

34 I can talk about communicators

A Good communicators

Good communicators are people who:

- are first of all good listeners, and really **take in** what others have to say.
- make sure their body language **isn't at odds with** what they are saying.
- **pick up on** little things that are important to people, such as important names or dates.
- **keep** people **in the picture** about things.
- know when to distribute information **on a need-to-know basis**.
- don't **get** people's **backs up** by being rude, aggressive, dismissive, etc.
- **win** people **over** rather than make demands.
- are prepared to **open up to** people, so that others will open up to them.

Glossary

take sth in	understand, absorb, and remember new facts and information.
be at odds with sth	be in conflict with sth; contradict sth.
pick up on sth	notice sth and perhaps react to it.
on a need-to-know basis	so that sb is told only what they need to know and only when they need to know it.
get sb's back up	INF annoy sb.
win sb over/round (to sth)	get sb's support or approval by persuading them you are right or sth is right.
open up (to sb)	talk about what you really feel and think.

spotlight Giving people information

If you **put sb in the picture**, you give them the information they need to understand a situation. If you **keep sb in the picture**, you continue to give them the necessary information. SYN **keep sb posted (about/on sth)**. If you **get the picture**, you understand a situation that somebody is describing to you.

1 Cover the glossary, then answer the questions.

- 1 If someone puts you in the picture, what do they do?
- 2 Are you pleased if someone keeps you posted?
- 3 If someone gets your back up, how do you feel?
- 4 If you win someone over, what does that involve?
- 5 If you say to someone that you get the picture, what does it tell them?
- 6 If you've picked up on something, what have you done?
- 7 If you open up to someone, what do you do?
- 8 If what someone says is at odds with what they do, are you pleased?

2 Complete the final word in each dialogue.

- 1 Did you understand everything? ~ No, I couldn't take it all
- 2 Do you want to know what's happening? ~ Yes, could you keep me ?
- 3 Do you find him annoying as well? ~ Yes, he really gets my back
- 4 Do you have all the details? ~ No, but Jane will put me in the
- 5 Do you give them much information? ~ Only on a need-to-know
- 6 They will need persuading. ~ Don't worry. Pete will soon win them

3 ABOUT YOU What are the three most important points at the top of the page? Which are you good at or bad at? Write your answers in your notebook, or talk to another student.

B A poor communicator

HOLLY Do you think Jonathan will use our ideas in the advertising campaign?

JAKE I think he's **mulling** them **over**, but **reading between the lines** I'd say 'maybe'.

HOLLY He doesn't **give** much **away**, does he?

JAKE No. He doesn't **let** anyone **in on** what he's thinking. He prefers to **keep things to himself**, which is probably why we end up **getting the wrong end of the stick** so often.

HOLLY Doesn't it **occur to** him that it's very frustrating to **be kept in the dark** like this?

JAKE No. **It makes no odds** to him what people think. Or if he does care, he doesn't **let on**.



Glossary

mull sth over	spend time thinking carefully about a plan or proposal.
read between the lines	look for or discover a meaning that is suggested rather than actually stated.
give sth/sb away	make known sth that sb wants to keep secret.
let sb in on sth	INF allow sb to share a secret, or know what only a few people know.
get (hold of) the wrong end of the stick	INF understand sth in the wrong way.
occur to sb	(of an idea or a thought) come into sb's mind.
it makes no odds	INF used to say that sth makes no difference or is not important.
let on (to sb about sth)	INF tell sb sth, especially sth you have been keeping secret.

spotlight Keeping information back

If you **keep sth to yourself**, you don't tell others about it. If you **play/hold/keep your cards close to your chest**, you keep your plans or ideas secret. If you **keep sb in the dark**, you don't tell them something because you want to keep it secret from them.

4 Do you know? Write 'yes', or 'perhaps', or 'no'.

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 He plays his cards close to his chest. | 5 It didn't occur to him to tell me. |
| 2 He gave it away. | 6 He let me in on it. |
| 3 I'm reading between the lines. | 7 He kept me in the dark. |
| 4 He let on. | 8 I got the wrong end of the stick. |

5 Rewrite the sentences starting with the words given.

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|--|----------------------------------|
| ► I haven't told people about the project. | I've kept the project to myself. |
| 1 I don't tell other people my ideas. | I keep my cards |
| 2 I completely misunderstood what he meant. | I got |
| 3 It should've stayed a secret but I told someone. | I gave |
| 4 I wanted to think about it. | I wanted to mull |
| 5 I didn't tell her because I didn't want her to know. | I kept |
| 6 He didn't tell me exactly but I knew what he meant. | I read |
| 7 I don't realize that I'm being secretive. | It doesn't |
| 8 I don't care what people think. | It makes |

35 I can use the language of discussion

A Winning the argument

In a heated discussion, how annoyed are you by people who: very/quite/not at all

- want to win the argument **at all costs**?
- **play devil's advocate** all the time?
- constantly **butt in** when you're trying to speak?
- **beat about the bush** all the time instead of **getting to the point**?
- always seem to **miss the point** of what people are saying?
- always want to **have the last word**?
- just want to argue **for the sake of it**?
- refuse to **back down** and admit they are wrong?

Glossary

at all costs	used to say that something must be done, however difficult it is. SYN at any cost/price .
play devil's advocate	pretend to disagree with sb in order to start an argument or discussion.
butt in	interrupt sb.
beat about the bush	discuss sth in an indirect way, without saying what you really want to say.  See page 162.)
get to the point	stop talking about unimportant details and say what is most important.
miss the point	not understand the main thing that sb is trying to say.
have the last/final word (on sth)	win an argument by making the last statement or final decision on sth.
for the sake of it	If you do sth for the sake of it , you do it because you enjoy it, not because you want to achieve anything else.
back down (on sth)	admit that you are wrong or have lost an argument.

1 Is the meaning similar or different? Write S or D.

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|---|---|
| 1 She always has the final word. | She always butts in. |
| 2 He wants to win at all costs. | He wants to win at any price. |
| 3 She never gets to the point. | She always misses the point. |
| 4 He keeps butting in when I'm talking. | He keeps interrupting when I'm talking. |
| 5 He loves to play devil's advocate. | He often argues for the sake of it. |
| 6 She doesn't beat about the bush. | She never backs down. |

2 Complete the sentences.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 I never get a chance to finish what I'm saying, because he keeps | in. |
| 2 Mr Ellis explained it carefully, but Anya still completely | the point. |
| 3 Stop about the bush and get to the | of what you're trying to say. |
| 4 However much you argue with her, she always has to have the final | . |
| 5 Even if you prove he's wrong, he still won't down. | |
| 6 I don't think she disagreed with you. She was just playing | advocate because she enjoys |
| arguing for the | of it. |

3 ABOUT YOU Write your answers in the questionnaire at the top of the page, or talk to another student. Do you do any of these things?