



Tips for effective communication

As a leader in your business, you are the role model for the way communication happens in your workplace. Some useful tips for effective communication are provided below.

Observe

What is the tone of the conversation and body language being used? Do you need to use a different tool or strategy to improve outcomes? Check that your body language doesn't conflict with the words you are using.

Be self aware

Know your perceptions, beliefs, triggers and behaviours and be aware of the impact your thoughts, feelings and behaviour have on others, and whether they achieve good outcomes.

Be clear on intent

What outcome do you want from this conversation?

Be committed

The degree to which you are committed to a conversation will indicate the level of concern, credibility and authenticity you have. Lack of commitment gives an impression of insincerity, fakery or inactivity.

Advocate, don't debate

Driving home your own view while diminishing someone else's is non productive. It strengthens opposition and creates enemies. By all means, be firm and back up what you advocate with clear benefits, but listen to others' views too.

Listen

To persuade someone to support you frequently requires finding out more about what they want.

This takes skilful listening and questioning. If you can learn what someone else is thinking and what their needs are, you can often demonstrate to them how your way will give them what they want.

Provide opportunities

Initiate opportunities for others to speak by asking questions. This will make people feel more included and they will be more likely to contribute.



Establish rapport

Ask others what their thoughts and feelings are about an issue. See if you can build bridges for them to come over to your way of thinking and address the concerns you've picked up through careful listening.

Clarify assumptions

When we don't clarify our assumptions, conversations get very cloudy. Many times we place conclusions or proposals into conversations without bothering to explain what led us to them. Take a little extra time to let people know what you're thinking and find out about other people's assumptions too: "What leads you to conclude that?"

Structure your discussion

This is particularly important when working in teams. Many groups forget to agree to a plan for their conversation before they start.