

# How To Excel at Communication



Great communication starts with the person looking at you in the mirror. Before you have high expectations of others to communicate well with you - it's important to make sure you are doing all you can to communicate well. Here are some starting points for you!

- **Be self-aware**  
What are your strengths and weaknesses? Are you aware of items you are extra sensitive about? What do people say is a common theme you struggle with when communicating (i.e. you don't listen, you are too harsh with responses etc)? Don't despair! Just be aware! All aspects can be improved!!
- **Decide what you want to say**  
Whether you are preparing to make a sales pitch or speak at a school board meeting or bring up an issue with a spouse: try writing out what you want to convey first before starting to speak. What is your end goal? When all is said and done, what will help you sleep easy tonight? What are the top 2 points you want to get across?
- **Convey it clearly & succinctly**  
Take everything you want to say and try to summarize it in a couple statements. Some things need to be said - but in a second meeting. Try to shorten all the passion and summarize it into a brief segment. Be especially mindful of any required time limits.
- **Leave room for questions, follow up or response**  
No need to run the clock. Leave time for them to follow up with additional questions.
- **Engage back and forth**  
Invite feedback and welcome questions. Good communication involves give and take.
- **Leave on positive note**  
Always leave an "open door" at the end of your message. Use phrases like, "Thank you for your time. I look forward to more discussions." Or "I know I just put a lot on your plate: perhaps we can continue the chat at a later time?" Make it your goal to walk away with a smile on your face. This can help ease tensions and allow people to see your heart: you really do want to help provide solutions.
- **Follow up**  
It never hurts to send a leader or friend a text or email or even handwritten note afterwards, "Thank you for your time. I really appreciate you hearing me out on what was on my heart!"



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Amy has had a passion for good communications for over 20 years. And she too continues to love the learning journey! Email her with questions and explore all the resources she has available!