

Chapter 1 : Avoiding Conflict - Assertive Communication

Over time, you'll find that avoiding these common communication mistakes will greatly enhance the quality of your messages, your reputation, your working.

A few moments of silence later, Armstrong resumes his presentation as if nothing strange had happened. Out of synch with the near term business interests of his company? A reporter for Discovery. As a startup leader, you will have ample opportunity to direct similar pivots of your own. Inarguably poor communication from inarguably successful founders. Every element of posture, each facial expression, those distracted glances at your iPhone during a focused conversation, your clothing choices, and even the smallest behaviors all communicate volumes to your peers, employees, investors and customers. To this analyst, a clothing choice was a communication vehicle that spoke louder than words. In fact, Communication Is the 1 Challenge Facing Business Leaders Today At face value, you might think you have a strategy problem, a sales problem, a marketing problem, a morale problem, a delivery issue, an innovation issue, an uncooperative team member, or a lack of vision. In truth, a communication issue most likely underlies every one of these. And despite being taught to speak as toddlers and studying our reading, writing and arithmetic into our late teens or early twenties for those founders who actually did attend college, few of us arrive in leadership positions with a strong sense of how to communicate with clarity, influence, power and presence. Look, every organization has places where what leadership says and what leadership actually does do not match. When you can bring what you say and what you do into alignment, you make significant strides toward authentic communication not to mention authentic leadership. The language you choose, the examples you set, the behaviors you model set the tone for your entire organization, as well as for the stakeholders throughout your entire ecosystem. Communicate with Clarity Nothing cuts through the clutter in complex times like simple, powerful communication – except unclear, convoluted poppycock. Listen with Purpose Many top executives have two distinct states while in conversation with their colleagues: They think they have the greatest impact through the way they speak, when in fact we often have the most impact in the way we listen. Powerful communicators are powerful listeners who tune into the words of others with intent and intense focus. Approach Communication as a Critical Business Process Like leadership itself, leadership communication is a process. As a matter of fact, most organizations might be viewed as little more than a series of conversations – among leaders, across departments, between people and technology, with customers, with prospects, with investors and with partners. Strong leaders know how to set the tone for those conversations and create an environment where the right conversations are happening up, down and across the organization. Gone wrong, you may find your organization focused on the past, on what went wrong, what never was, and what should have happened. Conversely, great leaders use conversation about what the company could do its vision, should do its plan and will do its future to create the momentum that company needs to power through tough times or achieve its most audacious goals. It is a reality of the social era that anything that can be on-the-record read as: Statements made to one intended audience can – and often will – make their way in front of any number of unintended audiences. Communication skills that have always been important now find themselves highlighted in stark relief by the light from millions upon millions of laptops, tablets, and smartphone screens. This is a truth of our times – and as the examples in this post illustrate, even the most technology-centric executives among us could stand a refresher on how to make the right kind of impact when communicating in the age of hyper-connectivity and utter transparency.

Chapter 2 : How to Avoid Miscommunication: 14 Steps (with Pictures) - wikiHow

Avoiding conflict with Assertive communication Offer direct communication in a considerate manner Assertive communication should not be confused with an aggressive communication style. In many English speaking countries, assertive has mistakenly come to be recognised as a communication method that can alienate.

This new edition represents a summation of the extensive work that has been done on communication apprehension, shyness, reticence, and so forth. Practitioners will find it useful for its detailed coverage of intervention tactics and their relative effectiveness. All in all, the book is a wonderful resource for anyone with an interest in phenomena that interfere with communication activities. Contextualizing Communication Avoidance Research: Scope, Realm, and Paradigm, Mark Wadleigh. Daly, John Caughlin, and Laura Stafford. Beatty and James C. A Component Theory of Communication Apprehension: Schmidt, and Debbie M. Communication State Anxiety, Chris R. Sawyer and Ralph R. Conceptualizations and Perspectives, James C. Richmond, and Linda L. Keaton, Lynne Kelly, and Gerald M. Self-Report Measurement, James C. Physiological Assessment, Alan D. Heisel and Michael J. Communication Apprehension and Quietness: Treatment Assessment of Communication Apprehension: Systematic Desensitization, Derek R. Cunconan, Gustav Friedrich, and Blaine Goss. Communication Apprehension and Cognitions: Is it the Thought that Counts? Visualization and Performance Visualization: Sonandre, and Tanichya K.

