

# Communication Skills and Personality Development

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A KALIBUR PRESENTATION

# Agenda

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**Effective Communication Skills**

**Writing Skills**

**Listening Skills**

**Presentation Skills**

**Negotiation Skills - Exer**

**Team building - Exer**

**Meeting Skills - Exer**

**Interpersonal/People Skills**

# What is Communication?

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*“Communication - the human connection--is the key to personal and career success.”*

- ❖ Effective Communication is fundamental to success in life.
- ❖ Our ability to communicate effectively defines how we are perceived.
- ❖ Our Persona and our communication skills are interlinked, they are the two faces of the same coin.

# What is Personality Development?

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The relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that distinguish individuals from one another.



# The 7 Cs of Communication

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## A Checklist for Clear Communication.

According to the 7 Cs, communication needs to be:

1. **Clear**
2. **Concise**
3. **Concrete**
4. **Correct**
5. **Coherent**
6. **Complete**
7. **Courteous**

# 1. Clear

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- ❖ When writing or speaking to someone, be clear about your goal or message.
- ❖ What is your purpose in communicating with this person? If you're not sure, then your audience won't BE SURE EITHER.
- ❖ To be clear, try to minimize the number of ideas in each sentence.
- ❖ Make sure that it's easy for your reader to understand your meaning.
- ❖ People shouldn't have to "read between the lines" and make assumptions on their own to understand what you're trying to say.

# 2. Concise

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- ❖ When you're concise in your communication, you stick to the point and keep it brief.
- ❖ Your audience doesn't want to read six sentences when you could communicate your message in three.
- ❖ Are there any adjectives or "filler words" that you can delete?
  - ❖ You can often eliminate words like "for instance," "you see," "definitely," "kind of," "literally," "basically," or "I mean."
  - ❖ Are there any unnecessary sentences?
  - ❖ Have you repeated the point several times, in different ways?

# 3. Concrete

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❖ TO Do



# 4. Correct

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- ❖ When your communication is correct, it fits your audience. And correct communication is also error-free communication
- ❖ Do the technical terms you use fit your audience's level of education or knowledge?
- ❖ This is more relevant in Written Communication
  - ❖ Have you checked your writing “Add to My Personal Learning Plan” for grammatical errors?
  - ❖ Remember, spell checkers won't catch everything. Are all names and titles spelled correctly?

# 5. Concrete

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- ❖ When your message is concrete, then your audience has a clear picture of what you're telling them.
- ❖ There are details (but not too many!) and vivid facts, and there's laser-like focus.
- ❖ Your message is solid.

# 6. Complete

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- ❖ In a complete message, the audience has everything they need to be informed and, if applicable, take action.
- ❖ Does your message include a "call to action," so that your audience clearly knows what you want them to do?
- ❖ Have you included all relevant information – contact names, dates, times, locations, and so on?

# 7. Coherent

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- ❖ When your communication is coherent, it's logical.
- ❖ All points are connected and relevant to the main topic, and the tone and flow of the text is consistent.

# 8. Courteous

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- ❖ Courteous communication is friendly, open, and honest.
- ❖ There are no hidden insults or passive-aggressive tones.
- ❖ You keep your reader's viewpoint in mind, and you're empathetic to their needs.

# Two more very important traits of successful communication

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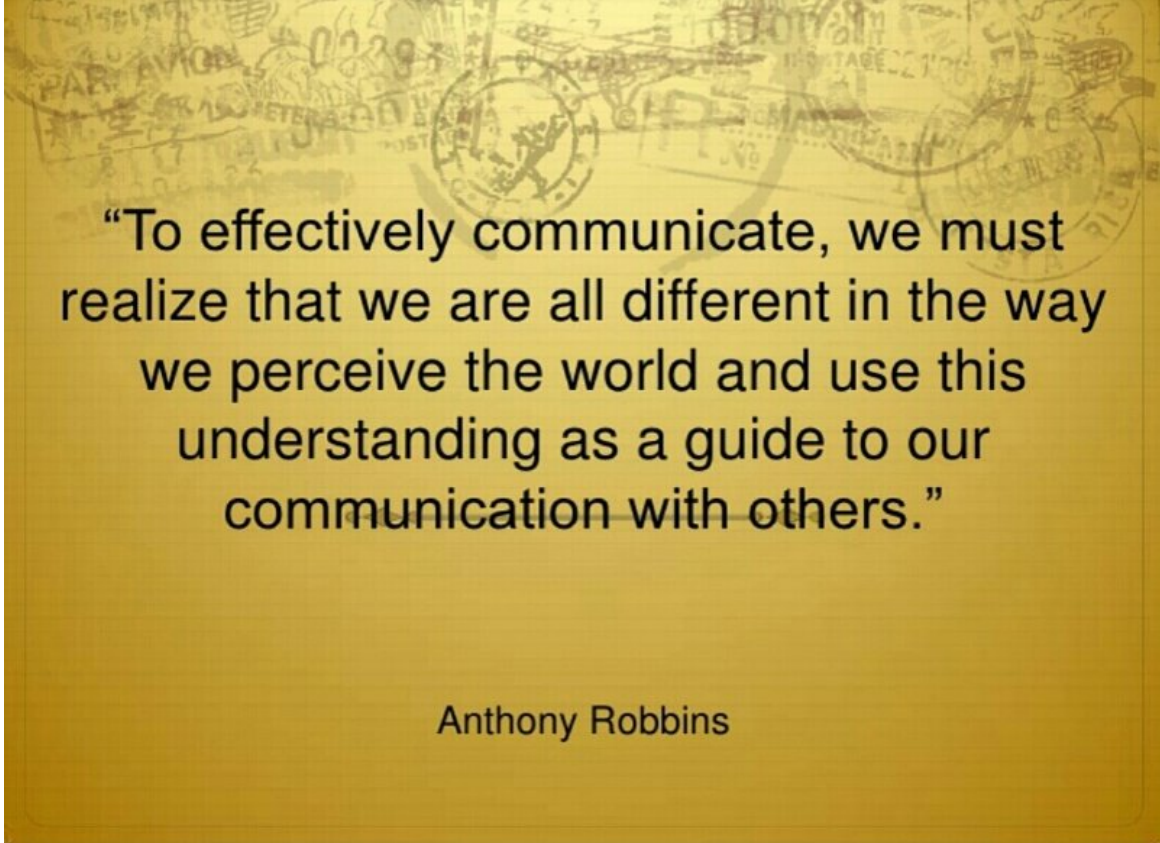
## ❖ Conviction & Confidence

❖ Your message will come across as convincing only if it carries Conviction

❖ Your message will carry conviction if it is delivered with Confidence

# Effective Communication

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“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.”

