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Mindful Communication: Should You Text or Call?

Fast communication is not always meaningful and effective. So, should you pick up the phone or meet in person to discuss that important issue with your coworker, colleague, boss, or customer? It could make a difference in your getting the job, smoothing over a conflict, explaining a mistake, or getting the sale. This is called “mindful communication”—choosing the right communication method. That might be text, but be *mindful* about it. Communication “tools” include voice, tone, appearance, and nonverbal behaviors. These resources—and those of your counterpart—may be what deliver your goal. The meaning of your communication is found in the response you get back. If it is not what you want, switch methods.



What Willingness to Learn Says about You

You may have hard-fought education and training in one area of work, but if you are not communicating a strong sense of willingness to learn new skills, you may be overlooking opportunities and a critical way to engage with your employer in the modern era. Willingness and a desire to learn demonstrate your motivation for personal improvement and achievement. Your willingness and desire to learn a soft skill employers value says a lot about you. Employers look for potential, capability, and the ability to withstand change. Desire for a new challenge communicates it all.



How to Up Your Team Skills

Showing up, pitching in, being timely, and communicating well part of teamwork. How many of these other skills do you also possess: 1) **Leadership**. Even if you are not the team leader, you can still practice leadership behaviors—think proactively, take initiative, and “think upstream” to prevent future problems. 2) **Conflict Resolution**. Spot conflicts early and facilitate resolution. 3) **“Other” Awareness Skills**. Continually sense the needs of team members (e.g., sensing others are overworked, you pitch in to share more of the load). 4) **Checking In**. Disagreements happen, but personality clashes can be toxic. Check in—ask, find out whether things are “OK between us.” 5) **Diversity Awareness**. Pay attention to—and grow appreciation for—the variety of skills and abilities of team members while seeking ways to best utilize them.



Blue Light No Sleep Delight

Blue light from technology screens like smart phones is known to interfere with sleep. Suppression of melatonin, a naturally occurring hormone is the reason. It helps us fall asleep and makes sleep restorative. Researchers recently demonstrated that blue light also interferes with your body's ability to naturally reduce its temperature at night, which also enhances restorative sleep. During the night, this temperature drop hits its low at about 4 a.m. As body temperature returns to normal, you begin to awaken. Blue light inhibits this temperature drop. This in turn, causes your deep sleep period to suffer. Hence, you are tired the next day.



Source: <http://www.haifa.ac.il> (search “blue light”)

Know Your Positive Personal Attributes

Employers not only want employees with the right skills and abilities, but also they want positive personal attributes. Could you describe your positive attributes? The ability to discuss them shows your personal insight and adds energy to any job interview, making you stand out in ways that many other applicants do not. Examples of personal attributes are the following: flexible and adaptable, ability to work unsupervised, taking initiative, getting along well with others, willing and eager to learn, communicating effectively, thoughtful and reflective about issues/problems, able to be self-critical, seeking unique ways around problems, asking questions, and tolerating uncertainty well.



Soft Skill to Know . . . Staying Energetic

Being energetic at work is more than avoiding the sluggish feeling after lunch. When you're energetic, you possess and exhibit energy in abundance that's an obvious part of a vigorous work style and temperament. Employers value energetic employees for a key reason—their energy is contagious as they engage, create, and participate effectively with teams. You don't have to undergo a personality transformation to be more energetic. 1) Start with regular exercise and stress management techniques. 2) Have a proper diet that maximizes your energy and that contains fewer food substances that weigh on metabolism. 3) Get enough sleep. 4) Practice positivity to help you feel energetic. Good physical health and nutrition influence a positive mood, but this works both ways. Combine this with reducing negative self-talk scripts that bring you down. 5) Practice work-life balance so you nurture yourself with activities you enjoy, and participate in social activities that renew your spirit.



New Resource: Health and Happiness: Your Guide to Proper Physical Fitness, Healthy Nutrition and Leading a Positive and Balanced Lifestyle; 2017 by Brittany D. Costa.

When a Nap Comes Knocking

New research suggests a 30-minute nap is all it takes to reverse the hormonal impact of a night of poor sleep. This is the first study that found napping could “restore biomarkers of neuroendocrine and immune health to normal levels.” Lack of sleep is recognized as a public health problem. Insufficient sleep can contribute to reduced productivity as well as increased vehicle and industrial accidents, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. People who sleep too little are more likely to develop chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and depression. The findings support the development of practical strategies for addressing chronically sleep-deprived employees.



Source: www.endocrine.org (search “napping”).

Creating a Life Plan

Your life will happen one way or another, so it's a good idea to take charge of its direction, and a life plan is the way to do it. Thousands of books discuss how to create a life plan. No matter your age, the purpose of a life plan is to capitalize on opportunities and avoid regrets. A life plan can be written for a month at a time or drafted to incorporate many years. Life plans help you maximize and prioritize possibilities, and they separate the possible from the improbable. (You probably don't have the resources to visit the moon someday, so a plan will keep you pursuing dreams that are still realistic.) The future is coming, and with it the realities you will face. A plan can help you navigate these challenges with your happiness remaining intact. So, where are you heading?