Chapter 3 : Communication problems in the workplace, learn to avoid them

This new edition represents a summation of the extensive work that has been done on communication apprehension, shyness, reticence, and so forth.

Communication is a key aspect of your everyday working life but, clearly, there is work to be done when trying to get your point across. Follow these five tips and minimize the likelihood of a misunderstanding in your office. This is particularly true when communicating internally, so take a look at which platforms you predominantly use and look to give new ones a try. You could even go a little old-fashioned and encourage more face-to-face communication. Some companies have incorporated tech-free office hours in a bid to encourage more verbal communication. This can often be down to not applying the correct level of protection for your data, or simply using the wrong platform. Separate work and personal communication Methods for work and personal communication are often blurred. Depending on the content, this can be embarrassing for both the sender and receiver of these communications. There are vastly different communicative expectations between work life and home life. Get it wrong, and this can lead to inappropriate content being sent to a colleague at work. To avoid the potential pitfalls, look to separate work and personal communication wherever possible. This can lead to unwarranted stress, confusion, unclear strategies and missed deadlines. If in doubt, just ask. Try something new Like an earlier suggestion, you could choose to switch up your daily communication methods and attempt to loosen your reliance on technology. Frank, face-to-face conversation is always going to be the most efficient way to discuss workplace problems and bring about solutions. So, how can you incorporate more of it into your working day? This is essentially a brief, daily team meeting that gives everyone an opportunity to mention blockages and barriers to success. Issues can be addressed early at the start of the day and you can avoid a back-and-forth email exchange that can so easily be misinterpreted or ignored. Where miscommunication occurs in the office Alarmingly, throughout the research conducted, men were found to miscommunicate at work with much more regularity. In every aspect of miscommunication investigated in the survey, men were found to do it more. The same is true of the method of communication. As for the content of the communication, the trend continues. In summary, women are much better at avoiding miscommunication in the office than their male counterparts – but that too comes with its own risks. Following the tips above, and encouraging others to do the same, could lead to a decrease in the level of miscommunication we see today.

Chapter 4 : Â» Avoid Communication Breakdowns With These 4 Tips

Communication drives a project and keeps your team focused on the same goals. Avoid communication breakdowns on your creative projects by following these tips.

