

Workplace Communications Tips

In the workplace, you have internal and external clients. Your team members, co-workers, supervisors, managers, and employees are your internal clients. Of course, your customers are your external clients.

When communicating with all of your clients, focus on giving them the information and feedback they need, in a clear and concise manner. Use the following tips to guide you:

- ▶ **Choose the appropriate method of communication:** How you communicate depends on the situation and the receiver's preferences. A quick email may do the job when sending a brief bit of information, but for longer discussions you may need to pick up the phone and make an actual call.
- ▶ **When you are speaking to someone in person, consider:**
 - **Tone of voice:** Sometimes sarcasm, boredom, frustration, or another negative emotion will slip into our tone of voice. When we are tired or, let's face it, exasperated, it is difficult to keep that in check in our conversation. Take a deep breath, focus on giving your customer a great experience, and use a positive tone of voice ... always.
 - **Eye contact:** When speaking with clients, when possible, look them in the eyes. Don't stare, of course! Also maintain reasonable eye contact when listening to them as they speak to you.
 - **Body language:** We give a lot away with our body language. Be aware of what you are doing with your hands, arms, and the rest of your body when interacting with a client.
 - **Active listening:** Listen to understand and engage, rather than simply listening to respond. We tend to think too much about what we are going to say and then we miss the important points that are being conveyed by others in conversation.
- ▶ **Mind your manners:** Remember the basics - please, thank you, yes ma'am, yes sir - in verbal and written communications. In every interaction, make sure your clients know you appreciate them.
- ▶ **When sending a written message, proofread!** Read, re-read, and proofread your message for typos and grammatical errors - and for content that could potentially be misinterpreted.
- ▶ **Think about the receiver.** Why do you communicate? You are relaying information, giving instructions, asking questions, presenting a proposal, or even just expressing your opinion **to another human being.**

Always think about the human on the other end of your communication!