

Basically , when you hear the word 'communication skills' , you always think it's about just talking in a good manner. Well , let me make that clear for you , it's a lot more than that. Communication skills include active listening , use of good words , expressing through body language , precise information and much more.

Communication means giving or receiving some information , ideas , opinions , facts , etc and developing communication skills will help you do that efficiently. We will talk about how to develop communication skills ? Which things to avoid while communicating? and How communication skills can make you stand-out from the crowd and also can help you in your career?

LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner stated, "Somewhat surprisingly...interpersonal skills is where we're seeing the biggest imbalance. Communication is the number one skills gap across the major cities."

Now , an integral part of communication is active listening and interpreting. You need to focus on what the other person is trying to explain or ask. Don't interrupt while someone else is speaking , just wait for your turn. You need to pay attention to what is happening which is also considered as a symbol of respect. If you listen actively , you understand what is being asked and then also keep preparing your response in mind. When the other person stops , then you can answer exactly what is expected using your listening and interpreting skills. Interpreting also plays a major role here as you can only respond correctly if you have interpreted it correctly.

Second important point would be 'Know your audience'. You have to communicate in a way that your target audience can easily understand what you are trying to deliver. You cannot use technical terms when talking to a five year old . Similarly , you can not use casual language when talking to your professor. You need to use the language in a way that your audience will not only understand you but also relate to you.

Be precise and straight forward with what you are trying to tell. Don't digress unless necessary. You should give the exact response to what is being expected. There should not be a scope of misunderstanding or misinterpreting your statements. Also , be confident. Believe in what you are saying . Because , when you are confident , it automatically conveys that you have the desired knowledge , you are sincere and don't be afraid of anyone . Just , be the polished version of you and represent it confidently. Sometimes , something random is asked for which you are not prepared , so you need to be ready to prepare your answer in few seconds and answer it as perfectly as possible. Be ready for some impromptu conversation. For that , you need to have some background knowledge about the topic as well which brings me to the next point , knowledge about the topic.

If you want to talk sensibly and logically, which you obviously need to , you have to get your facts straight. You need to learn about the topic in depth. All the important details about the topic should be very clear to you so that nothing comes as a surprise and even if it does , you are ready to relate your knowledge with that stuff. Be aware of the terminologies used in the respective field. The information that you transmit must be correct. Don't lie or bluff when you don't know something. That will

lead to a very bad impression. Give concrete examples or proofs of what you are claiming. Examples are easy to understand and it also adds something to your point and concrete details will make you look stronger than your competitors. Also, be prompt with your answers. Neither can you take too much time thinking and nor can you stop for bits or make weird sounds while answering like you must have experienced somewhere.

Get a good hold on the language. You need to be very fluent at the language which you will be using. Grammar, vocabularies, sentence structures, etc should be taken care of while speaking. Moreover, if you have a good hold on language, you can always use unique and professional words to show that you are really good at it. The way you react to what is being said using correct words also defines you. So, language is definitely important for communication skills.

Now, let's talk about body language. Your words define you and so does your silence. Because your body is expressing all the time. So, first of all, maintain a good body posture. Don't sit like an 80 year old man. Sit straight, keep your body parts to yourself. Use gestures to convey what you are trying to say. Maintain eye contact so that the other person knows that you are being attentive and you are interested in the conversation. A little hand movement is also okay. Smile when light discussion is going on and be serious when a heavy topic is being discussed. Your facial expressions should be appropriate according to the situation.

A great benefit of having good communication skills is that you will easily be able to form connections. Whether you are doing a formal or informal conversation, by following proper tips, you will be able to relate to your audience. That sense of belief and trust is developed when you form that connection. Because when similar characteristics are seen, we get a bit of a homely feeling, you know. There is a term 'emotional intelligence' which sensitises us to use our emotions to communicate and bond effectively. Empathise with others. Put yourself in the position of the other person and think like them. Manipulate your sentences accordingly. Always be more involved, interested and enthusiastic while communicating.

The information that you give must be complete and it should all go together without contradicting anything. Your volume and tone should be appropriate. You must not speak too loudly, you should be clearly audible. Use a polite tone. Don't try to intimidate others, don't show anger and don't use passive-aggressive sentences. In short, maintain the decorum. Moreover, don't be fake or pretentious. And, don't be judgemental. Your focus should not be judging the other person or criticising them but it should be to be the best version of you, no matter how much you like or dislike the person.

During an annual GMAC Corporate Recruiters Survey, employers were asked to identify which skill sets, among five options, they considered to be most important when hiring for a mid-level position. Communication skills topped the list, followed in order by teamwork skills, technical skills, leadership skills, and managerial skills. So, communication skills hold importance at every stage of your career.

If you will be giving exams like IELTS , you know how important communication and language related skills are. When you are in college , you need to put your ideas forward. If you don't have good skills or If you are not confident , someone will replace you by shining better than you. So , for written assignments , discussions in lectures ,doubt asking ,giving presentations, being a leader or oral vivas , you need to use communication effectively. You will be writing statement of purposes , applying for internships , working with a variety of people and giving interviews . All of that will need a very good hold on your communication skills , because you need to represent yourself using mere words. So ,better know how to do it.

According to a recent National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Outlook Survey (1), employers identified the ability to verbally communicate with others inside and outside the organisation and the ability to create and/or edit written documents as among the top ten skills they seek when hiring.

When you will be doing some job , you will constantly need to express your ideas , presentations , mails , suggestions , etc. You need to maintain good relations with your colleagues and with your customers. For example , if you are into the sales department , you should know how to persuade and develop trust among customers. You should know that with a variety of audiences , you need to have a variety of communication styles to scale your business. You should have information about the product and you should make the buyer realise that your product is somehow beneficial to them and buying it would be a great decision . You develop those skills by first of all , acknowledging what skills you need and then by sincerely working, practice and experience.

I will be ending this podcast by giving a few more important tricks that you can implement in your regular life to have immense benefits in near future:

- Use the desired language regularly . Communicate with your friends and family. Try and find your mistakes in grammar and vocabulary. Take feedbacks from the listener's point of view and work upon that lacks. Use mirror to know more about your expressions , gestures and body language. You can also attend some workshops on communication skills. There are many available at minimum price or some of them for free as well.

Thank you for listening!