

CHAPTER 1 - COMMUNICATION FOUNDATIONS

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1:

Explain how communication skills fuel career success and why writing is vital in a digital workplace.

COMMUNICATING IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

Individuals can expect a fast-paced, competitive, and highly connected digital environment

Technology connects individuals anywhere and anytime.

Businesses recognize the power of digital media networks.

Electronic media have empowered the public to participate and be heard.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Include reading, listening, nonverbal, speaking, and writing skills

Require individuals to be media savvy and exercise good judgment when posting Internet messages and writing e-mails

Necessitate that individuals guard their online image and protect the reputation of their employers

STRONG COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Are critical to effective job placement, advancement, and organizational success;
- Are specifically asked for in job advertisements;
- Include general communication, interpersonal skills, and teamwork skills; and
- Are at least as important as technical skills for entry-level and management positions.

WRITING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Employers expect more formal, thoughtful, informative, and error-free messages.

Solid writing skills are necessary in networked digital world.

Employees must be familiar with new communication channels, including the Web and e-mail, instant messages, blogs, and social media networks.

"Writing matters more than ever because the online media require more of it, not less."

HR professionals identified problem solving and critical thinking as top workplace skills today. Given the avalanche of information available, individuals must be able to evaluate all sources critically because information flows at a great speed, across a variety of media, and in many directions. It is important for students to be proactive and control their careers more than ever.

Discuss career aspirations and how students are preparing for their futures. Also include a focus on their job expectations (salary, security, workplace venue, and working hours) after graduation. Students must understand that prospective employees must have the required skills, course work, and GPA expected. Employers want strong communication skills, work ethic, the ability to work in teams, and initiative.

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND YOU

Use e-mail, electronic slide presentations, wikis, podcasts, or Facebook and other social media in a professional setting.

- 1 Think critically in the digital age
- 2 Manage your career well
- 3 Succeed in competitive job market.

INFORMATION WORKER DESCRIBES SOMEONE WHO:

- (a) Provide and consume information in the workplace;
- (b) Engage in mind work;
- (c) Make sense of words, figures, and data; and
- (d) Demand continuous, lifelong learning.

Whether you work in m-commerce (mobile technology businesses), e-commerce (Internet-based businesses), or brick-and-mortar commerce, three out of four jobs will involve mind work. This problem solving requires that individuals understand the problem, generate and select the most feasible ideas, and refine, justify, and implement the solution. Individuals need to be proactive and exercise greater control over careers. Jobs are no longer nine to five with predictable pay increases, lifetime security, and conventional workplaces. Constant training and lifelong learning are necessary. In addition, individuals must manage their reputation and protect their "brand."

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HAS:

- (a) Changed how we work, play, and communicate;
- (b) Made it easier to access and share information via various digital media from a vast network of sources;
- (c) Made it easier to distribute information instantly and to widespread audiences; and
- (d) Necessitated thinking critically about new media.

Knowledge or information workers in this age can expect to generate, process, and exchange information. They can also be expected to use e-mail, electronic slide presentations, wikis, podcasts, or Facebook and other social media in a professional setting. Additionally, the avalanche of information available requires individuals to evaluate all sources because information flows at a great speed across various media and in many directions.

KNOWLEDGE WORKERS IN THE INFORMATION AGE:

- (a) Changed how we work, play, and communicate;
- (b) Expect to be generating, processing, and exchanging information.
- (c) Think creatively and critically (backed by reason and evidence).
- (d) Test plans and get feedback from colleagues and bosses.
- (e) Require continual training to meet changing technologies and work procedures.

Knowledge or information workers in this age can expect to generate, process, and exchange information. They can also be expected to use e-mail, electronic slide presentations, wikis, podcasts, or Facebook and other social media in a professional setting. Additionally, the avalanche of information available requires individuals to evaluate all sources because information flows at a great speed across various media and in many directions.

