



Communication



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01 ✨ Knowledge ✨

What is *communication*? Why is it important?



“Of all the life skills available to us,
communication is perhaps
the most empowering.”

Bret Morrison



What is Communication?

Definition

Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages, verbally and nonverbally.

- A core skill for wellbeing
- Essential for expressing our needs, asking for help, and maintaining healthy relationships

Key Aspects

Types of Communication

Verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual.

Actions for Communication

Sending, encoding, and decoding messages. Listening and providing feedback.



Why is Communication Important?



To Express Needs

Effective *communication* is the most direct method for expressing thoughts, feelings, & needs.



To Request Help

Effective *communication* allows people to ask for help when they need it, quickly and clearly.



For Relationships

Effective *communication* is essential for maintaining healthy relationships.



Barriers to Effective Communication

a) Ambiguity

It is more likely that a message will be misunderstood when it's ambiguous—be direct!

b) Judgment

A message is less likely to be heard when the receiver feels judged or criticized—be open!

c) Inattention

Poor timing, lack of attention, and interruptions/distractions negatively impact communication—consider timing/environment before sending an important message!

d) Individual Differences

The ability for a sender and receiver to understand one another may be impacted by demographics (age, sex, culture), relationship type, present contextual factors, and more.



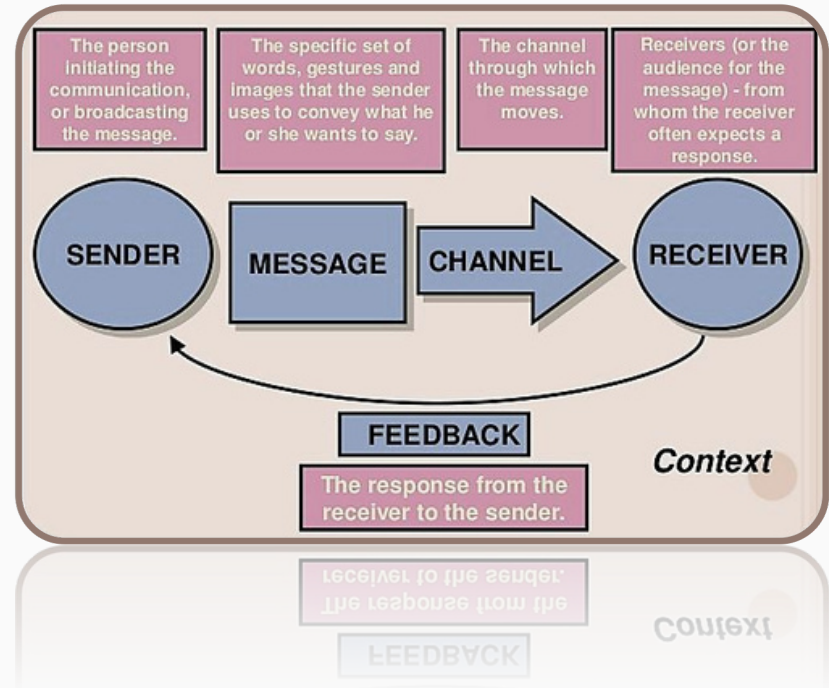
02 ✨ Development ✨

What makes *communication* effective? What are the benefits?

Communication Theory

Communication becomes **effective** when the message is understood, meaning it is...

- 1) clearly delivered by the *sender* through an appropriate channel
- 2) accurately encoded and interpreted by the *receiver*





Two Simple Steps to Communication:

1) Send a Clear Message

Effective communicators send intentional, appropriate verbal and nonverbal messages to the person/people they are communicating with.

2) Verify that the Message was Received

On top of sending a clear message, effective communicators make sure that the receiver has clearly understood the content of the message.

Remember...

Messages must be **clearly sent** and **accurately interpreted** for effective *communication* to occur! Make a conscious effort to communicate by considering the clarity, tone, and timing of your message, in addition to the receiver's perspective and communication style. It will take practice to understand the communication preferences of others—keep trying!



1. Send a Clear Message



Sender

- What is your communication style?
- What individual contextual factors influence the way you communicate?
- Do you communicate differently with different people/relationships?



Message

- What needs or information are you trying to share?
- Is the message clear, correct, concise, and confident?
- Do the tone and timing match the message?



Channel

- What channel are you using?
- Are you using verbal and/or nonverbal cues?
- Is the message better sent in person or email/text?
With words or with actions?



2. Verify the Message was Received



Receiver

- Who are you sending a message to?
- What contextual factors influence their communication style?
- What relationship do you have with the receiver?



