



# The Communication Advantage

8 Essential Skills That Build Trust, Clarity, and Influence

*"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."*

— George Bernard Shaw

Great communication is not about saying more. It is about saying what matters — with clarity, empathy, and intention. Communication is the bridge between ideas and action, between leaders and teams, between conflict and resolution. The good news is that these skills are learnable, practical, and powerful.

## 8 Essential Communication Skills

- 1. The 80/20 Rule** — Listen more than you talk. Questions like Help me understand uncover truth.
- 2. Start With Context** — Set intention upfront: Here is what I hope we accomplish.
- 3. Give Feedback with SBI** — Situation. Behavior. Impact. Keep it clear, focused, and fair.
- 4. Adapt Your Style** — Bottom line for direct people, details for analytical, stories for expressive.
- 5. Close the Loop** — Confirm next steps and timelines. Clarity beats confusion every time.
- 6. Navigate Hard Talks** — State facts, share your view, invite theirs, and solve together.
- 7. Read Between the Lines** — Pay attention to tone, energy, and body language. Silence speaks too.
- 8. Use the Power of Pause** — Ask, then wait. People reveal more in the silence than in the rush.

## The CLEAR Method for Crucial Conversations

- Context — set the stage
- Listen — understand first
- Explore — solutions together
- Agree — commit to action
- Review — follow up
- + Empathy always

## Your Communication Action Plan

Current Challenge: What type of conversation do you avoid?

Skill Focus: Which one skill will you practice this week?

Commitment: I will use \_\_\_\_\_ in my next important conversation.

## A Closing Reminder

Communication is not about perfection. It is about connection. When you listen deeply, speak clearly, and follow through, you do not just earn respect — you build trust that lasts.

## Quick Reference — Communication at a Glance

Listen More • Set Context • Give Clear Feedback • Adapt Your Style
Close the Loop • Navigate Hard Talks • Read Cues • Use the Pause

Listen. Clarify. Connect.

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