Management and employees work together in such areas as product development, quality control, and customer satisfaction, which means workers must think creatively and critically. Thinking creatively and critically means having opinions that are backed by reasons and evidence. Constantly changing technologies and work procedures mean continual training for employees.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Technology enables rapid, frequent transmission of messages.

People stay connected through spoken and written messages.

People with good communication skills are seen as intelligent, educated, and capable.

The ability to write opens doors to professional employment.

PROBLEM

Identify and clarify

Gather information

Evaluate evidence

Consider options

Test the best option

The first step in reaching a solution is pinpointing the problem. The second step looks at possible causes and solutions, which may mean checking files, calling suppliers, or brainstorming with fellow workers. Once the information has been researched, it is important to evaluate it to identify any potential biases or inaccuracies. This is followed by weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives being considered. This step requires creativity. Lastly, the best alternative is selected and tested to ensure effectiveness over time.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2:

Examine critically the internal and external flow of communication in organizations through formal and informal channels, explain the importance of effective media choices, and understand how to overcome barriers to organizational communication

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES AFFECTING YOU IN THE INFORMATION AGE WORKPLACE

- | | |
|--|--|
| (e) Collaborative environments and teaming | (a) Social media and changing communication technologies |
| (f) Growing workforce diversity | (b) Anytime, anywhere: 24/7/365 availability |
| (g) Virtual and non-territorial offices | (c) Global marketplace and competition |
| (h) Technology enables rapid, frequent transmission of messages. | (d) Shrinking management layers |

Statistics:

- Since its inception in 2004, Facebook has ballooned into a massive global force of more than 1 billion users.
- North Americans put in the longest hours (about 50 percent more) than most European countries and Japan.
- Canada ranks as the third worst in the world for legally mandated time off work.
- By 2031, Statistics Canada predicts that approximately one third of the people in the Canadian labour force could be foreign born. Women account for 47 percent of the workforce.

Doing business in faraway countries means dealing with people who may practise different religions, follow different customs, live different lifestyles, and rely on different approaches to business.

Added problems include multiple time zones, vast distances between offices, and different languages. New skills required include cultural awareness, flexibility, and patience.

Frontline employees as well as managers participate in critical thinking and decision making. Nearly everyone is a writer and a communicator.

Ask students if they can think of any jobs where they will NOT have to write to or communicate with others.

It is important to discuss social media with students here. Ask students how many have Facebook, LinkedIn, or other social networking accounts. Have they ever posted anything on YouTube? Do they Skype, Tweet, or use Instagram? How would they feel if their potential employers saw their posts? Is there anything embarrassing on their accounts?

INFORMATION FLOW AND MEDIA CHOICES IN TODAY'S BUSINESS WORLD

Functions of business communication:

- ✓ TO INFORM
- ✓ TO PERSUADE
- ✓ TO PROMOTE GOODWILL

Mobility and interactivity: instant, less paper-based communication; wireless access is widespread; Internet access ever-present (*Internet and intranet, corporate websites, audio and video podcasting, videoconferencing, and Web chats keep individuals informed anytime and anywhere*)

Smart devices: used to inform, communicate, and entertain (*these allow users to bypass desktop computers and notebooks entirely*).

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Two basic forms of communication: (1) oral, (2) written

Internal communication includes exchanging ideas and messages with superiors, co-workers, and subordinates.

External communication includes communicating with customers, suppliers, the government, and the public.

COMMUNICATION ADVANTAGES

ORAL
1. Opportunity to ask questions immediately for clarification
2. Enables communicators to see facial expressions and hear voice inflections
3. Efficient method to develop consensus when many people involved
4. Promotes friendships

WRITTEN
1. Provides a permanent record
2. Enables communicators to develop an organized, well-considered message
3. Is convenient
4. Can be composed and read when the schedules of both communicators permit
5. Can be reviewed

