

WIN/WIN Communication

Good communication is a lifelong learning process! The goal of effective communication is to make sure each person gets heard and basic needs are met -- a win/win solution. We've all know the satisfaction of effective communication and the frustration of poor communication or misunderstandings. In the business world, communication problems translate into lost opportunities.

Below are **10 tips** to improve YOUR communication:

- 1. Prioritize your communications** and enlist the help of all "gatekeepers" in getting you connected!
- 2. Compose a clear message.** Don't shoot from the hip! Think out and list the key points you need clarified. Work to eliminate vagueness.
- 3. Select the "best timing."** Consider when your *receiver* will be most receptive, and also the times you are at your best. Block interruptions during all important calls and meetings.
- 4. Listen carefully with an open mind.** Acknowledge what you hear and clarify their true needs and interests.

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5. Choose the best "channel." Should the issue be discussed by fax, letter, phone, e-mail, voice mail, memo or in person? The more complex the issue, the greater the need is for joint communication

6. Confirm delivery and understanding of your messages. When it's important, don't assume it got there or that they understood -- check it out!

7. Ask for and agree on response time frames. All of us have a hectic pace. Find out and negotiate agreeable time frames for the decision or next call to discuss options. *Immediately* write these on your schedule.

8. Expand the range of possible solutions. Whenever you feel under pressure or sense a major problem emerging, **STOP!** Take a break, think, and ask others for ideas. Maybe neither of you can see the forest for the trees!

9. Ask for feedback about your communication style and suggestions for improvements.

10. Celebrate successes! Acknowledge the satisfaction and good feelings that come with WIN/WIN! Thank your "partner" for his/her efforts with positive words, tone, and gestures. The next contact will be even better!