

Verbal Influence

Verbal communication is a powerful skill, and the way you express yourself will determine how your message is received. Do you take responsibility for how your verbal interaction influences individual behavior, builds consensus, and contributes to organizational momentum?

For communication to be effective, it is worthy to anticipate a few of the variables that will enable you to achieve predictable outcomes. Let's acknowledge that most verbal communication is routine and embedded throughout our day-to-day activities as we interact within a community of people.

These conversations can easily evolve into an unexpected direction, so we need to be alert when they transition from a normal exchange of information to a sensitive issue that has been brewing for a while. Are you prepared to quickly engage and have an effective conversation when they are unexpected?

No matter whether a conversation is planned or unforeseen, quickly determine if the environment needs to be managed to minimize interruptions and distractions, and clarify perspectives by asking questions and summarizing what you have heard. Discover their perceptions of a solution before prematurely providing your own thoughts. Playing the devil's advocate or focusing on the past may stimulate discussion, but it can also create a confrontational environment or limit the conversation.

Maintain control of your delivery and determine when you need to shift gears from counseling or collaboration to a more directive-tone. And although we do not have the luxury of planning every communication encounter, significant conversations require a consistent and familiar process for engagement.



- Present a confident body language with eye contact.
- Use people's names and listen with respect.
- Establish an understanding of broader perspectives.
- Consider alternatives, and establish direction.
- Summarize and offer hope.

Whether your verbal communication is planned in advance or is spontaneous as a result of your daily interactions, do not underestimate your verbal responsibility to maximize your interpersonal value and effectiveness.

Assessments or surveys that capture the interpersonal skills of employees and supervisors are a fundamental resource to measure the employee experience and their impact on organizational performance.