



CHAPTER 5:

COMMUNICATION

It's kind of a funny thing, when you consider it, that having an entire chapter of this book dedicated to communication actually seems somehow backwards or incorrect. Seriously, when you consider the fact that we've been discussing things like different ways to finance a startup and which specific open source tools you should be using for business development and lead scouring, communication just seems so out of place as a topic, doesn't it?

Of course, deconstructing the phenomenon that's occurring here isn't terribly difficult. As human beings, we lend ourselves to a bit of hubris in that we all think we're experts in the realm of communication. Because it's such a second-nature activity, and one that we're constantly immersed in everyday, we think that we must be experts in the field. With that in mind, of course it would seem silly that we have an entire chapter of this book dedicated to communication.

Newsflash: it very much is not.

Ask anyone, anyone at all from the business world, what they believe the top traits of successful companies and individuals are and, far more often than not, you're likely to hear communication echoed in their lists. So why don't we dedicate more time to ensuring that we're communicating properly and meaningfully? Good question.

In founding our company, we've learned a few things that we believe will hold true for almost anyone involved in the formation and operation of a startup. One of those universal truths is that whether you're an investor, a technologist or an entrepreneur, you're likely to encounter issues with communication during the early phases of your business. Another of these truths, and

a far more important one, is that there are ways to avoid these problems and, more directly, to resolve them once they've occurred.

Of course, in order to make any progress in the ways that you and your company communicate, you need to be able to narrow your focus to the key issues and, luckily, we've gone ahead and done that for you.

In this chapter we're going to take the time to focus on three core aspects of communication that we've not only encountered firsthand, but also believe are critical to optimizing communication and the spread of information and initiatives in any business.

First and foremost, we're going to speak on the ways in which communication tactics differ among different leaders and employees, and why this is. In doing so, we'll touch on the Big 5 personality traits and talk about the ways in which skills can become weaknesses and vice versa.

Following that, we're going to take time to consider the ways in which communication should be something that a business strives to constantly improve, as well as offer specific examples of how this is done in the professional world already.

Finally, we'll touch upon the role that technology plays in communication, particularly among the startup community and companies in the high tech sector. Since we've made concrete recommendations regarding communication tools in prior chapters, here we'll speak generally on technology's evolving communicative role in the workplace and what it means for us.

Along the way, we'd encourage you to take the time to move back through other chapters and sections of this text and consider

the ways in which the communication skills that we'll be outlining might play into those scenarios. While we've asked you to do this before, we think it's particularly applicable here. Indeed, the topics that we've covered in our first few chapters (financing your business, guerilla marketing and building initial sales portfolios) would be virtually impossible without adequate communication.

COMMUNICATION TACTICS BY PERSONALITY

Why don't they get it?! I can't be any clearer!

If you're human, then there's zero chance that you've never experienced this thought. For better or for worse, there are some moments in life that we're giving our all to making something clear, but the person to whom we're communicating simply can't get the message.

While it can be tempting to think of this as simply a personal failing or major malfunction on the part of the recipient, it's actually a far more complex issue than that explanation does justice to.

As it turns out, research has actually come to the conclusion that the way that we listen, communicate and interact with others in general is largely informed by our personality. Now, you're probably thinking that this sounds far too obvious to be even remotely useful in practical application, but bear with us.

Over the past few decades, social scientists and behavioral theorists have come to develop what they call the 'Big 5' personality traits. Each of these traits has a bearing on the ways in which we interact and communicate with others, and the way

that a given individual scores in each trait offers a snapshot into their personality and, thusly, how they process information most effectively.

While any people have yet to hear of the Big 5, some of the world's most influential companies have begun offering Big 5 Personality Tests in their application and interview process in order to determine a potential employee's culture fit.

So what exactly does this mean, and how can we use Big 5 to become more effective communicators within our business? While, some of that's straightforward, and some of it isn't. For the sake of easing in, here, let's begin with the easiest stuff by deconstructing each of these factors.

