embraces the gamut from email, internal business memos, formal letters, bulletin boards, posters, flyers, PPTs etc.

Effective writing requires careful choice of words that send out a message cogently and accurately.

This form of communication is reliable; it can be used to reach multiple individuals all at once; and is the best way to convey technical information.

Since it is precise and explicit, written communication is an effective tool to explain complex concepts and to issue instructions. It is unambiguous, and when the writer is articulate, he or she leaves no room for misinterpretation.

Written communication also creates a paper trail for future reference and it also helps the legal teams of large companies do their job.

Read [how to improve your writing skills](http://www.careerizma.com/skills/writing-skills/).

Reading

This is tough to master simply because more and more people, especially young people, are spending less and less time reading.

Many limit their ‘reading’ to social networking sites and instant messaging, while reading only when absolutely necessary.

Yet, to be a successful employee, executive, manager or CEO, you need to master the art of reading simply because at least half your business communication is in written format. It is the better half of ‘writing’ in the paragraph above!

Read [how to improve your reading skills](http://www.careerizma.com/skills/reading-skills/).

Listening

Perhaps the most difficult business communication skill to practice, listening implies that you not only hear what someone is saying but also understand the content, decode all the non-verbal signals and filter the message without bias or prejudice.

Effective listening is a winning tool in every manager’s toolkit, for it implies the ability to put oneself in someone else’s shoes, something every employee craves – an empathetic ear.

Take that attitude to a much larger level and you have a company that listens to what its clients, customers and even the competition has to say.

A company that listens effectively is one that is open to ideas, feedback, innovations, has good organisational relationships, is willing to correct its mistakes and inevitable marches forward.