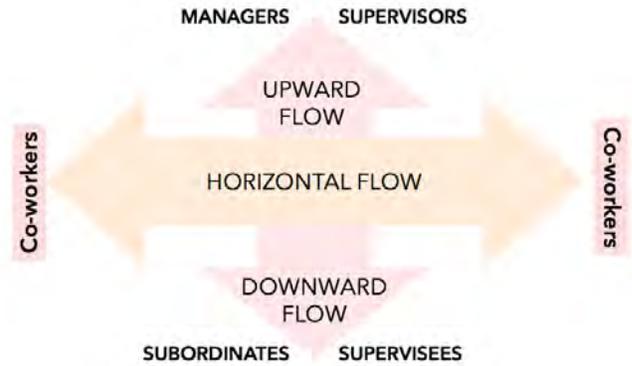
COMMUNICATION DISADVANTAGES

ORAL
1. Produces no written record
2. Sometimes wastes time
3. May be inconvenient
4. Requires work interpretation

WRITTEN
1. Requires careful preparation
2. Can become dangerous if public "smoking guns" in court cases
3. Is more difficult to prepare

INFORMATION FLOW IN ORGANIZATIONS: FORMAL CHANNELS

A free exchange of information helps organizations respond rapidly to changing markets, boost efficiency and productivity, build employee morale, serve the public, and take full advantage of the ideas of today's knowledge workers. Formal channels of communication generally follow an organization's hierarchy of command.



DOWNWARD INFORMATION FLOW



Information flowing downward generally moves from decision makers, including CEOs and top managers, through the chain of command to workers.

Longer lines of communication can distort the message. To improve communication, management speaks directly to team leaders, thus speeding up the process. Management also uses newsletters, announcements, meetings, videos, blogs, podcasts, and company intranets. It is important to let workers know how well the company is doing and what new projects are planned.

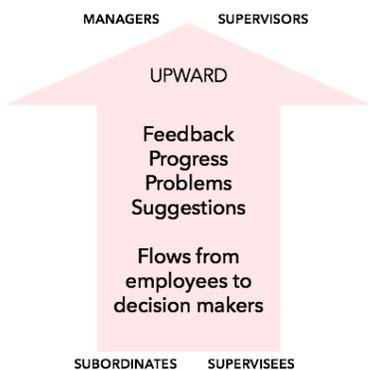
IMPROVING DOWNWARD INFORMATION

Companies create smaller operating units and work teams.

Management speaks directly to employees.

Companies use company publications, announcements, meetings, videos, podcasts, and other channels to let workers know how well the company is doing and what new projects are planned.

UPWARD INFORMATION FLOW



Information flowing downward generally moves from decision makers, including CEOs and top managers, through the chain of command to workers.

Longer lines of communication can distort the message. To improve communication, management speaks directly to team leaders, thus speeding up the process. Management also uses newsletters, announcements, meetings, videos, blogs, podcasts, and company intranets. It is important to let workers know how well the company is doing and what new projects are planned.

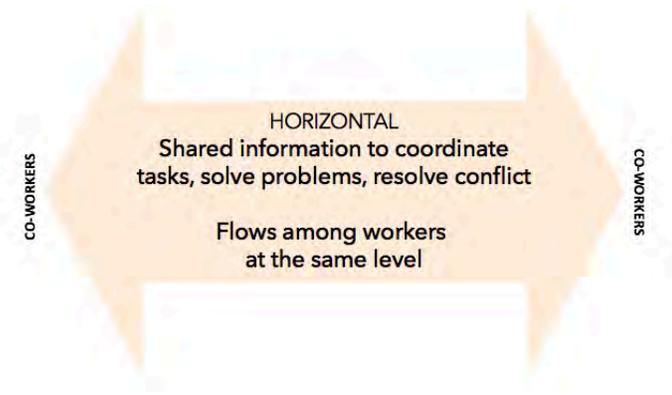
IMPROVING UPWARD INFORMATION

Companies create smaller operating units and work teams.

Management speaks directly to employees.

Companies use company publications, announcements, meetings, videos, podcasts, and other channels to let workers know how well the company is doing and what new projects are planned.