NOTE: PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT WHEN THE BIG 5 TEST IS ADMINISTERED, IT'S ALMOST ALWAYS THE CASE THAT EACH OF THESE FACTORS IS SCORED ON A SCALE OF 0-50, SO WE'LL BE SPEAKING ABOUT EACH OF THE BIG 5 TRAITS IN THESE TERMS.

The first trait that we see in the above matrix is conscientiousness. In short, this refers to the level to which an individual is considerate of their tasks, their environment, and the people around them. Scoring high in this category might mean that you're an individual who can be depended on to finish their work on time and on deadline. Scoring too high in this category (say, for example, scoring a 45 or above) might mean that you're too sensitive to external views of your work, and that your productivity is hampered by this.

The second trait in the matrix is agreeableness, which is certainly a bit more straightforward than conscientiousness is. We know that individuals who score highly in agreeableness

are likely to communicate and behave in ways that they feel are likely to minimize conflict. Of course, this can be a considerable advantage within both corporate and personal settings, but it, too, has its drawbacks. Individuals who operate too highly within agreeableness may appear as pushovers or easily dissuaded from their beliefs, when in actuality they're simply trying to minimize turbulence.

Third we see perhaps the most interesting (and perhaps the most telling) slot on the matrix, emotional stability. Often, this is rewritten as need for emotional stability, because that's exactly what it refers to. Individuals who score highly in this arena of the Big 5 Personality Test have a slightly harder time adapting to change or moving on their feet. Now, it's important to remember, here, that this is not necessarily a weakness, it simply reflects the ways in which one is likely to communicate or behave. Inversely, those who score low here may find that they can handle unexpected hurdles very well, but may also be likely to take direction or structured environments far less well than others.

Fourth we see openness, which refers not to the ways in which one presents themselves or how truthful they are, but rather to something else entirely. Individuals who score highly in the openness category of the Big 5 assessment are going to be more receptive to new ideas, new ways of thinking, and new ways of going about their work. Those who score low in this category will likely be somewhat recalcitrant to this sort of thought process. Again, there are pros and cons to each of these results. For example, someone with high openness may be open to new ideas, which is good, but they may also allow their idea to

pass in favor of something worse, simply because someone else proposed it. Individuals who score in the upper middle range of openness are likely the best fit for most corporate structures.

Last but not least on the Big 5 matrix is extraversion, which is also one of the more straightforward aspects of the chart. Individuals who score high in extraversion are more likely to be outspoken and forward, the kind of individuals who could walk into a cocktail party and know everyone in the room by the time they exit it. While it might seem that these people are natural born leaders, that's not always true, as extroverted methods of communication aren't as well suited to audiences comprised of more introverted individuals. Just as we've discovered in analyzing the first four traits of this matrix, balance is always best when it comes to determining how extroverted one's leaders should be.

Alright, take a deep breath and let that sink in.

THAT'S ALL WELL AND GOOD, BUT WHY DO I CARE? HOW DOES THAT HELP COMMUNICATION WITHIN MY STARTUP?

If you find yourself asking that question, you're on exactly the right track. This information is worth effectively nothing to you if you don't know how to implement it. In order to answer that question, you'd do well to read the following excerpt, which we've lifted from *How to Become a Better Leader*, an article penned by Ginka Toegel and Jean-Louis Barsoux, which appeared in the Spring 2012 edition of the MIT Sloan Management Review:

“The objective is not to undergo a personality change. It is to be yourself, with more skill. The point that comes across

from many of the examples given in this article is that most successful leaders have had to work on themselves in order to manage or tone down potentially career-limiting traits. It required hard work and introspection. That is the bad news. The good news is that we are not prisoners of our personalities. Personality is about preferences - preferred ways of behaving - and we can behave in ways that run contrary to our personality. Indeed, we all have to do this from time to time. Some people do this exceedingly well."

The meaning here is implicit, not obvious. What the author is trying to say is, coincidentally, the secret to using understanding of personality traits to communicating more effectively within your business. In short: you need to ensure that you're working constantly to cater the ways that you communicate to the ways that your audience is most likely to effectively receive them.

