

Communication and leadership go hand-in-hand. Leaders have to be good communicators to inspire and motivate those they lead to ensure the best results possible. David Grossman outlines twelve communication points that drive results.



Twelve Tools and Tips for Communication that Drive Results

by **DAVID GROSSMAN**



Whether you need to leverage new technology, engage employees to deliver better for customers, or just keep meeting your business goals, good communication is critical to any success strategy. Strong leader communicators know that when it is effective, communication does much more than make people feel good. It is directly linked to business results.

A recent Towers Watson study showed that effective employee communication is a leading indicator of financial performance and firms that communicate effectively are four times more likely to report high levels of employee engagement than those that communicate less effectively.

In fact, good communication is inextricably linked to strong leadership. It inspires employees to commit their best effort by helping them understand the goals of the organization and how their individual efforts contribute to overall success. Here are some

tried and true ideas for communication that drives results:

1. DON'T SETTLE FOR GOOD... BE GREAT

Good communication gets the message out, great communication connects the dots. Whether it's in your detailed job description or not, your role is to connect the dots so others know what's possible and their role in making it happen.

2. BUILD TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

Be visible and approachable, engage others openly, fully and early on.

3. CONTEXT AND RELEVANCE

Remember to provide context and make information relevant so your audiences understand how they fit and what it means to them. Provide job-related information so those you work with have the essential information they need to do their job effectively and/or make the best decisions.

**4. COMMUNICATE WITH INTEGRITY**

Tell the truth always and without exception.

5. MATCH YOUR WORDS AND ACTIONS

Talk is cheap...especially when it comes to leaders and their ability to build and maintain trust. Just ask anyone (especially employees). At the end of the day, it's actions and results that matter most.

6. MAKE TIME TO COMMUNICATE AND MAKE THE MOST OF THAT TIME

Set up regular face-to-face (or voice-to-voice) communication opportunities.

7. BE BRIEF AND BRILLIANT

Be ready to get your point across in fifteen seconds or less. Grab attention from the start and convince your listener what's in it for them so they want to hear more.

8. REMEMBER THE BASICS

Who, what, where, when, why and how (tip: adults usually start with the "what," then the "why").

9. USE STORIES

The right anecdote can be worth a thousand theories or facts.

10. CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Make sure your message is heard and really understood. Ask questions. Listen. Ask for a paraphrase.

11. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE AND WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM

Understanding your audience is key to moving employees to action; the more you know about them, the better you'll be able to persuade them.

12. WATCH FOR INFORMATION OVERLOAD

These days, everyone's bombarded with so much information that it's hard to digest it all. Just because you say something doesn't mean others hear and understand you. And isn't that the whole point of communication - to create shared understanding and drive people to action? (The answer is yes!) **RL**



David Grossman, ABC, APR Fellow PRSA, helps leaders drive productivity and get the results they want through authentic and courageous leadership and communication. He's a sought-after speaker and advisor to

Fortune 500 leaders, and author of the highly-acclaimed books, *You Can't NOT Communicate: Proven Communication Solutions That Power the Fortune 100* and its follow-up, *You Can't NOT Communicate 2*.

A frequent media source for his expert commentary and analysis on employee and leadership issues, David was recently featured on "NBC Nightly News," CBSMoneyWatch, TODAY, WSJ.com, in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *LA Times*.

David counsels leaders at top organizations to unleash the power of strategic internal communication and drive performance. Clients include Accor, AOL, DuPont Pioneer, HTC, GlaxoSmithKline, LifeScan (a Johnson & Johnson Company), Lockheed Martin, McDonald's, Microsoft, Nielsen, Raytheon, Symantec, and Tyco, to name a few.

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