



THE NUMBER **ONE** LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION TIPS

FROM COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS AROUND THE WORLD

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**BEHIND
THE
SCENES**

As a leader, your primary role is to envision a better future, chart the best course to achieve it and persuade your team, colleagues, customers and partners to join you in pursuit of that vision.

To do this successfully, you first need to **connect** with your stakeholders in a way that allows them to identify with, relate to and trust in you and your vision.

This requires **effective leadership communication**.

Only through effective leadership communication are you able to inform, inspire, engage and unite your key stakeholders behind a common purpose, vision and direction.

Only through effective leadership communication can you learn from those at the front line what challenges and opportunities exist, giving you the visibility needed to steer the organisation towards success.

Only through effective leadership communication can you ignite in others the courage, confidence and commitment required to navigate change and explore new territories.

Effective communication is like **oxygen**: it is the **life force** of your leadership. It's vital if you want to achieve your vision and potential as a leader.

Whether you are on the path to leadership, have recently entered a leadership position, or have been a leader for many years, the **communication tips** that follow have been compiled by some of the world's experts on leadership communication to help you on your journey.

My thanks to everyone who contributed their **number one leadership communication tip**, and my thanks to you for downloading this book. I hope you find it a valuable resource that you continually refer to in an effort to **communicate, connect** and **contribute** with maximum impact.

Catherine



**BEHIND
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my number **ONE** tip...



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It's not about you. It's always about your audience. Try to put yourself in their shoes and consider not only their challenges, fears and frustrations, goals, hopes and opportunities but also their communication preferences. What information do they want or need from you? How do they prefer to receive this information? How regularly? Through what channels? How do they want to communicate back to you? What is their preferred communication style? How does that compare to yours? If you're not sure of the answers, don't be afraid to ask them because - just like shoes - one size does not fit all, so it's important to be flexible in your approach to communication. Whilst it may seem like a lot of effort, always remember, the more you can understand your audience, the easier it will be for you to communicate in a way that reaches, resonates and connects with them.

Catherine Hollyman

Founder | Communications Coach
Behind The Scenes Communications



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*Everything you do communicates. Whether you intend to or not, everything leaders do (and don't do) communicates something. Planning and being intentional about communications is often the key to employees having the information and context they need to help an organisation or team achieve its vision and goals. And being more purposeful in your communications can take **as little as five minutes.***

David Grossman

Founder & CEO
The Grossman Group



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Communication is a two-way street. It's about listening as much as it's about talking. Powerful leaders pay attention to both verbal AND nonverbal cues from their audiences, and they actively solicit feedback to verify their own messages are getting across as intended.

Dana Harvey

Founder
Dana Harvey Communications



my number **ONE** tip...



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Leaders need to overcommunicate their vision and message. It's never safe to assume that if you've said something once, or twice, or five times, that employees and stakeholders have internalised your message. You need to continually tie your overall vision into day-to-day activities, to remind people of why they're here and what purpose they're serving. Repetition - even far beyond what you think is necessary - is key to having your workforce truly get on the same page.

Dorie Clark

*Author, Speaker,
and Executive Coach*
Dorie Clark



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My number one tip actually comes from Teddy Roosevelt and Zig Ziglar: "People don't care what you know until they know that you care."

Brianna Ludwig

Director of Communications
North Dakota State Auditor



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By far, my number one coaching focus with leaders is helping you align what you say and what you do. When you get that right, the rest is easier. That applies to Fortune 50 companies and newbies.

Jim Shaffer

Leader
Jim Shaffer Group



my number **ONE** tip...



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Communicate with heart. Too many leaders use business language that is empty of emotion and makes them sound like a robot. Instead, start communicating with feeling and empathy to increase trust and commitment that is so lacking in many organisations today.

Andrea Greenhous

*Founder and Chief Internal
Communication Strategist
Vision2Voice*



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It's not about the process of communicating; it's what the audience walk away thinking and doing. Always start the journey with this in mind.

Jon Hammond DL

The Catapult Group



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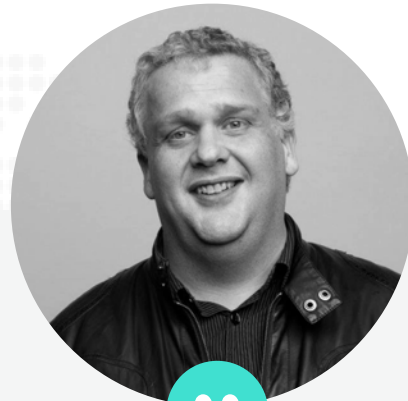
Be vulnerable. Don't be afraid to talk about the times you've failed and how you came back to succeed. Too often we only speak about our successes. If we want people to take risks, we must be unafraid to talk about the entire outcome, good and bad, what we learned and how we made it work.

Pamela Dmytruk-Lebel

*Senior Advisor,
Internal Communications
Strathcona County*



my number **ONE** tip...



