

# Communication Faults: 100 Communication Mistakes People Make

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What mistakes are you making when you open your mouth? Here are 100 common communication faults. Use this checklist to strengthen your effectiveness or as part of your professional development. As you use this list, you will discover that each item leads to a person's heart and soul. If one's eyes are mirrors of the soul, communication is a mirror of the mind.

## 1. Lack of Credibility

- Overpromises results or benefits
- Overstates facts; hypes
- Lies, misrepresents; is dishonest
- Sneaky, not forthright
- Eager to please, needs approval
- Pretentious, tries to impress
- Sounds needy, desperate
- Insincere-sounding; not real
- BS-er, full of it, full of themselves
- Justifies, overexplains

## 2. Disrespectful

- Critical, harsh, judgmental
- Insensitive, no compassion
- One-ups, downplays efforts
- Ignores what was said
- Patronizes, parents
- Sexist, bigoted, intolerant
- Digs, undermines, barbs
- Inappropriate comments or humor
- Stingy with praise or support
- Hard sell; tries to convince or trick

### 3. Disrupts Flow

- Too positive; pushes mood
- Too fast, adrenalized, pushes mood
- Half-duplex (can't hear when speaking)
- Inattentive, easily distracted
- Information-reactive (responds only to information, not person or feelings)
- Literal, can't get gist easily
- Keeps making point even after other person got it
- Responds with non sequiturs
- Interrogates, peppers with questions
- Overly concerned, too significant

### 5. No Warmth

- Cold, icy
- No personality, flat, no fizz
- Measured, controlled
- Suspicious, distrusting
- Negative, jaded, acerbic
- Quickly points out flaws
- Rigid
- Highly technical language
- Analytical; logic without feelings
- Judges, labels, compartmentalizes

### 4. Lack of Clarity

- Trite, boring, old, useless
- Pat answers or quotes, walking cliché
- Confusing, overly complicated
- Vague, rambles, repetitive
- Mishears, mislabels, assumes
- Consumes information versus assimilating it
- Dogmatic, righteous, singular
- Linear, two-dimensional, flat information
- Overloads with too much information
- Too quick with advice

### 6. Weak Listener

- Listens too hard
- Listens only for the familiar; misses subtlety
- Can't multiprocess (can only hear one idea, subject, or problem at a time)
- Listens ignorantly (not sure what to listen for)
- Doesn't echo (person doesn't feel heard)
- Always preparing a response; misses what is being said
- Reacts negatively, stops listening
- Interrupts too much
- Corrects too much

## 7. Poor Speaker

- Doesn't condition or contextualize
- Uses jargon or boilerplate
- Uses generic, nonspecific language
- Has inadequate vocabulary
- Doesn't know distinctions
- Ignorant, uninformed about life or subject
- Mostly I/me oriented
- Oblivious to or unaware of people's reactions
- Numb, unaware of own feelings
- Steps over or ignores key clues

## 9. Ineffective Style

- Oblique, hinting (versus direct)
- Slow, plodding (versus quick)
- Draining (consumes space or energy)
- Coach versus consult
- Coach versus help
- Matter versus mean something
- Intense, overeager, too "on"
- Speaks too slowly
- Speaks too quickly
- Bossy, domineering, controlling
- Sugary sweet; puffery
- Broadcasts, lectures, speaks at
- Talks more than listens

## 8. Wrong Focus

- Symptoms-oriented (versus source)
- Problem-centric (versus source)
- Past-oriented (versus present)
- Future-oriented (versus present)
- Consequence-oriented
- Old-fashioned (versus current thinking)
- Hearsay, gossip (versus fact)
- Theoretical (versus practical)
- Tactical (versus strategic)

## 10. Annoying Voice or Tone

- Feeble, weak, doesn't reach or affect
- Loud, booming, overpowering
- Nasal, grating
- High pitch, squeaky
- Hesitant, tentative, unsure
- Heavy breather, spitter
- Shriill
- Whiny
- Negative, doomsday tone
- Heavily significant, overacting