

FREE EBOOK:



how to improve oral communication skills





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Tag: how to improve oral communication skills, tips to improve communication skills, communication skills examples, mistakes in communication

1. Learn to listen

This is advice given in theatre and improvisation classes. If we expect you to react properly to what is said to you, then you have to give it the correct attention. The hard part is to be able to both focus both on listening and preparing your answer. If you don't want to forget an idea you just thought about when listening, you can ask for a moment, write it down quickly and focus back on your interlocutor. It can only lead to a healthier discussion.



**Don't wait
for opportunity.
Create it.**

Related post: CommunicationSkills365.info/13-tips-to-improve-your-listening-skills-for-better-communication

2. You have to over-communicate just to communicate.

**“Your career
is your business.
It's time for
you to manage
it as a CEO.”**

Dorit Sher

Wednesday - Sep 5, 2012 (6:34 pm)

In 1990, a graduate student at Stanford University was able to prove that presenters overestimate how much listeners understand. In a study that become known as “the tappers and the listeners,” one set of participants was asked to tap the melody of 120 famous songs. The other participants were asked to guess what song was being tapped.

Tappers estimated that 50 percent of the songs tapped would be correctly identified. In reality, only 2.5 percent of songs were correctly identified. This study shows that it is important to communicate clearly, and to over-communicate when sharing new ideas. As this study indicates, it is likely that the audience will fail to absorb as much as you expect.

3. Avoid relying on visual aids.



**“They may forget
your name, but
they will never
forget how you
made them feel.”**

- Maya Angelou

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Steve Jobs instituted a rule at Apple that banned all PowerPoint presentations. Similarly, Sheryl Sandberg instituted a PowerPoint ban at Facebook. Both leaders realized that PowerPoint presentations can hinder rather than help communication.

Be prepared to use words, compelling storytelling and nonverbal cues to communicate your point with the audience. Avoid using visual aids unless absolutely necessary.

4. Put Yourself in Other People's Shoes

You are strong when you
know your weaknesses.
You are beautiful when
you appreciate your flaws.
You are wise when you
learn from your mistakes.

Just imagine for a second that what is said to someone is said to you instead. How would you react? How would you feel in a certain situation? Understanding — or at least paying attention to — what your teammates can feel will help you at work everyday. This is called empathy, and I believe it's extremely useful when working in a team.