HORIZONTAL INFORMATION FLOW



Lateral channels transmit information among workers at the same level. They enable individuals to coordinate tasks, share information, solve problems, and resolve conflicts. Horizontal flow takes place through personal contact, telephone, e-mail, memos, voice mail, and meetings.

Obstacles include poor communication skills, prejudice, ego involvement, turf wars, competition within units, and uneven reward systems.

IMPROVING HORIZONTAL INFORMATION

Train employees in teamwork and communication techniques.

Establish a reward system based on team achievement rather than on individual achievement.

Encourage full participation in team functions.

(Ensure that employees realize that they are personally responsible for making themselves heard, for really understanding what other people say, and for getting the information they need)

THE GRAPEVINE

The grapevine is an informal channel of communication that carries organizationally relevant gossip. It is powerful, functioning through social relationships, and it takes place in the office break room, at a co-worker's desk, as well as in e-mails, texts, and blogs.

As much as two thirds of an employee's information comes from the grapevine, which has demonstrated accuracy ratings of 80 percent or more for many grapevine transmissions.

THE GRAPEVINE CARRIES ORGANIZATIONALLY RELEVANT GOSSIP

⇒ Functions through gossip, carries unofficial messages, flows haphazardly, can be remarkably accurate, is mostly disliked by management, thrives where official information is limited, travels much more rapidly online

USING THE GRAPEVINE PRODUCTIVELY

Respect your employees' desire to know.

Increase the amount of information delivered through formal channels.

Share bad news as well as good news.

Monitor the grapevine using social and other digital media.

Act promptly to correct misinformation.

RESPONDING ETHICALLY TO GOSSIP

Run - don't walk - away from anyone who gossips

End rumors about others (keep confidences)

Attack rumors about yourself

Limit the amount of personal information you share

Avoid any form of co-worker belittlement

Build co-workers up, don't tear them down

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3:

Analyze ethics in the workplace, understand the goals of ethical communication, and choose tools for doing the right thing

ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE NEEDED MORE THAN EVER

ETHICS - CONVENTIONAL STANDARDS OF RIGHT AND WRONG THAT PRESCRIBE WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD DO

These standards usually consist of rights, obligations, and benefits to society. They include virtues such as fairness, honesty, loyalty, and concern for others. Ethics is about having values, taking responsibility, and following the law.

DOING WHAT ETHICAL COMMUNICATORS DO

Abide by the law	Communicate clearly
Tell the truth	Use inclusive language
Label opinions	Give credit
Be objective	Follow code of ethics

CHOOSING TOOLS FOR DOING THE RIGHT THING

- Is the action you are considering legal?
- How would you see the problem on opposite side?
- What are alternative solutions?
- Can you discuss the problem with someone you trust?
- What if people learned from you action?

Have students research *IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators*. Have them come up with unethical situations they may encounter in their future jobs/careers, and have them identify solutions for doing the right thing.

Resolving ethical questions is never easy. It can be made less difficult if key issues are identified. Asking these questions may be helpful.

CHAPTER 2 – PROFESSIONALISM

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1:

Discuss effective practices and technologies for planning and participating in face-to-face and virtual meetings

ADDING VALUE TO PROFESSIONAL TEAMS

What do digital-age employers want?

Education and experience

Hard skills (i.e., technical skills in your field)

Soft skills

- ⇒ Strong oral and written skills
- ⇒ Active listening skills
- ⇒ Appropriate nonverbal behavior
- ⇒ Proper business etiquette
- ⇒ Efficient and productive teamwork skills

Soft skills include listening proficiency, nonverbal behaviour, and proper business etiquette. Employers also want team players who can work together efficiently and productively. They want managers who are comfortable with diverse co-workers, who can listen actively to customers and colleagues, who can make eye contact, who can display good workplace manners, and who are able to work in teams. These are key in the hiring and promotion process

WHY FORM TEAMS?

BETTER DECISIONS | decisions are generally more accurate and effective because group and team members contribute different expertise and perspectives.

