

Summary: Basic Communication Skills

Listening

Do's ...	Don'ts ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep an open mind. ✓ Maintain eye contact and show interest. ✓ Listen for the central themes. ✓ Consider the speaker's nonverbal behaviors and tone of voice. ✓ Ask for clarification. ✓ Paraphrase the meaning and feelings being expressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Be judgmental. ✗ Fake attention. ✗ Interrupt the speaker. ✗ Begin formulating a rebuttal. ✗ Distort the message based on your own beliefs or thoughts.

Nonverbal Communication

Do's...	Don'ts ...
<p>Eye Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Look at people's eyes. ✓ Continually scan the group with your eyes. ✓ Look at the whole group. 	<p>Eye Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Avoid eye contact. ✗ Scan the group too rapidly or infrequently. ✗ Only look at one or two people or at only one side of the room.
<p>Body Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Position your body so you face the majority of the people. ✓ Vary your position in the room. ✓ Stand with good posture. ✓ Walk toward people when they speak. 	<p>Body Movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Talk to your notes, easel, or board. ✗ Turn your back to part of the group. ✗ Stand in fixed positions. ✗ Slouch. ✗ Distance yourself from people.
<p>Gestures and Facial Expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use natural and spontaneous gestures. ✓ Smile and be animated. ✓ Convey emotion affirmatively. 	<p>Gestures and Facial Expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Engage in distracting behavior such as looking at your watch, or jingling change. ✗ Look disinterested. ✗ Use gestures or expressions that could be seen as negative or judgmental.

Using Your Voice

Do's ...	Don'ts ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Speak loud enough to be heard. ✓ Vary the pace of your presentation. ✓ Slow down for important points. ✓ Use the pause. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Mumble. ✗ Use "fillers" such as "like" or "um." ✗ Speak with a monotone voice. ✗ Be afraid of pauses.

Engaging Your Audience

Do's ...	Don'ts ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ask clear, concise questions.✓ Ask open-ended questions.✓ Focus each question on a single issue.✓ Acknowledge responses in a positive manner.✓ Allow time for the audience to answer.✓ Let your conviction and passion for the subject matter show.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Ask questions that require two distinct answers.✗ Answer your own question! Rephrase your question if you don't get an answer.✗ Ignore comments or questions.✗ Declare an answer is wrong.✗ Be afraid to remain silent while waiting for responses.