Worksheet – "Top 10 Communication Skills"

Instructions: Working with a partner or group answer the question under each skill.

1. **Be an Active and Attentive Listener**

   - Pay close attention to what is being said.
   - Rephrase what has been said – ask clarifying questions.
   - Attentive listening – eye contact, posture, facial expressions, gestures, and genuine interest.

   What do you need to do to improve your active and attentive listening skills?

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2. **Practice Expert Non-Verbal Communication:**

   - Watch non-verbal signals of speaker.
   - Your body tells the real story.

   What do you need to do to improve your non-verbal communication skills?

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3. **Be Clear and Concise**

   - Say just enough – not too little…not too much.
   - Do not ramble on and on and on.

   What do you need to do to be a clearer and more concise communicator?

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4. **Be Kind and Friendly**

   - Nice and polite go a long way in understanding.
   - Smile often. You are in control of your "mood."
   - Everyone responds to honest friendliness.

   Who is the friendliest communicator in your office? How does this affect his or her performance?

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5. **Have Confidence in Yourself**

   - Confidence builds trust.
   - Speak clearly – no "basically" – no "you know" – no blah, blah, blah.
   - Aggression is NOT confidence.

   What can you do to be more confident in your communication with co-workers and external customers?

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6. **Have Empathy for Everyone**

- Respect and understand other's point of view (even if you disagree).
- Validate speaker's opinion.

What are your "hot buttons" for lack of empathy? How do you overcome these?

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7. **Be Open-Minded**

- Be flexible and open to new ideas.
- Encourage open dialogue.
- Do not stay stuck on your opinions, especially when you "know" they are right.

When are you the most closed-minded in your communication with co-workers and external customers?

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8. **Respect Everyone**

- Respect everyone whether they deserve it – demonstrates your level of respect.
- People more open when they feel their voice and ideas are respected.
- No qualifiers:
  - *"I don't want to hurt your feelings, but..."*
  - *"I know this is going to make you mad, but…"*
  - *"I hope you don't take this the wrong way, but…"*
  - *"I know you are very sensitive, but…"*
  - *"I'm sorry to be the one to tell you the bad news, but…"*
  - *"Don't take this personally, but…"*

What communication *qualifiers* annoy you the most?

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9. **Provide Feedback**

- Everyone wants honest and fair feedback.
- Focus on solutions, not just problems.
- Focus on results, not personal attack.

Who, in your office, provides the best feedback to co-workers and/or external customers? Explain.

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10. **Select the Right Medium**

- Do not overuse email.
- No emails for serious conversations (layoffs, changes in salary, demotions, promotions, etc.).
- Select the best method to convey message.

What is an example of a message you received that was in the wrong "medium?"

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