When you think about some of challenges in your business communications, which are hopefully less highly charged than what Robert Plant wailed about, do you experience frustration and angst? It usually happens to everyone from time to time but rarely causes insanity and can make you ask yourself: Was the message that was received what I intended? There can be technical or cultural reasons for this. People can be too busy or messages get lost in the avalanche of information coming their way. People may disagree and not know how to handle disagreements well. The options are too numerous. In this post I will: 1. Identify a possible cause of these breakdowns; 2. Show you possible solutions that can be taken to create more productive dialogue. A large part of any miscommunication will always center on the communication vehicle you choose. Face-to-Face Conversations Each of these has its various pros and cons but I believe there are two variables that matter the most: Email Regarding efficiency, email, texts, Twitter, etc. It is really amazing how much information can be transmitted electronically and the cold reality of being overwhelmed by the email beast is a result. Perhaps there can be too much of a good thing. Telephone Today it seems that smart phones are fairly ubiquitous. They can do so much more than just allow phone calls to happen. I am frequently dismayed to see couples at a nice restaurant who have their noses to their iPhone rather than speaking to each other. But phone conversations can be very useful in creating real-time dialogue that allows a good back and forth to go on as opposed to the static responding to the words in an email and then waiting for a response. Face-to-Face Conversations Face-to-face conversations have an immediacy and impact that allows really effective communications to occur, but in the global environment we operate in, these get harder and harder to make happen. Even companies with worldwide operations see the value in bringing the key leaders together in person at least once a year. The challenge we have is that the effectiveness of the communication exchange is the opposite. The difference in the communication exchange has to do with the clarity of the meaning that is intended and that which is received. If we were all fantastic writers, this would be less of an issue, but we are not. You can send lots of information but that can overwhelm whatever meaning or message that was intended. Visual or Non-Verbal 1. Verbal This refers to the words we choose to convey the message. English is a difficult enough language to learn because of the multiple meanings of various words. I can think of at least six. You may scoff at this figure but there have been many extensive studies that bear this out. Vocal This can be the pace, volume or intensity with which we speak. When we are excited we usually speed up. We get louder when we are insistent. We may speak more softly or slower to emphasize a point. When you say you are really excited about an idea but you sit back with your arms across your chest and a brow that is furrowed in confusion, your body language will trump the words you use every time. Your very best chance for the clearest and most complete communication is going to be with face-to-face conversations, or in meeting situations where you can experience the verbal, vocal and visual aspects of the communication vibration. So here are a few tips to consider to improve the effectiveness of your communication: Email is efficient but not always effective. Although I realize there is a generational trend that sees smart phones as more for email and text messages, versus phone calls, consider leaving a voicemail to convey your message better or to ask to schedule that call or a meeting. Skype, Face Time messaging and video conferencing are increasingly available and are the next best thing to meeting in person. It can also be done fairly cost-effectively. It often requires a little more planning, but I assure you that it is usually worth it. It never hurts to ask. If you are going to improve the effectiveness of the communication, ask yourself: What can I do to maximize the opportunity to get the Verbal, Vocal and Visual aspects in my communications exchange? Since the Visual or Body Language aspects of the communication vibration are so important, what can I do to learn more about this to enhance my effectiveness as leader? I look forward to your comments and suggestions. Sign up for my blog updates and never miss a post. This iframe contains the logic required to handle Ajax powered Gravity Forms.

Chapter 5 : How To Avoid Communication Barriers - SpeakersOffice

This is the first book to draw together the major conceptual, methodological, and research approaches to the problems of communication avoidance and shyness.