Part of this, of course, will be a very active process. For example, let's assume that you're a C-suite executive and you need to communicate with some of your first sales hires. At the risk of operating under stereotypes, let's also assume that your sales employees fit the bill of the traditional salesmen: high in extraversion, slightly lower in openness, mid-high in conscientiousness. If you aren't usually a particularly extroverted person, you're going to need to modify your behavior to be far more outgoing when communicating with them.

The other part of this, and the part that may be of even more use to you, is that you need to be particularly mindful of these differences when you're building your staff. If you build a company that's completely heterogenous in terms of it's personality traits, you're going to have a staff that functions very well together,

but that is nearly impossible for new clients or new hires to communicate with.

The key is balance. When you onboard a new individual to your staff, make sure that you're taking the time to think about how their communication skills will fit into the repertoire that you and your colleagues have already built. Do you need an extroverted leader to communicate with client-facing operations? Are you looking for someone who speaks the unspoken language of back-office employees? Oftentimes, finding someone who's communication skills are a great fit for your organization or company's needs is much more valuable than finding someone with all the right words on their resume but poor interpersonal communication skills.

The single largest takeaway here, exactly as Toegel and Barsoux hinted at, is that self awareness is pivotal to communication. Being aware of the ways in which your personality traits, the personality traits of your staff and the personality traits of your audience inform communication between these three parties will afford you and your company a heightened chance at success. Not doing so, however, will likely set you up for failure.

Now, one of the best ways to build a firmer understanding of the Big 5 system and how it can be applied to your business management and communication techniques is through comparing it to another classic system of personality analysis, often used by businesses, known as the classic alignment system.

In the classic alignment system, individuals are grouped into one of two sections: Law vs. Chaos or Good vs. Evil. We'll get to exactly what these mean for these individuals, you and

your business in a minute. In order to understand these two declarations, though, you need to first understand the nine subcategories upon which these two rankings of a given individual are decided:

Lawful good: Individuals who can be described as having a lawful good personality act in a matter according to how their given society or setting informs them to believe a good person would act. In short form: lawful good individuals behave based on a societally informed mental compass.

Neutral good: Neutral good individuals are similar to lawful good people in that they act in accordance with what they believe is good and right, but they do not do so based solely on societal definitions of those traits. Instead, they do the best they can do in any given situation. These individuals are more likely to work for the most immediate good presented to them, and are less likely to respond to traditional authority than those who are lawful good.

Chaotic good: Chaotic good personality types manifest through actions that we often find it hard to understand. This is because chaotic good individuals do whatever they think is best in the moment, sometimes without regard to the bigger picture and usually without regard to what is expected of them. These people can make phenomenal leaders, but are less likely to do well in a middle management role where they are still reporting up.

Lawful neutral: This type of individual behaves in a manner in accordance with what tradition or personal code informs them is good. These people can also be fantastic leaders, but often run into problems where their personal belief, which overrides external opinion or external moral definition in their own mind, can

be something that others would define as negative. For example, if a lawful neutral individual believes in discrimination, they will continue to do so, even when told it is wrong, because it's part of their code or tradition.

Neutral: True neutrals are perhaps the most interesting personality type. These individuals view each situation without regard to past experience, personal code, tradition or societally established definitions of good. They take each situation in as a novel, new experience, and act on what their judgement tells them to be good in the moment.

Chaotic neutral: Not to be confused with a traditional neutral, chaotic neutrals also stray from personal code, societal norms or morals or anything of the sort, but do so in an effort to maximize self interest. These individuals are self-oriented, which can be both a good or bad thing, depending on the situation you find yourselves in.

Lawful evil: Lawful evil individuals act on their beliefs in a way that is negative, but do so according to a very specific code or set of established morals. More often than not, this type of personality represents a deep dedication to evil as a personal code, because it is believed to represent their own personal interest.

Neutral evil: Neutral evil individuals act as lawful evil individuals do, but with one key difference: they only do what they feel they can get away with. Where lawful evil people are committed to doing wrong even when it jeopardizes themselves, neutral evil people only do so when it maximizes self interest.

Chaotic evil: As you may have guessed, chaotic evil behavior is defined by acting in a detrimental manner, but in an inherently

unpredictable way.

SO, WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?