Anthony Robbins

# Effective Communication (contd ...)

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- ❖ Effective communication skill is a key to success in your personal and professional life and in relationships.
- ❖ Without effective communication, a message can turn into misunderstanding, frustration, error or even disaster by being misinterpreted or poorly delivered.
- ❖ Communication is a process where we try as clearly and accurately as we can, to convey our thoughts, intentions and objectives.
- ❖ Communication becomes successful only when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information.
- ❖ In today's highly informational and technological environment it has become interestingly important to have good communication skills.
- ❖ It is a well known fact that effective communication skill is essential among some highly successful people.
- ❖ However not all of us are expert speakers but with enough practice and determination to excel, everyone can be a good speaker.



# How to be good at Communications

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- 1. Know what you are saying and why:** Understand clearly the purpose and intent of your message. Know to whom you are communicating and why. Consider any barriers you may encounter such as cultural differences or situational circumstances (gender, age or economic biases). Ask yourself what outcome you want to achieve and the impression you want to leave.
- 2. How will you say it:** we are all aware by now, that it's not always what you say, but how you say that counts. Begin by making eye contact. You inspire trust and confidence when you look the person in the eyes when you speak. Second, be aware of your body language since it can say as much, or more, than your words. By standing with arms easily at your side you tell others that you are approachable and open to hearing what they have to say. If instead, your arms are crossed and shoulders hunched, it suggests disinterest or unwillingness to communicate. Good posture and an approachable stance help make even difficult communication flow more smoothly. Make sure you speak in a cooperative, non-adversarial tone. Be nonjudgmental.

# How to be good at Communications

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- 3. Listen.** Communication is a two way street. After you've said what you have to say, stop, listen, and look for feedback and clues of comprehension. While the person is responding avoid any impulses to cut them off or listen only for the end of the sentence so that you can blurt out more ideas or thoughts that come to your mind. Respectfully give them your full attention. When they are finished, to ensure that your message has been clearly and correctly understood, ask open questions and encourage discussion. Fine-tune your message if necessary.
- 4. Reach understanding, agreement or consensus.** Once you have had the opportunity to discuss your message and the feedback to it, re-visit the purpose of the interchange. Have you reached common ground, solved a problem, or clarified your position? If the purpose was to teach or instruct, have you accomplished your goal? To communicate well is to understand and be understood. Make sure that your message has been received as intended and that any questions or concerns have been alleviated. You can even agree to disagree. There are no guarantees that your communication efforts will be met with total compliance and agreement. As long as you understand each other, are cordial and respectful, you can still have a successful exchange.

# More Tips for Developing Good Communication Skills

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- ❖ To obtain a better command of the English language (or any other language), expand your vocabulary by reading and writing more. Look up words you're not familiar with. The better you are able to express yourself, the better your ability to communicate.
- ❖ Practice your listening skills. Be considerate of other speakers by waiting until they are done before stating your views. Process what has been said before responding.
- ❖ Learn to understand and appreciate opposing points of view by being open-minded and making an effort to see things from another's perspective. It will in turn, gain you more cooperation and understanding.
- ❖ Avoid trying to communicate when in an emotional state. You lose objectivity and may say something inappropriate or regrettable. Take time to think your position through before speaking.
- ❖ When you take the time to acquire and hone good communication skills you open yourself up to better relationships, more career opportunities, and increased self-confidence. Moreover, you reach higher levels of mutual understanding and cooperation while successfully attaining your goals.
- ❖ All new skills take time to refine, however, with effort and practice you can develop good, even exceptional, communication skills.

# Communication Quotes:

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- ❖ *Effective communications starts with listening.*
- ❖ *The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.*
- ❖ *Communication works for those who work at it.*
- ❖ *The great thing is to know when to speak and when to keep quiet.*
- ❖ *The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said.*
- ❖ *Wise men speak because they have something to say; Fools because they have to say something. (Plato)*
- ❖ *Do not say a little in many words but a great deal in a few. (Pythagoras)*
- ❖ *The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.*
- ❖ *We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak. (Epictetus)*
- ❖ *Have something to say, say it, stop talking.*
- ❖ *Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people. (Yeats)*

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- *Hey, did you hear what I just said?*
- *Nope.*



## **The 7 Keys to Magnetic Communication**

# Communication is the key!

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I'm sure you've heard this before. We cannot NOT communicate – that's the physiological, neurological and cultural fact of life.

Most people possess reasonably good communication skills and are happy with that. Many will seek to improve and refine those skills through various training courses and classes on “effective” or “powerful” communication. There are many books and articles written on this subject matter from many different angles and yet... I always felt that something was missing and decided to fill in this gap.

There is a higher, more subtle thus more powerful level of communication mastery, which I call “**Magnetic Communication**”. I propose that these simple, yet exquisitely effective 7 keys – let's call them *personal strategies* - will make you irresistible (like a magnet) in your communication with others – if you learn them well and implement continuously until they become a habit.

# The 7 Keys

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1. **Get over yourself!**
2. **Quickly establish rapport**
3. **Be the listener then the talker**
4. **Speak in the other person's preferred sensory modality**
5. **Use your voice consciously**
6. **Have an embedded sense of humour**
7. **Use your body language**

Let's discuss them one by one.

