



Communication tips handout

Remember we can't change other people's behaviour – we can only change our own.

1. **It's hard to listen and speak at the same time.** Try to remember we have two ears and one mouth for a reason 🗣️!!
2. **Think about how we are acting or behaving towards our 'listener'.** How are we looking at them? Are we sitting or standing? It really makes a huge difference. Try to relax, think about your tone of voice too and avoid defensive or aggressive body language.
3. **Listen as though you want to understand and look at the speaker.** Ask them to explain again or reword what they are saying if you don't understand. It's ok to ask! Listen to understand, rather than just waiting for your turn to speak.
4. **Remove distractions.** Like, being willing to turn off the TV, close a door, or stop reading your texts. Give the speaker your full attention and let them know that they are getting it.
5. **Try to understand things from their point of view; stand in their shoes, would you see things the same way now?** It's hard to listen well if you are hearing something personal or painful, or something you disagree with, but if you want to be heard sometimes you also must listen.
6. **Be patient.** Some people take longer to find the right words, to make a point or clarify an issue. Give the listener time to get it all out before you jump in with your reply.
7. **Watch your emotions.** If what your listener is saying creates an emotional response in you, be extra careful to listen carefully, pay attention to the intent and full meaning of their words. When we are angry, frightened or upset, we often miss critical parts of what is being said to us.
8. **Even if you disagree, let the speaker have their point of view.** If you respond in a way that makes the other person defensive, you may lose the opportunity to tell them how YOU are feeling. Try to be slow to disagree, criticise or argue.
9. **Ask a question.** Ask your listener to clarify or explain further what they are saying. It's ok not to understand; we can understand words and the meanings of words differently. Asking for more explanation can help us understand them more accurately.
10. **When you want to talk about something choose your time and space wisely.** Avoid times when you know your listener is busy or has things on their mind.
11. **Try to avoid 'second guessing' what you think the listener is going to say (think Goldilocks)**
12. **Use an 'I' statement.** 😊



Communication Styles

Aggressive

Aggressive behaviour is saying strongly or violently what you want to say without thinking about the other person's feelings

Assertive

Asking people nicely for what you need by saying what you feel and think whilst being kind towards the other person's feelings

Passive

Is when you go along with the other person even when you don't want to and you feel unhappy

Passive-aggressive

Is when your behaviour indirectly expresses negative feelings instead of openly addressing them. There's a 'disconnect' between what you do (behaviour) and what you say.



Communication Styles

Passive

Passive communication involves not saying what you really think or how you feel and you tend to act like you are not bothered by anything. Passive people get 'stepped on' and feel unable to speak up for their rights (and may not even know what their rights are!). They tend to let people walk all over them and they have little control over their lives allowing others to make decisions for them. They have trouble saying 'no' which may lead them to feeling angry and resentful.

Aggressive

Aggressive people express their thoughts and feelings in a way that often intimidates others by using power, position and language. They get their own way at anyone's expense and can 'step on' people. They can be abusive and violate other people's rights and feelings. Aggressive communicators can hurt others both emotionally and perhaps physically by shouting, criticising and putting down people. They tend to react instantly and like to 'get even'. This type of behaviour creates enemies and fear.

Assertive

Assertive people stand up for their personal rights and express their thoughts and feelings firmly, directly, and honestly in ways that are respectful of others. **They respect the rights of others and recognise the importance of having their own needs and rights respected.** They speak clearly and to the point and are confident about who they are. **They recognise they have choices in life but will listen to what other people say also.** Assertive people gain respect for being respectful. They do not have to shout to be heard and own what they say by using 'I' statements.

Passive-aggressive

Passive-aggressive behaviour is when a person can seem annoyed or upset, but instead of saying what is wrong or why they are feeling that way, they might say 'I'm fine' but act moody and make indirect comments. These comments are often sarcastic and/or aggressive and can make others feel confused and unsure of what has happened.