In establishing effective communication, it's important to find individuals who represent every single one of these traits, and can apply those representations in a situationally systemic fashion. Effectively, when you're looking for a strong management hire or an employee who will be heavily involved in company communication, you want to find a chameleon. These people are most commonly referred to as either good vs. evil or law vs. chaos.

These two titles denote the way these individuals see the world, and can explain the way many of their behaviors are informed. Of course, operating solely on the classic alignment system would be a bit draconian for a management communications structure in today's society, so it's encouraged to use the Big 5 traits as a series of guidelines to determine who might view the world through either a good vs. evil or law vs. chaos lens and, in turn, might be the right fit for your structure.

Constant Communication Improvement

Finished is the enemy of perfect.

The above phrase is something that we try to put into every aspect of managing our company, and this was particularly true when the business was just starting out.

In those early days, there's just so much to do that it's easy to slide into a modus operandi where your primary objective is simply to get things done. Over time, we learned that while finishing tasks is key to moving forward with your company, there are two key problems with that mentality:

1) Nothing's ever really finished, unless it's perfect.

2) Things don't stay perfect very long.

What we mean by this is that it's key to be continually reevaluating things in order to better them, and we think there are few arenas of the workplace where this is truer than in company communication in all aspects of your business.

Communication within your business is always going to be imperative to delivering the best results and creating optimal value, so it's not a process that you should ever be finished with. On the contrary, it's something that you should constantly be looking to improve and move forward. This means not only working to be the best communicator you can be, but also working to determine exactly what kind of culture of communication your company is building itself. Once you've done this, you'll be ready to begin operating at a truly high level.

Some of the less obvious ways in which your business can be improved through effective communication include:

1) Identifying Hidden Talent

As a manager, one of the most critical aspects of your job is determining what needs to be done and then, more often than not, going out and finding the party to actually do it. While this process seems simple, it's not always that way, and it's simplicity depends very strongly upon establishing constantly evolving and improving communication.

In order to create a culture of ever-improving communication in relation to talent discovery, it's important that you foster an environment of cross-departmental discussion. These talks should occur regularly, and should be not only about personnel

(though that may seem like the obvious choice when it comes to identifying hidden talent). Rather, these conversations should work towards the somewhat more basic goal of ensuring that members of any given department have a detailed and concrete understanding of what the other aspects of the business do.

If you can successfully build this sort of communication, you'll be surprised to find how frequently you can locate someone already on the payroll, just in another department, to complete work that your department otherwise would have hired externally for.

2) Improving External Image

This is one that tends to confuse managers of legacy companies, but rests easily in the minds of those in the startup community. It's absolutely imperative to the success of your company that you're constantly working to not only better your external image, but even just establish it in the first place.

In terms of bettering your image, one of the best ways that you can go about this is by constantly looking to be more involved in the industry in which you work. Attending social networking events, tech meetups, and more of the like can help you establish a presence as a thought leader. You might be surprised at how much that external image can affect your business, particularly in smaller cities or close-knit areas. If your competitors speak well about you, then you can be sure that you're doing something right here.

One of the most commonly overlooked ways to go about this is to ensure that you're over communicating the bad things, particularly on the client side. When you're coming up

short, you naturally want to be quiet about it, but this can be extremely detrimental. Speaking within teams and with clients about difficulties that you're having not only helps to mitigate expectation when necessary, it also shows honesty and transparency as being key to your business. Which brings us to our next benefit:

3) Establishing Cultural Values

There's a unique opportunity, when it comes to building constantly-bettering communication techniques for establishing cultural values, and that's to truly connect with your employees. While retirement funds, solid payscales, meaningful work and the like all matter deeply to your employees, the little things are worth a lot. Cultural values, no doubt, are near the top of that list of 'little things' that your employees will value so greatly.

Establishing constantly improving communication in this arena, unfortunately, can be far more difficult than some of the other facets listed here. This is simply because we allow cultural values to fall by the wayside when deadlines and tangible tasks start piling up. If you can work to build regular meetings into your company in which team rules, tasks and best practices are established, though, you'll find your company building a meaningful set of cultural values through communication in very little time at all.