The overall idea of this architectural style is to implement an application as a system of services. In the beginning, that seems like an easy task. In an ideal world, that should be the case. But in my experience, that only rarely happens. Sure, most applications have several tasks that are independent of the rest of the application. Examples for that are a nightly job that imports data or the product catalog of an online store. In these cases, your microservices need to communicate with each other. But that sounds a lot easier than it seems. Some of them are performance, fault tolerance and monitoring. These calls are a lot slower. That is one of the often named disadvantages of a monolith. Whenever one part of your application breaks, it affects your whole application. But it also reduces the complexity of your system. Independently deployed services also fail independently. Logging and Monitoring Other challenges that you need to face in a distributed environment are monitoring and logging. As long as you deploy your system as one big monolith, you just need to monitor one application, and you find all log files in one place. In a distributed system, these tasks become a lot harder. You now need to monitor multiple services at once, and these services might even use different technologies. So, the selection of a good monitoring tool becomes important. And when you want to analyze something in your log files, you need to check the log files of multiple services and track one user request through multiple systems. So, how do you handle these challenges? Tools like Retrace can help you solve the logging and monitoring challenges. You need to address these problems in your application design. What do they depend on? Does service A depend on the data that service B provides or does it require B to perform a specific operation? If it only depends on the data, you should consider replicating that data to service A to avoid the remote call. So, you might even get more benefits than just the avoided remote call. Replicating data introduces a new challenge. You need to update the replicated data. But the smaller the time frame in which you need to replicate your data, the more complicated it gets. All remote calls that are carried out while processing a user request slow down your system and introduce another source of failure. So, you might be able to avoid remote calls when your service just depends on the data provided by another microservice. But what about all the cases in which you need to call service B to trigger the business logic it contains? So, you need to implement it as efficient as possible. Implementing asynchronous communication You should prefer asynchronous communication for all remote calls. That can provide huge performance improvements because you just need to wait until the slowest service answered your request. As always, there are several ways to implement an asynchronous communication between two services. One of them is an asynchronous REST call. The container injects a suspended AsyncResponse object as a method parameter. The object is bound to the processing of the active request, and you can use it within your method to resume the request as soon as a result is available. You can do that by calling the setTimeout of the injected AsyncResponse object. Concurrency Utilities for Java EE. It utilizes a managed thread pool within a Java EE application server and provides a safe way to run your code within a separate thread. These are the most important things you need to do to implement an asynchronous REST endpoint. You now just need to add your business logic to the run method and to call the REST endpoint asynchronously. But you might ask yourself why you need to do anything when you already implemented the endpoint asynchronously. You can implement it in almost the same way as a synchronous call. You can use it to wait for the request to finish and to retrieve the result. Its smaller size and the focus on one specific task reduces its complexity and makes it a lot simpler to understand than the typical monolith. But that quickly changes when you have to implement multiple services that depend on each other. The distributed nature of the system adds a lot of technical complexity. You should, therefore, try to avoid any dependencies between the services and implement them as independent as possible. You sometimes need to call another service to trigger its business logic. In these cases, you need to design your services and infrastructure and service so that you can handle the additional complexity. Monitoring tool, like Retrace, can help you to collect the required information from all systems.

And by implementing the communication in an asynchronous way, you can minimize the performance impact of remote calls. One of the options to implement an asynchronous communication between your services are asynchronous REST endpoints. Messaging provides another option to implement an asynchronous communication between your services. But that provides other challenges and benefits. I will get into more details about it in another post.

Chapter 6 : 6 Communication Barriers and How You Can Avoid Them

As I said last week, there are ten communication blunders you need to avoid. Last week I gave you five of those. Here are the other five words, phrases, and communication approaches you need to avoid or at least use with extreme caution.

But all too often, when we try to communicate with others something goes astray. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts ensue. This can cause problems in your home, school, and work relationships. For many of us, communicating more clearly and effectively requires learning some important skills. What is effective communication? Effective communication is about more than just exchanging information. More than just the words you use, effective communication combines a set of 4 skills: Engaged listening Managing stress in the moment Asserting yourself in a respectful way While these are learned skills, communication is more effective when it becomes spontaneous rather than formulaic. Of course, it takes time and effort to develop these skills. The more effort and practice you put in, the more instinctive and effective your communication skills will become. Common barriers to effective communication include: Stress and out-of-control emotion. To avoid conflict and misunderstandings, you can learn how to quickly calm down before continuing a conversation. To communicate effectively, you need to avoid distractions and stay focused. Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. Effective communication skill 1: Become an engaged listener When communicating with others, we often focus on what we should say. However, effective communication is less about talking and more about listening. Listening well means not just understanding the words or the information being communicated, but also understanding the emotions the speaker is trying to communicate. Similarly, if the person is agitated, you can help calm them by listening in an attentive way and making the person feel understood. If your goal is to fully understand and connect with the other person, listening in an engaged way will often come naturally. The more you practice them, the more satisfying and rewarding your interactions with others will become. Tips for becoming an engaged listener Focus fully on the speaker. You need to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience in order to pick up the subtle nuances and important nonverbal cues in a conversation. Favor your right ear. As strange as it sounds, the left side of the brain contains the primary processing centers for both speech comprehension and emotions. Since the left side of the brain is connected to the right side of the body, favoring your right ear can help you better detect the emotional nuances of what someone is saying. Nod occasionally, smile at the person, and make sure your posture is open and inviting. However, you do need to set aside your judgment and withhold blame and criticism in order to fully understand them. The most difficult communication, when successfully executed, can often lead to an unlikely connection with someone. If there seems to be a disconnect, reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. Ask questions to clarify certain points: You can do this by singing, playing a wind instrument, or listening to certain types of high-frequency music a Mozart symphony or violin concerto, for example, rather than low-frequency rock, pop, or hip-hop. Nonverbal communication, or body language, includes facial expressions, body movement and gestures, eye contact, posture, the tone of your voice, and even your muscle tension and breathing. Developing the ability to understand and use nonverbal communication can help you connect with others, express what you really mean, navigate challenging situations, and build better relationships at home and work. You can also use body language to emphasize or enhance your verbal message—patting a friend on the back while complimenting him on his success, for example, or pounding your fists to underline your message. Improve how you read nonverbal communication Be aware of individual differences. An American teen, a grieving widow, and an Asian businessman, for example, are likely to use nonverbal signals differently. Look at nonverbal communication signals as a group. Consider all of the nonverbal signals you receive, from eye contact to tone of voice to body language. Anyone can slip up occasionally and let eye contact slip, for example, or briefly cross their arms without meaning to. Improve how you deliver nonverbal communication Use nonverbal signals that match up with your words rather than contradict them. Reading Body Language Adjust your nonverbal signals according to the context. Avoid

