

Keys to effective communication

1. Listen, listen, and listen. People want to know that they are being heard. Really listen to what the other person is saying, instead of formulating your response. Ask for clarification to avoid misunderstandings. Have one conversation at a time. For example, if you are speaking to someone on the phone, do not respond to an email, or send a text at the same time. The other person will know that they do not have your undivided attention.

2. Who you are talking to matters. Make sure that you use words that the other person will understand. Avoid girlguiding jargon.

3. Body language matters. This is important for face-to-face meetings and video conferencing. Remember SOLER

- Same level – sit or stand
- Open position – no arms or legs crossed
- Lean forward – rather than lean back
- Eye – maintain steady eye contact
- Relax – take a deep breathe and smile

4. Check your message before you hit send. Spell and grammar checkers are lifesavers, but they are not foolproof. Double check what you have written, to make sure that your words are communicating the intended message.

5. Be brief, yet specific. Remember BRIEF.

- Create a **Background** for your statements.
- Give a **Reason** for what you are saying
- Justify it with **Information**.
- **End** the statement
- **Follow-up** on your communication through asking questions.

6. Write things down. Take notes while you are talking to another person or when you are in a meeting. Do not rely on your memory. Send a follow-up email to make sure that you understand what was being said during the conversation.

7. Sometimes it's better to pick up the phone. If you have a lot to say, call the person. Email is great; sometimes it is easier to communicate what you have to say verbally.

8. Think before you speak. Always pause before you speak. Avoid saying the first thing that comes to mind. Take a moment and pay close attention to what you say and how you say it.

9. Treat everyone equally. Treat everyone with respect. Treat others as your equal.

10. **Maintain a positive attitude and smile.** When you communicate verbally, smile. This shows a positive attitude. When you smile often and exude a positive attitude, people will respond positively to you.

Adapted from: <https://www.manpowergroup.com/en/insights/10-communication-sk>