FASTER RESPONSE | Small groups can act rapidly to respond to competition or to solve problems.

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY | Team members can see opportunities for improving efficiency because they are often closer to the action and customer.

GREATER BUY IN | Members are committed to solutions and more willing to support them if they helped to develop them.

LESS RESISTANCE TO CHANGE | People who have input into decisions are less hostile, aggressive, and resistant to change.

IMPROVED EMPLOYEE MORALE | Personal satisfaction and job morale increase when teams are successful.

REDUCED RISK | Responsibility for a decision is diffused, thus carrying less risk for any individual.

COLLABORATING IN VIRTUAL TEAMS

Work interdependently with shared purpose across space, time, and organization boundaries by using information technology.

May be local or global

View work as what you do rather than a place you go.

Benefit from shared views and skills

Must accomplish shared tasks without face-to-face contact.

Today, individuals can expect to collaborate with co-workers in other cities and even in other countries. Virtual teams are groups of people who work interdependently with a shared purpose, across space, time, and organization boundaries, by using technology.

FOUR PHASES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Forming is the first phase where individuals get to know each other. They begin to develop trust in each other. Here, they discuss why the team is necessary, who "owns" the team, whether membership is mandatory, how large it should be, and what talents members can contribute.
2. Storming is when members define their roles and responsibilities, decide how to reach their goals, and iron out the rules governing how they interact. This stage often produces conflict.
3. In the norming stage, tensions subside, roles are clarified, and information flows among team members.
4. In the final phase, performing, members have established routines and a shared language. They have developed loyalty and a willingness to resolve all problems. Fights are clean and members continue working together without grudges. Information flows freely, deadlines are met, and production exceeds expectations.



POSITIVE TEAM BEHAVIOUR
<u>TEAM PLAYERS</u>
Set rules, abide by them
Analyze tasks, define problems
Contribute information and ideas
Show interest, listen actively
Encourage members to participate
Synthesize points of agreement

NEGATIVE TEAM BEHAVIOUR
<u>TEAM HATERS</u>
Block ideas of others
Insult, criticize and aggress against others
Waste the group's time
Make inappropriate comments
Fail to stay on task

TEAM PLAYERS: Members are willing to establish rules and abide by those rules. They analyze tasks and define problems so that they can work toward solutions. They offer information and try out their ideas on the group to stimulate discussion. They show interest in others' ideas by listening actively. They also seek to involve silent members. They review significant points and move the group toward the goal by synthesizing points of understanding.

COMBATTING GROUPTHINK

Faulty decision-making process where members are overly eager to agree

AVOID GROUPTHINK BY:

Striving for team diversity,

Encouraging open discussion,

Searching for relevant information,

Evaluating many alternatives,

Considering how decisions are implemented, and

Planning for contingencies.

⇒ Teams must avoid **groupthink**, which is where team members agree without examining alternatives or considering contingency plans.

REACHING GROUP DECISIONS

MAJORITY: results in a quick decision but may alienate the minority

CONSENSUS: all team members agree; generally, elicits commitment by all members to implement the decision

MINORITY: useful when the full group cannot get together to make a decision or when time is short

AVERAGING: negotiate and haggle to reach a middle position, which often requires compromise. This method may cancel out the opinions of the most knowledgeable members in favour of those members who are least knowledgeable.

AUTHORITY RULE WITH DISCUSSION: after listening to team members' ideas, manager makes the final decision. This method encourages lively discussion and requires a leader who is willing to make decisions.

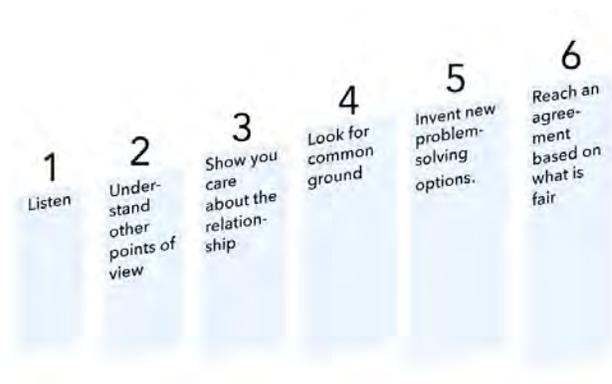
DEFINING SUCCESSFUL TEAMS

Small, diverse teams often produce more creative solutions with broader applications than homogeneous teams do. Good teams exchange information freely and collaborate rather than compete.

