

42 Tips on Effective Communication

Are you a good communicator? Are you able to listen effectively, impart information, and advocate seamlessly for your clients? Do you pick up the nuances of non-verbal communication, especially when body language disagrees with the spoken word? In any facet of life, communication skills are important—to exchange information, solve issues, and build relationships. Here is a list of communication tips and pointers that will hopefully allow you to be an effective communicator:

1. Being a good communicator means you can advocate for client.
2. Communication involves listening, speaking, writing, and discerning non-verbal cues.
3. Professional communication must be articulate, succinct and error free.
4. Communication is crucial for the exchange of information, to learn, and to build relationships.
5. Key attributes include professionalism, empathy, and preparedness.
6. Add in politeness, confidence, focus, and active listening.
7. Good listening includes eye contact, focus, and not interrupting!
8. Tone matters—whether speaking or writing!
9. Aim to speak at a moderate pace, in an even tone, and concise manner.
10. Use words and language your client will understand!
11. Mirror words back to your client, or paraphrase as needed to clarify a point.
12. Be mindful of cultural issues and know that certain expressions or tone may mean something else to others.
13. Work to connect with your client. Repeating their name shows your awareness of who they are. For example: "Mrs. Singh, could you repeat that again please."
14. Start interviews with open ended questions so the client can tell their story, then narrow the questions to get needed answers.

15. Non-verbal communication includes gestures, body language, facial expressions, sounds and closeness (personal space).
16. Learn to discern non-verbal cues and understand what they mean. Do your client's words agree with their body language?
17. Effective communication includes understanding the cues of the client.
18. Pay attention to your own behaviour. Notice your gestures and tone.
19. Observe others and note their non-verbal actions. Look for patterns to aid in understanding.
20. Don't misjudge cues. A weak handshake doesn't mean someone is timid. It may mean they have arthritic hands!
21. Excellent writing is fundamental to written communication.
22. Written communication provides an opportunity to elevate the client's situation and, demonstrates your knowledge and credibility.
23. It is important to know what you are writing about. Research, purpose, and direction are critical.
24. Remember the 4 C's—clear, concise, courteous, and complete.
25. Logical flow and smooth delivery are key in writing submissions.
26. Shape your ideas with original thought and avoid clichés! Choose your words wisely—keep a thesaurus handy!
27. Be direct and not overly wordy (or pompous!)
28. Write, edit, write, revise, and wait 24 hours before sending that big submission.
29. Grammar and spell check is your best friend. Seriously!
30. Persuasive writing means having structure and laying a road map, leading the reader to the decision you are wanting (hopefully).
31. Identify relevant issues and showing your client merits consideration. Negative factors should be addressed and aim to mitigate those issues.

32. Think of your legal request as the "thesis" and have a strong affirmative statement communicating the position being taken.
33. Ensure your written work is succinct and to the point. Detail may be needed but must be done in such a way not to lose the reader.
34. Stay on point, be clear and concise, use impactful language, be comprehensive, and make your arguments easy to follow.
35. Use headings and subheadings to break down issues and help guide the reader.
36. Write with confidence! Proofread, proofread, and proofread (oops did you catch that error?)
37. Can't say it enough—be succinct, professional, direct.
38. Know your audience, identify your purpose, have a plan, listen actively, speak clearly, use appropriate body language, and be approachable!
39. Practice speaking in front of mirror. Record yourself on Zoom. Take speaking or writing courses.
40. Avoid rushed or slow pacing, uncontrolled emotion, loss of focus, inconsistency, and interrupting.
41. Answer the phone with a smile. Be welcoming and friendly, while maintaining professionalism.
42. Look confident. Pull back your shoulders, sit up straight and know that you got this!