

Communication



What is communication ?

- Being able to communicate effectively is the most important of all life skills.
- Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place to another, whether this be vocally (using voice), written (using printed or digital media such as books, magazines, websites or emails), visually (using logos, maps, charts or graphs) &
- Non-verbally (using body language, gestures and the tone and pitch of voice).

Importance of Communication

- How well this information can be transmitted and received is a measure of how good our communication skills are.
- Developing your communication skills can help all aspects of your life, from your professional life to social gatherings and everything in between.
- The ability to communicate information accurately, clearly and as intended, is a vital life skill and something that should not be overlooked.
- It's never too late to work on your communication skills and by doing so improve your quality of life.

Importance of Communication

- Professionally, if you are applying for jobs or looking for a promotion with your current employer, you will almost certainly need to demonstrate good communication skills.
- For example, the ability to: speak appropriately with a wide variety of people whilst maintaining good eye contact, demonstrate a varied vocabulary and tailor your language to your audience, listen effectively, present your ideas appropriately, write clearly and concisely and work well in a group all require good communication skills. Many of these are essential skills that employers seek.

Top 10 Communication Skills

- Here are the top 10 communication skills that will help you stand out in today's job market.



Listening

- Being a good listener is one of the best ways to be a good communicator.
- No one likes communicating with someone who only cares about putting in her two cents, and does not take the time to listen to the other person. Instead, practice active listening.
- Active listening involves paying close attention to what the other person is saying, asking clarifying questions, and rephrasing what the person says to ensure understanding ("So, what you're saying is...").
- Through active listening, you can better understand what the other person is trying to say, and can respond appropriately.

Active Listening Skills



Examples of Active Listening Techniques

- Active listening techniques include:
- Building trust and establishing rapport.
- Demonstrating concern.
- Paraphrasing to show understanding.
- Nonverbal cues which show understanding such as nodding, eye contact and leaning forward.

Examples of Active Listening Techniques

- Brief verbal affirmations like I see, I know, sure, or I understand.
- Asking open-ended questions.
- Asking specific questions to seek clarification.
- Waiting to disclose your opinion.
- Disclosing similar experiences to show understanding.

How to improve listening skills?

- One way to show your listening skills is to carefully listen to the speaker in their entirety before responding.
- Don't interrupt and do be sure your responses reflect what you were asked.
- **Attentive listening** includes eye contact, posture, facial expressions, gestures and genuine interest in what the person is saying.
- **Reflection** includes repeating and/or paraphrasing what you have heard, showing the person that you truly understand what has been said.

What Makes a Good Listener

- Good listeners actively endeavor to understand what others are really trying to say, regardless of how unclear the messages might be.
- Listening involves not only the effort to decode verbal messages, but also to interpret nonverbal cues such as tone of voice, facial expressions and physical posture.
- Effective listeners make sure to let others know that they have been heard, and encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings fully.

Nonverbal Communication Skills



Nonverbal Communication

- Your body language, eye contact, hand gestures, and tone all color the message you are trying to convey.
- A relaxed, open stance (arms open, legs relaxed), and a friendly tone will make you appear approachable, and will encourage others to speak openly with you.
- Eye contact is also important; you want to look the person in the eye to demonstrate that you are focused on the person and the conversation (however, be sure not to stare at the person, which can make him or her uncomfortable).
- Also pay attention to other people's nonverbal signals while you are talking. Often, nonverbal signals convey how a person is really feeling. For example, if the person is not looking you in the eye, he or she might be uncomfortable or hiding the truth.

The Importance of Nonverbal Communications

- Most candidates carefully prepare what they will say during interviews and networking meetings. Less attention is typically paid to how messages are communicated..
- Your interviewing and networking success will be largely determined by how the people you meet respond to what you are saying.

