

- **Give your attention** - When someone starts to talk to you, stop what you are doing and thinking. Face the person and devote your whole attention to what and how it is being said.
- **Listen, not just hear** - One of the keys to good communication is the willingness to listen for meaning in what the other person says and not just for the words. Watch facial expressions and body language.
- **Don't let your mind wander** - While the person is talking, do not think about your answer or response. Listen until the person is finished, then decide what you are going to say.
- **Check for accuracy** - When the person is finished talking, paraphrase back to the person what was said to you. If you heard right, then respond to that statement or question.
- **Be aware of other's needs** - You need to be aware of the needs of the other business associates. Each person has different needs that should be considered and respected. Although each of us has differing needs, all of us have a need for trust, responsibility, praise, security, sense of belonging, and recognition.
- **Ask, don't tell - demonstrate equality** - Do this by asking for advice or asking a person to do something. This shows you respect the other person as a peer or equal. Telling often implies a superior/subordinate relationship, such as boss vs. employee.
- **Keep an open mind** - Do not criticize, pass judgment, or preach. It is extremely important to learn to make objective evaluations about ideas, people, and situations. You are making a value judgment when you attach your values, beliefs, or needs to an appraisal.
- **Offer advice, don't give advice** - Learn to offer in-sights, advice, and expertise without being forceful. It is wrong to say "this is how you should handle it" or "this is what you should do." It is better to say "what do you think about this way," or "I suggest we...." However, sometimes it is not appropriate to even soft-pedal advice. You should offer it only if asked for.
- **Develop trust** - Trust is the product of open and honest communications. So it is important that good communication channels exist. Also, trust is an essential ingredient of teamwork. If trust exists among business associates, teamwork and cooperation are much easier to achieve.
- **Create feelings of equity** - People share a sense of equality if all parties are informed, trust exists, and work is based on cooperation. For business ventures to succeed, all the parties must feel that they are equals. If one party feels left out or feels like a subordinate, success becomes less likely.
- **Develop comfortable relations** - Tension and stress are normal in any relationship. However, the level of tension and stress can be reduced in businesses that develop teamwork and trust through open and honest communication.
- **Become genuinely interested in others** - All of us have a need to feel important and be understood. One of the ways we feel important is if others are interested in us. So talk in terms of the other persons' interests and try to understand another point of view. If we expect others to understand us, we must first understand them.
- **Motivate others** - There are several ways to motivate people. Both negative and positive reinforcement are effective. But in the long run, negative reinforcement like criticism or punishment often creates a desire for revenge. Too often we think of positive reinforcement as receiving more income, but other positive reinforcements that require little effort are praise, trust, interest, and recognition.
- **Keep a sense of humor** - Laugh at the goofy things that happen. Laugh off little annoyances. Smile at every opportunity. Seeing the humor in a situation can often defuse it.