4) Encouraging Innovation and Shared Knowledge

The process of building constantly improving communication that encourages innovation and shared knowledge is actually a great deal similar to the one for establishing sound, solid cultural values. What's important in both is simply that you build a culture

of frequent, honest and open collaboration, and that you celebrate the sharing of knowledge and innovation.

The fact of the matter is that your employees likely want to work in a place that encourages innovation and shared knowledge, but that you need to take the initiative to create that atmosphere for them. Consider recognizing good work on the part of your employees by asking them to present a recent project or model to the office as a whole. Your employees will not only learn a new skill or method, but they'll also see that collaboration and innovation are both extremely welcome traits in your workplace.

It's important to note that this can be effective and executable even when it isn't directly applicable to your business in the immediate sense. Early on, we had a developer working for us who wanted to learn to Code in Swift. Despite not having much call on our client roster for that kind of work, we encouraged that person to learn the new skill, and did what we could to help them pursue the necessary resources. Not only did they become a more developed professional, but they became a more dedicated employee because we were able to demonstrate our commitment to him.

Keep in mind, here, that implementing a coaching or mentoring problem internally can be both inexpensive and efficient considering the plethora of open source teaching modules available, particularly in the tech and startup world.

5) Saving Time and Money

One of the unfortunate truths about beginning a startup is that your funding, more often than not, is going to be relatively limited. Now, that's a whole different conversation, but it does place

money up there as one of your most valuable and most finite resources (next to time, imaginably).

That said, it behooves you to develop and hone communication processes that focus on maximizing your time and money. Again, here, interdepartmental communication is going to be key. If you're at the stage where you're developing a formal budget, you need to be forging meaningful relationships with members of every funded department on that budget so that all of you can truly understand what each department uses their resources for.

Without a process of communication like this in play, you're likely to waste both time and money squabbling over who gets access to what.

6) Improving Results

Admittedly, this is a bit more of an inclusively holistic sector than the five that have preceded it in this list. That doesn't mean, however, that there's no value to it. Indeed, integrating a constantly improving means of communication into your discussions on results will only lead to better ones along the way.

Consider this: one of the greatest trappings of leadership is that it's important to analyze both our successes and our failures to improve. This is true both at the individual and at the group level. Unfortunately, we tend to overanalyze our failures, to look for what went wrong and what we can change, but not to apply this line of thought to our successes. After all, if we did something well, it's natural to assume that we'll handle it well next

It's pivotal that in your company, you not only recognize actions that have brought about successful results but also

encourage those involved in these actions to analyze what happened. Ask them questions centering on what situation they were in, what they were trying to accomplish, what they thought would happen, why they went about it a certain way and what actually happened. Through critical conversation like this, there's no doubt that you can improve the results that your startup experiences in almost all aspects of its operations.

TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN COMMUNICATION

AT WHAT POINT DOES SOCIAL BECOME IMPERSONAL?

Technology is moving at a more rapid pace than we've ever seen it. The emergence of workplace communications systems like Slack or live streaming video represent one of the largest paradigm shifts (if not the single largest) in human history, and this has unbelievable implications for the startup community.

When we talk about individuals founding successful startups, we realize that we're discussing groups of people who are unbelievably diverse. Based on what kind of industry that you're in, what kind of business you want to start and what your personal qualities are, the ways in which your business runs and operates will likely be relatively unique from other startups.

With that said, we also realize that one of the things that links startup founders together beyond their differences and uniqueness is their lack of reticence to explore new technological methods of communication. We'd like to think that this is due to the fact that those individuals who found startups simply see the merit in communicating effectively by any means possible, but it

may just be due to their predisposition to love all things tech.

Either way, the point can't be ignored that technology is playing a larger and larger role than it ever has in the way that companies communicate both internally and externally, and nowhere is this more true than in startups.

If you think about this, what you'll hopefully come to realize is that we're dealing with an extremely rapidly evolving landscape when it comes to communication and technology. Naturally, this comes with both its advantages and its drawbacks. An increasingly robust set of technological tools to aid communication can do just that, but, at the same time, it can lend something of an impersonal tone to the very thoughts, ideas and actions that we communicate within our workplace.

