

COMMUNICATION – A Cheat Sheet of Do's and Dont's

DO's

1. **Think before you speak** – try this: Count to 3 before replying.
2. **Be interested** – focus on what is being said to you and let it filter into your head properly.
3. **Listen carefully** – without thinking about what's for lunch or what you want to reply.
4. **Acknowledge** what the other person says before replying. Try This: when you reply, repeat what they said first, prefacing it with “I heard you say/understand that you”.
5. **Pay attention to your body language** – Closed arms shuts people out, looking over their shoulder shows disinterest. Not the right message! A nod of the head, good eye contact, leaning forward - all show you are paying attention.
6. **Answer appropriately** – *Respond*, don't immediately compare with your own experiences, rather show empathy, give an opinion if asked or expected, and a solution if requested.
7. **Use and invite feedback** – Given in the right way, feedback is invaluable.
8. **Put yourself in their shoes** – Try and see the other person's perspective. You may discover something very useful.
9. **Listen to other people's conversations** – to discover good ways to talk to people and what gets results.

DON'T's

1. **Don't Be judgmental** – be observationally and politely critical, not perjorative and dismissive.
2. **Don't Deviate** – unless you want to confuse and prolong the conversation.
3. **Don't be Negative** – try to phrase your differences in a positive way.
4. **Don't be Aggressive** – it really doesn't help.
5. **Don't shout** – obviously!
6. **Don't Interrupt** – it's very annoying.