



IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

- **Be clear.** Make sure your communication is simple, direct, and brief. When you use fewer words, they all matter more and are likely to get more attention.
- **Value achievement.** Take time to recognize the accomplishments of individual team members. This can go beyond work to celebrate significant moments in their lives with them.
- **Make it a priority.** Schedule communication regularly, even if you have nothing specific to “announce” or a project to delegate or check progress on. Team members need to hear from their leaders on an ongoing basis. It will help to build trust and understanding.
- **Really listen.** Most of us do more talking than listening. What is it that makes us more concerned about what we are going to say than what the other person is saying to us? Take the time to really listen to what people are saying, by their words, tone, and body language. If they know you are really listening to them, they will be more open and trust you with their real thoughts and feelings.
- **Come alongside the other person.** People don’t need friends who beat them up; they need friends who help them out. Being a friend means coming alongside the other person even if you don’t agree with them.
- **Don’t give unwanted advice.** Wait until your friend asks for advice and then give it to them. If they don’t ask for your advice, don’t give it to them. Giving unwanted advice makes you seem like a know-it-all and that doesn’t make for a good friendship or communication. Sometimes the person wants you to listen while you are trying to fix the issue instead.
- **Check your tone and body language.** Body language is more telling than the actual words you say. Watch your tone and body language when you are speaking. Are you harsh? Does your face give away your disgust? Do you smile and reassure the person who is talking? Your body language says more about your feelings and thoughts than your actual words
- **Be real.** The best way to communicate is by being open and honest. If you are frustrated, say “I’m frustrated”. Being able to label your feelings and work through them can help you when communicating with others. Being able to articulate your thoughts and feelings can be a big step in getting good communication with others.
- **It’s not about you.** Communication is a two-way street and we need to remember that the other person’s thoughts and feelings are as important as our own. To have a truly good communication, there needs to be honesty going both ways and a good understanding of what is being said.