negative body language. Instead of tentatively entering a room with your head down, eyes averted, and sliding into a chair, try standing tall with your shoulders back, smiling and maintaining eye contact, and delivering a firm handshake. It will make you feel more self-confident and help to put the other person at ease. Keep stress in check How many times have you felt stressed during a disagreement with your spouse, kids, boss, friends, or coworkers and then said or done something you later regretted? Communicate effectively by staying calm under pressure Use stalling tactics to give yourself time to think. Ask for a question to be repeated or for clarification of a statement before you respond. Pause to collect your thoughts. Make one point and provide an example or supporting piece of information. Deliver your words clearly. In many cases, how you say something can be as important as what you say. Speak clearly, maintain an even tone, and make eye contact. Keep your body language relaxed and open. Wrap up with a summary and then stop. Summarize your response and then stop talking, even if it leaves a silence in the room. Quick stress relief for effective communication When things start to get heated in a conversation, you need something quick and immediate to bring down the emotional intensity. Are your muscles or your stomach tight? Are your hands clenched? Is your breath shallow? Are you "forgetting" to breathe? Take a moment to calm down before deciding to continue a conversation or postpone it. Bring your senses to the rescue. The best way to rapidly and reliably relieve stress is through the senses—sight, sound, touch, taste, smell—or movement. For example, you could pop a peppermint in your mouth, squeeze a stress ball in your pocket, take a few deep breaths, clench and relax your muscles, or simply recall a soothing, sensory-rich image. Each person responds differently to sensory input, so you need to find things that are soothing to you. When used appropriately, humor is a great way to relieve stress when communicating. When you or those around you start taking things too seriously, find a way to lighten the mood by sharing a joke or amusing story. Be willing to compromise. If you realize that the other person cares much more about something than you do, compromise may be easier for you and a good investment in the future of the relationship. Agree to disagree, if necessary, and take time away from the situation so everyone can calm down. Go for a stroll outside if possible, or spend a few minutes meditating. Physical movement or finding a quiet place to regain your balance can quickly reduce stress. Assert yourself Direct, assertive expression makes for clear communication and can help boost your self-esteem and decision-making. Being assertive means expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs in an open and honest way, while standing up for yourself and respecting others. It does NOT mean being hostile, aggressive, or demanding. Effective communication is always about understanding the other person, not about winning an argument or forcing your opinions on others. To improve your assertiveness: Value yourself and your options. Know your needs and wants. Learn to express them without infringing on the rights of others Express negative thoughts in a positive way. Accept compliments graciously, learn from your mistakes, ask for help when needed. Learn to say "no. Look for alternatives so everyone feels good about the outcome. Developing assertive communication techniques Empathetic assertion conveys sensitivity to the other person. You become increasingly firm as time progresses, which may include outlining consequences if your needs are not met. Or ask friends or family if you can practice assertiveness techniques on them first. Recommended reading Effective Communication: Improving Your Social Skills — Learn how to communicate more effectively, improve your conversation skills, and be more assertive. AnxietyBC Core Listening Skills — Find tips on how to be a better listener and identify and improve the things that are getting in your way. University of Maine Some Common Communication Mistakes — Overview of common mistakes that get in the way of effective communication and how you can avoid them. Hear What People are Really Saying — Understanding active listening, particularly as it applies to the workplace, and the steps you can take to become an active listener. An Introduction to the Tomatis Method. The Mozart Center Press. Lawrence Robinson, Jeanne Segal, Ph.