The biggest takeaway here is that, for the vast majority of civilized time, we've seen innovations in communication technology come at a very slow clip. Every 30-40 years we would see something, such as the invention of the phone or the fax machine, that would alter considerably the ways in which we share information. With the emergence of the internet, though, those communication evolutions are not only occurring every 2 or 3 years, but are also taking less and less time to become affordable to the average small business.

That said, we'd like to offer a brief list of ideas, suggestions and actions that have worked well for us when it comes to using (or not using) technology to communicate.

8 Keys to Using (Or Not Using) Technology to Communicate

1) Link Your Mediums

As we've already addressed, we're at a point in technological development where new communication platforms practically get released faster than we can even learn to use them. While we'll go ahead and say that this is largely a good thing (after all, we're in the technology market, as are many of you), but it does have its drawbacks. One of the most apparent of these is when you miss an important message because you were too tied up in checking your other communication platforms.

In order to avoid this, it's important that you encourage all of your employees to link their communication platforms whenever possible. For example, linking GCal to your iCal and to your email guarantees that when an event notification goes off in GCal, you'll also hear about it on your phone and in your email. There's no way anyone's missing that, no matter how much they refuse to use one of the above three applications.

2) Would You Want To Hear This In Person?

On a simpler note, it's important that you take the time to ask yourself what kind of message you're sending before you actually, you know, send it. While the plethora of communication technologies at our disposal make communication from a distance easier than ever, there are still some things that are just better said in person. Ask yourself this question before you send each message, and you'll be able to avoid many communication faux pas'. Preach this in your startup, and you'll be amazed at how it changes your communicative culture.

3) Understand Group Purpose

If you know someone who isn't in at least one group message thread all the time, whether it be for personal or work purposes,

then you must have some sort of time machine. Group message threads have become a normalcy, and this is a wonderful thing, but only when they aren't abused.

There's nothing worse than sifting through a long group message thread trying to find critical information regarding a project or upcoming deadline, only to stumble across several members sub conversation regarding how the 49er's defense totally ruined their playoff contention chances in fantasy.

This seems like it would be obvious, but encourage your employees only to use the appropriate forums to communicate non-work messages, especially when it comes to group communication. It just saves everyone a lot of time.

4) Signatures

Email signatures are great in the sense that they can offer a lot of information to your recipients without you having to go through the monotonous task of inputting it into every new email. But please, consider your length and content.

No one likes getting a three word email followed by a two paragraph signature or some inspirational quotes. At best, it's inconvenient for the recipient, at worst, it harms your credibility. Keep it to the basics, like your name, phone, fax, email and LinkedIn URL. This is especially important if you're in any sort of business development or C-suite role.

One quick tip: consider having links in your email signature to your uberconference profile, as well as your Calendly. Making these two profiles available to those that you communicate with not only shows your openness to start a conversation, it puts the ball in their court in terms of scheduling and reduces the clumsy

logistics.

5) Invitations

You might be surprised by how often we forget to send invitations, even with all the incredible tools at our disposal to do just that (iCal, GCal, etc.).

If you're having a discussion with someone and you tell them to meet you somewhere or agree to a plan, send them an invitation immediately through at least one (and only one) medium. They'll be that much more likely to show, and it helps make your interest in actually carrying out the event more apparent. Whether it's a 15 minute standing meeting or a formal dinner with a potential investor, this is always the right move. After all, nothing's too small to go on your calendar.

6) No Cemeteries

This tip is absolutely critical to maintaining your sanity when organizing communication between platforms, and not nearly enough startups practice this. It's simple, when you're done using a certain method of communication for the foreseeable future, save any vital information from it in a local or external file, and delete it's cloud presence.

If you aren't doing this, your company is creating a virtual cemetery of abandoned trello boards and old slack threads, and it just adds to the clutter of everyone's life.

7) Ask

Earlier in this chapter we talked about taking the time to analyze one's successes as a pivotal step in moving towards more successful communication, so why wouldn't that apply here? Seek feedback from your employees and coworkers regarding what

forms of technology the company is using to communicate and how it's working out for them.

