

The four 'A's of Effective Communication

Apart from the 7 'C's of communication, 4 'A's of communication are equally important. There are as following:

Attention: To make the communication process successful and effective, it's important that the listener is attentive to what the speaker says. Don't just go on saying what you have to convey but first do some warm up or some pep up talk to make the listener attentive. Nodding, eye contact, body posture and facial expression are some of the signs that suggest if the speaker has the attention of the listener or not.

Apprehension: It is the responsibility of the speaker to encourage the listener to ask questions without fear or hesitation in case of any confusion so that there is complete understanding of the information shared. An interactive atmosphere should be preferred to avoid confusion.

Assimilation: Effective communication is the one in which complete understanding is followed by a complete acceptance of what has been shared. Understanding without acceptance is a sign of incomplete and ineffective communication process. The speaker has to put their views forth in a convincing and logical way to ensure assimilation.

Action: This step is a form of feedback. Once the message is clearly understood and accepted, the steps taken in accordance with the message convey that the communication process has been successful and effective. Students giving the right answers to the questions based on lecture is an example of effective communication on the part of the teacher.

To be an effective speaker, one needs to ensure that their communication fulfills the condition of the four 'A's.

Language of Communication

We have already discussed the different types of communication based on the nature of communication i.e. verbal/non-verbal, oral/written, formal/informal etc. Communication can further be categorized on the basis of the following:

1. Personal Communication: Human beings need to share views, ideas and feelings, give and receive information, persuade, instruct and request people to get something done and to interact for decision making. This type of exchange is called personal communication. Personal communication is important to build healthy personal and professional relationships. It enhances confidence and understanding. Verbal, non-verbal, symbolic and written are all types of personal communication. Politeness, patience and empathy are the qualities that make one a good communicator.

2. Social Communication: Social communication is relatively a new term which includes interactions with family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances and strangers. There are many aspects of social communication including:

Social Interaction that is based on cultural influences, speech style and context, social reasoning, social competence etc.

Social Cognition that consists of emotional competence, executive functioning (organization, planning, problem solving skills etc.), joint attention (social orientation, empathy etc.).

Pragmatics that includes verbal (speech acts and discourse) and non-verbal (body language, gestures, facial expression, eye contact etc.) communication

Language Processing which includes spoken and written language comprehension and expression, morphology, syntax, semantics, phonological skills for spelling and decoding etc.

3. Business Communication: In a professional scenario, people from various cultural, linguistic and ethnical backgrounds and different age groups have to interact with one another. Their communication patterns are influenced by the value systems, beliefs and attitudes that are nurtured in them as part of a certain group. Moreover, the individual perception and experience also influence the human interaction. In such an environment it is important to understand the difference in terms of ethics, body language, dressing sense, mannerisms etc. so that there is not any miscommunication due to lack of mutual understanding. What is completely professional in one culture could be rude or unethical for the other so one has to be very careful. If we talk of Indian scenario, with so many multinational companies in place, it becomes important to train oneself to work in a congenial way with people from different backgrounds, genders and age group without sounding offending unknowingly.

Depending on the kind of interaction one indulges in, the mannerisms and expression change to ensure that the communication process is effective, successful, constructive and enriching.