

Career

Development Toolkit



Use these strategies for effective communication, both in written and verbal form.

Written Communication

- Manners: Use titles and last names, avoid slang
- Be concise
- Choose text carefully and proofread before sending
- Respond to messages in a timely manner.

Verbal Communication

- Be conscious to let others speak and listen when they do.
- Maintain eye contact, smile, nod
- Pay attention to others' body language.
- Summarize or reflect on what is discussed to close the conversation.

Preemployment

Employers evaluate your communication skills at each phase in the pre-employment process. Below are some of the ways you can demonstrate your communication skills:



Application/Resume

Written communication



Cover Letter

Written communication, Attitude



Networking Events

Listening, Verbal Communication, Empathy



Interview

Verbal Communication, Listening, Attitude



Thank You Note

Listening, Written Communication, Attitude

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Listening

Pay attention to what others are saying and try to understand why they are saying it. You should be able to repeat or paraphrase what someone else says to you if you are listening well.

“I” Statements

Share opinions by stating “I think” or “I feel.” This allows you to share ideas with others without sounding accusatory. This also helps you make statements that others cannot refute.

Attitude

Maintaining a positive attitude as much as possible shows supervisors you are flexible and coworkers that you are helpful and friendly. Positive attitudes also help influence others.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand how others feel. Many work environments involve close work with other people. Being able to anticipate their emotions can help you stand out at work.

Improving Communication Skills

1. Put yourself in positions in which you might meet new people. This could involve participating in community activities, joining a club, attending a networking event, or any other opportunities where you can speak with people you do not know well.
2. Think of someone you believe is social and try to replicate the ways they interact with others. What body language do they use? How do you know they are listening?
3. Listen to feedback from others. Practice implementing the advice that they give you.
4. Before attending a social function, think of interesting facts to share. That way you are prepared to talk with people that you do not know.