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The most valuable phrase for leaders at any level of an organisation is "For us this means..." This is the bridge between what is happening - either within or beyond the organisation and making it meaningful to your most immediate team. For a CEO, that's the Exec team, for them it's direct reports, for a team leader, it's their team. This conduit to context is where vision, values and execution merge in the moment of authentic communication.

Jonathan Champ, SCMP

*Founder and Chief Consultant
Meaning Business*

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When counseling executives or company spokespeople, I always remind them of the saying "you have two ears and one mouth for a reason." Truly listen to a reporter, an employee, a constituent, before answering a question, jumping to a conclusion or speaking your mind.

Karen Lilla

*VP, Global Employee
Communications
Liberty Mutual Insurance*

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The CEO is the Statesperson for the business – you must be visible at all times, whether this involves conducting face-to-face floor walks, meeting small groups of employees or hosting virtual town hall sessions with the entire company.

Michael Nord

*Principal Consultant, ERM
The Fifth Business*



my number **ONE** tip...



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Listen, listen, and listen some more. One of the #1 mistakes I see from leaders is they tend to do more talking than listening. Not only will you learn more about your business if you listen, you build trust and rapport with employees.

Laurie Swinton

*Director, Communication Services
Empire Life*

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Everything communicates. Even when you don't think you're communicating, you are. Whether you sit alone at lunch, or take a seat with employees. Whether you consistently arrive five minutes late to meetings or conference calls, or whether you make it a point to be on time. Whether you walk the floor and say hi, or go straight from the elevator to your office. It's often the little things that carry a more powerful message than an employee communications campaign. The good news: anybody can become a better communicator! It takes a bit of focus and effort and getting out of your comfort zone, but it's truly not that hard if you prioritise other people.

Jeremiah McWilliams

*Director, Employee Communications
North Highland*

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Above all else, be yourself. Authenticity leads to trust, and trust in leadership is the foundation that allows a leader to influence mindsets and behaviour.

Kellie Williams, ABC

*Communications Manager
State Farm*

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my number **ONE** tip...



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Leaders have to be vocal yet transparent and honest, and not be afraid to tell bad news. Instead of sweeping things under the carpet, leaders should be upfront and explain what their strategies are to get the business back on track, where they are heading and how they want people to support. Refusing to talk about challenges and problems won't make them go away nor do they help you win hearts and minds. Good leaders communicate to make sure they gain trust to make things change.

Monique Lam

AVP Communications
Allianz Global Investors, Hong Kong

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Use every opportunity to ask employees questions about your organisation's top priorities: what progress they're making, what can be improved and so on. Asking, rather than telling, is a highly effective way to communicate what's top of mind for you while directly engaging employees. And if you listen with an open mind, you can gain important insights you wouldn't otherwise have access to.

Mary Ann Prychoda

Lead
Prychoda Communications

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Actively listening to what others say is one of the most effective ways to ensure they want to listen to what you say.

Jennifer Cox

Communications Officer
University of Winnipeg

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my number **ONE** tip...



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*Good leaders know how to speak.
Great leaders know when not to.*

Shane Michael Hatton

Speaker, Author, Trainer
Shane Michael Hatton



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Do everything within your power to build relationships with all employees. The power of communication is incredible when it comes to building trust and having authentic relationships. As a communicator, avoid tokenism, and reinforce the importance of meaningful connections. It's not all about listening exercises and surveys. It's about removing any ego and being invested in a two-way conversation. To that end, work to reduce the reliance and levels of email traffic. Encourage and build programs which get people in the same room, and walk the floors to show you value all people in an organisation.

Dan Gold MPRCA

Director of Digital Strategy
Martin Charlton Communications



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I recommend following the lean concept of "Go see, ask why, show respect." The larger, more hierarchical a company or organisation is, the more important it is for top leaders to personally visit and listen to frontline staff. It builds mutual trust, increases motivation, and supports good strategic decision making.

Kalle Speer

HR Communications Specialist
Port of Seattle



BOOK YOUR **FREE** SESSION



Coaching

One-on-one communication coaching and mentoring for the leader who wants to build their leadership presence, establish credibility, earn trust, build rapport, inspire, motivate, engage and communicate to connect with stakeholders at all levels.



Consulting

Development and implementation of leadership communication strategies that open the lines of communication throughout your business, enabling you to build a high-performing team and a culture of trust, pride and engagement.



Workshops

Interactive workshops packed with practical tools and techniques to take your communication skills to new heights by harnessing your natural communication style and strengths, targeting your development areas and learning to overcome barriers to effective communication.



Speaking

Keynote, lunch n learn and breakfast seminars designed to educate, inspire and empower the audience to become 'purposeful communicators', improve the impact of their day-to-day interactions and fast-track their path to high-performing success.



Communicate



Connect



Contribute

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