

COMMUNICATION

"Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something."

Plato, ancient-Greek philosopher

1. Communication Discussion

1. What makes effective communication?
2. What are some barriers to effective communication?
3. Are you a good listener? Which do you think is more important - listening or speaking?
4. How important is non-verbal communication?
5. Think of a good communicator and explain why they are so good at communicating. What qualities do they have?
6. Do you prefer to communicate with your colleagues face-to-face, by email or on the phone? What about your business contacts outside of the company?
7. Do you spend too much time reading and sending emails? How could this be avoided?
8. Do you have to communicate in English at work? How do you feel about this?

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2. Communication Vocabulary

- **to bring someone up to speed** (verb) – *to provide someone with the latest information/an update.*
- **to get to the point** (verb) – *to prioritise talking about the most important thing.*
- **(to put it) in a nutshell** (phase) – *to summarise the main facts in a short, clear way.*
- **(to be / to keep someone) in the loop** (phrase) – *to have access to, or to give someone access to, special/group information.*
- **(to be) all ears** (phrase) – *willing to listen.*
- **(to be) like talking to a brick wall** (phrase) – *to have difficulties communicating with someone because they are unwilling to listen.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. It would take me all day to explain the details, but_____, the company made record losses and is likely to go bust.
2. Anytime you need to talk, I'm_____.
3. I was away all last week; can you_____with where we are at with the project?
4. Kenneth never listens when I try to explain something to him; it's_____.
5. We don't have all day; please just_____!
6. It's important that we all know what's happening; we all need to be kept_____.

Vocabulary comprehension questions

1. When might you need to bring people up to speed?
2. When is it important to get straight to the point?
3. How would you describe yourself in a nutshell?
4. What's the best way to keep someone in the loop?
5. When should you be all ears?
6. When have you felt like you were talking to a brick wall? Why?

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3. Communication Conversation Questions

1. Do you agree that the most important communication skill is listening? How could you be a better listener?
2. Do you find it easy or difficult to communicate with someone in a higher position?
3. How do you know if your communication has been successful?
4. Has miscommunication ever caused you problems as work?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of online communication?
6. How has technology affected the way we communicate? Has it made it better or worse? How?
7. Can you think of any new ways we might communicate differently in the future compared to today?
8. Do different cultures communicate differently? Can you think of any examples of this?

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