

Keeping the Human in Human Resources

Communicate Like A Leader

San Ramon Chamber of Commerce
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 California Employers Association
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We will cover:

- Communication challenges leaders face today
- Strategies to communicate effectively
- Importance of Active Listening as a leader
- Preparing for difficult conversations

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Something to Consider

“ Being a great communicator can increase your value by more than **50%**.

Warren Buffet



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Question:

What communication challenges are you currently experiencing as a leader?



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Communication Challenges for Leaders



- Communication breakdowns
- Managing difficult conversations
- Not communicating clearly
- Making assumptions
- Lack of empathy

Communication is not a soft skill.
It is a **critical** skill in the workplace.



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Poll:

Which communication skills would you like to enhance as a leader?

- Active Listening
- Clear and Concise Messaging
- Emotional Intelligence
- Constructive Feedback
- Conflict
- Adaptability in Communication Style

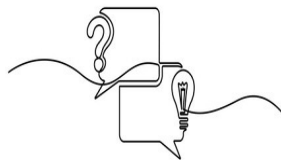


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Basic Communication Principles for Leaders

1. *Everything* we do is communication
2. Communicate clear expectations
3. Speak less, listen more
4. Provide and receive effective feedback
5. Don't shy away from difficult conversations



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Communicating Clear Messages

- **Prepare** in advance
- Convey the what, why, and how
- Be transparent
- Check for **understanding**
- **Be mindful** of your non-verbal communication



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Be Aware of Non-Verbal Communication

- Smile
- Tone
- Good posture
- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Be engaged
- “Vibes”

The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said. - Peter Drucker

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Ask Yourself 3 Questions

- 1. What needs to be done?**
“We need to improve Customer Service.”
- 2. Why does it matter to the audience?**
We need to keep our customers engaged, shopping and taken care of. And Sales!
- 3. What specific action needs to take place?**
“Starting Monday, greet every customer within 10 seconds and check in twice during their visit **so they feel welcomed, cared for, and supported throughout their experience.**”

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Communication Challenges in the Digital Age



- Less **face-to-face** communication
- Lack of **non-verbal** communication cues
- Shorter **attention** spans
- **Distractions**
- **Speed** in which we **respond digitally** results in misunderstandings and miscommunication and information overload

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Establish Communication Protocols

Identify best platforms to use for:

- Sharing and sending information
- Asking in depth questions
- Reviewing information
- Providing updates
- Providing quick answers
- Sharing new information

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Poll: How would you consider your listening skills at work?

- **Excellent** — I stay fully present and engaged
- **Good** — I try to listen well but sometimes get distracted
- **Fair** — I listen, but I often focus on what I'll say next
- **Needs improvement** — I struggle to stay focused when others talk

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Important Reasons to Listen



- Understand the other person and their message
- Helps to connect with the other person
- Determines the quality of your influence
- Transmits respect, displays empathy, and builds trust

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
Stephen Covey

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Tips for Active Listening

- Open ended **questions**
- **Silence** is okay
- Full **attention**
- Don't **interrupt**
- **Paraphrasing**
- Provide **empathy** and support



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Key Communication Skills

- Reflective listening
- Exhibiting empathy
- Adjusting body language
- Asking questions
- Using "I" Statements



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Providing Effective Feedback

- Be timely and specific
- Balance candor with care
- Create a safe space for two-way dialog
- Identify the type of feedback you're giving: coaching, appreciation, evaluation



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Effective vs. Ineffective Feedback

Effective

- Clear
- Relevant
- Timely
- Specific
- Honest
- Task-oriented
- Observable and actionable behavior

Ineffective

- Unclear
- Trivial
- Generic
- Condescending
- Blaming
- Shaming
- Personality-based
- Manipulative



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Receiving Feedback

- Keep a growth mindset
- Listen, don't interrupt
- Don't dismiss positive comments
- Take responsibility
- Ask for examples if feedback is not clear
- Thank them for their feedback
- Focus on action and next steps



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The Power of Dialogue



When we commit ourselves to **real dialogue**, we open ourselves to new insights, new potential and a deeper relationship with the other person or group.

Lorraine Flower



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Begin with Positive Intention

Ask yourself these four questions:

- What do I really want for myself?
- What do I want for others?
- What do I really want for the relationship?
- How would I behave if I really wanted those results?



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Focus on What You Want

Unhealthy Goals

- Be right
- Look good
- Keep the peace
- Win
- Blame
- Avoid conflict

Healthy Goals

- Learn
- Find the truth
- Produce results
- Strengthen relationships



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Find Mutual Purpose



- You care about their goals, interests and values
- You believe they care about yours

Remember: Confrontation is a search for the truth



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Focus on Behavior Not Personality

Personality statements are generally judgments (positive and negative) about a person

Behaviors statements describe how a person is acting

Personality Statement

You are lazy.

You're not a team player.

You are unreliable.

Behavior Statement

You didn't finish the report on time.

You didn't respond to your colleague's request for help.

You missed 3 deadlines this week.



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Check in with Your Emotions



- The last time you were cut off in traffic
- Your computer crashed
- Someone jumped in front of you in line
- Your boss asked you to do something you don't like to do



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Quick Communication Reflection

- How are you showing up to work?
- How are you managing your emotions?
- Do you help your teammates manage their emotions?



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Pre-Conversation Checklist

- **Mentally**
 - Check your mindset
 - Consider the other positions
- **Strategically**
 - Learn from others
 - Plan your message, different scenarios
- **Logistically**
 - Pick the right time
 - Select the right place
 - Tone, pace, body language



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Your feedback matters!



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& build resources for you!



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