EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

SOFT SKILLS ESSENTIALS

FOR EVERYDAY USE





For Team Members and Leaders

Effective Communication Skills

for Everyday Use Soft Skills Essentials

Sample Content Only Not the Full Book



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Looking forward to a Lifelong relationship.

Rishi Sehdev

Managing Director
DewSoft Operations
rishi.sehdev@planetdewsoft.com
www.dewsoftacademy.com, www.planetdewsoft.com

The Best Ten of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi;



- Live as you were to die tomorrow, and Learn as if to live forever.
- 2. Be the Change you want to see the world, You are in Control.
- 3. An ounce of Practice is much more than a ton of Preaching.
- 4. Glory lies in the Attempt to reach the goal, and not in reaching it.
- 5. Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from indomitable will.
- 6. A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks, he becomes.
- 7. Take care of this moment, without action, you aren't going anywhere.
- 8. Be Persistent, Continue to Grow and Evolve.
- 9. I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.
- 10. Work is Worship.

~ Mahatma Gandhi



Preface

Communication is the Key to virtually everything meaningful in our everyday lives. Be it personal, professional, family, social, institutional or any other sphere, Effective Communications build Successful Relationships which ensures open access to people, situation and assists in understanding the subject or matter at hand and guides us ways to deal with the same.

Communication involves people, who have their individual thought process, and reactions to any given situation, or proposal, nurtured by their upbringing and/or environment they have lived in. While some may absorb your viewpoint, others may reject it outright. A very little percentage of people will actually accept your perspective on the first go. These are usually people who have a fair idea of you, your approach towards different things, and your proposal.

So effective communication is a culmination of personal and professional skills, that include body language, attitude, knowledge and awareness and above all your willingness to participate with a positive mindset.

Many books have been written on the subject ever since the literary world evolved to make it possible for mankind to communicate with each other effectively; respectful, and to the point.

This workbook is designed to introduce you effective communication, primarily intended for everyday usage. Its purpose: To provide everyone some basic guidelines for talking with and getting along effectively, something we all essentially need to learn.

It includes tools, tips and guidance for effective communication; how to use those tools to communicate successfully in specific situations; how to control anger when dealing with irate people; how to develop and use good telephone habits to ensure effective communication with everyone; and how a good leader communicates with his team.

These interpersonal skills will help you in your personal and professional interactions with people.

Please feel free to check for free upgrades at www.dewsoftacademy.com. This may include worksheets, exercises, simulations related to this and many more subjects designed to make your life easy.

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Rishi Sehdev Managing Director

DewSoft Operations

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"The single biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

~ George Bernard Shaw

1-Introduction

Everyone uses interpersonal communication skills. We use them at home with our families, in the workplace with our bosses and coworkers, on our computers when we answer email, and on the telephone when we order pizza or make a sales call. This manual is intended to help you improve your interpersonal communication skills and develop new skills to become a more effective communicator.

Interpersonal communication applies to all of our relationships, personal and business. Others respect or reject us based on our interpersonal communication skills. People send us messages in every interpersonal communication encounter. Those messages can be explicit (verbal comments) or implicit (nonverbal facial expressions, other body language, and physical space).

Remember Communication is infectious. It spreads around amongst the people that you work with silently, and becomes a way of life. So how you set these standards is purely upto you. No matter what your belief, the acceptable global norm is Soft toned, local cultural, easy going, short and simple, direct as much possible, clear to understand, and mutually respectful, all of which we shall study and learn in the following pages

How you communicate will be replicated by people around you. You will see reflection of your communication style all round you. So remember to set these standards for yourself, before you expect them in others.

DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION

Communication can be defined in many ways. In simple terms communication is:

- Information transmitted
- A verbal or nonverbal message
- A process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior.

KEY ELEMENTS IN COMMUNICATION

There are three key elements in the communication process, which will be referred to later in interpersonal communication. They are:

- You
- Your audience
- Your message

You can bring professional touch to the communication process. You can earn credibility with your team, management, the prospects, the public, the media, and your fellow workers.

