

Checklist – Top Tips: How to Improve Your Communication Skills

“The single biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has been achieved.”
George Bernard Shaw

Here are 9 ways to improve your communication skills:

1. **Understand and identify your own communication style.** The first step is to understand your own preferred communication style: the strengths of that style, and any possible weaknesses.
2. Identify the **communication style of others.**
3. **Adapt your style** to get better results. In [Social Styles](#), this is known as a ‘**style flex**’ – we adapt a temporary change in how we would prefer to communicate, in order to adapt to the other person’s preferred communication style.
4. **Be fully present** when you are with people. Stop thinking about yourself, and instead fully listen, and watch the other person. Non-verbally, we give huge cues out that great communicators pick up on, because they are *present* when they communicate.
5. **Actively listen** to people – good communicators speak less and listen more. There is an old expression, *“We have two ears and one mouth, so that we can listen twice as much as we speak”*. Epictetus, Greek Philosopher.
6. Become known as a **positive communicator**. Use positive expressions, such as *“I hear what you are saying...”*, *“This is what I can do...”* and *“Thank you for taking the time to let me know this...”*.
7. Know what outcome you are looking for from every communication situation – people who are **assertive**, and goals focused, tend to achieve more.
8. **Ask others for feedback on how you communicate.** If you chair a meeting, handle a difficult discussion, put your point forward in a team meeting – ask people how you come across, and if you can make any improvements.
9. **Evaluate your communications** with others, especially key stakeholders. Great communicators are always keen to *“make bad relationships good, and good relationships better”* (Bolton & Bolton).

[The Development Company](#) is a leading edge training company, dedicated to enable people to be the best that they can be. Communication is a key skill for life.

We design and deliver workshops, awaydays, virtual training sessions, and [courses](#) that get real results. We use Transactional Analysis, DiSC, and Social Styles, as models of communication.

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