



How to communicate effectively and phrase a coherent and understandable message

Effective communication ¹

An effective communication message has three components: (1) owning feelings, (2) sending feelings, and (3) describing behaviour. **Ownership of feelings** focuses on “who owns the problem.” The sender of a message needs to accept responsibility for his or her own feelings. Messages that own the sender’s feelings usually begin with or contain the word “I.” Sometimes **communicating feelings** is viewed as a weakness. But the value of sending feelings is communicating honesty and openness by focusing on the problem and not evaluating the person. **Describing behaviour** concentrates on what one person sees, hears, and feels about another person’s behaviour as it affects the observer’s feelings and their behaviour. The focus is on specific situations that relate to specific times and places.

Effective and understandable messages ²

In order to send messages effectively, you should consider the following points:

- 1. Become aware of your thoughts and feelings.** Do not be quick to brand them “good,” “bad,” “wrong,” or “right.” Accept them as a reflection of the present “you,” and let them become best friends by giving support and feedback to your effectiveness and to your needs; consider what they are whispering or shouting to you. By increasing your awareness of your feelings, you can better decide what to do with them.
- 2. Feel comfortable in expressing your feelings.** Such expression, when congruent with the situation and appropriate, can enhance communication.
- 3. Be aware of the listener.** Try to verbalise your message in terms of the listener’s understanding and indicate why you feel the message is important to him or her. Does it have a specific significance for the listener, or is it just “general information”?
- 4. Focus on the importance of the message** and repeat key concepts and essential aspects of the information.
- 5. Use as few words as possible to state the message.**

Websites and social media ³

Social media communications flow between participants and organizations in one of three directions:

One-to-many – this is the traditional marketing broadcast model. Use it to get your message to the largest possible audience.

¹ <http://home.snu.edu/~jsmith/library/body/v06.pdf>, p. 35.

² <http://home.snu.edu/~jsmith/library/body/v06.pdf>, p. 70.

³ <http://heidicohen.com/social-media-communications/>.



Tips: use hashtags (#) to attract a broader audience, mention others in your comments, build relationships with influencers (those who comment, share or like your content).

One-to-one – this is the prime form of personal interaction. It’s a great way to reach out to people you already know. You can use this to contact people with whom you want to engage. But understand that you must be willing to provide value to the person with whom you’re seeking to connect.

Tips: use private messaging to engage people, be available when you first publish your content (especially to reply to comments and shares).

Many-to-many – this form of communications is unique to social media. Communications go in multiple directions concurrently among participants. Unlike other forms of communication, they can happen in real time or lapsed time. Participants respond when they’re interested and/or available.

Tips: monitor social media for brand mentions (reply to people who contact you on social media in short time).

Five key types of social media communications and how to use them:

- **Notices or status updates** – add keyword related hashtags to your status updates to broaden your audience.
- **Information distribution** – tailor your content to the specific social media platform; craft attention getting headlines; add social media bling (visuals).
- **Commentary** – be attentive and responsive on the social media entities where your audience engages; don’t feed the trolls.
- **Discussion** – participate and respond to participants who mention and contact you; target your interactions by letting followers know where the conversation is.
- **Messages** – respond promptly; provide recipients with a reason to respond.

Resources:

If you want to read more on social media communication:

http://samples.sainsburysebooks.co.uk/9781317680604_sample_660608.pdf



Speech⁴

There are four ways in which a speaker can deliver his or her information. One can speak from his head, commit every word to memory, read from a script or use a blended approach. Facts must be accurate. The message should be important, and the speaker must be engaging and well-groomed.

A good speaker will also think about the delivery method, or the way in which the speech will be conveyed to the audience. There are a few ways in which this is done:

Impromptu – this is a speech that has no advanced planning or practice. Reflecting back on your speech, you are probably thinking about what you could have done better. Your black eye may very well be the catalyst for your regret in making a choice of words. Well, lucky for you. If you are ever asked to speak before a crowd without advanced notice again, here are a few tips you can use: think for a second about what you are going to say, keep your points brief and to the point, take a few seconds between thoughts to compose yourself.

Extemporaneous – finding the right words without advanced notice may not be for every speaker. No need to worry. The extemporaneous speech is a perfect balance. This speech involves the speaker's use of notes and some embellishment to deliver a speech. To clear this up, a speaker who uses this method would have note cards or prompts that guide him or her from point to point, but the speaker uses their own words as they go along. What makes this different to an impromptu speech is that there will be loose guidelines for the speech. Nothing had to be memorised; cues were used to know where to go next.

Manuscript – the speaker reads every word from a pre-written speech. This seems easy enough. Well, if your audience enjoys a bedtime story, it may work. Reading directly from the pages of a script has its benefits. You won't miss a single word or important fact. The downside? It can be boring. Without eye contact, animation or movement on stage, the audience may become disinterested. This is especially true if the speech is about a drab topic.

⁴ <http://study.com/academy/lesson/types-of-speech-delivery-impromptu-extemporaneous-manuscript-and-memorized.html>