

My Top 5 Tips for Leaders to Communicate Successfully

Leaders play a critical role in setting the tone for effective communication within their team.



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It starts with you

A team is as good as its communication. That's what really makes a group of individuals a team.

And it will be no surprise that it starts with you as leader.

As a leader, one of your primary responsibilities is helping your team communicate and collaborate effectively. There are numerous ways in which you can do that. **I give you my top five tips that make a real difference.**

Top Tip 1

Big Picture

Clearly articulate the team's vision, mission, and goals.

When team members understand the bigger picture and how their individual contributions fit into it, they are more motivated and engaged.

Regularly communicate updates on goals, progress, and any changes to keep everyone aligned and focused.

If your organization is in flux and/or in the process of redefining its strategy, you can still focus on short to mid-term key priorities. And communicate them. It's better than leaving the team with nothing.

Top Tip 2

Transparency

Foster a culture of open and transparent communication.

Be honest about challenges, opportunities, and decisions that affect the team.

Transparency builds trust. It allows team members to better understand the rationale behind certain actions.

Even when decisions are tough or unpopular. You need to be able to explain them - even the ones you may not agree with fully. Ultimately, you need to stand behind the decisions. If you don't, you are not trustworthy as leader representing your organization. And this impacts your team.

Top Tip 3

Active listening

Practice active listening and show empathy towards team members' concerns, ideas, and feedback.

Encourage an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing themselves without fear of retribution.

Listen for silences. It's often a sign something is unsaid or unclear. Be curious and ask an open question like 'What else?'.

Top Tip 4

Adapt your Style

Recognize that different team members have varying communication preferences and needs.

Adapt your communication style to suit the different members of your team. Considering factors such as their personality, work style, and preferred means of communication.

Some team members may prefer written updates, while others might respond better to face-to-face discussions.

Don't second guess their style. **Ask them what they prefer.** And work together on finding the best way for both of you.

Top Tip 5

Speak last

When you ask a question to your team, don't be the first one to answer it. Even if everyone is silent.

Count to 10 ... or more! 😊

You likely will get more diverse answers and different perspectives if you let team members answer first. **Try on different questions**, e.g. ask 'Who has another idea?' or 'What would our stakeholders say?'. You may be surprised.

Hearing more voices leads to better team decisions. It's also better to hear them directly instead of via the grapevine later on.



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Leadership is a skill. And leading teams can be learned.

In essence, it is about moving your team towards achieving shared goals while fostering an environment of trust, respect, and collaboration. It requires a combination of interpersonal skills, strategic thinking, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

Remember, today's pressures are enormous. You may not always get it right. You are a human being. Be gentle with yourself.