



ESSENTIAL MANAGERS

Effective Communication

>>> LISTENING
PRESENTING
GIVING FEEDBACK





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Overcoming barriers

Why do attempts at communication often fail? Broadly speaking, there are two barriers that keep us from communicating successfully: the operations of our bodies and our minds, and our assumptions that other people understand and react to the world in the same way that we do.

Unblocking your communications

The information we receive about the world comes from our senses. It is possible, however, for our senses to be impaired or for the source of the message to provide inadequate information to be reliably decoded. In sending messages to others, we must be sensitive to the fact that they may not see, hear, touch, taste, or smell in the same way we do.

Overcoming barriers to communication

CONSIDER CULTURE

Be aware that different backgrounds, education, and experience give people different expectations. Your way of seeing the world is not the only one.

BANISH PREJUDICE

Never make a judgment before knowing the facts about a situation. Acknowledge that you are usually working with incomplete data.

FIGHT STEREOTYPES

Don't assume that all members of a group share the same characteristics. Put aside any stereotypical views you may have, treat each person as an individual.

CONTROL YOUR FEELINGS

Try to present your arguments **rationally** rather than **emotionally**, and accept that other people may have strong feelings about a subject.

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

Recognize that language has **different levels of meaning**. People will respond differently to the same words, especially if the words are vague or general.

Ensuring understanding

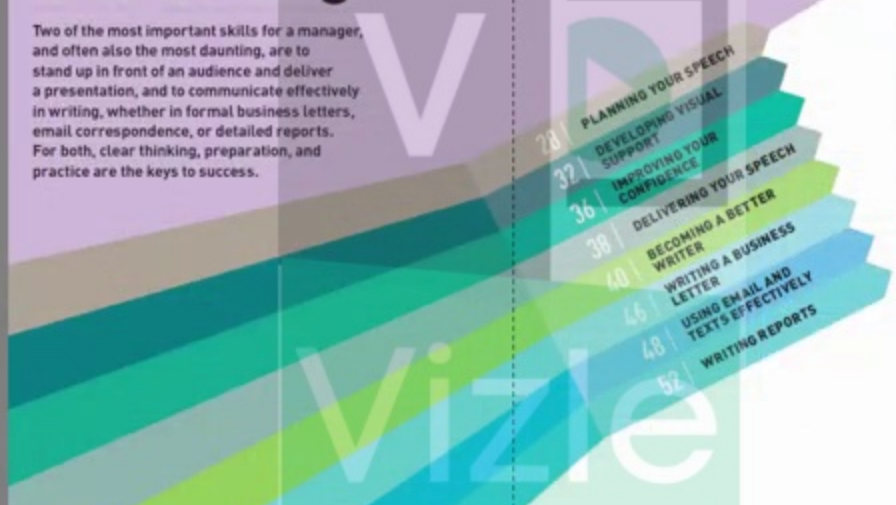
Communication is more than sending and receiving messages; if the message has been delivered but not understood, no communication has taken place. Everything, from the culture in which we live to the norms or standards of the groups to which we belong, can influence how we perceive the messages, events, and experiences of everyday life. Even individual mindsets, such as holding stereotypes, can set up barriers, affecting what we understand and how we react to outside stimuli.

Learn to recognize the barriers likely to block your communications, and focus on what you can do to overcome them. When speaking to someone, for example, constantly monitor their reactions to confirm that you are being fully understood.

In sending messages to others, we must be sensitive to the fact that they may not see, hear, touch, taste, or smell in the same way that we do

Speaking and writing

Two of the most important skills for a manager, and often also the most daunting, are to stand up in front of an audience and deliver a presentation, and to communicate effectively in writing, whether in formal business letters, email correspondence, or detailed reports. For both, clear thinking, preparation, and practice are the keys to success.