Communicating at Job Interviews

- Your nonverbal communications can either support the tone of your conversation or leave the interviewer wondering whether you're all talk and no substance.
- Displaying nonverbal behaviors that are a match for your messages can help you to convince employers that you are genuinely interested in the job and suited for the work.
- In general, what's most important is to be positive and engaging. If you feel confident about your ability to do the job and know you'll be an asset to the employer, you can show that by your actions as well as your words.

Communicating at Work

- In addition to making a hiring decision, employers will also be evaluating your nonverbal skills to determine whether you will be able to relate effectively to clients, co-workers and business associates.
- In many occupations, the ability to establish credibility and trust is a significant success factor. Positive nonverbal behavior will enable you to demonstrate your sincerity and engaging personality.

Nonverbal Communication Skills Examples

- Avoiding a slouching posture
- Avoiding smiling or laughter when messages are serious
- Displaying some animation with hands and facial expressions to project a dynamic presence
- Don't bring your phone, a drink or anything else to an interview or meeting that could distract you
- Don't interrupt your interviewer

Nonverbal Communication Skills Examples

- Eliminating fidgeting and shaking of limbs
- Establishing frequent but not continuous or piercing eye contact with interviewers
- Focusing on the on conversation
- Introducing yourself with a smile and a firm handshake

Nonverbal Communication Skills Examples

- Keeping hands away from the face and hair
- Leaning slightly forward to indicate interest
- Listening carefully
- Maintaining open arms, folded arms can convey defensiveness
- Modulating vocal tone to express excitement and punctuate key points

Nonverbal Communication Skills Examples

- Nodding to demonstrate understanding
- Observing the reaction of others to your statements
- Paying attention to the conversation
- Reading the nonverbal signals of others; providing clarification if they look confused, wrapping up if they have heard enough
- Refraining from forced laughter in response to humor
- Refraining from looking at the clock, your phone or displaying any other signs of disinterest

