

Internet Quest



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REVIEW OF KEY POINTS

- People communicate for different reasons. They may want to inform, persuade, inquire, or develop goodwill. Whether the message is oral, written, or nonverbal, there are many factors that can influence effective communication.
- Communication is a two-way process between the sender and the receiver. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are communication skills that are interconnected—they do not occur in a vacuum. Improving these communication skills will enhance one's social, educational, and professional life.
- Communication within a business can flow upwardly, laterally, or downwardly. All communication, within an organization or with people outside the organization, must be clear, complete, concise, consistent, correct, and courteous.

CASE 1.1

Disastrous Miscommunication

On January 28, 1986, a tragic disaster occurred—the *Challenger* space shuttle exploded just seconds after liftoff. Research indicates that miscommunication between three organizations—Morton Thiokol, Inc. (MTI), Marshall Space Center, and NASA—was in part a factor to the accident. MTI engineers documented that there was a problem with the O-ring, “the physical cause of the *Challenger* disaster.” However, *Challenger* was launched in spite of this report. Lateral communication between engineers documented a problem. When management received the reports, they ignored and downplayed the seriousness of the research.

What is your personal opinion about the ethical position of ignoring facts and information? Discuss how upward communication and external communication skills affect decision making.

CASE 1.2

Empowered by Communication Skills

Mark Winters started a new position as marketing associate for Great Western Telecommunication Corporation. Following extensive training, he had to call current customers who were interested in new telephone services. His goal was to make 20 presentations each week and to sell features to at least 60 percent of potential customers.

After eight presentations and no sales, Mark decided to ask another associate, Lynn, to observe his next presentation. Lynn noticed that Mark spoke fast and did not make eye contact. He did not notice the customers' puzzled looks and their attempts to ask questions. For example, when talking about caller ID, Mark mentioned that the feature "did not work in all areas." What he meant was that caller ID did not identify calls received from areas that did not have the service yet.

Lynn praised Mark for knowing the product; however, she had some specific positive feedback that would help him to improve his presentation.

What communication strategies do you think Lynn will suggest to Mark?

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Communicating in Your Career

A successful communicator is a better employee. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are communication skills that are important in a variety of professions.

Give an example of the way in which the communication skills listed above would be used in each of the following jobs: veterinarian assistant, insurance agent, and flight attendant.

Ethics in Action

Discretionary Decision

You are introduced to the newest employee and recognize that he is a former high school classmate. You remember that he was suspended from school for fighting and for stealing. During lunch, you consider telling your co-workers about his history and wonder if your boss knows of his past. What are the ethical issues? Who are the affected parties?