# 1. Get over yourself!

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- ❖ This is a very blunt, yet very powerful strategy with two polarities of behaviour.
- ❖ It immediately dissolves our fear of *not being good enough* which affects our interaction with people. No-one is perfect and so don't even try to be one! Did you know that diamonds with unique flaws that makes them distinguishable will attract a much higher price than the flawless ones?
- ❖ The level of your self-confidence is directly proportional to how much *you* trust and believe in yourself and has *nothing* to do with what others think of you.
- ❖ On the other side of the spectrum - when speaking with someone, don't be the centre of *your own* attention – that actually, often comes across as being rude.
- ❖ Focus on the other person, not on yourself. Open up. Allow yourself to be a little vulnerable. Be genuinely interested in what they have to say and respect their views. That's what creates magnetism.



## 2. Quickly establish rapport

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- ❖ What is rapport? It's an invisible, positive energetic connection between two people. It can be established very quickly (in about 30 seconds), or it can never happen throughout the conversation. It pays handsomely to establish rapport as quickly as you can with your new prospect or client, customer, boss, colleague or any other person that comes into your life for a few minutes, for a year or forever.
- ❖ Why? - because this invisible connection has the power to override any mistakes, shortcomings and inadequacies on your part, and fill in any gaps in your communication. It moves you from the social to personal distance (i.e. closer to the person you speak with) and serves as a safety net. It also lowers the barriers and opens up the communication channel - which is exactly what you want.
- ❖ So how do you establish rapport?
- ❖ The key is to *look*, *sound* and *feel* familiar to the other person straight away. Assume the same position (mirroring), use the same body language (with a slight delay). Find something in common and start talking about it - a hobby, sport or holiday destination. Be observant, pick up as much information as you can about this person and pretty soon you will have a new friend.

# 3. Be the listener then the talker

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- ❖ We are all humans, and humans like to talk about themselves. This means that when we *listen* to what others are saying, we are an *attractive* communication partner. Most people know that focused, attentive listening is an extremely important and effective communication skill. Few realise however, that it is also *magnetic*.
- ❖ When you listen to someone speak, don't think about what you are going to say in reply. Focus on the communication taking place, on the content, the style and the underlying emotions. If you focus on your own thoughts instead, you might miss something important.
- ❖ You may have seen a popular cartoon of a patient leaving his psychiatrist's office after one hour of continuous monologue, thanking profusely the psychiatrist while handing him a handsome cheque - who didn't say a single word in the entire session – for being such a big help.

# 4. Speak in the other person's preferred sensory modality

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- ❖ We get information about reality through our five senses (ok, there are six but that's a separate conversation). These are our mind filters.
- ❖ Every person usually has one or two preferred sensory modalities (also known as representational systems) which they use often to the exclusion of the remaining ones. You can tell someone's preferred modality by their specific language which is connected to it. There is a whole vocabulary that you can recognise (which you can easily find on the internet), with the following key predicates:
  - ❖ **Visual preference** - "it looks good" ( I see; this is crystal clear; just picture this)
  - ❖ **Auditory preference** - "it sounds good" ( I can hear you; this rings a bell )
  - ❖ **Kinaesthetic preference** - "it feels right" ( let's touch base; this resonates with me)
  - ❖ **Auditory-Digital preference** - "it makes sense" (let's map this out, it does compute)
- ❖ If, while speaking with someone you make an effort to "speak their language", i.e. use the words of their preferred modality (e.g. saying *I hear what you say* to an auditory person, rather than *I can see your point* if your preference is visual), not only will you strengthen the rapport, but you will also incredibly *magnetise* your interaction with that person, as you will look, sound or feel (whatever the case may be) very familiar to them.

# 5. Use your voice consciously

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- ❖ Very few people use their voice consciously in communication with others, unless they are actors, radio presenters or singers trained to use their vocal cords.
- ❖ And yet, it is often not *what* you say but *how* you say it that makes a difference; in fact, tonality accounts for about 38% of our communication.
- ❖ When you say a sentence with the rising inflection, it conveys a question and subservient position (not knowing, hence asking)
- ❖ When you say it flatly, it is neutral (and monotonous)
- ❖ When you say the same words with the falling inflection, it conveys a command and your authority, even if grammatically it is a question.

# 5. Use your voice consciously (contd..)

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- ❖ Could you do this for me please? (inflection up)
- ❖ Could you do this for me please..... (inflection neutral)
- ❖ Could you do this for me please. (inflection down)
- ❖ Depending on the inflection in your voice, you will get a different response. Try to change your inflection from rising to falling when speaking to a child, for example, and their level of compliance with your request will dramatically increase.
- ❖ You can also modulate the volume, tempo, resonance, rhythm, and pitch of your voice to create the desired effect on those listening to you. Experiment with different combinations and have fun with it. This will make your voice communication colourful and interesting, and will certainly make it magnetic.

# 6. Have an embedded sense of humour

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- ❖ Don't you love people with a sense of humour? I know I do. This is such a magnetic attractor. Try to embed humour in your communication (as appropriate, of course) with light jokes, dry humour and a lot of laughter! Learn to see the funny side of life. I really love people who laugh easily and make me laugh or even smile. They are relaxed, approachable, open, confident and totally *not* self-conscious. If you make a mistake or *faux-pas* – admit it with humour! Put a funny twist on it and people will laugh *with you* not *at you* – and that's a big difference to your sensitive ego.
- ❖ Use humour to diffuse tensions and awkward situations – it works like magic! When you crack a joke or say something funny in front of a group of grumpy or disgruntled people, their grumpiness and anger will disappear in an instant as their brain squirts a dose of dopamine\* and their bellies shake with laughter...It's a scientific fact that you cannot laugh and be angry at the same time (try it!).

# 7. Use your body language

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# Leadership Qualities & Development

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## ❖ Great Leadership Requires Conviction

- ❖ Leaders with conviction create an environment of certainty for everyone. When a leader is absolutely convinced that he's chosen the best course of action, everyone who follows him unconsciously absorbs this belief and the accompanying emotional state. Mirror neurons are responsible for this involuntary response. They mirror the emotional states of other people—especially those we look to for guidance. This ensures that leaders with conviction put us at ease.
- ❖ *Leaders with conviction show us that the future is certain and that we're all headed in the right direction. Their certainty is neurologically shared by everyone.*
- ❖ When leaders have conviction, people's brains can relax, so to speak, letting them concentrate on what needs to be done. When people feel more secure in the future, they're happier and produce higher quality work. A leader who can demonstrate conviction will be more successful, and so will everyone she or he works with.



# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They're strong (not harsh).** Strength is an important quality in a leader with conviction. People will wait to see if a leader is strong before they decide to follow his or her lead. People need courage in their leader. They need someone who can make difficult decisions and watch over the good of the group. They need a leader who will stay the course when things get tough. People are far more likely to show strength themselves when their leader does the same.
- ❖ A lot of leaders mistake domineering, controlling, and otherwise harsh behavior for strength. They think that taking control and pushing people around will somehow inspire a loyal following. Strength isn't something you can force on people; it's something you earn by demonstrating it time and again in the face of adversity. Only then will people trust that they should follow you.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ *They recognize their own filters.* They're able to identify when they're being overly influenced by their assumptions and emotions or by another person's opinion. Their ability to filter out the feelings that *aren't* coming from their intuition helps them focus on what is.
- ❖ *They give their intuition some space.* Gut instincts can't be forced. Our intuition works best when we're not pressuring it to come up with a solution. Albert Einstein said he had his best ideas while sailing, and when Steve Jobs was faced with a tough problem, he'd head out for a walk.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They're relentlessly positive.**
- ❖ Leaders with conviction see a brighter future with crystal clarity, and they have the energy and enthusiasm to ensure that everyone else can see it too. Their belief in the good is contagious.
- ❖ While this might look natural, leaders with conviction know how to turn on the positivity when the going gets tough.
- ❖ Positive thoughts quiet fear and irrational thinking by focusing the brain's attention on something that is completely stress free.
- ❖ When things are going well and your mood is good, this is relatively easy; when you're stressing over a tough decision and your mind is flooded with negative thoughts, this can be a challenge. Leaders with conviction hone this skill.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They're confident (not cocky).**
- ❖ We gravitate to confident leaders because confidence is contagious, and it helps us to believe that there are great things in store. The trick, as a leader, is to make certain your confidence doesn't slip into arrogance and cockiness.
- ❖ Confidence is about passion and belief in your ability to make things happen, but when your confidence loses touch with reality, you begin to think that you can do things you can't and *have done things you haven't*. Suddenly it's all about you. This arrogance makes you lose credibility.
- ❖ Confident leaders are still humble. They don't allow their accomplishments and position of authority to make them feel that they're better than anyone else. As such, they don't hesitate to jump in and do the dirty work when needed, and they don't ask their followers to do anything they aren't willing to do themselves.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They embrace that which they can't control.**
- ❖ We all like to be in control. After all, people who feel like they're at the mercy of their surroundings never get anywhere in life. But this desire for control can backfire when you see everything that you can't control or don't know as a personal failure. Leaders with conviction aren't afraid to acknowledge what's out of their control. Their conviction comes from an unwavering belief in their ability to control those things that they can. They don't paint a situation as better or worse than it actually is, and they analyze the facts for what they are. They know that the only thing they really control is the process through which they reach their decisions. That's the only rational way to handle the unknown and the best way to keep your head on level ground.
- ❖ **They're role models (not preachers).**
- ❖ Leaders with conviction inspire trust and admiration through their *actions*, not just their words. Many leaders *say* that something is important to them, but leaders with conviction walk their talk every day. Harping about the behavior you want to see in people all day long has a tiny fraction of the impact you achieve by demonstrating that behavior yourself.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They're emotionally intelligent.** The limbic system (where emotions are generated in the brain) responds to uncertainty with a knee-jerk fear reaction, and fear inhibits good decision making. Leaders with conviction are wary of this fear and spot it as soon as it begins to surface. In this way, they can contain it before it gets out of control. Once they are aware of the fear, they label all the irrational thoughts that try to intensify it as irrational fears—not reality—and the fear subsides. Then they can focus more accurately and rationally on the information they have to go on. Throughout the process, they remind themselves that a primitive part of their brain is trying to take over and that the logical part needs to be the one in charge. In other words, they tell their limbic system to settle down and be quiet until a hungry tiger shows up.
- ❖ **They don't ask, "What if?"** "What if?" questions throw fuel on the fire of stress and worry, and there's no place for them in your thinking once you have good contingency plans in place. Things can go in a million different directions, and the more time you spend worrying about the possibilities, the less time you'll spend focusing on taking action that will calm you down and keep your stress under control. Leaders with conviction know that asking "what if?" will only take them to a place they don't want, or need, to go to.

# Leadership Qualities & Development

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- ❖ **They're willing to take a bullet for their people.** Leaders with conviction will do anything for their teams, and they have their people's backs, no matter what. They don't try to shift blame, and they don't avoid shame when they fail. They're never afraid to say, "The buck stops here," and they earn people's trust by backing them up. Leaders with conviction make it clear that they welcome challenges, criticism, and viewpoints other than their own. They know that an environment where people are afraid to speak up, offer insights, and ask good questions is destined for failure.
- ❖ **Bringing It All Together**
- ❖ Conviction assures people that their work matters. They know that if they focus all their energy and attention in a determined direction, it will yield results. This belief does more than put people at ease—it creates a self-fulfilling prophecy of success.