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- A stylized graphic of a staircase or ramp with steps. Each step is a different color and contains a number and a topic. The steps are arranged in a descending staircase pattern from top-left to bottom-right. The colors transition from dark green at the top to light blue at the bottom. The number '02' is visible in a large green circle on the right side of the page.
- 28 | PLANNING YOUR SPEECH
 - 32 | DEVELOPING VISUAL SUPPORT
 - 36 | IMPROVING YOUR CONFIDENCE
 - 38 | DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH
 - 40 | BECOMING A BETTER WRITER
 - 46 | WRITING A BUSINESS LETTER
 - 48 | USING EMAIL AND TEXTS EFFECTIVELY
 - 52 | WRITING REPORTS

Becoming a better writer

Very few people think writing is easy. Good writing—that is, writing with power, grace, dignity, and impact—takes time, careful thought, and revision. Such writing is often the product of many years of training and practice. Even though writing may sometimes seem like hard work, with a little effort you can learn to do it well.

Organizing your writing

Good business writing is simple, clear, and concise. By not calling attention to itself, good writing is “transparent,” helping the reader focus on the idea you are trying to communicate rather than on the words that you are using to describe it.

The key to good business writing is organization. You need to know where you are going before you start, so do your research and identify the key issues you need to cover. Compose a list of the most important points, and use them to create

an outline. If your document will include an overview section containing your purpose for writing, write this first. Next, tackle the most important paragraphs, before filling out the details and any supplementary material.

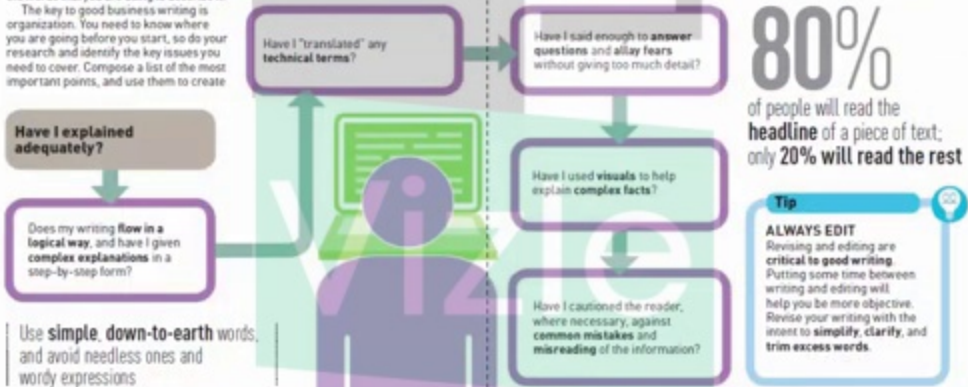
Writing for clarity

When composing a memo, letter, or report, keep in mind that your reader often doesn't have much time: senior managers, in particular, generally have tight schedules and too much to read. They need your written communication to quickly and clearly give them the details they need to know.

Ensure that your writing style is both precise and concise. Use simple, down-to-earth words, and avoid needless ones and wordy expressions. Simple words and expressions are more quickly understood and can add power to your ideas. Be direct and avoid vague

terms such as “very” and “slightly”; this will show that you have confidence in what you are saying and will add power to your ideas. Make sure, too, that everything you write is grammatically correct—you don't want your busy reader to have to reread your sentences to try to decipher their meaning.

Keep your paragraphs short; they are more inviting and more likely to get read. If your document must include numbers, use them with restraint—a paragraph filled with numbers can be difficult to read and follow. Use a few numbers selectively to make your point, then put the rest in tables and graphics.





Communicating with your team

A team is only as good as its communication; misunderstandings can cause a huge amount of extra work and lost time. When managing a team, focus on giving constructive feedback, briefing thoroughly, and dealing effectively with conflict.

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- A stack of six books, each with a different colored cover (purple, blue, teal, green, light green, and light blue). The books are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth. The titles on the spines of the books are:
- 56 | LISTENING EFFECTIVELY
 - 58 | GIVING FEEDBACK
 - 60 | UNDERSTANDING NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION
 - 62 | RUNNING BRIEFINGS AND MEETINGS
 - 64 | COMMUNICATING TO PERSUADE
 - 66 | MANAGING CONFLICT

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Conflict resolution techniques

Resolving conflicts between team members is an important function of an effective manager. To begin the process, you should first ensure that both parties acknowledge that the conflict exists and the effects that it is having on team performance and morale. It may be that one party sees the problem as trivial, or is ignoring the issue. Next, encourage the parties to set aside time to address the problem—schedule the first meeting, and offer to participate in the process.