5. Try Humility

Knowing your
weaknesses

is as important as
oooooooooooooooooooo

knowing your
strengths

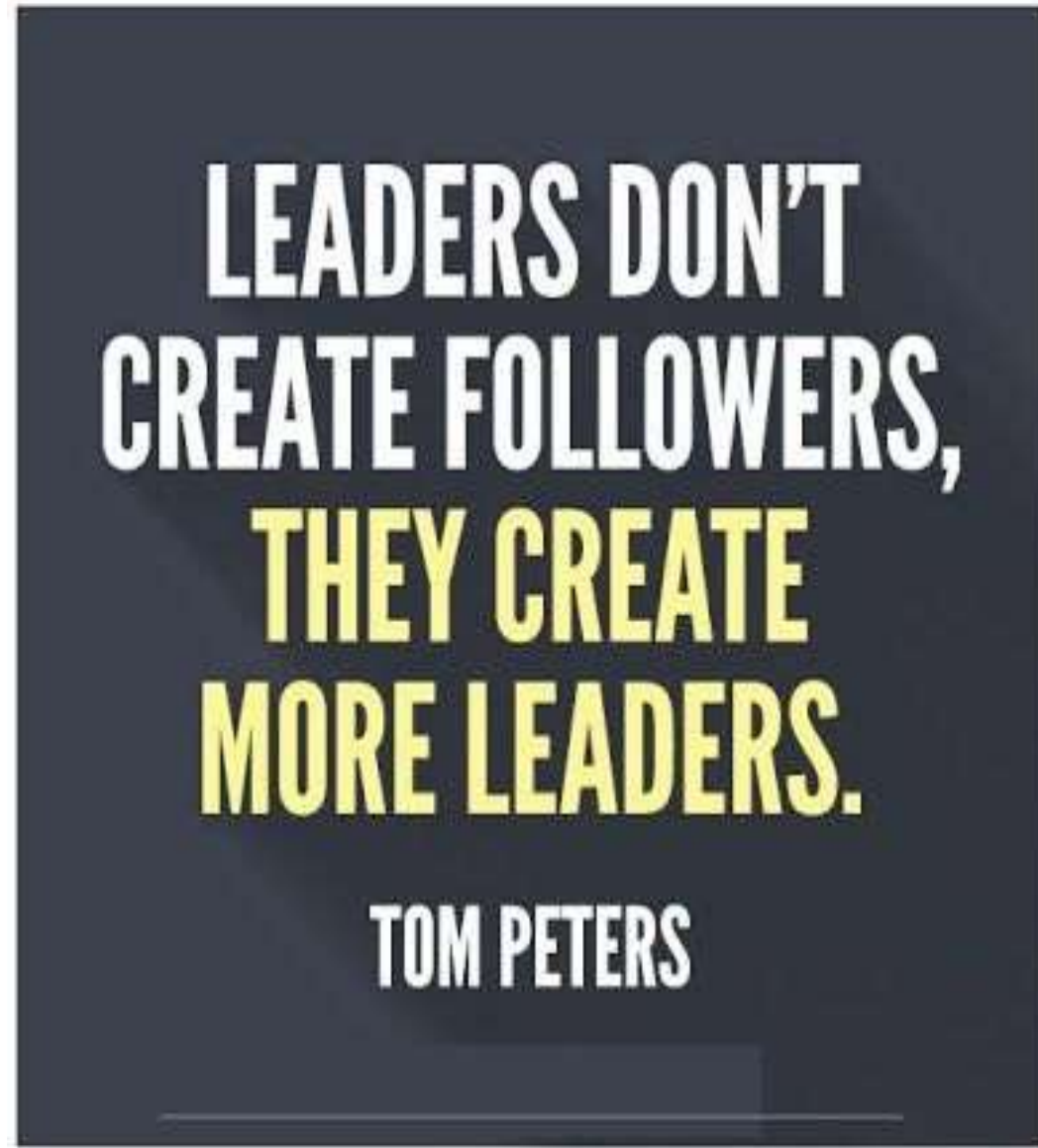
The Cookie Chronicles

We humans have a bad habit of trying to shine in the presence of others. Doesn't it feel nice to be recognized by your peers? To make everyone laugh at your jokes? To appear like an irreplaceable piece in the team? Certainly.

I want, however, to emphasize the problem with this particular character trait. To me, it creates an environment where everyone tries to accentuate his own success, whereas what really matters is the success of the team.

6. Ask for honest feedback

As with most leadership skills, receiving honest feedback from peers, managers and members of your team is critical to becoming a better communicator. If you regularly solicit feedback, others will help you to discover areas for improvement that you might have otherwise overlooked.



7. Engage the audience in discussion.



**STRENGTH
AND growth
COME ONLY
THROUGH
CONTINUOUS
EFFORT AND
STRUGGLE.**

Napoleon Hill

Regardless of how compelling the speaker is, all audiences have limited attention spans. To become a more effective communicator, make presentations and discussions interactive.

Ask the audience a question, encourage people to call out their thoughts during a brainstorming session or at the very least ask hypothetical questions to stimulate the audience.

Related post: CommunicationSkills365.info/14-ways-to-engage-your-audience-during-an-important-meeting

8. Don't Write, Talk

You probably can resolve issues over a written discussion, but how much time would you have wasted? Muster your courage, pick up your phone — or get up — and talk to people.

Sure, you really don't want to disturb programmers every other 5 minutes. If the issue at hand is not really urgent, you can still write a note so you won't forget your idea.



9. Accept the Fear

Do you fear to speak in public and do presentations? Who doesn't? Instead of thinking of as an unpleasant chore, try to consider it an opportunity to engage with people and share your knowledge. Anyway, focusing on your fears can only make them worse. Focus instead on what you have to say, and how important it is for your audience to know about it. How it can help them in their daily programmer life.

Success
isn't about how much
money you make;
—
it's about the
difference you make
in people's lives.

— Michelle Obama
First Lady of The United States

10. Start and end with key points.

WE DON'T GROW WHEN
THINGS ARE EASY; WE
GROW WHEN WE FACE
CHALLENGES.



Think back to the “tappers and listeners” study mentioned earlier. Clear communication is of paramount importance. To ensure that the audience understands the key takeaways from a presentation, reiterate key points at the start and finish. This can also be accomplished by providing attendees with a one-pager that includes key points the audience should consider throughout the presentation.

11. Use the PIP approach.

A common framework used by business experts like those at McKinsey is the purpose, importance, preview (PIP) approach to presentation introductions. Following this approach, the speaker first states the purpose of the presentation, and then shares why presentation is important by reviewing implications and possible outcomes.

Finally, the presenter gives a preview of the topics that will be discussed. This framework is a useful way to get audiences excited about the presentation, helping them to focus on your message and on key takeaways.

“Don't stop
when you're
tired. STOP
when you
are **DONE.**”

Unknown

12. Get to know your audience.

To communicate effectively, it is important to get to know your audience first. Each audience is different, and will have different preferences and cultural norms that should be considered when communicating. A good way to understand expectations is to ask members of the audience for examples of good communicators within the organization.

**WITHOUT POSITIVE
ATTITUDE, SUCCESS IS
CALLED LUCK.
BUT WITH POSITIVE
ATTITUDE, SUCCESS IS
CALLED
ACHIEVEMENT.**



13. Focus on earning respect instead of laughs.

"The greatest accomplishment is not in never falling, but in rising again after you fall."

Vince Lombardi

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It can be tempting to communicate with others in a lighthearted way; after all, this can be a good way to make friends in a professional setting. But remember that the most successful communicators are those who have earned respect, rather than laughs. While telling a joke or two to warm up an audience can be effective, avoid ending a presentation with a laugh.