- *Small, diverse group*
- *Agreement on purpose and procedures*
- *Ability to confront conflict*
- *Effective communication*
- *Collaboration rather than competition*
- *Acceptance of ethical responsibilities*
- *Shared leadership*

SIX STEPS TO DEALING WITH CONFLICT

1. LISTEN
2. UNDERSTAND OTHER POINTS OF VIEW
3. SHOW YOU CARE ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP
4. LOOK FOR COMMON GROUND
5. INVENT NEW PROBLEM SOLVING OPTIONS
6. REACH AN AGREEMENT



PLANNING AND PARTICIPATING IN FACE-TO-FACE AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Decide whether a meeting is necessary.

Select the appropriate participants based on meeting purpose.

Distribute advance information (e.g., agenda).

Use digital calendars to schedule meetings (e.g., Google and Yahoo Calendars, Microsoft Outlook).

Discuss the importance of the agenda, which identifies the following:

- Date and place of meeting
- Start time and end time
- Brief description of each topic, in order of priority, including the names of individuals who are responsible for performing some action
- Proposed allotment of time for each topic
- Any pre-meeting preparation expected of participants

BEFORE THE MEETING

Decide whether a meeting is necessary (no meeting should be called unless the topic is important, can't wait, and requires an exchange of ideas; if the flow of information is strictly one way and no immediate feedback will result, then don't schedule a meeting).

Include only key participants (ideally, those attending the meeting will make the decisions and have the necessary information required to make the decisions).

Prepare the agenda (meeting agendas show topics to be discussed and other information and should be distributed before the meeting).

GETTING THE MEETING STARTED

Open with a three- to five-minute introduction, including the following:

- Goal and length of meeting
- Background of topics or problems
- Possible solutions and constraints
- Tentative agenda
- Ground rules to be followed

DURING THE MEETING

- Start on time and begin with preview and agenda.
- Appoint a secretary to take minutes and a recorder to track ideas.
- Encourage participation but avoid digression.
- Deal with conflict openly. Let each party speak.
- After reaching consensus, confirm agreement.

Successful leaders keep the meeting moving by avoiding issues that sidetrack the group.

To benefit from meetings, arrive early, be prepared, contribute positively and respectfully, stay calm, give credit to others, don't use your cell phone or laptop, help summarize, express your views in the meeting (not after), and complete your assignments.

When conflict develops between two members, allow each to make a complete case before the group.

ENDING THE MEETING AND FOLLOWING UP

- Summarize decisions, tasks, and deadlines.
- End on time.
- Distribute minutes within a couple of days.
- Remind team members of assignments.

Effective meetings end with a summary of accomplishments and a follow-up reminding participants of their assigned tasks. If minutes are taken, they should be distributed within a couple of days of the meeting.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Connect participants using a variety of technology

Exchange ideas, brainstorm, build consensus, and develop personal relationships

Function to train employees, make sales presentations, coordinate team activities, and talk to customers

AUDIOCONFERENCING

Tools: telephone, cell phone, enhanced speakerphone

Most commonly used collaborative tool in business, it is simple and effective

VIDEOCONFERENCING

Tools: video, audio, visual

Used by researchers, top executives, it can be expensive, however, able to connect in real time

WEB CONFERENCING

Tools: computer, internet access, software, camera

Businesses share documents and data, it is inexpensive and accessible and collaborators connect in real time

PLANNING VIRTUAL MEETINGS: PRE-MEETING CONSIDERATIONS

- Decide what technology will be used.
- Ensure full participation, coach participants as required.
- Use Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) to coordinate time zone issues.
- Avoid spanning lunch hours, overtime, or early arrivals.
- Decide on language to be used.
- Distribute any relevant documents to participants.

