



## How to Be a Better Communicator

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Communication is the key when it comes to anything that involves collaboration. Since humans are a social species, communication is involved in nearly everything you do.

Some people are born with the natural ability to communicate well, while others may struggle with it. No matter what category you fall into, it's likely that ***you can benefit from paying attention to improving your communication skills.***

### Why Better Communication Helps You

Did you know that most businesses consider your communication skills to be the most important characteristic about you? This means that you could have top-notch knowledge and job skills but still fail to land a job if you're lacking in the communication department.

Communication is certainly not only important when it comes to your work life, but it's also vital in having a successful home life as well. ***Couples and family members that are good communicators lead happier lives overall.***

Proper communication will prevent misunderstandings and save you time so you won't have to go back and explain yourself again and again. You know you've gained good communication skills when you can communicate your thoughts effectively with as few words as necessary!

### How To Improve Communication With Others

Communication is a two way street. This means that you could have excellent skills, but if the recipient is lacking, then you may not be understood. This is why it's important not only to develop our *speaking skills*, but our *listening skills*, too.

Since you can't affect the skill level of others, the only thing you can do is strengthen your *own* communication skills. Besides, when you're an excellent communicator, more people will understand you, everything around you will run more efficiently, and you'll more often get what you want!

**Try these strategies to improve your communication skills:**

- 1. Avoid arguing.** If you run into a snag in a conversation and it starts to morph into an argument, step back and realize what's going on. It's easy to get swept up into the blame game, but ultimately it's not important who's at fault. What's important is the ***mutual understanding of the issue at hand and a desire for a solution that benefits everyone.***
- 2. Don't be afraid to compromise.** You may be tempted to try and "win" but that's not the best way to reach a mutual agreement. You may be happier with getting your way, but it may come at the expense of the other person, which can cause further issues. Find a good compromise that you both can willingly accept.
- 3. Work on listening.** Your listening skills are *even more* important than your speaking skills. After all, how will you know what you should say - and when - if you haven't effectively listened? ***Listen more than you speak and you'll gain a profound wisdom of others, too!***
- 4. Keep your focus.** Communication will get overly complicated if you worry about too many issues at once. Avoid bringing up the past or other issues and, instead, focus on the one topic at hand.
- 5. Stay calm and take responsibility.** Adopt a calm and cool manner of handling situations. When things remain low key, it's easier to communicate and get your point across. This also means that you need to take responsibility for what you say. ***Don't be afraid to admit mistakes when you're wrong.***

Becoming a better communicator doesn't happen overnight. But if you keep practicing and tweaking your skills, you'll be surprised at what you can accomplish.