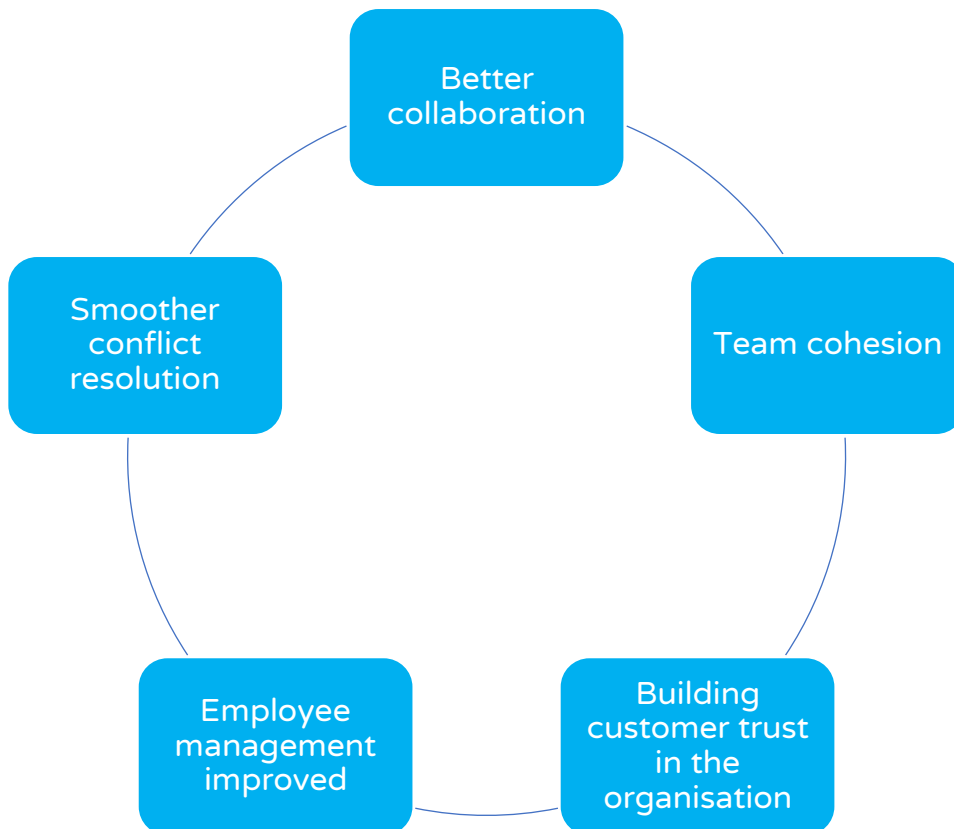


Improving verbal communication in the workplace

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What are the benefits of great communication?



Strategies to improve your verbal communication skills

1. **Think about what you are going to say.**
 - a. Don't think of things on the spot.
 - b. Plan and put some thought into what you are going to say.
 - c. Your message will then be delivered in a clear and understandable way.
 - d. You can also prepare yourself for any questions you may be asked.

2. **Speak clearly.**
 - a. Speak at the right volume and pace for your audience.
 - b. This will make it easier for them to understand you.
 - c. You also lower the risk of any misinterpretations by your audience.

3. **Adapt your tone.**
 - a. Make sure that your tone is appropriate for the message.
 - b. A matched tone will reinforce the meaning that you are trying to get across.

4. **Keep in mind your audience.**
 - a. The way you deliver your message will depend on your audience.
 - b. Are you communicating with someone who has a strong understanding of the topic, or are they new to it?
 - c. You may have to change the language that you use, and the level of information that you provide.

5. **Interact with your listener to make sure they understand.**
 - a. Verbal communication also involves interacting with your listener to ensure that they understand.
 - b. Ask for feedback!
 - c. Offer to answer questions.
 - d. It will be more likely that the listener has understood the message in the way that you want them to, and there is less risk of misinterpretation.

Starting a conversation

Start with a handshake

- A handshake may be a simple gesture, but it speaks volumes.
- Not only is it formal and polite, it can communicate confidence and openness.

Smile

- Smiling and expressing your interest will make a person feel more comfortable.
- You will also come across more trustworthy and easier to speak to!

Body language

- Being aware of your body language is very important, as appearing open will make you seem more approachable.
- For example, if you cross your arms and turn away from the person you are speaking to, they may get the impression that you are disinterested.

Focus your attention on the person in front of you

- Make sure that when you are interacting with another person, there aren't any distractions that may take away your attention from them.
- For example, don't look at your phone, or start having a conversation with another person in the room.

Strategies for effective listening

Active listening is when you consciously focus on what someone else is saying. By engaging in active listening, you are listening to understand the message.

1. **Eliminate distractions.**
 - a. Humans are prone to distraction, but you can prevent this.
 - b. Eliminate distractions by putting your phone away, turning off your computer, and not looking at any of your notes or documents.
 - c. Try not to let your mind wander to other tasks that you're thinking about completing.
 - d. Offer the person who is speaking your undivided attention.

2. **Be aware of different perspectives.**
 - a. Perspectives differ, so try to see things from the viewpoint of the other person.
 - b. Be open minded and give them a chance to explain their point of view.

3. **Keep your focus on the person that is speaking.**
 - a. It is easy to try to anticipate your response to what a person is saying.
 - b. By doing so, you're not truly listening to them.
 - c. You may end up missing important parts of their message that you then have to ask questions about.
 - d. Focus on what the other person is saying, and give yourself an opportunity to think about what they have said afterwards.

4. **Don't interrupt the speaker.**
 - a. When a person is speaking, you may sometimes think of your own point that is relevant.
 - b. Wait for them to finish speaking before you make your point, and don't interrupt them.
 - c. If you have a question, wait until there is an appropriate pause to ask it.

How to end a conversation

Summarise

- Summarise what you have discussed with the other person.
- This will indicate that the conversation is coming to an end.
- It will also demonstrate that you have been paying attention to what they've said.

Give a reason

- You may want to provide a reason for why you need to end the conversation.
- For example, do you have another meeting to get to? Or do you have some tasks that you need to complete today?
- Make sure that the reason you provide is sincere- it doesn't need to be complicated!

Show appreciation

- Show your appreciation for the conversation that you have just had.
- This will make the other person feel that their input is valued.

Future meeting

- If you would like to meet them again, you can also suggest arranging a future meeting
- If you know the person, simply end with when you will be speaking to or seeing them again.