

Life Lessons

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#1 Skill of a Successful Person

Communication. The degree of success a person will achieve depends on the skill he/she has to communicate.

Just the other day a friend told me, "Don't send me text messages on the phone. I prefer you call." I took a note of that. I have another friend, who says, "Any time you want to 'talk' to me, just send me an email." People are different. Not everybody likes to communicate the same way. Here are the top tips in a nutshell for you.

General guidelines for Communication

1. Take **genuine interest** in the person you're talking to. Ask people about themselves and they'll talk for hours.
2. Make **eye contact**. It is the window to a person's heart.
3. Master the art of **listening**.
4. Use **body language**. Researchers say 70% of what you communicate is in the body language.
5. Ask the other person's **opinion** on the subject.
6. Speak in **short intervals**. Do not monopolize the conversation.
7. Be **enthusiastic** when you speak or listen to someone. Lean forward.
8. Be **curious** and show **empathy**.
9. Express your sense of **humor** and laugh at theirs (even if you've heard it before.)
10. Shut up. Harness the will to remain **silent** after you've asked a question.

Communicating by phone

1. **Prepare** before you call.
2. **Smile** and say something **positive**. It puts the person on the other side at ease.

3. Get **personal**. Give your name and ask for his/hers.
4. If you're making the call **ask permission**, "Do you have a minute or five to talk?"
5. Know and state the **purpose** of the call. "...the reason I'm calling is ..."
6. If you're receiving the call, **first, listen**.
7. **Agree** as much as possible. Never argue.
8. Ask **questions**. Understand before you seek to be understood.
9. End conversation on an **"up"** note.
10. Speak **clearly, slowly** and **repeat** your phone number if you leave a voice mail.

Communicating by Email/Letters

1. Make the email **subject line** clear and interesting. Otherwise it may not get read.
2. Stick to the **topic**. Multiple themes and requests get ignored. Better to send multiple emails.
3. **Reply** to personal emails. It confirms to the sender that you've received it and eliminate misunderstanding.
4. Keep your **inbox clean**. Reply, forward or delete message immediately.
5. Include the **previous message** when replying to questions for clarity.
6. Don't send **BCC** email to people in **CC**.
7. Do not send email when you can **communicate orally**.
8. Ask for **permission** before putting them on mass mail list, and offer a way to "unsubscribe."
9. If you are writing to a larger audience, pick one person you know and write to that person.
10. Add **signature** with your name and contact information.

Keep communicating!