

# Top ten tips for communicating successfully

Communication is a very broad area and covers face-to-face communication, (such as meetings, lectures and conferences) written communication (memos, letters and reports) and mechanical communication (such as telephone, e-mails, the internet etc).

We asked personal development expert, **Margaret Burnside**, to tell us more.

“Great communication relies on a **willingness** to communicate whether you are **sending** or **receiving** a message. Successful communication can only be achieved if there is an exchange of information, ideas, attitudes, thoughts and opinions.

“We communicate in many ways – not just by talking but by the way we act and the way we appear to others – our non verbal communication.

“To be successful in communicating it is essential to appreciate not only *what* you communicate to others but also *how* you communicate.”

## Margaret's top ten tips for successful communication

1. Choose the most *effective* method of communication for your message – not just the method you find easy or convenient.
2. Communication is most effective when you remember it is a two-way process – invite responses and feedback.
3. In face-to-face communication practice *active* listening – show the other person that you are listening through your facial expressions, body language and encouraging noises or questions.
4. Keep e-mails ‘easy on the eye’ e.g. short paragraphs, bullet points, key items easily identified. Remember, most e-mail is read in plain text format.
5. When answering the telephone - start with good morning, or good afternoon and then your name – that way it is not lost at the beginning. **Smile** when you're talking on the 'phone – it really does make a difference!
6. Before making a telephone call – think about the objective and purpose of the call and have all relevant paperwork to hand.
7. In written communication - work out what you are going to say in advance and make notes, then say it using short words, short sentences and short paragraphs.

8. Always check your spelling and grammar. If your word-processing software has the feature, then use the automatic check facility.
9. Do not assume your e-mail will be read immediately or in time for an event – if it is urgent or short notice you should probably supplement it with a follow up telephone call.
10. Remember, to be *really* effective in your communication it must be tailored to suit the needs and preferred style of the recipient.

Margaret Burnside is Managing Director of the Centre For Personal Development Ltd, an independent training, coaching and development organisation. Margaret's career spans over 22 years and she has worked in a wide range of industries and organisations.

Margaret's expertise lies in the areas of coaching and mentoring on a one-to one basis as part of structured programmes for small, medium and multi-national organisations. She passionately believes that coaching is one of the most effective ways to help people make significant transitions in thinking, attitude and behaviour. Her goal is to help motivate individuals to formulate and implement an action plan that helps them reach their hidden potential – not only in their career but in all areas of their life.

Margaret is a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management and a Graduate in Management of the City and Guilds Institute of London.

Margaret is also a volunteer business mentor with The Prince's Trust, supporting young people in starting, developing and growing their own businesses.

For more information visit [www.centreforpersonaldevelopment.com](http://www.centreforpersonaldevelopment.com)



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