

How to Get a Job and Keep It: Communication

Q1: What is networking and who needs to be a part of your network?

A1: It's a supportive connection with individuals in other departments, outside of your organization and groups having a common interest.

Q2: Networking in your workplace will make you more interesting, and reflect to your manager or supervisor that you're professionally invested in your organization.

A2: TRUE. It will also allow you to expand your ability to effectively communicate outside of your department and organization.

Q3: True or false: A bad attitude and demeanor shows you have a lack of courtesy and consistency.

A3: TRUE. Having a good attitude and being courteous to others, gives the impression that you care and have an investment in your professional relationship. Using "would you please" shows gratitude towards the person you're working with.

Q4: What are some of the benefits of having a good attitude and demeanor at work?

A4: It gives the impression that you care and have an investment in your professional relationships with colleagues.

Q5: Name some of the benefits in having "fluid" conversations between participants.

A5: Allows for others to make a statement, observation, or ask a question without interruption or negative reaction.

Q6: What are some interesting resources for topics to talk about, related to work, outside of your organization?

A6: Look for articles in the local newspaper, reputable online news sources, professional business clubs, and sites like LinkedIn.

Q7: What are appropriate work conversations you should have, that are related to your organization?

A7: Articles from trade or industry publications, to stay informed and up-to-date on the latest trends.

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Q8: In the electronic world, a less effective means of communication is to walk to another colleague's desk, rather than email one another. So why is it sometimes better to walk to their desk, rather than emailing them?

A8: It's easier to convey emotions, humor, or sarcasm that are not easily conveyed electronically. Your feelings could be misinterpreted or if there's a point to make, you stand a better chance of being understood.

Q9: What are two ways you can help reduce the volume of emails?

A9: Ask yourself if the email is really necessary and can the conversation be conducted via instant message or phone.

Q10: Sharing and sending sensitive or personal information in an email is never appropriate. To avoid this, what is the best way to share bad news?

A10: Whenever possible, deliver bad news in person. It helps you to communicate with empathy, compassion, and understanding, and to make amends if your message has been taken the wrong way.

Q11: In making good use of an email subject line, what are some examples of things to avoid?

A11: Leaving the subject line blank (Might be viewed as SPAM), vague or broad topic (Like "Next Week's Meeting" or "Be on the Look Out"). Also typing a message in the subject line and leaving the email body blank.

Q12: What are some ways you can be more effective in the email subject line and grab the recipient's attention?

A12: Use message leads like URGENT, ACTION REQUIRED, UPDATE, or REVISED.

Q13: Is there a difference in the cost/price of sending multiple emails vs. the cost of sending one?

A13: There is no price difference. If you have multiple topics to communicate, consider writing one email for each of them OR consider combining them into related points. "Chunking" the information into small, well organized units are easier to digest.

Q14: What are some of the preferred ways to close an email message?

A14: Regards, Sincerely, All the Best, and Thank You.

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Q15: Body language is not easily conveyed in email. What are some ways you can express feelings in an email?

A15: Choice of words, sentence length, punctuation, and capitalization.

Q16: Your email is a reflection of your professional image. Before hitting send, what should you check when proofing?

A16: Check for grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes. Make sure that your emails are short and concise, without excluding necessary information.

Q17: According to a survey conducted by Kelly Services, what is the trait individuals identify as most important in creating their personal brands?

A17: Verbal communications.

Q18: What are ways you can improve your verbal communication?

A18: Be friendly, think before you speak, be clear, don't talk too much, be yourself, practice humility, speak with confidence, and be concise. When appropriate, use humor for the human touch.

Q19: In communication, what is the "verbal modeling" law of human nature?

A19: When a person is speaking softly, then you speak softly. If they are speaking slowly, then model their speed by talking slowly. If they are speaking with energy, then match their energy.

Q20: One of the best ways to improve your communication skills is to be an active listener. What are some ways you can be more effective in this skill?

A20: Watch for body language and gestures, be relaxed, keep an open mind, never interrupt, ask questions for clarification, and try to feel what the speaker is feeling.

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Q21: Body language can tell others that you're confident, energetic, engaged, and honest. What are some common body language mistakes you should be aware of?

A21: Bad posture, mirroring another person's body language, fidgeting or gestures, and inappropriate facial expressions. Good habits include: always make good eye contact, a firm palm to palm handshake, matching verbal/nonverbal facial expressions, have a genuine smile, avoid eye rolling and arm crossing, and avoid physical barriers like desks or short walls.

Q22: Dressing professionally for work means making sure clothes and glasses fit, wearing appropriate shoes, and looking coordinated and well put together. What are some fashion looks to avoid?

A22: Ladies should avoid tank tops, cut-offs, flashy colors, noisy accessories, flip flops, and open toe or heel shoes. (These are OK to wear if safety is not an issue.) Men should avoid wearing wrinkled shirts or pants, tank tops, denim jeans with holes, and flip flops or sandals. Attire rules may vary from office to office. The key to looking professional is to dress like a professional. Check with your supervisor if you have any questions.

Q23: Personal grooming is also important for looking professional. What are some things to avoid?

A23: Wet hair, unmanaged facial hair, and strong perfumes or colognes should all be avoided. Once again, the key is to look professional in your grooming or appearance.

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WRAP UP:

⇒ When having conversations with your office peers, it's always a good idea to stick to topics related to your work. Some available resources that would be appropriate subjects of conversation would include:

- Local newspaper articles.
- Reputable online news sources.
- Professional business clubs.
- Trusted online sites.

Staying informed on industry trends and current issues benefits you and the organization.

⇒ It's also a good idea to speak on topics other than work topics. It shows your human side. Topics of interest of positive activities in society and what may be going on in that person's life for others to appreciate the person having a life other than the job. This can also help you know the history of your fellow employee and how you have arrived at the same work venue via life.

FINAL THOUGHT:

By analyzing and being thoughtful in your workplace communications with both your subordinates and superiors, you can better learn how to lead in whatever position you have. In this way, you'll not only secure your future prospects to rise up your company's ranks, but you'll be able to create a more productive and better working environment for yourself and your colleagues.