COLLABORATING SUCCESSFULLY IN VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- Be as precise as possible when presenting ideas.
- Give examples and use simple language.
- Recap and summarize often.
- Confirm your understanding.
- Project an upbeat, enthusiastic, and strong voice.
- Avoid traffic jams (i.e., everyone talking at once).
- Encourage dialogue by asking questions.
- Use the "round-robin" discussion technique.
- Leave time before or after scheduled meeting for small talk.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2:

Explain and apply active listening techniques in the workplace

LISTENING IN THE WORKPLACE

Workers spend 30 to 45 percent of their communication time listening.

Executives spend 60 to 70 percent of their communication time listening.

Experts say we listen at only 25 percent efficiency - We forget, distort, or misunderstand 75 percent of what we hear.

POOR LISTENING HABITS

Lack listening training

Challenged by competing sounds and stimuli

Process speech much faster than people speak

Speak at about 125 to 175 words per minute but listen at 450 words per minute, resulting in lag time

TYPES OF WORKPLACE LISTENING

LISTENING TO SUPERIORS

Involves hearing instructions, assignments, and explanations of work procedures. Good listening techniques include taking notes, not interrupting, and paraphrasing.

LISTENING TO COLLEAGUES AND TEAMMATES

Involve teammates involves critical listening and discriminative listening. Critical listening enables the listener to judge and evaluate what is being heard. Discriminative listening is necessary when the listener must understand and remember. It involves identifying main ideas, understanding a logical argument, and recognizing the purpose of a message.

LISTENING TO CUSTOMERS

Will help to improve sales and profitability.

TEN KEYS TO BUILDING POWERFULL LISTENING SKILLS

1. *Control internal and external distractions.*

Block out surrounding physical distractions. Try to focus on the speaker. Postpone any serious listening when emotionally charged.

2. *Become actively involved.*

Show you are listening by leaning forward and maintaining eye contact with the speaker. Listen to the words and how they are spoken. Pay attention to the speaker's body language.

3. *Separate facts from opinions.*

Separate facts from opinions. Facts are known truths and can be proven. Opinions are statements of personal judgments or preferences.

4. *Identify important facts.*

Select what's important and register it mentally.

5. *Avoid interrupting.*

Let the speaker have his or her say. Interruptions are not only impolite; they prevent you from hearing the speaker's complete thought. Interruptions can sidetrack discussions and cause hard feelings.

6. *Ask clarifying questions.*

Wait for the proper time and then ask questions that do not attack the speaker. Use open questions (without set answers like yes or no) to draw out feelings, motivations, ideas, and suggestions. Use closed questions to identify key facts in the discussion.

7. *Paraphrase to increase understanding.*

Summarize a message in your own words to confirm your understanding. Be objective and nonjudgmental when doing so.

8. *Capitalize on lag time.*

Use the time while waiting for the speaker's next idea to review what the speaker is saying. Separate the central idea, key points, and details. Use lag time to silently rephrase and summarize the speaker's message.

9. *Take notes ensure retention.*

Make notes as soon as possible after a conversation. Don't rely on your memory. Jot points down to ease the mind and to be sure they are correctly understood.

10. *Be aware of gender differences.*

Be aware that men tend to listen to facts. Women tend to perceive listening as an opportunity to connect with the other person on a personal level. Men generally interrupt to control a conversation while women tend to interrupt to communicate, to elaborate on another's idea, or to participate in conversation. Women are attentive listeners providing good eye contact and head nodding. Men are less attentive and provide sporadic eye contact and move around.

COMMUNICATING NONVERBALLY

Helps to complement and illustrate, reinforce and accentuate, replace and substitute, control and regulate, and contradict.

Includes all unwritten and unspoken messages, both intentional and unintentional, influences the way a message is interpreted or decoded by the receiver