

# Ten Guidelines to Good Communication

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1. I will be sure I understand what I want to say.
  - What is the real purpose of my message?
  - What do I expect the receiver to do?
2. I will clarify my ideas before I attempt to communicate them.
  - Can I accurately say what I want to say?
  - Am I interesting? Meaningful?
  - How many ideas should I include?
  - What is the minimum number of ideas I must get across?
3. I will state my message as simply as possible.
  - Is technical language imperative or would simpler language be better?
  - Will the words I use mean the same to the receiver as they do to me?
  - Will a picture or graphic help convey the message?
  - Have I been as brief as possible?
4. I will consider the entire environment affecting my communication.
  - What impression does my form of the message convey?
  - When and where will the message be received?
  - How will the time and location affect the interpretation?
  - Is it necessary to use several methods to get the message across?
5. I will be aware of the receiver.
  - Can I capitalize upon his/her known needs or interests to improve understanding?
  - Can I get the message from his/her viewpoint and understand it?
  - Am I telling the receiver all he/she needs to know?
6. I will consider the overtones of my message as well as the intended message.
  - Does the "tone" of the message say more than the basic content?
  - Can various interpretations of meaning cause my message to be misunderstood?
7. I will provide for and encourage feedback.
  - Can the receiver easily tell me what was understood?
  - Can he/she ask for more information?
  - How can someone report personal feelings/actions resulting from my message?
8. I will follow-up my communication.
  - When I finished my message, was it complete?
  - How will I know when it is complete, how successful it was, or what further steps I'll need to take?
9. I will be sure my actions support my communication.
  - Do I do as I say?
  - Does my body language support my message?
10. I will seek not only to be understood, but also to understand. I will be a good listener.
  - Do I concentrate when I listen?
  - Do I understand what the other person is really saying?
  - Am I listening or just hearing?
  - What feedback should I give the message I hear?