In order to be an effective communicator, you need to know who your AUDIENCE is. If your audience is a Networker, or a Direct Seller, you can comfortably talk about "flush outs, spillovers, weekly payouts, closing, direct sponsor, indirect sponsor, eligibility" etc. If your audience is ordinary public or your board members, you need to switch from technical jargon to "plain English/Hindi/local language" incorporating examples which the audiences understand. The principles of effective interpersonal communication are the same whether your "audience" is one person, ten people, or one thousand.

The MESSAGE element is equally important. What do you want to say? What is the best way to communicate the message? There is a basic rule used by journalists for writing a newspaper story that can help you focus your message. A well-written story should contain *the who*, what, when, where, why, and how of the story in the first paragraph or two. If it does not, it will not hold our attention.

The same principle applies to your message in the process of interpersonal communication. If you do not let your audience know quickly *the who, what, when, where, why, and how* of your message, you risk their losing interest, being inattentive, and tuning out.

Therefore, whether spoken or unspoken, messages should contain most of these elements:



COMMUNICATION TOOLS

There are four basic communication tools:





• Reading

W. Writing

All four of these basic tools can be learned and improved. First, you must want to improve your communication skills. Next, you must understand them, and recognize their importance in the communication process. Then, you need to learn some new skills. Finally, you must practice good skills to become a better, more effective communicator.

At an early age we begin to learn to speak, early enough that it is difficult to remember the process. However, most of us can recall learning to read and write. These are skills we learn from parents and teachers. We spend most of our communication time listening. Yet, listening is a skill we are not taught, unlike writing, reading, and speaking. Probably, listening is the most important communication skill we can develop. We will explore listening skills in Chapter 2.



"Write to be understood, Speak to be heard, Read to grow."

~ Lawrence Clark Powell

HOW WE GET AND USE INFORMATION

How much information we retain in the communication process depends on many factors. It is important for each of us to recognize how we learn best. Do we remember most of what we read? Most of what we hear? Do we learn more if someone shows us?

Typically, we retain information at these rates:

- 10 percent of what we read
- 20 percent of what we hear
- 30 percent of what we see
- 50 percent of what we see and hear
- 70 percent of what we see and discuss
- 90 percent of what we do

Another way to think about how we retain information is this adage (wise saying):

Tell me and I will probably forget, Show me and I might remember, Involve me and I will learn.

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal messages are unspoken and more difficult to interpret than verbal messages, but are just as important. This is particularly true when you think that someone is saying one thing and showing body language that tells a different story. Nonverbal cues are often neglected during interpersonal communication. We will explore them in Chapter 4.

A type of unspoken communication is writing. Communication in writing is powerful and lasting. Whether you write a letter, a memo, or an email message, written communication can be recalled word for word. Spoken communication is often misquoted and misremembered. Writing lasts a long time. So, think carefully about written communication. We will explore these skills in Chapter 3.

APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

In Chapters 1 through 4 this manual will concentrate on basic communication skills, how to identify them, and how to improve them. In Chapters 5 through 7 discussion will involve applying these skills to dealing with the public, the workplace, and governing boards.

Change involves risk. It takes one to three months to establish a new habit. Be brave! Make the commitment to try one new communication skill, to practice it, to give yourself a chance to improve. Take a big step; you cannot climb a mountain in a short sprint. You have to be regular, enduring, disciplined and above all a believer that you can get there.

Communication skills CAN be learned. You decide, whether or not you want them or not.

To record your progress of this course use the personal development planner mentioned in Appendix A



"The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said."

~ Peter Drucker

2-Oral Communication

LISTENING SKILLS: BARRIERS, IMPROVEMENTS AND TIPS

Say what you mean, and mean what you say!

We have all heard that from time to time. Trying to understand the difference between what is said and what is heard can be frustrating. Consider these two examples.

Husband: "I don't want to be late again." [what is said]

Wife: "Did you mean we should leave earlier than 5:00?" [clarifying question]

Husband: "No, but you always say you'll be ready on time, and we never are." [what was meant]

Teenager: "All my friends are allowed to stay out late." [what is said]

Mom: "Just because all your friends are, doesn't mean you should." [what is heard]

Teenager: "Why can't I stay out later?" [what was meant]

Mom: "How late do you want to stay out?" [clarifying question]

Teenager: "At least until 11:30. Then I won't be the first one leaving the party." [what was meant]

Listening is really where all good communication begins. Misunderstanding what another person is saying is one of the biggest obstacles to communication. Each of us sees the world in a unique way, and we usually assume that everyone sees it the same way we do.

