

## **WORKPLACE WRITING PROMPT - #8**

**TOPIC:** Oral Communication Skills at Work

**QUESTION:** Write an informational essay describing the different types of communication and why each is important in the workplace. Why is it important to develop a variety of communication skills to become a successful and productive employee?

### **DIRECTIONS:**

1. Read the following texts:
  - Communication
  - TYPES OF COMMUNICATION
  
2. As you read the texts, think about the details from the texts you might want to use in your essay. You may highlight key points and ideas.
  
3. After reading the texts, create a plan for your essay. Think about ideas, facts, definitions, details, and other information or examples you want to use.
  
4. Write a 5 paragraph essay with an introduction, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Each paragraph should contain 3-6 sentences. Follow this outline:
  - **Introduction Paragraph #1** – Introduce the topic clearly and provide a focus. Explain what the essay will be about. Turn the topic question into a statement.
  - **Paragraph #2** – Describe what oral communication is and give examples. Explain why it is an important skill to develop.
  - **Paragraph #3** – Discuss what nonverbal communication is and give examples. Explain why it is important to develop and practice appropriate body language and facial expressions in the workplace.
  - **Paragraph #4** – Discuss what written communication is and give examples. Explain the importance of clearly expressing ideas in writing.
  - **Conclusion Paragraph #5** - Provide a summary of the information just presented. Restate why it is important for an employee to understand and develop a variety of communication skills.
  
5. Be sure to use correct sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Use clear language and vocabulary. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion. Be sure to use information and details from the texts.

# Communication

Communication skills are ranked FIRST among a job candidate's "must have" skills and qualities, according to a 2010 survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Communication skills are important to everyone - they are how we give and receive information and convey our ideas and opinions with those around us. Communication comes in many forms:

- verbal (sounds, language, and tone of voice)
- aural (listening and hearing)
- non-verbal (facial expressions, body language, and posture)
- written (journals, emails, blogs, and text messages)
- visual (signs, symbols, and pictures)

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It is important to develop a variety of skills for both communicating TO others and learning how to interpret the information received FROM others. Knowing our audience and understanding how they need to receive information is equally important as knowing ourselves.

To an employer, good communication skills are essential. In fact, employers consistently rank good communication skills at the top of the list for potential employees.

During an interview, for example, employers are impressed by a job candidate who answers questions with more than one-word answers (such as yeah...nah...dunno), demonstrates that he or she is listening, and shares information and ideas (by asking questions for clarification and/or follow-up). The interview can be an indication to employers of how the candidate or employee will interact with supervisors, co-workers, and customers or resolve conflicts when they arise. Remember, non-verbal communication is also critical in an interview. Employers expect good eye contact, good posture, and "active" listening.

One of the challenges in the workplace is learning the specific communication styles of others and how and when to share your ideas or concerns. Though some supervisors may specifically ask for your opinion, others may assume if there is something important they need to know, you will bring it to their attention – or if there is something you are unsure about, you will ask. Knowing how to listen carefully and when to ask for help is important. If an employee and a supervisor learn to communicate well (in whatever method that works), there is a greater likelihood of job retention and promotion.

The activities in this section will not only help participants practice and recognize how they provide information to others, but also help them consider how others may prefer to receive information. It is important to reinforce with participants that communication skills involve give and take – and they can, indeed, be learned and strengthened over time.

<https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/softskills.pdf>

# **TYPES OF COMMUNICATION**

## **Oral Communication**

Oral communication is the process of using spoken words to successfully get your message across to others by conveying your thoughts and ideas effectively. The spoken verbal communication relies on words but also includes visual aids and nonverbal elements to assist the delivery of the meaning. Oral communication includes presentations, speeches, discussion, and other forms. In oral communication, body language and tone of voice can play a major role in getting your message across.

## **Nonverbal Communication**

Nonverbal communication is the aspect of communication that does not involve verbal communication. It involves sending and receiving wordless messages. This includes facial expressions, body movements, eye contact, gestures, and posture. It is talking without speaking. Nonverbal elements are also included when using the spoken word. These elements include volume, voice quality, pitch, rate, and speaking style. Dance can be considered a form of nonverbal communication.

## **Written Communication**

Written communication is communication by means of written symbols (either printed or handwritten). It is the clear expression of ideas in writing and includes using correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The ideas must be expressed so the reader can understand them. Written communication is the most common form of business communication. This includes emails, memos, reports, and articles.

## **Visual Communication**

Visual communication is the expression of information and ideas in forms that can be read or viewed. It is communication that relies on vision. Body language and gestures are part of this communication process. Visual communication can be expressed with images including drawings, designs, illustrations, and color. Other forms are video clips and television.

"Soft Skills Training" "A workbook to develop skills for employment"

by: Frederick H. Wentz