

Basic Business Communication: 7 Self-Test Questions to Freshen Your Communication Skills

By Lyndsay Swinton

Effective managers understand basic business communication. It's not about whizzy powerpoint slides or wordy reports. Effective business communication is about being understood. Ask yourself these 7 Basic Business communication questions to freshen up your communication skills.

1. Who's My Audience?

Are they young, old, many or few? What's their background? Their education level? Their interest in the subject? Knowing your audience will answer many questions about the best method for communicating with them.

2. What Relationship Do I Have With Them?

Have you communicated before or is this a first time? Is there any "baggage" that may complicate your message? What can you do to build, then maintain the relationship?

3. What's My Intention?

People are more likely to respond to your communication if they have a clear understanding of what you want from them. Know what you want from the communication before you begin and you'll be more successful.

4. How Should I Communicate with them?

Email, in person, by phone, voice-mail, text, fax, mail, cards, online chat, forums, flip-charts, leaflets, town hall meetings, skip level meetings - the list is endless. You need to choose the right medium for communication, and maybe even use a combination, to get your message across clearly.

5. What Barriers To Understanding Exist?

Are there any physical or mental barriers to understanding, such as deafness, poor

sight or ability? Are there language or cultural differences? Do all involved have the same technical hardware, software and ability? How senior or junior are the people within the organisation? Everything is gibberish unless you speak gibberish too.

6. Have You Used Plain English?

Why use 100 words when 10 or even one would do. Here's a great resource to keep you right - the campaign for [Plain English](#). Indeed, do you need language at all - would a picture or diagram be more effective?

7. How Can I Check Understanding?

Clear communication results in action. Providing additional back-up communication can help - frequently asked questions, telephone help-lines, on-line, open door policy etc. And prepare to do it all again. Communication is rarely one-off, so your message may need to be repeated to be received and understood.

These 7 basic communication skill questions provide a quick check-list which can improve your communication. [Click here for further communication skill articles](#)

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