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BUSINESS & HR SOLUTIONS

Business Communication Tips



COMMUNICATION OCCUPIES APPROXIMATELY 70% OF OUR WAKING HOURS AND MANY PEOPLE FIND COMMUNICATING CHALLENGING.

The ability to communicate effectively impacts not only our personal lives but our professional lives as well. Organisations that are highly successful are shown to have employees who are strong communicators at all levels of the firm.

Business in the 21st century is more complex than ever, especially in companies that conduct operations at several locations, or even worldwide. In this environment, communication skills are paramount and employers are increasingly looking for people who can communicate well so they can function in complex business environments.

Times have also changed and we take for granted that the new generation know how to communicate in a professional environment in the 21st century.

Many employees, not just the young people new to a business environment, struggle with the basics of how to communicate at work. The digital world has added another layer of complexity to how we communicate effectively.

Good business communication skills are essential for creating strong working relationships and building successful teams. Both of which are paramount for overall business success.

The majority of communication at work is carried out via 3 different mediums.

Email/Written, Over the Phone and Face to Face.

Below is a summary of key Business Communication Tips which covers these 3 areas which will assist you to become a more successful communicator at work.

Remember, the foundation of all good communication at work is based on the following 5 behaviours.

Always:

- Be polite and respectful
- Be sincere
- Be professional
- Be empathetic. Understand and share the feelings of others. Put yourself in the other persons shoes
- Think, plan, and prepare before talking, typing or sending

Email Tips

1. Remember tone and attitude can not be conveyed in writing. You can not use body language or your voice to help recipients infer meaning. Therefore you need to make sure your email is clear and concise.
2. What you put in the Subject Line is very important. Readers often decide if they are going to read an email or not by what is put in the Subject line. Use a clear and descriptive subject line that is no more than four to five words.
3. Avoid emoticons, shortcuts, abbreviated text-speak or text-see. It is not professional.
4. Email is not Private. Think before you send. Do not put anything in an email that you wouldn't want the whole world to know about. Once it is sent electronically, it can not be taken back.
5. Before you send. Proofread, Proofread, Proofread.

Business Telephone Tips

The way you speak on the phone will form your customers, suppliers and fellow colleagues' impression of you and your business.

Talking with someone effectively on the phone is very different from both talking to people online and in person. Online, you have the time to devise an answer and think about what you are going to speak about before you press "enter". When you talk with someone face to face, you can use your facial expressions and body language to better translate the message you are trying to get across. However, when you are talking on the phone, it is all about your voice and the way you speak.

1. Swallow first. Your mouth should be unoccupied when making a call or answering the phone. You want to be able to speak clearly and that is impossible if you are chewing or swallowing.
2. Try to answer all incoming phone calls promptly. This leaves the caller with a good impression and a feeling that they are valued.
3. When answering the phone, be warm, enthusiastic, and professional. Welcome callers courteously.
4. Always identify yourself and your organisation. Always state your name along with the name of the person you are calling.
5. Enunciate clearly. Be conscious of the volume and tone of your voice and the speed at which you talk. We all tend to speak very quickly over the phone. Slow down.
6. Always speak into the telephone receiver with an even and low tone of voice.
7. Control your language when speaking on the phone. Do not use slang or buzzwords.
8. Think through exactly what you plan to say and discuss BEFORE you place a call.

Face to Face Business Communication Tips

Face to face communication happens in real time. You need to be able to listen and respond appropriately with no time to plan.

Communicating successfully is not simply the "Verbal" part of communication. ie The language we use and words we "Say". It is also how we say them and the way the message is delivered. This is called "Non Verbal" Communication. It is the tone of voice and the volume at which we speak, our body language, hand gestures and emotions.

1. Communication is a 2 way process. All parties must participate if communication is to be effective.
2. The use of body language is a key aspect of face to face communication. This includes: your body posture- slouching or standing tall, gestures - strumming fingers or pointing, facial expressions - grimacing, and eye movements.
3. Listen. Talk less and listen more. Listening is an important skill. Concentrate on listening to what others are really saying. Pay attention to non verbal cues.
4. Voice. The ability to vary your tone, pitch, rhythm, volume and pace will increase the effectiveness of how your message is received and willingness of people to listen. Speaking in a monotone is perceived as dull and is difficult to listen to and understand.
5. Ensure your message matches your Non Verbal communication.
6. Prepare ahead. If possible, prepare ahead for the conversation you are going to engage in.
7. Be clear about the intent of the conversation. What is the purpose of the discussion?
8. Check for understanding by paraphrasing and summarizing.
9. Concentrate on the message and not the messenger.

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