Chapter 7 : 10 Common Communication Mistakes - From calendrierdelascience.com

March 07, There is a large body of work concerning the way women's communication style differs from that of men. For example, there is research suggesting that females downplay their certainty, while males downplay their doubts.

This post is also available in: Spanish Communication problems in the workplace, learn to avoid them When you go to a job interview and they ask you what is your experience working as a team, we all try to prove that we work great, that we are friendly and that anyone would be comfortable working with us. But the truth is that a lot of people prefer to work on their own. Not because we are introverted people living in caves and eating crickets, but because we know that communication problems in the workplace can cause great misunderstandings, and if you have been working for more than 10 years, I am sure you have witnessed complicated and sometimes even horrific situations. But still, working as a team is vital, so that we can give much more of ourselves. Sometimes you might be lucky to have wonderful colleagues, who do their work, help you and solve your doubts, but you may as well encounter people with personalities that are different from yours, lazy, with a different working pace and even grumpy. You have to face one situation or another, communications problems in the workplace are the order of the day and learning to communicate within the team is vital for the work to move forward. Peter Drucker , a well-known philosopher, dedicated to the administration of S. And even if you think that you are an expert on communicating your ideas, check these tricks to reduce communication problems in the workplace: You should know that not all communications are the same; here are three simple tricks to achieve a great start on good work environment without communication problems in the workplace: Think about the most appropriate way to deliver the message: When you first see it your first reaction might be: I need to get home as fast as I can, my kitchen is full of tomato sauce from that lasagne that I made in the morning and now my wife is going to kill me. Then when you get home your wife greets you with a kiss, a big smile and goes back to the sofa to see that last chapter of Walking Dead. You ask her if she is mad at you and she answers: Why would I be? I wonder how many times this has happened to you on a single day! There are different methods to communicate, and sometimes, short texts, emails or internal chats within the office, can be misinterpreted and might lead to confusion. Leave those messages and texts for later, in the office, whenever possible, go for a face to face chat. If you find yourselves located in different offices, telephone calls and video calls are useful but a software like eHorus is even more useful. How do we express what is going on? In our case, a software development company, developers, sales department, human resources team, graphic designers, writers and translators, they all have studied in different fields. In order to deliver a message you have to learn to adapt your speech depending on the person you are talking to. Talk, but not too much: Continually interrupting our colleague by showing her how cute your dog is or showing her videos of children singing covers on YouTube, will confuse and annoy your colleague. There are times when you must be quiet and respect others, and if you are having a lazy day, do not try to delay the work of your colleagues by talking too much. On the other hand, too many questions can be annoying, remember that there is Mr Google, and when talking about issues that are not very important, we encourage you to use it, be a more responsible person. Put these tips into practice, and you will see that work relationships will be more bearable. But communication problems in the workplace can be further reduced by considering several guidelines that must be implemented by the workers and representatives of each group: Everyone must feel like members of the same team: We are all part of a chain, from assembling to the sales department or support department, all these are essential for a company to work. They say you cannot take trust for granted. But in this case, foster peer relationships by doing activities outside the office hours might be a good idea. Few beers in the pub down the road or karaoke day can improve the environment and create longer relationships. There are a lot of companies, which do barbecues, dinners, escape rooms; it does actually improve the relationships and helps to remove the communication problems in the workplace. Learn to listen and share your ideas: It is important to feel part of the group; otherwise it will be difficult for some people to express their views freely. Regardless of whether you are shy or very outgoing, it feels good to be heard. Each employee may have good ideas to improve the product, department, organization, etc. Some examples for this

