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The Five C's Of Effective Communication



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Have you ever been in a meeting and felt like others were dismissing your opinions and input? Or do you feel like you can't get your point across when requesting something in a conversation? One of the main reasons we don't

feel respected in the workplace, as in any other setting, is a lack of dynamic communication.

When we don't feel heard at work, where we usually spend most of our waking hours, we can become incredibly frustrated, judgmental and apt to misinterpret situations way more often. It can lead to breakdowns and unengaged employees or leaders if they don't feel valued and respected. Bad communication creates tension and a negative dynamic and environment. Ultimately, communication is the key to building trust interpersonally and within a team, and trust is essential to great performance and outcomes.

The goal is to master communication and have a clear road map of how to use it to create positive outcomes in the workplace and in every conversation. Communication is key for creating wins for all parties involved, including employees and leaders, as well as team culture, the organization, customer service and ultimately the bottom line. When the focus of a company is on its product, service or customer support instead of solving internal issues, it can increase productivity, profits and employee engagement.

When initiating a conversation, always make sure the time is right and that you have the other person's undivided attention. Here are the five C's of effective communication:

1. Be clear.

To communicate effectively, you have to know what you want and take ownership for your own needs. Before communicating your issue, identify it and know what you want and need from the other person. When you experience an issue, try to get clarity on what the issue is and why it shows up for you. Do you feel disrespected and shut down when a colleague is not open to hearing your opinion in a meeting? Understand what value of yours isn't being honored, and own it. It's your responsibility to initiate the tough conversation.

Communicate the issue directly without misinterpreting or reacting emotionally, judgmentally or defensively. Take ownership of your experience, and be transparent. Be as clear and objective as possible.

2. Be concise.

Keep your requests direct, simple and to the point. The less wordy, the better. Don't get caught up in the story — focus on getting your point across in the most succinct manner and moving the conversation forward.

3. Provide a compelling request.

Once you make a request for change, you're in negotiations. After communicating the issue, provide the person with a suggested solution that you'd be happy with. If you feel shut down and dismissed in meetings whenever you bring your area of expertise into consideration, first ask the other person if there's a deeper issue. Then, ask how you might resolve it, and make your request to be listened to in the future. Explain that it's just as important for you to express your opinion or expertise, be involved in the conversation, and share your thoughts on the topic to provide necessary feedback.

4. Be curious.

Listen to what the other person needs. Once you make a request, be curious about what the other person's issues and objectives are and what they might need to fulfill your request. It's not all about you. Understand where the other person is coming from because they also have needs and issues that need to be addressed.

5. Be compassionate.

Make an attempt to understand the other person. Listen carefully to their feedback, and put your own assumptions aside. When a person feels like they're being heard, they tend to open up more and feel safer and more

secure in the conversation, which can lead to a more trusting relationship. Having the ability to understand, recognize and appreciate the way others feel is crucial to resolving conflict, managing change and making tough decisions. Strive to negotiate a win for both parties by taking the other person's perspective into consideration. Get a clear understanding of what it would take for both of you to get a positive outcome.

Dynamic communication is one of the most important skills to develop. It's beneficial not only in the workplace but also in virtually every area of your life. It's important to understand that communication is what builds bridges and connects people in a powerful way. When you're able to get your point across in an objective manner, others are more likely to open up, see your perspective and negotiate with you. Communication is the key to influencing others and creating powerful teams, relationships and joint forces to achieve successful outcomes.

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