# The Power of Non-Verbal Communication

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- ❖ Friedrich Nietzsche had it right when he said, *“All credibility, all good conscience, all evidence of truth come only from the senses.”*
- ❖ To put it in simpler terms, the way you are “sensed” by others will impact how successfully you communicate, and in turn how you perform professionally.
- ❖ Brilliant ideas, ambitious projects and everyday opinions are often misconstrued or dismissed because you are negatively perceived or misunderstood.
- ❖ It’s not what you’re saying; it’s *how* you’re saying it.
- ❖ Non-verbal communication is the process of shared cues between people, which goes hand-in-hand with public speaking. Simple things like eye contact, gestures, facial expression or stance can increase trust, clarity and add interest to your presentation – if done right.
- ❖ In fact, 85 per cent of what an audience takes away is based on body language.
- ❖ Let’s take a look at some of the most common ways we communicate without words:



# Body Movements

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- ❖ Gestures like talking with your hands and fidgeting say a lot about how you think and organize your thoughts.
- ❖ Moving your body reinforces what is being said verbally.
  - ❖ For example, nodding your head while saying “yes” not only emphasizes your agreement but also indicates you are an active participant in the conversation.
- ❖ Body movement also regulates the flow of communication and signals when others should speak.
- ❖ When you want to move, move with a purpose that is obvious to your audience.
- ❖ Be careful not to break your listener’s sense of personal space; make sure they are comfortable.

# Posture

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- ❖ How you stand or sit says a lot about your comfort and confidence.
  - ❖ For example, slouched shoulders and leaning to the side says you are either unsure of the message, nervous about the conversation or just don't care.
- ❖ Avoid standing too stiffly, this implies you are afraid.
  - ❖ Same goes with pacing during your speech; this implies that you are nervous.
- ❖ To ensure a solid, confident body position, learn to take the boxer's stance.
  - ❖ Power poses radiate confidence and leadership.
- ❖ In fact, studies show that when standing in a power pose, our bodies increase testosterone levels by 20 per cent.
- ❖ Testosterone boosts motivation and confidence.

# Eye Contact

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- ❖ This determines the level of trust between you and your audience.
- ❖ Eyes are one of the best attributes of human expression because they can show countless emotions with just one look.
- ❖ Maintaining eye contact with your audience or recipient indicates a mutual respect and a high level of interest in what is being said.
- ❖ A person can listen to a conversation, but having the appropriate eye contact shows that you are engaged.

# Facial Expressions

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- ❖ Your face registers comfort or discomfort, passion or boredom and clarity or confusion about a topic or task.
- ❖ Include smiling, frowning, eye rolling, blinking, scowling and appearing interested or disinterested.
- ❖ When your face shifts, others are interpreting how you feel about what is being said.
- ❖ Your words may seem positive, but your face could illustrate worry or anxiety.
- ❖ People are more likely to absorb your message through your face.
- ❖ But be warned when using facial expressions, everyone understands them differently; we can easily misinterpret the intent behind nonverbal cues.

# Remarks and Reactions

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Spontaneous answers to questions represent your real ability to improvise. While your script may be rehearsed, your follow-up questions and open forum are not. We face tough questions and conversations each day. How you react in high-pressure situations says more than your answer. Stammering through questions shows lack of confidence and may convey uncertainty.

Fast thinking may not be your best thinking, but if you can slow down and structure your ideas, you will appear more transparent and better informed.

Public speaking is perhaps the one method of communication that still stands above technology. PowerPoint may get more glamorous but how you present the content will stay with the audience forever.

Professionals who understand and use nonverbal cues effectively are masters of their own communication. This can provide far deeper insight into business interactions than spoken or printed words.

Funny isn't it? The most important thing in communication is arguably what *isn't* being said.

# Communication Roadblocks

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Ah yes, those pesky [roadblocks](#)! Perhaps you've heard of them, perhaps you've used them or they've been used on you. Well, let me tell ya, they don't work. Period. Let's show them first before we get into that.

There are 12 of them. Here they are, with examples:

# 1. Ordering, Directing, Commanding

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- ❖ You must do this.
- ❖ You cannot do this.
- ❖ I expect you to do this.
- ❖ Stop it.
- ❖ Go apologize to her.

# 2. Warning, Admonishing, Threatening

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- ❖ You had better do this, or else . . .
- ❖ If you don't do this, then . . .
- ❖ You better not try that.
- ❖ I warn you, if you do that . . .



# 3. Moralizing, Preaching, Imploring

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- ❖ You should do this.
- ❖ You ought to try it.
- ❖ It is your responsibility to do this.
- ❖ It is your duty to do this.
- ❖ I wish you would do this.
- ❖ I urge you to do this.

# 4. Advising, Giving Suggestions or Solutions

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- ❖ What I think you should do is . . .
- ❖ Let me suggest . . .
- ❖ It would be best for you if ...
- ❖ Why not take a different approach?
- ❖ The best solution is ...
- ❖ I will tell you one thing ...
- ❖ Why don't you do this?...

# 5. Persuading with Logic, Lecturing, Arguing

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- ❖ Do you realize that ...
- ❖ The facts are in favor of ...
- ❖ Let me give you the facts.
- ❖ Here is the right way.
- ❖ Experience tells us that ...

# 6. Judging, Criticizing, Disagreeing, Blaming

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- ❖ You are acting foolishly.
- ❖ You are not thinking straight.
- ❖ You are out of line.
- ❖ You didn't do it right.
- ❖ You are wrong.
- ❖ That is a stupid thing to say.

# 7. Praising, Agreeing, Evaluating Positively, Buttering Up

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- ❖ You usually have very good judgment.
- ❖ You are an intelligent person.
- ❖ You have so much potential.
- ❖ You've made quite a bit of progress.
- ❖ You have always made it in the past.

# 8. Name-calling, Ridiculing, Shaming

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- ❖ You are a sloppy worker.
- ❖ You are a fuzzy thinker.
- ❖ You're talking like an engineer.
- ❖ You really goofed on this one!

# 9. Interpreting, Analyzing, Diagnosing

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- ❖ You're saying this because you're angry.
- ❖ You are jealous.
- ❖ What you really need is ...
- ❖ You have problems with authority.
- ❖ You want to look good.
- ❖ You are being a bit paranoid.

# 10. Reassuring, Sympathizing, Consoling, Supporting

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- ❖ You'll feel different tomorrow.
- ❖ Things will get better.
- ❖ It is always darkest before the dawn.
- ❖ Behind every cloud there's a silver lining.
- ❖ Don't worry so much about it.
- ❖ It's not that bad.