might be: Communication is an art form. We all have that colleague who exaggerates or spice up a bit all the news. It is important to learn to inform your colleagues at the right time without manipulating information. This way, we can avoid rushed decisions and panic. Be empathetic with your colleagues: It does not matter where you were born, whether or not you believe in God, the language you speak, or your culture or gender. Because we are all different people, it is normal that different opinions arise; often this will create problems within the group. At this point it is important not to wait until the problem explodes, the best thing to do when problems arise is to do a meeting in order to discuss what is happening. Sometimes it may be due to misunderstandings or problems in the organization, so in order to prevent this from going further, it should be treated on time, by looking for solutions that do not harm any group. This way being fair and intelligent. So this it, we have seen some of the tips that everyone should start putting into practice today. If you want to see more work communication related articles we recommend visiting [Pygmalion Effect in the workplace](#).

Chapter 8 : Communication Between Microservices: How to Avoid Common Problems

How to Avoid Miscommunication. In this Article: Using Clear Communication Being a Good Listener Communicating Electronically Community Q&A Miscommunications can be funny, frustrating, or upsetting.

Most individuals are unaware of the static they create when they communicate. What do I mean by static? Static is created when what you say is inconsistent with how you say it. This article will increase your awareness of the static you are creating for your listeners, and give you practical, immediate tips to have more impact and influence. Stop Communicating Ineffectively Take a couple minutes to view the video below, and then continue with the rest of the article which builds upon it. Do you look as confident as you say you are? How to Avoid This Barrier: Show Some Enthusiasm Begin paying attention to the type of facial expressions you use and when you use them. You may not be aware of when you frown, roll your eyes, or scowl. Make sure your facial expressions are appropriate based on your topic, listeners and objective. Once you have increased your awareness of facial expressions, practice the skill of incorporating them into your message, matching the appropriate expression to each situation. Communication Barrier 2 Distracting Gestures The majority of individuals I work with fidget with their fingers, rings, pen – the list goes on. Their elbows get locked at their sides and every gesture looks the same. Throughout the day, notice how you and others use gestures. Do you talk with your hands or gesture too often? Do your gestures have purpose? Ask for constructive feedback from friends, family and co-workers: Use Gestures for Emphasis Confident speakers use gestures to add emphasis to their words. To gesture with purpose, avoid locking your elbows at your sides or creating the same repetitious gestures. Instead, expand your gestures from your sides and let your hands emphasize and describe your message. Add variety to your gestures by relaxing your arms back to your sides after you complete a gesture. Gestures add energy and inflection to your voice and channel your adrenaline and nervous energy. The purpose of visual aids is to enhance and support your message through pictures and illustrations. Stay Focused When you begin to say too much and feel like a train about to derail, put the brakes on and get yourself back on track – PAUSE! Keep your objective in mind. Think in terms of what your listener needs to know about what you want them to do, not what you want to tell them. Put thought into your words. Focus your message on three significant points. Pay attention to your listener. Are they hanging on your every word or are they dazed? Are they attentive or fidgeting? Design Visual Aids, not Wordy Slides How you design your visual aids will determine your ability to stay connected with your listener. Create PowerPoint slides with more pictures and fewer words. Listener expectations and needs. Listener experience and knowledge level. Save details for handouts. Your listeners will appreciate a conversational approach with interaction accompanied by take-aways they may use as a resource. Stay away from software overkill. Stop disconnecting with your listener by talking to your visual aids. Only speak when you see eyes! Pause when you refer to your visual aids and stay connected with your listener. Communication Barrier 5 Verbal Static Um – what perception – like – do you create – you know – when you hear – um – a speaker using – uh – words that clutter – you know – their language? As I travel the country, the number one challenge individuals need to overcome to increase their influence is the ability to replace non-words with a pause. We use non-words to buy ourselves time to think about what we want to say. These words are distracting and your listener misses your message. Eliminate Filler Words Want to learn more?

