



# Communicating with Peers and Supervisors

## What is Communication?

Communicating comes in different types. It is used every day. It can be with family and friends. Or with schoolmates and teachers. Or even your dog and cat. Speaking clearly will help to fully know what someone is sharing with you. This makes it one of the most important tools you'll use.

## What is communicating?

To share information. To share ideas. To share concerns with others. To know what someone means.

## What are the different forms?

**Verbal** is a form. It means talking. So is **written**. **Body language** can also tell you something.

1. What's a good time to have a conversation? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What's a bad time to have a conversation? \_\_\_\_\_

Talking, writing an e-mail, waving your hand, or a smile are kinds of communication. We use these and other styles to share thoughts, ideas or feelings with people or groups of people. But just because we do these daily doesn't make them simple.

Here are some tips to help build good communication skills:

- **Respect** the other person. Being mean can quickly stop the message from being heard.
- Make **eye-contact**. Do this while talking and listening. It will help keep the other person's attention.
- Don't **interrupt**. It's rude and won't let others finish their thought.
- Be **clear** about what you are saying. Try changing how you say things if your message isn't heard, or fully understood.
- Another big point is **timing**. Sometimes the other party isn't paying attention, is distracted or preoccupied. It might be best to wait for them, or come back at a later time.



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## Non-Verbal Communication

There are lots of ways to talk with others. You can get your message across without even saying a word. This is called non-verbal communication. These are gestures, facial expressions and eye contact. This type can set the tone for an entire chat. Do you walk into your boss' office with crossed arms and a dirty look? If so he will assume you are mad about something.

Non-verbal communication can help repeat the message that is spoken. It can change a message altogether. They can replace spoken words. For example, a person's eyes can send a bigger message than words. They can add to a spoken message. Like a pat on the back while saying "Good job!" They can underline a spoken message. Like pointing to something.

**Help Ryan:** Ryan thinks that he gets along with his work mates. But his work mates would say he is scary. They say his eyes are overpowering. And if he shakes your hand, he lunges. Ryan is a caring guy who secretly wishes he had more work friends. But his non-verbal ways keep people away.

Circle all the **actions** that would help Ryan improve his body language.

<b>Whisper</b>	<b>Talk Quick</b>	<b>Lower Shoulders</b>	<b>Frown</b>	<b>Whistle</b>	
<b>Smile</b>	<b>Cry</b>	<b>Listen</b>	<b>Scream</b>	<b>Interrupt</b>	<b>Relax</b>

## Team Building Exercise

*What you will need:* Popsicle sticks and glue.

*What you will do:* Get into groups of 4. Two will be the bosses. Two will be the workers. You will need to build a bridge out of Popsicle sticks. The bosses will give the directions to the workers. But there is a catch! You cannot talk. You can use eye contact, pointing, hand and facial gestures, and body language. Try this for 10 minutes then have the bosses and workers switch places.

1. Was this activity hard?
2. Were there times when the workers did not understand what you were trying to say? What went wrong?