

# Communication is not that easy!

*We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.*

— Epictetus, a Greek philosopher

**1. Discuss the questions.**

- What does the quote mean? Do you agree with it?
- When we communicate, what is more important: listening or talking?
- What are the qualities of a good communicator?
- What problems might occur when communicating with someone?

**2. Complete the table with words that go with these verbs. Some words can be matched to more than one verb.**

|                  |          |                  |           |           |
|------------------|----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| feedback         | thoughts | ideas            | confusion | meaning   |
| misunderstanding |          | miscommunication | message   | animosity |

|                |                  |                |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>receive</b> | <b>share</b>     | <b>grasp</b>   |
|                |                  |                |
| <b>prevent</b> | <b>interpret</b> | <b>lead to</b> |
|                |                  |                |

**3. Fill in the sentences with the correct form of the verbs from the table above and then discuss these points.**

- Asking people questions usually ..... miscommunication.
- One of the most common reasons that ..... misunderstandings is the use of complicated sentence structures.
- It only makes sense to ..... positive feedback as it keeps everyone happy.
- People with various knowledge, experience and cultural backgrounds ..... messages in a different way.

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4. Watch the first part of a [video](#) (to 3:10) titled “How miscommunication happens (and how to avoid it)” and choose correct answers.

- 1) The transmission model:
  - A. means that communication is a one-way process
  - B. involves communicating complex concepts
  - C. includes feedback from the other person
- 2) In the transactional model:
  - A. there is no exchange of information
  - B. just one person assigns meaning
  - C. people give and receive feedback
- 3) Perceptual filters....
  - A. improve communication by adding extra information
  - B. limit the number of messages we receive
  - C. change meanings and interpretation of messages we receive



5. Complete these rules of good communication with words from the box.

filters      gut      open      express      engage

**#1:** ..... actively with the verbal and nonverbal feedback of others, and adjust your message to facilitate greater understanding.

**#2:** Listen with your eyes and ears, as well as with your ..... . Remember that communication is more than just words.

**#3:** In the rush to ..... ourselves, it's easy to forget that communication is a two-way street. Be ..... to what the other person might say.

**#4:** Be aware of your personal perceptual ..... . Elements of your experience, including your culture, community, and family, influence how you see the world.

6. Watch the second part of the [video](#) (from 3:10) and check your answers in the previous exercise.

7. Discuss the rules above. What do they mean? How easy do you think it is to follow these rules?

**8. Discuss the questions.**

- Do you think that people tend to use too many words to communicate their ideas?
- What can we do to be better communicators?
- In what kinds of situations do you have to ask someone to rephrase what they've said?

**9. Match phrases to correct categories.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • In other words, ...                         | • To be more specific....                            |
| • I don't quite follow....                    | • Can you say that again?                            |
| • Can you elaborate on that?                  | • I don't get it...                                  |
| • I don't fully understand...                 | • Would you mind speaking more slowly?               |
| • Could you be more specific?                 | • So, you're saying that...                          |
| • I didn't catch that.                        | • If I understand you correctly...                   |
| • Could you repeat?                           | • Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're saying that... |
| • To put it another way...                    | • Let me clarify that...                             |
| • Just to be clear, you're suggesting that... |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| You want someone to clarify what they've said             | You didn't hear something                                      |
|   |  |
| You want to explain/clarify something you've already said | You want to check if you understand what someone has just said |
|   |  |

**10. What would you say in these situations? Use the expressions from the table on the previous page to complete these dialogues.**

- a) A: First, you need to know the nuts and bolts of running a business.  
B: .....  
A: It means that you need to know at least basic details about running a business.
- b) A: I'm going to finish this task soon.  
B: ..... . Everyone's waiting for you.  
A: Yeah, I'll finish by Friday.
- c) A: If you want to add a new vendor to the system, you have to click this button and type the vendor's details.  
B: That's it? I'm not sure if I know what to do. ....  
A: Ok, so you click this button and type your vendor's details. Remember that all fields should be filled in. Then, you click 'accept' in the top right corner. After a second, you'll see the information on your screen whether your form has been completed correctly or not. If not, you need to repeat the process.
- d) A: So, I asked her if she knows... and how about ... But she...  
B: I'm sorry, but I've just switched off. ....
- e) A: He wasn't really honest with us.  
B: .....  
A: Yes, he was a liar.
- f) A: Your name, please.  
B: Jane Kowalski. K – O – W – A – L – S – K – I.  
A: Sorry, ..... . Would you mind speaking more slowly?
- g) A: You should present the product, talk about all its advantages, give them the price and make sure they buy it.  
B: If I understand you correctly, I just need to sell it.  
A: Yeah, ....., just sell it.