Feedback

- What is the verbal and/or non-verbal feedback?
- Does the receiver's feedback suggest they understood your message?



Context

- What contextual factors may have influenced the receiver's interpretation?
- Was the receiver emotional or preoccupied?
- Was the room too loud or distracting?



The Benefits of Healthy Communication



Professional

- Understand Mutual Goals
- Build Loyalty
- Enhance Collaboration
- Improve Productivity



Interpersonal

- Build Trust
- Reduce Misunderstandings
- Provide Insight
- Multiple Perspectives



Intrapersonal

- Develop Empathy
- Empower Self-Expression
- Provide Clarity
- Foster Growth

03



Practice



What practices improve *communication* in daily life?



To Effectively Send/Receive Messages

...You Must Also Be a Listener!

Listening is the process of receiving AND understanding both verbal & nonverbal messages.

- For effective *communication*, one must be proficient at both sending their message and receiving the messages of others.
- *Listening* improves *communication* by hearing and valuing the messages of others, understanding their communication styles and feedback, and using this knowledge to improve future messages.



Be Mindful

Be fully present and attentive—provide feedback! If we aren't listening, we aren't communicating fully.



Be Curious

Keep a curious, tolerant, and kind mindset when listening to others—ask questions if there is something you don't understand or agree with!



Becoming a Listener



Be Aware

...of your thoughts/feelings.

- What comes up in response to the message you are sharing?
- Are you remaining present or distracted by your thoughts/feelings?



Be Open

...to taking in new information.

- Are you leading with curiosity and empathy? Judgment and critique?
- How open are you to accepting a different perspective?



Be Calm

...and regulate your emotions.

- Are you abruptly and emotionally reacting? Are you mindfully responding?
- Are you able to take in new perspectives without stress?



The Practice of Active Listening

Active Listening

An individual is engaged in active listening when they are...

- Fully present and attentive to receive the message.
- Have the goal of understanding and accurately interpreting the message.

Rather than just *hearing* someone speak, **active listeners *truly engage themselves with the communication process.***



Red Flags

Do you find yourself only listening to respond? Criticizing, being bored, or dividing your attention? You might benefit from *active listening*.



Benefits

Active listening helps construct meaning from the information received—it benefits the sender and receiver!



The Practice of Active Listening

Attend

Pay attention to the sender and their message.

Respect

Withhold unnecessary, invalid, or abrupt judgements.

Reflect

Don't ignore emotional responses, acknowledge your feelings.

Clarify

Ask questions if a part of the message was misunderstood or not received.

Summarize

Communicate your understanding and interpretation of the message.

Share

Honestly and respectfully share your response (thoughts, feelings).



Practice Effective Communication Daily



Schedule Times to Practice Sending Messages

Set up check-ins with those in your close circle. Explain your goal (“I want to be a better communicator”) and discuss how to support one another.



Check In on the Receiver Before Sending Messages

Before practicing effective communication, make sure the other party is ready to receive your message. Break down big/difficult topics and model active listening.



Let Others Know You've Received Their Message

Affirm the messages you receive—acknowledge and restate the message to show you understand it: “Thank you for sharing.” “I hear you saying...”
“Am I understanding you correctly?”



04 ✨ Conclusions ✨

What did we learn about *communication* today?



Communication

...is a complex process that allows people to share their needs and be understood.



Mindsets

...to keep: be positive and intentional with your delivery, understand the receiver, listen with curiosity, awareness, & calm.



Effective Communication

...involves correctly sending and receiving messages—both speaking and listening.



Practice

...*active listening* to improve your *communication*.

**Communicate WITH others,
not TO others.**

05 ✨ Resources ✨

Where can we learn more about *communication*?



Practice, Practice, Practice!

Below are a few resources to help you learn about and begin practicing *effective communication*.

Website	<u>8 Ways You Can Improve Your (Professional) Communication Skills Harvard</u> <u>How to Communicate in a Relationship Nicole McDermott Forbes</u>
Mobile App	<u>FamilyWall: Family Organizer App</u>
Podcast	<u>Improve Your Relationships with Healthy Communication The Verywell Mind Podcast</u>
Book	<u>Effective Communication Skills GoodReads</u>
Journal Article	<u>The Relative Effectiveness of Active Listening Weger et al. Taylor & Francis Online</u>
YouTube	<u>The Art of Effective Communication Marcus Velazquez TEDxWolcottSchool</u> <u>How to Effectively Communicate During Conflict Terri Cole</u>