

Effective Communication

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Have you ever felt that a meeting, presentation or memo was pointless or that you didn't get all the necessary information from your leader to finish your task successfully? Then you probably agree with the title of this article. Whether you want to motivate your team or just simply delegate certain tasks you have to be able to deliver your message clearly otherwise it is rather a waste of time.

Planning is vital

Even if you aren't going to make a formal speech, it is always a good idea to consider the following factors:

1. Who are you talking to?

You might say 'My team, of course', but the answer might not be that easy. Perhaps these are trainees or newly employed workers. In this case, they probably need more examples and explanation from you than those who have been working on similar projects for years.

2. Objectives and clarity

What is exactly that you want to achieve? Do you want a more creative and interactive discussion with highly qualified employees? Are you going to praise those who have contributed to a great achievement or do you want to train a new colleague? Depending on your objective, your message will be completely different. So, you might want to consider making notes to ensure you touch every issue you want to talk about. It will also help you to stay focused and convey your message more clearly. Not an ignorable outcome, if you ask me.

3. Communication channel

In the 21st century, face-to-face communication is only one of the communication channels available. Don't be afraid to use them. If there is a change in the company policy for instance, you might want to consider sending an email to your team instead of telling them in person. Why? They can read it at their own pace and even more than once, if something is not clear. Or if you wish to get feedback from your employees, probably it would be more effective to ask them to share their opinion through a skype conversation. People tend to be more communicative if not stared at by co-workers. Here are a some other channels you could use:

- notice boards
- team briefing
- meetings
- lunchtime/coffee break discussions (less formal)
- newsletter
- teleconference
- video chats

4. Timing

Yes, timing is a key factor as well. If a message is not that important than it should wait until the more urgent matters are taken care of. In other words, to ensure effectiveness of your team, you should take time to prioritize your and your team members' tasks.

Avoid one-way communications

Even those who make presentations offer to their audience the possibility to ask questions at the end of their speech. Why? Communication means conveying information and questions are the most common way the listeners can signal that a part of this information is either not clear or not covered at all. So don't shy away from questions and make no mistakes: receiving no question is also a feedback. It might signal

lack of interest or that your audience could not follow your reasoning. So, watch their body language. Do they look puzzled? If yes, then reformulate your message. Are they afraid to ask questions? If yes, you should spend more time bonding with your team. Open communication is the best way to promote creativity and efficiency.

Finally, remember that your words are guidelines for employees. So, making sure they understand your message, is vital to the company. But don't despair, communication skill can be learnt. All you have to do is practice.