



Communicating Effectively in the Workplace

Part One

“Communication is a process of transferring information from one person or group to another person or group.”

What are some of the reasons we communicate at work?

Why is it important to have good communication at work?

The Communication Process

Sender

Receiver

What are some of the reasons we might use one-way communication.

Common Barriers

Physical barriers

Attitudes and emotions

Language

Cultural differences

Being vague

Information overload

Making assumptions

Sending the Message

KISS principle—Keep It Simple and Straightforward

Who

What are some examples of considerations related to your audience?

Why

Think about the last time you communicated with someone, and it went poorly. Circle the answer below that best fits the reason for that communication.

To be heard or vent

To be right or in control

To win, convince or persuade someone

To build a rapport

To solve a problem

What

How

What would you want to take into consideration when determining how (mode) you will communicate?

When

What might you consider when deciding when to deliver your message?

Why do you think it's important to take the time to invite the other person to discuss the matter?

Where

What are some things to consider when deciding where to communicate a message?

Activity: Analyze the Message

Underline or circle the parts of the message that create a vague or unclear impression.

Someone called from the customer that we sent the big shipment to, saying that they were having a problem with some of our product. I know, not the first time we've had this type of complaint but you know what they say, the customer is 'always right.' Anyway, the caller thought that there was probably going to be some more information heading our way pretty soon. They indicated that they were really concerned because this is not the first time this has happened. It might be fairly costly to them if something isn't done soon to take care of this problem.

Rewrite the statement to make it clearer.

Additional Resources:

Tips for Communicating Electronically

Email

Use email to communicate information that doesn't need an immediate response.

Appropriate for email

- With established relationships
- To relay detailed information
- When needing documentation
- To give directions/instructions

Not appropriate for email

- To build new relationship
- To brainstorm
- Need explanation or clarification
- Giving negative feedback

Instant Messaging (IM)

Use IM when you need to collaborate quickly.

Know your company's policy on instant messaging. While some businesses encourage IM use, others don't. Find out what your company's policy is and follow it. If your company doesn't have an IM policy, then use common sense as your guide.

Be respectful of people's status. Look to see if the person's status is "Busy" or "Do Not Disturb."

Keep it brief. Save IM for times when you need a quick answer or a quick exchange information.

Use correct grammar. Incorrect grammar can frustrate people, and it confuses communication. Do your best to IM with correct grammar. For instance, use the proper lower and uppercase letters.

Avoid abbreviations. Unless you know the recipient understands your abbreviations, keep abbreviations to a minimum. It's a good idea to avoid abbreviations that you wouldn't use in regular emails or correspondence.

Be cognizant of the content. Sometimes we forget that instant messaging is something that's monitored by our employer and can be called up in legal proceedings. Don't share personal or confidential information via IM.

End the conversation. Don't leave the person hanging. Thank him or let him/her know you're ending the conversation.