Most people are born with good hearing, but not good listening skills. Listening must be learned. Listening is a mental process requiring effort, and we can learn how to be

good listeners. First, we need to understand what the barriers are to good listening skills. Then, we can identify ways to improve those skills.

WHY WE DON'T LISTEN WELL

We are busy people. There is much that competes for and distracts our attention, both at work and at home. We may arrive at work in the morning worried about an ill child at home. Or we may arrive at work with a full agenda in our heads, only to learn that our priorities have been rearranged for us. At the end of the day we leave work full of goals for the next day, and arrive home unable to turn off the ideas. At home our family or chores demand attention. And so the cycle goes.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Here are some barriers to effective listening. You'll probably recognize that most of them apply to you at one time or another.

- We can think faster than a speaker can talk, and jump to conclusions.
- We are distracted and allow our minds to wander.
- We lose patience, and decide we are not interested.
- We overreact to what's said and respond emotionally.
- We interrupt.

Other barriers include use of "absolutes" and "limits":

- Thinking or speaking absolutes: "It will <u>never</u> work" "We <u>always</u> do it that way"
- Setting limits: "We tried it that way once!"

HOW TO BE A BETTER LISTENER

There are some simple steps to becoming a better listener, but they take practice to achieve results. Here are some ways to listen better whether in a large group or one-to-one.

In a large group situation, such as a lecture or training session, try these exercises:

- Be patient for the entire message
- Be aware of speech cues (who, what, where, when, why, how)
- Listen for ideas, not just facts (stories, reasons, goals help us remember facts)

Watching Exercise

Watch carefully any of the CD/DVDs that you have received with this package, or otherwise and make notes on "who, why, what, when, where and important contents of the same.

Watch the DVD or listen to the same lecture/presentation repetitively, you will realize every time you will find new notes and view points. This is the first process to inculcate listening habit.

Try the following guidelines when talking with someone on the telephone or face-to-face. Practice these for a week or two and you will soon realize that they work.

Verify:

"So, you're saying that..."

"If I understand correctly, you said...'

Question:

"What do you mean when you say...?"

"Have you really spent...?"

Acknowledge:

Look at the speaker and nod

Occasionally say, "hmmm" or "oh, right"

Silence:

This allows you to give your undivided attention to the other person. You may give some non-verbal cues that you are hearing, such as nodding your head, smiling, opening or closing your eyes. This method is especially useful when people come to you with strong feelings, either positive or negative. Their first need is simply to share the feelings and to have someone listen.

Encourage:

"Tell me more"

"Would you like to talk about it?"

"Want to have lunch and talk?"

Tips

It is estimated that we use only about 25 percent of our listening capacity. Here are three tips to help you increase your ability to listen by 50 percent:

• Look at the speaker (benefit = 15 percent)

• Ask questions (benefit = 15 percent)

• Take notes (benefit = 20 percent)

Improvement occurs only if you practice these good listening skills. Try one of them for about three months. It takes at least that long to create a new habit. If you are a good list taker already, then practice asking questions to clarify what you hear. Avoid trying to implement all three tips at the same time. Success with one new habit will encourage you to try others.

Hearing is natural. Listening is a skill that we learn. Remember: we listen more than any other human activity except breathing!

• Listening Exercise

Listen carefully to the Audio book or lecture or seminar presentation and make notes on "who, why, what, when, where and important contents of the same.

"Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."

~ Stephen R. Covey

SPEAKING SKILLS:

WHAT TO SAY AND HOW TO SAY IT

ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking questions is part of being both a good listener and an effective speaker. Part of developing good listening skills is learning how to ask questions to verify messages and to clarify understanding.

There are many ways to ask questions. Some are designed to clarify the message you are receiving. Others are designed to get more information.

<u>Close-Ended Questions</u> are designed to clarify, and can be answered with a "yes" or "no" response. Here are some examples:

- Would you like your children to get better education?
- Do you want to spend more time with your family and friends?
- Do you want to make some more money working part time?
- Have you written your wish list?
- Do you believe in writing your goals and following them?
- Have you understood the proposal and it's benefits?
- Did you go to the website to check additional information?
- Can we provide you with more information on the proposal?
- Did you show the plan today?
- Are you the decision making person for yourself?
- Do you want to go for an expenses paid 3 day holiday to Thailand?

