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## Article: Six Top Tips for Successful Communication

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*“The single biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”* George Bernard Shaw. So how can you ensure your communication is effective? Below are six tips to use when communicating.

### 1. Avoid Assumptions

‘The saying ‘Assuming makes an ASS out of U and ME’ is well known – however many a miscommunication comes from assumptions being made. Asking clarifying questions such as ‘*What do you mean?*’ or ‘*Could you clarify?*’ helps you to check that you are not making an incorrect assumption

### 2. Put yourself in the other person's shoes

Before you communicate with another person, think ‘*How will this be received? How does this person want to be communicated with? What language, tone is most appropriate to the situation. Am I making any assumption that may not be correct?*’

### 3. Get your own ideas clear - what do you want to get across?

The rule here is KISS – Keep It Simple Stupid. Check that your words are as unambiguous as possible. Avoid jargon. Use short sentences and short words where possible.

### 4. Keep the communication two-way -be prepared to adapt

Communication is two way so how are you going to ensure it is two way? Have you considered how you want the other party or parties to respond, and when? If the other party doesn’t respond as you want or plan, have a strategy to deal with this outcome. You may need to stop or reduce what you are communicating or return to the drawing board to look for ways to adapt the communication so that it achieves its intention.

### 5. Check you are understanding each other

In face to face communications observe non-verbal communication and use active listening to check that the message is being received as required. On the telephone pay close attention to the tone the other person uses. If you notice that the message is not being received as required stop the communication and use questions to clarify the situation and clear up any confusion or misunderstanding.

**Note** You should fit the medium to the message – the more important it is that the message is understood the more time should be spend on checking this – by face to face interactions or feedback mechanisms (email is very limited in this area!)

### 6. Sum up and agree where you've reached.

Have regular summing up points – where you can confirm understanding of the communication to date and make a note of progress /outcomes. Ideally you should agree outcomes and decisions in tangible, measurable terms. Words like ‘**quicker**’ are open to misinterpretation, deliberate or not. For example ‘*I need the work throughput to be quicker*’. Both parties could have a very different view of what has been agreed and both would not be wrong!



## About the Author - Krista Powell Edwards

Krista is a very experienced and highly qualified consultant, coach, facilitator, trainer and author.

She uses her experience and expertise to support individuals and organisations to enhance their effectiveness and performance.

Krista is currently writing her first book on how to effectively communicate credibility.

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### ***Expertise and experience***

Krista has developed her expertise through

- An extensive track record of supporting organisations in the UK and internationally since 1995.
- Masters level research in the factors that affect the achievement of workplace performance.
- Extensive Continuous Professional Development (CPD), (including regular attendance at conferences and development programmes).
- Research of 'best practice' consultancy, facilitation and learning and development
- Qualifying as a Master Trainer, Master Practitioner and Practitioner in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).
- Designing and delivering 500+ training and development programmes.
- 20+ years as Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) volunteer - branch chair, council representative - supporting the CPD and performance of 7500+ HR professionals.
- Lecturing at a university (International Human Resource Management).

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### ***Specialist areas***

Krista specialises in three main areas:-

**Credibility** - How to communicate credibility for influence and positive impact in the workplace

**Credible HR** - Enabling HR to add value to the organisation

**Personal Effectiveness Skills** - Support in developing confidence, credibility, influence, time management and assertiveness and conflict management skills so that individuals and teams are able to perform effectively.

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### ***Services***

Krista offers support in **workplace performance improvement**.

Tailored, cost effective

- Consultancy and Research
- Coaching
- Facilitation
- Training and Development

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### ***Contact Details***

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