Chapter 9 : Avoiding Conflict - Fogging

At the end of your conversation, ask for clarification about the communication between you and the other person. Clarify what you have heard, what you have said, and what actions you expect each.

It can be embarrassing to make mistakes with communication. For example, if you send an email without checking it, and later realize that it contained an error, you can end up looking sloppy and unprofessional. But other communication mistakes can have more serious consequences. They can tarnish your reputation, upset clients or even lead to lost revenue. Store this close to hand. It can be difficult to see errors in your own work, so consider asking a colleague to look over key documents before you distribute them. Alternatively, read your work aloud – this makes it easier to catch typos and tone errors. Then, give yourself time to reflect on your document, and to make any final changes. If you did, you could upset everyone! If you need to deliver bad news, do this in person, and think carefully about how you can do it sensitively, so that you can convey your message but minimize long-term upset at the same time. You can then take steps to clarify your message, or help people deal with the difficult news.

Avoiding Difficult Conversations

At some point, you will need to give negative feedback. Preparation is the key to handling difficult conversations. Learn to give clear, actionable feedback, and use tools such as the Situation – Behavior – Impact technique to encourage your people to reflect on their behavior. You may also want to role-play your conversation first, so that you feel confident in both your words and your body language.

Not Being Assertive

is about stating what you need, while considering the wants and needs of others. Use our Bite-Sized Training session on Assertiveness Skills to identify your needs, and to practice assertive communication. Assertiveness also means saying "no" when you need to. Assertiveness is not the same as aggression.

Reacting, Not Responding

Have you ever shouted at a colleague in frustration, or sent a terse reply to an email, without thinking your point through? This kind of emotional reaction can damage your reputation. You may upset people with your strong emotions, and give the impression that you lack self-control and emotional intelligence. Read our article on managing your emotions at work for tips on how to keep your reactions under control.

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Mistake 6: Not Preparing Thoroughly

Poorly-prepared presentations, reports, or emails frustrate your audience and can, over time, damage your reputation. First, set aside time to plan your communication thoroughly. Then, if you are delivering a speech or a presentation, rehearse thoroughly, so that you are fluent and inspiring. In fact, your communications need to address those differences as much as possible. This means that everyone – from those who learn best by reading to those who prefer a more hands-on approach – can benefit from your session. These differences create a rich tapestry of experiences and opinions that can greatly enhance our lives. However, it can be tempting to stereotype new colleagues or clients, or to make assumptions about them based on just a few pieces of information. Over time, this can jeopardize your relationship with them. So, set time aside to listen when you meet someone new. Give them space to talk about their viewpoints and take time to absorb these. If you often work with people from overseas, explore the idea of cultural intelligence, so that you can start to adapt your behavior when you come across people from different cultures. To avoid these problems, write sensitive messages before you select the recipient, and then double check their email address. If your email program automatically fills in email addresses, you could switch this feature off, so that you can consciously choose the right recipient. You may find it helpful to draft these emails in a word processing document or blank email, and then to paste the text into a new message.

Key Points

Everyone makes communication mistakes from time to time. Prepare each email, document, and presentation carefully, and give yourself time to check it. Above all, remember that communication is a two-way process. Be ready for questions, and listen to what your audience has to say. Subscribe to our free newsletter, or join the Mind Tools Club and really supercharge your career!