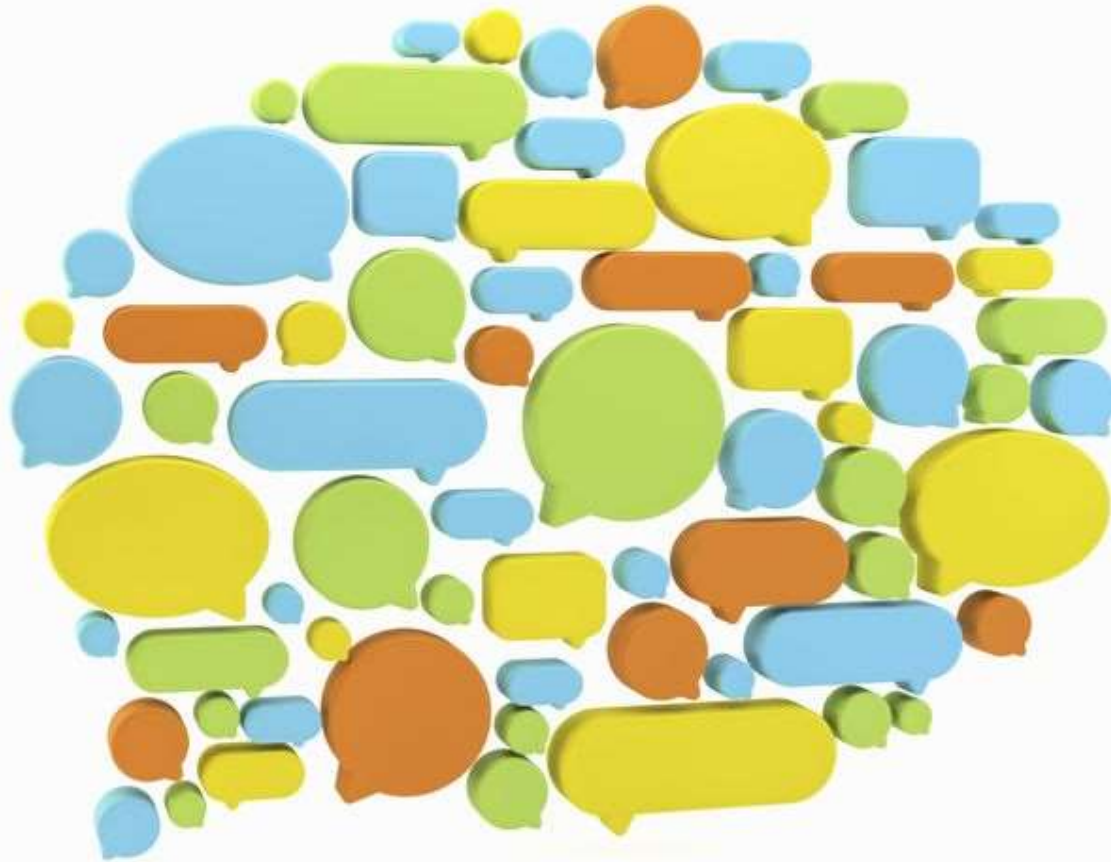
Nonverbal Communication Skills Examples

- Respecting the amount of personal space preferred by your communication partners
- Rotating eye contact to various speakers in group interviewing or networking situations
- Shaking hands firmly without excessive force
- Showing that you're interested in what the interviewer is telling you
- Smiling to indicate that you are amused or pleased with a communication
- Staying calm even when you're nervous
- Steering clear of monotone delivery
- Waiting until the person is done talking to respond

Clarity and Concision

- Try to convey your message in as few words as possible.
- Say what you want clearly and directly, whether you're speaking to someone in person, on the phone, or via email.
- If you ramble on, your listener will either tune you out or will be unsure of exactly what you want.
- Think about what you want to say before you say it; this will help you to avoid talking excessively and/or confusing your audience.

Verbal Communication Skills



Verbal Communication Skills

- Almost every job requires workers to use verbal communication skills.
- That's why verbal skills are highly ranked on the candidate evaluation checklists used by many job interviewers.
- The stronger your communication skills, the better your chances of getting hired regardless of the job for which you're applying.
- You'll do better during the interview, as well as on the job.

What Are Verbal Communication Skills?

- Effective verbal communication skills include more than just talking.
- Verbal communication encompasses both how you deliver messages and how you receive them.
- Communication is a soft skill, and it's one that is important to every employer.
- Workers who can convey information clearly and effectively are highly valued by employers.
- Employees who can interpret messages and act appropriately on the information that they receive have a better chance of excelling on the job.

Verbal Communication Skills in the Workplace

- What constitutes effective verbal communication on the job depends on the relationships between communication partners and the work context.
- Verbal communication in a work setting takes place between many different individuals and groups such as co-workers, bosses and subordinates, employees, customers, clients, teachers and students, and speakers and their audiences.
- Verbal communication occurs in many different contexts including training sessions, presentations, group meetings, performance appraisals, one-on-one discussions, interviews, disciplinary sessions, sales pitches and consulting engagements.

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Advising others regarding an appropriate course of action
- Enunciating clearly
- Anticipating the concerns of others
- Asking for clarification
- Asking open-ended questions to stimulate dialogue
- Assertiveness
- Calming an agitated customer by recognizing and responding to their complaints

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Conveying feedback in a constructive manner emphasizing specific, changeable behaviors
- Conveying messages concisely
- Disciplining employees in a direct and respectful manner
- Emphasizing benefits of a product, service or proposal to persuade an individual or group
- Encouraging reluctant group members to share input
- Explaining a difficult situation without getting angry
- Explaining that you need assistance

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Giving credit to others
- Introducing the focus of a topic at the beginning of a presentation or interaction
- Noticing non-verbal cues and responding verbally to verify confusion, defuse anger, etc.
- Paraphrasing to show understanding
- Planning communications prior to delivery
- Posing probing questions to elicit more detail about specific issues

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Giving credit to others
- Projecting your voice to fill the room
- Providing concrete examples to illustrate points
- Receiving criticism without defensiveness
- Recognizing and countering objections
- Refraining from speaking too often or interrupting others
- Requesting feedback
- Restating important points towards the end of a talk

