

COMMUNICATION RESULT PRINCIPLE CHECKLIST

As a manager you are involved in a wide range of communications and it is vital that you ensure your message is heard, understood and where necessary acted on. This will help you to properly prepare and approach your communications so that your all your exchanges are effective.

By using the six components of the RESULT principle you will thoroughly prepare your message so that it is appropriate to that particular communications environment. This will mean that your communications will achieve your desired result.

1. Reason

The first component of the principle you must define is the 'reason' behind why you need to conduct the communication. The more thought you put into why you want to open up this process the more objective and focused your purpose will be.

The most productive communications have a single objective ensuring clarity and easy of comprehension by the recipient's. Any conversation, discussion or meeting can have many exchanges but by focusing on a single objective will ensure your success.

Now you have established the reason why you want or need to communicate you can structure the format of your message according to the principle's other components.

2. Environment

In your management role you will find yourself needing to communicate in a wide variety of situations. For example with your team, colleagues, suppliers etc. For your communications to be effective it is essential that you define the nature of each situation and adapt your message to fit what you see.

Is the environment a positive or negative one? Are the individuals reacting to events or being proactive? Is there conflict, aggression, dissension or apathy? The questions are endless, but by asking just a few simple questions you will gather the necessary intelligence to communicate effectively. This preparation enables you to adopt the best style of communication to suit your approach and prepare for potential arguments or problems.

3. Specific

Having defined your reason for communicating and the type of environment it will take place in you must now specify exactly what it is you want or need from the other person. You must make sure that you have any supporting information, background or data that guarantees that your message and exchange will have clarity.

In some contexts you will need to breakdown your supporting information into manageable chunks. For example, if you have to report on the progress of an event or project you will have to adjust your message according to the specific audience.

- The executive want to hear financial and business aspects,
- Users will want to hear how its progressing,
- Project members want or need to know how well each phase or individual process is going in comparison to the plan.
- Stakeholders want to know that business needs are being met.

Being specific is not just related to the message itself it is also about who needs to informed. Many people gloss over this aspect of communication and cause themselves problems by sending inappropriate messages to the wrong audience that result in unnecessary interruptions and diversions.

If you select *only* those who have a *real need* to know the contents of the message you will have more effective communications. Technology such as emails and texts make it all too easy to copy in unnecessary and inappropriate people. Lead others by your own example and you will create an open and honest communication culture.

4. Understanding

Whatever form of communication you need to conduct an essential part of that process is ensuring that the recipient actually understands the message you want to give them correctly. You also want to be sure that resulting action by an individual or group is what you want and expect so that you achieve your communication objective.

You can't afford to make any assumptions you need to get confirmation from the recipient that they have the same understanding as you about what a situation may be and what the required action plan is. It is vital that you remember that comprehension is a two-way process. Not only do you need to know that others in the communication process understand you, but you also need to confirm that you have understood what they have told you.

5. Listen

You will only gain this level of 'true' understanding if you actively listen to what is being said and observe the behaviors of those involved in the communication. Make sure that your own verbal and non-verbal communications convey the message you want.

Remember use your observation skills throughout the exchange to gauge the attitude and acceptance of your audience. Ensure that you are totally focused on what is being said and feedback your own understanding of what you are being told. If you do this you will avoid any unnecessary confusion that often occurs when someone does not take the time to listen properly.

6. Timeframe

The final aspect of the RESULT principle is concerned with the amount of time you have to prepare for and conduct the actual communication. Not all exchanges occur in situations where you have all the time you want.

Frequently you will find that the time you have to prepare is very limited and you will have to adjust your preparation to fit what time you have at your disposal. However much time you have make sure that you use it effectively by following these principles. The better prepared you are the more effective and productive your communications will be.

NOTE: The key to successful communications is that you ensure that it is a two-way interactive process that attains the desired result.