



DON'T MAKE A HABIT OF FUMBLING THROUGH YOUR WORDS! GROOMING EXPERT DR DIVYA JAITLY TALKS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION. READ THROUGH TO PICK UP SOME INVALUABLE TIPS...



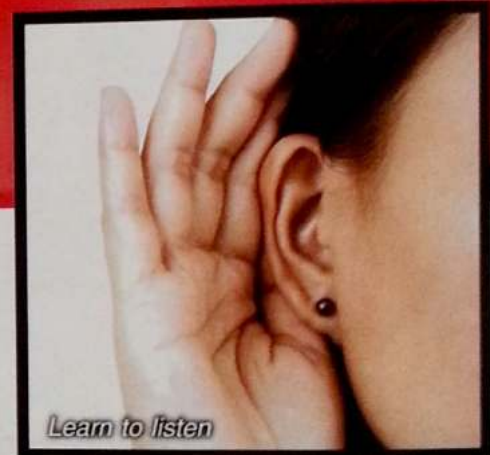
Avoid technology and maintain eye contact

“A barrier to communication is something that keeps meanings from meeting. Meaning barriers exist between all people, making communication much more difficult than most people seem to realize. It is false to assume that if one can talk, he can communicate. Because so much of our education misleads people into thinking that communication is easier than it is, they become discouraged and give up when they run into difficulty. Because they do not understand the nature of the problem, they do not know what to do. The wonder is not that communicating is as difficult as it is, but that it occurs as much as it does.”

—Reuel Howe (theologian and educator)



Practice will make you perfect - so have the confidence to say what you want to - even in everyday conversations



Learn to listen

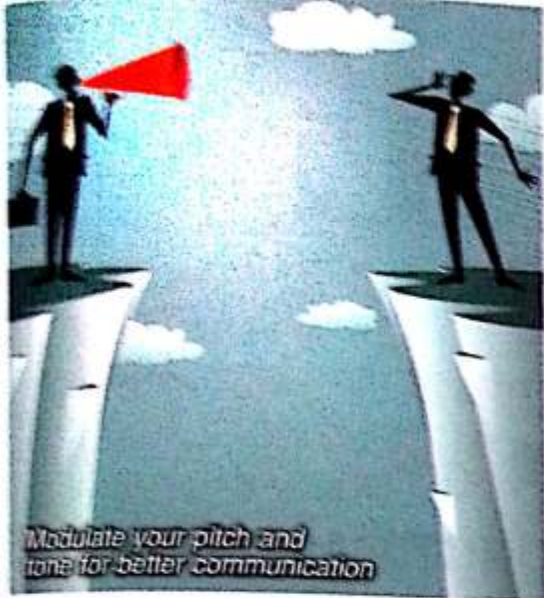
In this information age, we have to send, receive and process huge numbers of messages every day. However, effective communication is about more than just exchanging information... It is also about understanding the emotion behind the information! Effective communication helps us better understand a person or situation and enables us to resolve differences, build trust and respect and create environments where creative ideas, problem solving, affection and caring can flourish. It improves relationships at home, work and in social situations by deepening your connections to others and improving teamwork, decision-making, and problem solving. Undoubtedly, it is a combination of a set of skills including non-verbal communication, attentive listening, the ability to manage stress in the moment, and the capacity to recognize and understand the emotions of those whom you are communicating with.

As simple as communication seems, much of what we try to communicate to others—and what others try to communicate to us is sometimes misunderstood, which can cause conflict and frustration in personal and professional relationships. By learning these effective communication skills, you can connect better with your spouse, kids, friends and co-workers. While effective communication is a learned skill, it is more effective when it is spontaneous rather than formulaic. A speech that is read, for example, rarely has the same impact as a speech that is delivered spontaneously. Of course, it takes time and effort to develop these skills and become an effective communicator. The more effort and practice you put in, the more instinctive and spontaneous your communication skills will become.

The advantages of effective communication are manifold. So let us quickly take a look and understand the essential factors for acquiring captivating communication skills:

Have the courage to say what you think: Be confident in knowing that you can make worthwhile contributions to a conversation. Take time each day to be aware of your opinions and feelings so you can adequately convey them to others. Individuals who are hesitant to speak because they do not feel their input would be worthwhile need not fear. What is important or worthwhile to one person may not be to another and may be more so to someone else.

Practice will make you perfect: Developing advanced communication skills begins with simple interactions. Communication skills can be practiced



every day in settings that range from the social to the professional. New skills take time to refine, but each time you use your communication skills, you open yourself to opportunities and future partnerships.

Develop effective listening skills: Not only should one be able to speak effectively, one must listen to the other person's words and engage in communication on what the other person is speaking about. Avoid the impulse to listen only for the end of their sentence so that you can blurt out the ideas or memories in your mind while the other person is speaking.

Manifest constructive attitudes and beliefs: The attitudes you bring to communication will have a huge impact on the way you compose yourself and interact with others. Choose to be honest, patient, optimistic, sincere, respectful and accepting of others. Be sensitive to other people's feelings and believe in others' competence.

Concentrate on enunciations and pronunciations of your words: Speak clearly and do not mumble. If people are always asking you to repeat yourself, try to do a better job of articulating yourself in a better manner.

Use the right words and grammar: If you

are not sure of the meaning of a word, do not use it. Grab a dictionary and start a daily habit of learning one new word per day. Use it sometime in your conversations during the day and be equipped with right grammatical usage.

Develop your voice: A high or whiny voice is not perceived to be one of authority. In fact, a high or soft voice can make you sound like prey to an aggressive co-worker, or make others not take you seriously. Begin doing exercises to lower the pitch of your voice. Try singing, but do it an octave lower on all your favourite songs.

Get rid of unnecessary conversation fillers: 'Umm's, 'hmm's and 'aah's do little to improve your speech or everyday conversations. Cut them out to be more persuasive and appear more confident. One way is to start keeping track of when you say words like 'umm' or 'like'. You could also try taking your hands out of your pockets or simply relaxing and pausing before you speak.

Put away the distractions: It is extremely rude to use your phone while someone is talking to you, or when you are supposed to be hanging out with them. Maybe we cannot get rid of all our distractions or put away technology completely, but just taking the time to look up could vastly improve our communication with each other.

Be feedback oriented: Make sure that your listener has understood correctly by taking feedback. This will help you improve and adapt to various personalities in order to communicate effectively. Rather than blaming it on miscommunication, it is important that you widen your horizons and be ready to accept constructive criticism.

Impressive communication is fundamental to the optimum functioning of any organization and relationship. Its importance can never be over emphasized and it is one of the most critical factors to success, especially for women. Communication could be the single most time consuming activity if not done correctly and efficiently. A leader communicating well to his or her team saves time by avoiding multiple interactions and ensures productivity by being clear and specific on the goals! So why wait? Let's get talking! ◀