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Selecting language appropriate to the audience
- Showing an interest in others, asking about and recognizing their feelings
- Speaking calmly even when you're stressed
- Speaking at a moderate pace, not too fast or too slowly
- Speaking confidently but with modesty
- Stating your needs, wants or feelings without criticizing or blaming
- Summarizing key points made by other speakers

Examples of Verbal Communication Skills

- Supporting statements with facts and evidence
- Tailoring messages to different audiences
- Telling stories to capture an audience
- Terminating staff
- Training others to carry out a task or role
- Using affirmative sounds and words like uh-huh, got you, I understand, for sure, I see, and yes to demonstrate understanding
- Using humor to engage an audience
- Utilizing self-disclosure to encourage sharing

Friendliness

- Through a friendly tone, a personal question, or simply a smile, you will encourage your coworkers to engage in open and honest communication with you.
- This is important in both face-to-face and written communication.
- When you can, personalize your emails to coworkers and/or employees - a quick "I hope you all had a good weekend" at the start of an email can personalize a message and make the recipient feel more appreciated.

Interpersonal Skills



Interpersonal Skills

- What are interpersonal skills and why are they important?
- Interpersonal skills, also known as people skills, are related to the way you communicate and interact with people.
- When employers are hiring, interpersonal skills are one of the top criteria used to evaluate candidates.

Why Employers Value Interpersonal Skills

- Interpersonal skills go by several names—they're also called people skills, in addition to *employability* skills.
- The majority of careers require consistent, if not constant, interaction with other people. To do that successfully, and thus to be employable, you need to have interpersonal skills.
- Even if you excel at the technical aspects of your job, if you're a disaster to work with, your presence in the office will not be well received.
- As a result, it's important to emphasize your interpersonal skills in your cover letter, resume and in your interview.

Confidence

- It is important to be confident in all of your interactions with others.
- Confidence ensures your coworkers that you believe in and will follow through with what you are saying.
- Exuding confidence can be as simple as making eye contact or using a firm but friendly tone (avoid making statements sound like questions).
- Be careful not to sound arrogant or aggressive.
- Be sure you are always listening to and empathizing with the other person.

Empathy

- Even when you disagree with an employer, coworker, or employee, it is important for you to understand and respect their point of view.
- Using phrases as simple as "I understand where you are coming from" demonstrate that you have been listening to the other person and respect their opinions.

Open-Mindedness

- A good communicator should enter any conversation with a flexible, open mind.
- Be open to listening to and understanding the other person's point of view, rather than simply getting your message across.
- By being willing to enter into a dialogue, even with people with whom you disagree, you will be able to have more honest, productive conversations.

Respect

- People will be more open to communicating with you if you convey respect for them and their ideas.
- Simple actions like using a person's name, making eye contact, and actively listening when a person speaks will make the person feel appreciated.
- On the phone, avoid distractions and stay focused on the conversation.
- Convey respect through email by taking the time to edit your message.
- If you send a sloppily written, confusing email, the recipient will think you do not respect her enough to think through your communication with her.

Feedback

- Being able to appropriately give and receive feedback is an important communication skill.
- Managers and supervisors should continuously look for ways to provide employees with constructive feedback, be it through email, phone calls, or weekly status updates.
- Giving feedback involves giving praise as well - something as simple as saying "good job" to an employee can greatly increase motivation.

Feedback

- Similarly, you should be able to accept, and even encourage, feedback from others.
- Listen to the feedback you are given, ask clarifying questions if you are unsure of the issue, and make efforts to implement the feedback.

Picking the Right Medium

- An important communication skill is to simply know what form of communication to use.
- For example, some serious conversations (changes in salary, etc.) are almost always best done in person.
- You should also think about the person with whom you wish to speak - if they are very busy people (such as your boss, perhaps), you might want to convey your message through email.
- People will appreciate your thoughtful means of communication, and will be more likely to respond positively to you.