

Title:

6 Steps to Effective Communication

Word Count:

381

Summary:

Distinguish yourself as an effective leader by applying these six communication skill strategies. In fact, these strategies are so powerful, they even work at home.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Effective leaders are known for being excellent communicators. Here's what to do.

1) Avoid "Not." Negative talk encourages arguments, counter attacks, and attempts to solve your problems. It also creates a negative impression. For example, when you say, "I can't," you appear helpless and ineffective. Instead, talk about what you can do and what you want.

2) Deal with impossible requests by 1) acknowledging the request, 2) empathizing with the other person's feelings, 3) saying, "I wish I could fix it." and 4) suggesting a reasonable alternative." For example, imagine that you work at a resort and it is raining. A guest walks up to you carrying a golf bag, slams it against your desk, and shouts, "This place stinks! I spent thousands of dollars coming here and it's raining."

You respond by saying, "You're right it's raining. And I know how upsetting it must feel to travel this far and be stuck inside. I wish I could make it stop. In the meantime, you may want to visit our indoor putting center. Our golf pro is offering instructions this afternoon."

3) Deal with difficult requests by 1) affirming your willingness to help and 2) asking the other person to help you plan a solution.

For example, if your boss asks you to start another project, you could say, "I understand you want me to start a new project. And right now I'm working on another project. To help me set my priorities, I wonder which one you want me to

finish first."

4) When possible, offer choices that show the consequences of different options. This allows the other person to choose both the process and its impact.

For example, you can say, "That's a great idea. And there are different ways I can meet your request. We can use our existing supplies, which are free, or we can buy custom materials, which will cost \$500. Which option would you prefer?"

5) Deal with complaints by asking the other person to describe a fair settlement. You can say, "What do you want?" or "What would you consider a fair solution to this?" or "What would make you happy?"

6) A smile significantly affects how you sound. It also makes you more approachable. When you frown, other people hear anxiety, caution, fear, and rejection. A smile (or at least a pleasant expression) encourages open communication.