# 11. Probing, Questioning, Interrogating

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- ❖ Why did you do that?
- ❖ How long have you felt this way?
- ❖ What have you done to try to solve it?
- ❖ Have you consulted with anyone?
- ❖ When did you become aware of this feeling?
- ❖ Who has influenced you?

# 12. Distracting, Diverting, Kidding

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- ❖ Think about the positive side.
- ❖ Try not to think about it until you're rested.
- ❖ Let's have lunch and forget about it.
- ❖ That reminds me of the time when ...
- ❖ You think *you've* got problems!

# The 12 Road Blocks

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## THE 12 ROADBLOCKS

- |               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ordering   | 7. Praising         |
| 2. Warning    | 8. Name Calling     |
| 3. Moralizing | 9. Analyzing        |
| 4. Advising   | 10. Reassuring      |
| 5. Arguing    | 11. Probing         |
| 6. Judging    | 12. Being Sarcastic |

# Summary

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- ❖ Implicit (and sometimes quite explicit) in these 12 categories of listener responses is the desire or intent to change rather than accept the sender. The Roadblocks communicate a desire for (and often pressure for) the listener to think, feel, or behave differently. These 12 types of responses, then, act as vehicles for communicating unacceptance. And we know that a climate of unacceptance is very uncondusive to personal growth, development, and psychological health.
- ❖ Why? It seems that people don't problem-solve very effectively when they fear arbitrary power to make them change, or when they feel threatened, judged, put down, or analyzed so they will change. Such a climate produces defensiveness and resistance to change (the person protects Level II safety and security needs); it also inhibits self-expression and self-exploration—both necessary for solving one's problems.
- ❖ Listening performs another very important function in helping group members solve their problems—it helps keep the responsibility for problem-solving with the member (who, of course, is the one who “owns the problem”). The 12 Roadblocks, on the other hand, in varying degrees, tend to grab that responsibility away from the owner of the problem and deposit it in the hands of the leader.

# Common Barriers to Effective Communication

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- ❖ Regardless of what we do or where we go in life, one thing remains constant--we are always communicating. Our very human nature is to desire to connect with one another. So why is effective communication important? It is important because, "effective communication helps us better understand a person or situation and enables us to resolve differences, build trust and respect, and create environments where creative ideas, problem solving, affection, and caring can flourish“.
- ❖ Communicating effectively is a very active process involving **active listening, maintaining focus, reading nonverbal cues, understanding your internal feelings, as well as, the feelings of the other party, and managing stress or conflict that may arise during the process.** Effective communication is hard work--which is why it is so easy to fail at it. It takes work and practice to improve. To improve, one must become familiar with some of the common barriers to effective communication.

# Eight Common Barriers

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1. Filtering
2. Selective perception
3. Information overload
4. Emotions
5. Language
6. Silence
7. Communication apprehension
8. Lying

# Presentation & Public Speaking

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## ❖ **Becoming a Confident, Compelling Speaker**

- ❖ Whether we're talking in a team meeting or presenting in front of an audience, we all have to speak in public from time to time.
- ❖ We can do this well or we can do this badly, and the outcome strongly affects the way that people think about us. This is why public speaking causes so much anxiety and concern.
- ❖ The good news is that, with thorough preparation and practice, you can overcome your nervousness and perform exceptionally well.

# The Importance of Public Speaking

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- ❖ Good public speaking skills are important in many areas of your life. You might be asked to make a speech at a friend's wedding, give a eulogy for a loved one, or inspire a group of volunteers at a charity event. You might have to talk about your organization at a conference, make a speech after accepting an award, or teach a class to new recruits. Speaking to an audience also includes presentations or talks; for instance, when training a virtual team, or when speaking to a group of customers in a meeting.
- ❖ In short, being a good public speaker can enhance your reputation, boost your Self-Confidence and open up countless opportunities.
- ❖ However, while good skills can open doors, poor ones can close them. For example, your boss might decide against promoting you after sitting through a badly-delivered presentation. You might lose a valuable new contract by failing to connect with a prospect during a sales pitch. Or you could make a poor impression with your new team, because you trip over your words and don't look people in the eye.



# Strategies for Becoming a Better Speaker

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## Plan Appropriately

- ❖ First, make sure that you think about how you'll structure what you're going to say.
- ❖ When you do this, think about how important a book's first paragraph is; if it doesn't grab you, you're likely going to put it down. The same principle goes for your speech: from the beginning, you need to intrigue your audience.
- ❖ For example, you could start with an interesting statistic, headline, or fact that pertains to what you're talking about and resonates with your audience. You can also use story telling as a powerful opener.
- ❖ Planning also helps you to **think on your feet**. This is especially important for unpredictable question and answer sessions or last-minute communications.

# Practice

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- ❖ There's a good reason that we say, "Practice makes perfect!" You simply cannot be a confident, compelling speaker without practice.
- ❖ To get practice, seek opportunities to speak in front of others. You could also put yourself in situations that require public speaking, such as by cross-training a group from another department, or by volunteering to speak at team meetings.

# Engage With Your Audience

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- ❖ When you speak, try to engage with your audience. This makes you feel less isolated as a speaker and keeps everyone involved with your message. If appropriate, ask [leading questions](#) targeted to individuals or groups, and encourage people to participate and ask questions.
- ❖ Keep in mind that some words reduce your power as a speaker. For instance, think about how these sentences sound: "I just want to add that I think we can meet these goals" or "I just think this plan is a good one." The words "just" and "I think" limit your authority and conviction. Don't use them.
- ❖ A similar word is "actually," as in, "Actually, I'd like to add that we were under budget last quarter." When you use "actually," it conveys a sense of submissiveness or even surprise. Instead, say what things are. "We were under budget last quarter" is clear and direct.
- ❖ Also, pay attention to how you're speaking. If you're nervous, you might talk quickly. This increases the chances that you'll trip over your words, or say something you don't mean. Force yourself to slow down by breathing deeply. Don't be afraid to gather your thoughts; pauses are an important part of conversation, and they make you sound confident, natural, and authentic.
- ❖ Finally, avoid reading word-for-word from your notes. Instead, make a list of important points on cue cards, or, as you get better at public speaking, try to memorize what you're going to say – you can still refer back to your cue cards when you need them.

