

Principles of communication: seven pillars of business communication

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Swift, clear and precise communication is the foundation of any business operation. Quick, effective communication improves productivity, increases efficiency, and reduces redundancies. Whether you are emailing a colleague, pitching a client, or preparing for a job interview, strong communication skills will help you sell more, get more done, and land your dream job.

Below, we take a look at the seven principles of **communication** every business must follow:

1. Clarity

Clarity is the number one rule all business communication must follow. A message that leaves the reader scratching his head is a failed message. Clarity springs from a knowledge of the message (what you want to say), the method (how you want to say it), and the medium (what format do you want to say it in). A lack of insight in any one of these components is going to affect the effectiveness of your message.

2. Conciseness

Business communication is founded on the principles of brevity. There is little room for lyrical prose or academic loquaciousness. This applies to not just the length of your message, but also its contents. Try to use short sentences and short words. Avoid jargon and words that send the reader to the dictionary (unless you sell dictionaries!). Adopt this principle for intra-team as well as client focused communication.

3. Objectivity

Business communication must always have a purpose. This purpose must be apparent to any who glances through your message. Before you put a single word to paper, ask yourself: “what am I trying to achieve with this message?”. This will help you stay on course through the message creation process and effect a remarkable improvement in the message efficacy.

4. Consistency

Imagine that you’re reading a book that starts out as a serious medieval romance, turns into a supernatural screwball comedy around the half-way mark, before finally finishing as an avant-garde, high-brow literary exegesis. Without a doubt, such a book will leave you confused and even angry.

This is the reason why all business communication must have consistency of tone, voice and content. A humorous satire on one page, a serious explanation on another will alienate your readers. Although you can stray from the set tone from time to time – a few humorous jokes can help lighten the mood – the overall theme must remain consistent.

5. Completeness

Each message must have a clear and logical conclusion. The reader shouldn’t be left wondering if there is more to come. The message must be self-sufficient, that is, it must hold good on its own without support from other messages. This is particularly apt for blog posts which often end abruptly and leave the reader scratching his head.

6. Relevancy

Every message you send out must be contextually cohesive with previous/future messages. The message must also be relevant to your primary offering. A blog post about Kobe Bryant’s free-throw record followed by a webinar on inbound marketing will only leave

your readers confused. So make sure that everything you write in a business setting is contextually related and relevant.

7. Audience Knowledge

Lastly, your message must have a thorough understanding of your primary audience. Everything else – clarity, completeness, objectivity – results from your knowledge of your audience. Always know who you are writing for as it will influence the tone, voice and quality of your message. You can't write to a company's SVP the same way you would write to your colleague in the next cubicle, and you can't write to a client the same way you would write to a SVP.

Your message must reflect the age, education level, aims and objective of your audience. This is possible only if you thoroughly research your readers and can see things from their perspective.

Conclusion

Business communication is dramatically different from casual or literary communication. It has its own principles, objectives, language patterns. Mastering business communication will make you a more effective leader, increase your sphere of influence, and help improve workplace efficiency.