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# CONNECTIONS

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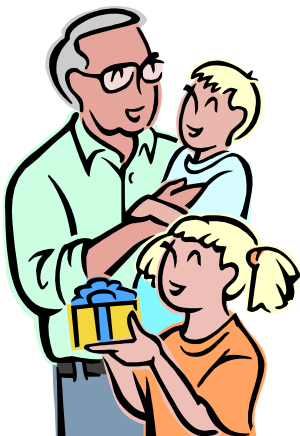
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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY  
JUNE 18TH

## COMMUNICATE!

### Coming In Loud and Clear?

Studies show that the average employee spends the equivalent of two months every year dealing with problems related to miscommunication. Use these tips to make sure your message is getting across clearly.

**Use “preferred” methods.** Using the method the person you’re communicating with prefers - e-mail, fax, voice mail, face-to-face - makes your message more likely to be received successfully. Be sure to share your own preferred methods as well.

**Make a checklist.** Write down the points you need to get across in your communication *before* you send or say it. Make sure you put the most important points first.

**Check for understanding.** When communicating an important point, check to be sure you were understood (or that you understood the other person correctly). When e-mailing, faxing or leaving voice mail, ask for a response that outlines what you’re expecting from the recipient.

### E-mail Tips

A large percentage of business communication is conducted via e-mail. However, e-mail can often be easily misunderstood. Before you send that message, ask yourself these questions:

**Is this right for e-mail?** Sensitive subjects, topics that require explanation or messages that are private probably aren’t. **Rule of thumb:** If you are having unusually difficulty composing the e-mail or you’re wondering whether or not to send it, pick up the phone or schedule a meeting instead.

**Have I been clear?** It’s important to remember that e-mail is written communication. In e-mail, emotions such as anger or annoyance can be amplified. A snappy, sarcastic comment can come across as rude. **Be careful:** Don’t write an e-mail when you’re upset or frustrated. If the communication is crucial, keep the e-mail short and follow up with a conversation to explain the details.

**Did I re-read my message?** The speed with which e-mails are sent means that they often contain errors that could lead to miscommunication or the wrong impression. It pays to give your message a once-over before you hit “send”.

# CONNECTIONS

## What Is Your Body Saying?

People communicate with more than words. Body language can say a lot, too. When you are listening to someone, pay attention to your body language.

- Maintain eye contact.
- Show that you are listening by leaning forward slightly and perhaps nodding your head when an important point is made.
- Stay relaxed and avoid sitting stiffly or crossing your arms in front of your body. This can send the signal that you're not receptive to what the other person is saying.
- Don't read, shuffle papers, write e-mails or take telephone calls. This sends the message that you aren't listening.

## It's Not Just What You Say...It's How You Say It

Learning how to say things the right way—in a neutral, clear manner that does not put people on the defensive—is one of the best ways to avoid conflicts on the job. Have you ever caught yourself using one of these negative phrases?

**Negative:** You neglected to ... You failed to ... You overlooked ... I can't see how to ... You should ...

These phrases suggest that the person you are talking to is careless and sloppy in his or her work, or even that he or she isn't as smart as you. They put the person on the defensive and cause anger. Rather than helping you get a job done, they may make things worse.

Try these instead:

**Positive:** May I suggest ... Another option might ... I can help you with that if you will ... I understand your point of view. Let me explain my perspective ... Let's brainstorm some solutions.

## Secrets of Great Communicators

**Be honest.** People who communicate well have integrity. Their thoughts, words and actions usually match each other.

**Listen actively.** Pay complete attention to the person speaking, and don't think ahead to what you are going to say next. Don't interrupt, and try to keep an open mind about what the other person is saying. Hold off on judgment until the person is finished, and repeat back parts of what he or she said to be sure you understood..

**Use "I" messages.** Talk about your own thoughts, feelings and perspective on a situation or problem. Using "you" statements makes you sound as though you are placing blame, even if you don't mean to..

**Give and receive feedback.** Feedback is important to help people learn, improve and change. Give feedback to others without being harsh or judgmental, and without placing blame. When receiving feedback, listen carefully, ask questions and try not to get defensive.

**Ask questions.** If you don't understand something, ask the person to clarify. Encourage others to ask questions when you are speaking.

**The Board of Directors of EFAP/North and our member organizations would like to extend a warm welcome to Dynatec Corporation, Mining Services Division of Sudbury. Dynatec shares the same Values that we at EFAP/North promote "the ultimate worth of their employees and their loved ones". These shared Values will go a long way in helping us establish a successful partnership, thereby helping us reach our primary goal of healthier and safer workplaces, homes and communities.**

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