These kind of questions are great if your counterpart (the person that you are communicating with) is guarded, shy or speaks less. It helps you to understand his requirement without him losing the guard.

Remember speak slow. Give time between questions, it should not be like an interview, it has to be communication. Ask relative question following the previous question or reply received. There is another book called "Preparing for Opportunity" from DewSoft, which talks about these practices in detail.

Remember the idea is to build a connection for the purpose of streamlining communication.

<u>Open-Ended Questions</u> are designed to get more information, and cannot be answered by a simple "yes" or "no." Here are some examples:

- What do you think about your children getting better education?
- Do you think of making extra money?
- What do you think about the proposal?
- How can we provide you better service?
- What do you think about an all expense paid 4 day family holiday?
- Do you think about social recognition?
- Do you ever think of owning a beautiful house(any other need based materialistic thing)?
- Do you think your current work will help you achieve your dreams?
- If this is not the plan to achieve your dream then what is?
- *How do you plan to handle this situation?*

- How can we improve the program to make it more suitable for you?
- Do you have enough security, surety about your life?
- Are you intellectually and financially satisfied?
- Do you think you do better given an opportunity?

Another questioning technique is called the <u>One-Point</u> <u>Solution</u>. The characteristics of the "one-point solution" are the following:

- Identifies an urgent concern
- Focuses on one issue at a time
- Forces a choice
- Leads to a specific solution

When using the "One-Point Solution" to ask a question, you can use several words, such as "one" or "best" or "top or "most immediate", "next", "begin". They all have the same characteristics. Here are some examples of "one-point solution" questions:

- What is the <u>one</u> thing that you need to achieve your goals?
- What is your <u>top</u> priority in life?
- What is your <u>most immediate</u> target?
- What is the <u>one</u> thing we can do to increase our customer satisfaction?
- What is our <u>top</u> priority this week?
- When is the <u>best</u> time to conduct a presentation seminar?
- *Now that you achieved this, what comes <u>next?</u>*
- When is the <u>best</u> time to conduct a follow up?

- When/Where should we <u>begin</u> marketing in schools, Colleges?
- Who is the <u>one</u> person who would be interested in our proposal?
- Who is the <u>best</u> person in my team, who can work with me accomplish my dreams?
- Who is the next in command?

We'll see how the "one-point solution" can help resolve conflict and disagreement later in this chapter.

A type of question to avoid is the "**loaded**" question. This means that the person asking the question "loads" the expected answer into the question. The response expected is presumed within the question. The classic example is:

When did you stop <u>chewing</u> tobacco?

The question presumes that you chew tobacco!

Here are some other examples:

- Don't you think we should <u>confirm</u> with the company, before finalizing the design for the backdrop?
- So when do I pick up the <u>payment</u> for the subscription activation?
- You think your personality has <u>improved</u> using DewSoft package?
- What do you think about this <u>amazing</u> book?
- Aren't the DVD and the Book that I gave you last week <u>just</u> <u>the thing</u> we need?
- Don't you think the Prime Minister's speech yesterday was <u>clumsy</u>?
- What do you think of that new thriller movie Race?

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Mr. Rishi Sehdev

Managing Director

www.dewsoftacademy.com

About the Author

Mr. Rishi Sehdev is a first generation writer, motivational trainer, speaker, academician, and very successful Entrepreneur, acclaimed of setting up DewSoft as one of the pioneers of education and training across the world.

Realizing the need for effective communication skills, this book will come in handy for Individuals and Institutions who believe in working in team spirit.

This book is one of the many topics he's writing to address the gap in Essential Soft Skills required to compete in the Industry. Happy Enhancing...

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- Communication Tools

Oral Communication

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- Listening Skills
- Speaking Skills

Written Communication

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- Faxes, Websites, eMail

Nonverbal Communication

- Behavior, Body language
- Attitude, Space
- Mind & Body Balance

Communications with Public

- Public Relations and How to use it?
- Customer Service, Complaints

Communication in Workplace

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