

Perfecting Workplace Communication Skills - Verbal Communication

Communication is considered to be the backbone of today's multi-cultural business world. **Workplace communication skills** has become the most desired aspect in organizations, wherein employees are urged to improve their spoken and listening skills, along with their body language. This article is the first of a two part series that deals with **improving interpersonal communication skills** in the work environment. The effective tips mentioned here provide readers on how to make good **verbal communication** a seamless part of their work life.

The importance of **verbal communication skills** in today's business world cannot be undermined. It forms the foundation upon which all deals are based upon. Whether it is horizontal, vertical or lateral communication, evidence suggests that good disposure, listening, comprehension and body language strengthens relationships and results in a healthy working climate. There exists strong group dynamics in organizations wherein the employees have open discussions and are open to feedback.



Verbal Communication

We have seen that communication is the foundation of team work. **Verbal communication** consists of components like spoken words, language and sound. In order to work effectively, team members must be aware of many important aspects like vision, mission, goals, strategies, roles and responsibilities. Though **communication in the workplace is documented**, factors such as these are best communicated time to time through spoken words.

Important aspects of effective verbal communication:

Speaking to be understood

The most important and sole purpose of communication is to convey an idea, thought or message to the receiver in a manner that reciprocates the same effect. Hence it is important that you speak in a manner that is understood by the listener.

- ❖ Be consciously aware of the words you speak. This is a good practice since it is not always possible to spend a few moments before you convey your thoughts.
- ❖ Occasionally ask for verbal acknowledgements to ensure that the listener has understood your point of view. This helps keep check-points for both the receiver of the message and you; it helps maintain the pace and flow of the conversation and steers it along the correct lines.

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Speaking with etiquette

The importance of **business etiquette** is substantiated by the fact that there are so many improvement programs available to improve this vital aspect. Etiquette has gained a lot of precedence in the present global business village. The multitudes of diverse cultures that currently work together has made it necessary to learn about the various acceptable protocols while you speak. The groundbreaking research by Geert Hofstede on Cultural Dimensions explains the differences in cultural diversity and how it can affect the business environment.

Speaking the A-B-C

Verbal communication can be concisely summed up with the ABC - this well known abbreviation is expanded as follows:

- ❖ **A** - Accuracy
- ❖ **B** - Brevity
- ❖ **C** - Clarity



Accuracy

Accuracy in **verbal communication** essentially means that you provide complete instructions or messages while you speak. It will help the listener to fully understand and comprehend your message. This in turn helps in good communication.

Brevity

Brevity requires that you K.I.S.S. the message, i.e., Keep It Short and Simple.

Clarity

Clarity is an important element in communication. You need to consciously ensure that your thoughts are clutter-free and are directional, so as to enable proper reception of the idea that you have conveyed.

To conclude this article on verbal communication, it is appropriate to mention one more vital ingredient to make it a success. No communication can be complete without tactful honesty - pitch it in and you now have the recipe for seamless and effective verbal communication in the workplace.

For further information on how to make **effective verbal communication** a part of your daily life, visit

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They feel anxious that it would attract dislike from others

This misconception is probably what prevents most people from being assertive. We all strive to be accepted and liked by others. We look up to people who can make their presence felt. Many people have a sphere of influence, wherein their opinions are accounted and accepted.

The only way this can happen is through their assertiveness. It helps them get their ideas across, and with a little bit of convincing, everyone sees good judgement in their view. People tend to respect those who have the ability to be assertive, not aggressive.

They feel that it would be considered as selfish

Assertiveness is all about making your presence and ideas be felt and heard. This is why a lot of people feel that it would be considered if they were to do so. It is important to realise that by putting our needs on an equal level with the needs of others does not account to being selfish. Selfishness arises if we don't consider the needs of others and put our wants first. Hence it is important to let our needs be known as it is important for our well being.

They fear angering or upsetting the other party

The momentary spark that is created when you are assertive will normally be replaced with agreement from the other side. By being assertive, you help the other person see your point of view, and understand your perception of the issue.

Here are some tips on how to be assertive in the work place:

- Try to relax, rather than becoming angry
- Look at the other person, stand (or sit) upright and keep a calm tone of voice
- Keep what you want to say clear and to the point
- Avoid long explanations
- Be polite but firm

The key to effective assertiveness is using the right words, pitch of voice and body language. You may find yourself becoming nervous - remember that it is a natural bodily reaction. Take a deep breath before you start speaking. Think of what you would like to say and put it forward without aggression. We have found that Assertiveness Skills Training helps individuals to gain a better perspective on how to be assertive in the

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workplace. It helps them in their conflict resolution skills and improves workplace relationships.

"The basic difference between being assertive and being aggressive is how our words and behavior affect the rights and well being of others."

- Sharon Anthony Bower

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Vikas Vinayachandran is a certified Coach and Leadership Facilitator. His ability to establish a deep connection with the participants gives him the unique skill to leave an indelible mark in the lives of his trainees. He has over 15 years of experience conducting training programs for various levels of management in Fortune 500 companies. He has an MBA from the prestigious Lancaster University Management School, UK.

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