

Effective Communicator

The first step to becoming a more effective communicator is determining if you are making one of the four most common mistakes that are making communication difficult:

- › You talk too much.
- › You think you know everything.
- › You blame everyone except yourself.
- › You go straight to action.

Communicating Across Cultures

Studies show that participants in cross-cultural conversations understand only 7 percent of the actual message being conveyed. To help improve the understanding, try to be as patient, courteous and complimentary as possible. Other things to consider include:

- › Recap the conversation: Try to paraphrase what you heard and ask for clarification.
- › Use a dictionary: If you get stuck, refer to a pocket dictionary or electronic translator.
- › Learn foreign business practices: Including mannerisms, body language and customs.
- › Respect cultural differences: Don't judge others based on your own cultural standards.

Watch Your Tone

This is especially true with written communications because it's difficult for tone to be conveyed. When you e-mail someone:

- › Do not type in all capitals: It makes it seem as if you are shouting at the recipient.
- › Be careful with humor: It's hard to write sarcasm/other nuances of verbal communication.
- › Delete extra information: Keep messages brief and to the point.

Listen

Studies show that 70 percent of our communicating time is spent listening. Try these tips to improve your listening skills:

- › Listen enthusiastically: Give the person and his or her message your full attention.
- › Put emotions aside: Don't let anger or jealousy stand in the way of attentive listening.
- › Avoid distractions: Focus your attention on the person talking; maintain eye contact.
- › Listen with your entire body: Use appropriate body language to show the message is being received loud and clear.

Additional Information

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