Get people to agree on the small stuff first: when this happens, the big issues become easier to address

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Find out what's on people's minds, and ask them what they're thinking and how they feel

FOCUS ON INTERESTS

Don't focus on a person's demands, but on their interests—the reasons behind their demands.

SEPARATE PEOPLE FROM PROBLEMS

Rather than saying "I can't support you," say "I'm not in favor of that solution."

RECOGNIZE FEELINGS

Accept feelings in others, and work to communicate empathy. Keep your own emotions in check, to ensure that you act professionally.

KEEP COMMUNICATING

Keep the lines of communication open and speak as frankly and honestly as possible.

Reconciling two sides

START SMALL

Get people to agree on the small stuff first. Once they start to agree on a few things, the big issues won't be as difficult.

SUMMARIZE THE AGREEMENT

Review all the details with everyone involved. Make sure all are in agreement.

DEVISE OPTIONS

Find alternatives for mutual gain. By working together on the options, you can shift the dynamic from competition to cooperation.

CUT YOUR LOSSES

Sometimes the conflict has simply gone too far, and you must decide to make personnel changes.

FIND THE SOURCE

Track the conflict to its source. Don't accept the first answers you find; employees may have underlying concerns.

Communicating through social media

Social channels on the internet—notably Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, and LinkedIn—have transformed the way people do business. A social media presence is no longer an option, but an essential—more than 80 percent of people are influenced in their buying decisions by a brand's presence on social media. So how do you maximize the impact of your social media output?

Devise a strategy

Social media can be used in many different ways—from increasing awareness of your company's brand, increasing traffic to your website, and forging new business contacts at home and abroad, to boosting sales or attracting customers to stores. So, the first decision you should make is to set the purpose of your social media interaction. Be specific in your goals, and list them in order of importance.

Next, carry out some research—formal or informal—into the internet habits of your customers or target audience: who are they? Which social media channels do they use? What do

they expect from these channels? You will have far more success if you tune in to the needs of your customers.

Focus on success

Always consider how your social media activities will translate into business growth—there is little point in maintaining a costly presence on social channels if it doesn't affect the bottom line. Think about how you can measure the effectiveness of your activities.

Having a large number of followers on Facebook or Twitter, for example, may be impressive, but may be of little value

Three major uses of social media

	SELLING	BUILDING PROFILE	CUSTOMER SERVICE
ACTIVITIES	- Posting information and user reviews of new products. - Announcing events or sales. - Issuing vouchers or discounts.	- Providing useful information or resources for users. - Becoming the "go to" place for discussion of an industry topic.	- Engaging with customer queries and solving their problems. - Measuring customers' sentiments toward your business.
REMEMBER TO	Balance the hard sell with useful content and user interaction.	Keep your content lively, current, and varied. Just giving links to other web sites will not encourage repeat visits from others.	Set up a separate account for this purpose and ensure that your responses are quick and authoritative.

if it fails to translate into improved business performance. Similarly, building up many connections on LinkedIn may be of little use if you fail to leverage these connections to create new business. Always consider how you'll gauge the value of the effort you invest in social media.

Remember too what social media is—social. Too many companies use it as a one-way form of communication, like a corporate website, and fail to invite user comment or contribution. The more dialogue you can build with your customers, the more effective your use of social channels will be.

Engaging with your audience

How you communicate through social channels depends on your goals (see above). However, you should always:

- Post regularly: a media stream to which you contribute sporadically will soon dry up.
- Post interesting comments: try to encourage debate, comment, or likes, rather than making passive statements.
- Vary contributors for differing perspectives.
- Always respond to posts from users within a reasonable time frame.

58%
of adult users of social networks follow at least one brand



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