# Pay Attention to Body Language

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- ❖ If you're unaware of it, your [body language](#) will give your audience constant, subtle clues about your inner state. If you're nervous, or if you don't believe in what you're saying, the audience can soon know.
- ❖ Pay attention to your body language: stand up straight, take deep breaths, look people in the eye, and smile. Don't lean on one leg or use gestures that feel unnatural.
- ❖ Many people prefer to speak behind a podium when giving presentations. While podiums can be useful for holding notes, they put a barrier between you and the audience. They can also become a "crutch," giving you a hiding place from the dozens or hundreds of eyes that are on you.
- ❖ Instead of standing behind a podium, walk around and use gestures to engage the audience. This movement and energy will also come through in your voice, making it more active and passionate.

# Think Positively

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- ❖ Positive Thinking can make a huge difference to the success of your communication, because it helps you feel more confident.
- ❖ Fear makes it all too easy to slip into a cycle of negative self-talk, especially right before you speak, while self-sabotaging thoughts such as "I'll never be good at this!" or "I'm going to fall flat on my face!" lower your confidence and increase the chances that you won't achieve what you're truly capable of.
- ❖ Use affirmations and visualization to raise your confidence. This is especially important right before your speech or presentation. Visualize giving a successful presentation, and imagine how you'll feel once it's over and when you've made a positive difference for others. Use positive affirmations such as "I'm grateful I have the opportunity to help my audience" or "I'm going to do well!"

# Cope With Nerves

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- ❖ When we have to speak in front of others, we can envision terrible things happening. We imagine forgetting every point we want to make, passing out from our nervousness, or doing so horribly that we'll lose our job. But those things almost never come to pass! We build them up in our minds and end up more nervous than we need to be.
- ❖ Many people cite speaking to an audience as their biggest fear, and a [fear of failure](#) is often at the root of this. Public speaking can lead your "fight or flight" response to kick in: adrenaline courses through your bloodstream, your heart rate increases, you sweat, and your breath becomes fast and shallow.
- ❖ Although these symptoms can be annoying, a certain amount of pressure can actually be used to enhance our performance. By changing your mindset, you can use nervous energy to your advantage.
- ❖ First, make an effort to stop thinking about yourself, your nervousness, and your fear. Instead, focus on your audience: what you're saying is "about them." Remember that you're trying to help or educate them in some way, and your message is more important than your fear. Concentrate on the audience's wants and needs, instead of your own.

# Watch Recordings of Your Speeches

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- ❖ Whenever possible, record your presentations and speeches. You can improve your speaking skills dramatically by watching yourself later, and then working on improving in areas that didn't go well.
- ❖ As you watch, notice any verbal stalls, such as "um" or "like." Look at your body language: are you swaying, leaning on the podium, or leaning heavily on one leg? Are you looking at the audience? Did you smile? Did you speak clearly at all times?
- ❖ Pay attention to your gestures. Do they appear natural or forced? Make sure that people can see them, especially if you're standing behind a podium.
- ❖ Last, look at how you handled interruptions, such as a sneeze or a question that you weren't prepared for. Does your face show surprise, hesitation, or annoyance? If so, practice managing interruptions like these smoothly, so that you're even better next time.

# Key Points: Summary

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- ❖ Plan appropriately.
- ❖ Practice.
- ❖ Engage with your audience.
- ❖ Pay attention to body language.
- ❖ Think positively.
- ❖ Cope with your nerves.
- ❖ Watch recordings of your speeches.
- ❖ If you speak well in public, it can help you get a job or promotion, raise awareness for your team or organization, and educate others. The more you push yourself to speak in front of others, the better you'll become, and the more confidence you'll have.



# The Role & Importance of Language

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- ❖ It is important not only to think about *what* you say, but *how* you say it.
- ❖ To communicate effectively, it is not enough to have well organized ideas expressed completely and coherently.
- ❖ One must also think about the style, tone and clarity of his/her speaking or writing, and adapt these elements to the audience.
- ❖ Again, analyzing one's audience and purpose is the key to speaking or writing effectiveness.
- ❖ In order to choose the most effective language, the author must consider the objective and the context in which it is being spoken or written, and who the audience is.

# Characteristics of Effective Language

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There are six main characteristics of effective language.

Effective language is:

1. concrete and specific, not vague and abstract
2. concise, not verbose
3. familiar, not obscure
4. precise and clear, not inaccurate or ambiguous
5. constructive, not destructive
6. appropriately formal.

# Concrete and Specific Language

- ❖ Concrete language includes descriptions which create tangible images with details the reader can visualize.
- ❖ Abstract language is vague and obscure, and does not bring to mind specific visual images.
- ❖ Consider the two sets of statements below. The statement at the top is abstract, but the statements become increasingly concrete and specific toward the bottom.

Abstract statements	Concrete and Specific
He is a bad roommate	Your relationship with John is unacceptable
He is lazy and discourteous	You do not get along well with John
He is untidy and unclean	You and John have a lot of arguments
He doesn't clean up his own messes	You and John insult each other too much
He leaves his dirty dishes on the kitchen counter	You and John call each other derogatory names

- ❖ The abstract statements can be interpreted in many possible ways, and leave many questions answered.
- ❖ The concrete and specific statements are less open to multiple interpretations.

