



Creative Business Consulting Business Tips



Clear Communication: An Essential Key to Success

Clear communication is an essential tool for success in all facets of your life...from work to friends, family, and community involvement. Your ability to share and interchange thoughts and feelings with others in order to promote mutual understanding, even in difficult situations, is a valuable skill. Most of us however are not well-educated in how to express ourselves for various reasons. **To enhance your speaking skills**, I recommend the following tips:

Tip # 1: Use “I” statements when you speak. Many of us tend to speak in the third person with such statement as “You really irritate me”. Speaking in this manner can not only be offensive to the person you are communicating with; it also holds the other person responsible for what you are feeling. Big mistake! Instead, it would be much better to say “I feel irritated right now because...”

Tip # 2: Know your audience. Whether you are giving a keynote speech at a professional meeting or when you are trying to communicate with your spouse at home, bear in mind how each of these situations will require different communication skills. Your keynote address may need to be well rehearsed and incorporate technical language common to that profession. Whereas, with your spouse, you may need to consider how to find quiet time to relate to each other without distractions.

Tip # 3: Speak for a purpose. This tip is especially important in business situations. If you’re at all timid about speaking up in front of a group or one-on-one with your boss, it is very helpful to think about what you want to say ahead of time, perhaps creating notes which you can refer to at your meeting.

Tip # 4: Always ask for feedback. To ensure that you’ve gotten your point across it is best to ask such questions as “Did I make myself clear?” or “Are there any questions that I can answer to clarify matters?”

Tip # 5: Encourage yourself to continually learn new words. The more words you have in your vocabulary increases the chances that you’ll be able to find the right words to use in communicating with a broad diversity of people.

To develop your listening skills, I suggest the following tips:

Tip # 1: Focus on the message being sent. Often times most of us try to do more than one thing at a time and when it comes to the art of listening this is not helpful. Pay attention to what the person is saying both with their words and their body. Tune out distractions and focus your attention.

Tip # 2: Listen to understand. If you’re like most people, many times you think that you know what someone is going to say even before they’ve finished their first sentence.

This is especially true in family communications. Our complex cerebral cortex provides all kinds of cunning ways in which we judge others, draw inferences and hold our own internal conversations all while trying to listen to another person. Often times this prevents you from really understanding what the other person may be trying to say. By quieting your mind and opening up to what the person is saying to you in the moment, you have a much better chance of understanding what is being communicated.

Tip # 3: Use reflective feedback to summarize the other person’s message. It is always helpful to reflect back to the speaker what you thought he/she has said to you. This is especially significant when it comes to work related responsibilities. You might say something like “If I understood you correctly, you’d like me to do the following...”, or if you haven’t understood what the person was saying you can politely ask “Would you please be so kind as to clarify what you’ve just said in regard to...”

Tip # 4: Thank others for sharing. This may sound trite, but acknowledging someone for clearly communicating with you enhances future communications and nurtures rewarding relationships with others. After all, each of us likes to be heard and understood.

If you are interested in additional information or would like to schedule a Communication Seminar, please contact:

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