While this may create a bit of extra work for you and your staff in terms of moving systems around and designing best practices for communication, it's worth the effort.

8) "Inbox 0," Email, and Other Quick Tips

As a general rule, it's important to understand that email is only appropriate for communication of certain things. We've found that the easiest way to differentiate what's ok for email and what isn't is to determine whether it's bad, good, or great.

Generally speaking, good news is really the only thing that's ok to communicate via email. This is because good news usually only entails a general progress report. In other words, news communicated via email should be centered on the point that things are going as expected. Great news should be communicated in person or on the phone, as it underscores the importance of the client, and bad news should be communicated in person or on the phone, as an email with bad news can seem dismissive.

Another key point is to always be striving for what we call inbox 0. You don't need a cluttered inbox, because it's only going to slow you down on a daily basis. This is a simple trap to fall into, and a simple one to avoid. Make sure that you're making use of your email filtering and archiving options. Additionally, boomerang, a personal email writing AI assistant, can help you ensure that you're communicating both succinctly and effectively in your emails.

Earlier in this chapter we talked about taking the time to

analyze one's successes as a pivotal step in moving towards more successful communication, so why wouldn't that apply here? Seek feedback from your employees and coworkers regarding what forms of technology the company is using to communicate and how it's working out for them.

While this may create a bit of extra work for you and your staff in terms of moving systems around and designing best practices for communication, it's worth the effort.

If you take nothing else from this book, we hope that you let this chapter sink in thoroughly and completely. While it may seem like a tertiary concern in comparison to things like securing funding for your company, making personnel decisions, finding an initial customer base and ensuring that you're keeping the lights on each month, communication is anything but.

In truth, communication will be at the heart of nearly everything you do for the rest of your time in the startup world and in the professional world as a whole. There is no task that communicating effectively cannot make easier, and no task that communicating improperly cannot make harder. In keeping with that, more often than not, the quality of the finished product of your work will serve as a strong indicator of how well you communicated during the process.

We encourage you, as you go through the rest of this book (particularly the next chapter, which will cover strategic sales and development) to constantly consider the ways in which communication can hamper or improve a given business situation. You'll find that these thought processes are more complex than you can imagine, limited only by the number of ways that

each person involved in a given transaction might choose to communicate. The more that you can focus on viewing your startup this way, the more well off you'll be.

While we didn't take the time in this chapter to focus on specific tools that you might use to communicate with employees and coworkers within your startup, we do believe strongly that certain platforms can be incredibly useful for communication during the formative stages of your business and onward. We suggest looking back through our prior chapters to see what we had to say about Slack, email, various social media platforms, Trello, and the like.

Remember, as we mentioned when we discussed the Big 5 personality traits in the beginning of this chapter, your weaknesses can become strengths when it comes to communication, but only if you take the time to try new methods from what you're used to and see what works.

Things worth doing are rarely easy, and that certainly holds true when it comes to communicating effectively in your business. When we began this company, we did so with a phrase in mind that we believe serves as a strong indicator of the proper way to communicate:

“Know your weaknesses, focus on your strengths, learn something new everyday, and never give up. .”

than you can imagine, limited only by the number of ways that each person involved in a given transaction might choose to communicate. The more that you can focus on viewing your startup this way, the more well off you'll be.

While we didn't take the time in this chapter to focus on

specific tools that you might use to communicate with employees and coworkers within your startup, we do believe strongly that certain platforms can be incredibly useful for communication during the formative stages of your business and onward. We suggest looking back through our prior chapters to see what we had to say about Slack, email, various social media platforms, Trello, and the like.

Remember, as we mentioned when we discussed the Big 5 personality traits in the beginning of this chapter, your weaknesses can become strengths when it comes to communication, but only if you take the time to try new methods from what you're used to and see what works.

Things worth doing are rarely easy, and that certainly holds true when it comes to communicating effectively in your business. When we began this company, we did so with a phrase in mind that we believe serves as a strong indicator of the proper way to communicate:

“Know your weaknesses, focus on your strengths, learn something new everyday, and never give up. .”