# Concise Language

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- ❖ A hallmark of effective writers is the ability to express the desired message in as few words as possible. Good writers, in other words, use language which is straightforward and to-the-point. Consider the following examples.
  - ❖ It is widely discussed by employees that many of them will be forced to change jobs and take on new responsibilities when the merger takes place between the two companies.
  - ❖ Before making a decision about whether the person on trial is guilty or innocent in this case, the members of the jury should be sure to carefully think about, ponder and reflect on all of the important and relevant testimony in the case.
- ❖ Notice how long-winded these sentences are, and how easily they could be shortened and simplified. An important part of revising and editing involves re-phrasing sentences to eliminate excessive wordiness. One way to reduce wordiness is to eliminate redundant words or phrases. Consider example one above. The phrases "to change jobs" and "take on new responsibilities" are redundant, and could be combined into one short phrase to be expressed more concisely.
- ❖ Consider example two above. The phrase "...should be sure to carefully think about, ponder and reflect on..." contains three ways of saying the same thing. This sentence could be improved by using only one of the key phrases: "...to reflect on..."
- ❖ A second way to reduce wordiness is to eliminate "filler" words which serve no purpose in the sentence. Consider example one above. Replace the phrase "...when the merger takes place between the two companies" with "...when the two companies merge." Consider example two above. Notice the excessive wordiness in the following phrase: "Before making a decision about whether the person on trial is guilty or innocent in this case ..." This sentence could simply read: "Before determining the defendant's guilt or innocence..."

# Familiar Language

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- ❖ Familiar language is that which the readers easily recognize and understand because they use it on a regular basis. One of the most important functions of language is to build "homophily" or a sense of commonality with one's readers. Language which is foreign and unfamiliar to the reader tends to emphasize the differences between writer and reader, and makes the message difficult to understand. By using language that is familiar to the reader, the message is likely to have more impact.
- ❖ Consider the following examples.
- ❖ An assignment given to a class of business students by their philosophy professor:  
"The presently assigned paper necessitates an eloquently articulated analysis of the Existentialist perspective as it pertains to contemporary living. You should adumbrate the points which represent the sine qua non of your analysis."
- ❖ A letter sent to high school students warning them of the risks of an unhealthy diet:  
"Individuals who maintain a diet of high fat content are exposed to an increased risk of developing atherosclerosis, which is a buildup of fat deposits on the inner walls of the arteries. This condition can reduce or cut off the flow of blood in the arteries serving the major organs of the body. This can lead to poor health."
- ❖ In both examples above, the language that is used is unfamiliar to the readers. As a result, the message loses its impact.

# Precise and Clear Language

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The use of appropriate language is a tricky matter because the meaning of words is relative and situational. In other words, words can be interpreted in different ways by different people in different situations. For this reason, it is important to choose language which is as precise and clear as possible. The more precise and clear one's use of language becomes, the fewer the number of possible interpretations for a message. Consider the following words. What numerical value would you assign to each of them? If something is "probable what percentage of the time does it occur?"

- (1) probable
- (2) doubtful
- (3) certainly
- (4) unlikely
- (5) perhaps

Would other people assign the same value to these words as you did? In actuality, the range of values varies greatly because these terms are relative: they can mean different things to different people in different situations. How could one be more precise in his/her use of these terms?

# Precise and Clear Language

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❖ Consider the examples below. Notice that these terms can vary widely in the meaning to different people. The best way to use such relative terms, then, is to compare them to something concrete and "known" to the reader. For example: "Is that Audi an expensive car?" is best answered with a comparison: "Compared to that Honda, the Audi is expensive. Compared to that Lexus, it is inexpensive."

❖ expensive  
intelligent  
good  
spicy

Consider the following examples. Note the potential confusion or ambiguity in these phrases.

- ❖ (1) Why the student body should continue in this state of apathy is not really understandable.
  - (2) Our student body is dull and slack-minded.
  - (3) The practice and theory of politics are studied in the classroom but political habits on campus do not seem to benefit from such labor.
  - (4) He's an *interesting* individual.
  - (5) It is difficult to estimate the number of people affected by AIDS.
- ❖ In short, it is wise to think carefully about your choice of words and their potential interpretations. To communicate effectively, precise and clear language is essential.

# Constructive Language

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❖ Constructive language phrases a potentially negative message in a positive way, whereas destructive language directs blame and criticism toward the reader, creating defensiveness. Readers are likely to become defensive when the writer's language expresses any or all of the following:

❖ Superiority over the reader

❖ Indifference or apathy about an issue of importance to the reader

❖ Negative evaluation or judgment of the reader (as opposed to neutral descriptions or observations)

❖ Command or control over the reader

❖ Skepticism or doubt about the reader's credibility or the legitimacy of their claims

❖ Consider the following examples.

- ❖ (1) Boss to employee: "Your job performance recently has been unacceptable and there are no excuses for it. You have claimed that you are having some serious personal problems, but even if this is true, you cannot allow it to affect the quality of your work. If your work doesn't improve, I'll have to replace you with someone else."
- ❖ (2) Student to instructor: "You have confused me so badly with your lectures that I don't know what to do. I am considering dropping out and taking the class next quarter from Dr. Johnstone, who can explain the information much more clearly. I don't want to drop out, but I have never been so frustrated with an instructor in my whole life."
- ❖ (3) Instructor to student: "I have never had a student who was so confused with this material. Perhaps you should take an easier course from an easier professor. It makes no difference to me."

❖ Why would these examples create defensiveness in the reader? How could you change the use of language to make these examples more constructive?



# Formality of Language

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- ❖ The formality of the language one uses should match the formality of the situation and the relationship between the writer and reader. Consider the following examples.
- ❖ *Very Formal*: Exceedingly large segments of the population are expressing their discontent with medical practitioners who appear to more engrossed in amassing financial assets than in providing efficacious care to people with health disorders.
- ❖ *Formal*: A large number of consumers are complaining about medical doctors who are apparently more interested in making money than in provide effective health care.
- ❖ *Informal*: A lot of people are unhappy with their doctors who only seem to care about how much money they make, and not about giving their patients good care.
- ❖ Notice that any of the three examples could be effective, depending upon the reader, the writer's relationship with the reader, and the situation. Under what conditions might you want to use these different levels of formality?
- ❖ Notice the difference in formality between the two words shown in pairs below. Either word might be equally appropriate, depending upon the reader and situation.
  - ❖ Utilize vs use
  - ❖ Transpire vs happen
  - ❖ Facilitate vs help

# Acknowledgements

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1. <http://www.mindtools.com>
2. <http://linkedin.com>

# Q & A

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