

“Everyone Communicates, Few Connect “

John C. Maxwell

Kindle Notes: Dave Kraft

Everyone talks. Everyone communicates. But few connect. Those who do connect take their relationships, their work, and their lives to another level. People cannot succeed in life without communicating effectively. It's not enough just to work hard. It's not enough to do a great job. To be successful, you need to learn how to really communicate with others. Connecting is the ability to identify with people and relate to them in a way that increases your influence with them. The number one criteria for advancement and promotion for professionals is an ability to communicate effectively. If you want to become more productive and influential, learn to become a better leader because everything rises and falls on leadership. And the best leaders are always excellent connectors.

Presidential historian Robert Dallek says that successful presidents exhibit five qualities that enable them to achieve things that others don't:

1. Vision,
2. Pragmatism,
3. Consensus building,
4. Charisma,
5. Trustworthiness.

President Gerald Ford once remarked, “If I went back to college again, I'd concentrate on two areas: learning to write and to speak before an audience. Nothing in life is more important than the ability to communicate effectively.” To communicate effectively and to lead others, you have to take initiative. You have to be proactive.

Maturity is the ability to see and act on behalf of others. To add value to others, one must first value others. Chew Keng Sheng, a lecturer at University Sains Malaysia's School of Medical Sciences, believes that the underlying reason for immaturity and ego-centeredness, especially among public speakers, is insecurity. “We aren't in the coffee business, serving people. We're in the people business, serving coffee.” three questions that people always ask themselves when interacting with others,

1. Do you care for me?
2. Can you help me?
3. Can I trust you?

To add value to others, one must first value others. The key to making others feel valued in a group or on a team is to invite participation. The smartest person in the room is never as smart as all the people in the room. Input creates synergy, buy-in, and connection.

Something I know but do not feel, my communication is dispassionate.

Something I know but do not do, my communication is theoretical.

Something I feel but do not know, my communication is unfounded.

Something I feel but do not do, my communication is hypocritical.

Something I do but do not know, my communication is presumptuous.

Something I do but do not feel, my communication is mechanical

You need to be more than just a messenger. You must be the message you want to deliver. Nothing can happen through you until it happens to you. By connecting on four levels: visually, intellectually, emotionally, and verbally.

I love something I read recently called “Property Law as Viewed by a Toddler” by Michael V. Hernandez. If you have children or grandchildren—or if you’ve ever spent time with a toddler—you’ll find that it rings true:

1. If I like it, it’s mine.
2. If it’s in my hand, it’s mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it’s mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it’s mine.
5. If it’s mine, it must never appear to be yours in any way.
6. If I’m doing or building something, all the pieces are mine.
7. If it looks like it’s mine, it’s mine.
8. If I saw it first, it’s mine.
9. If I can see it, it’s mine.
10. If I think it’s mine, it’s mine.
11. If I want it, it’s mine.
12. If I need it, it’s mine (yes, I know the difference between “want” and “need”!).
13. If I say it’s mine, it’s mine.
14. If you don’t stop me from playing with it, it’s mine.
15. If you tell me I can play with it, it’s mine.
16. If it will upset me too much when you take it away from me, it’s mine.
17. If I (think I) can play with it better than you can, it’s mine.

18. If I play with it long enough, it's mine.
 19. If you are playing with something and you put it down, it's mine.
 20. If it's broken, it's yours (no wait, all the pieces are mine)
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1. What people see—connecting visually
2. What people understand— Connecting intellectually

People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude “People will not always remember what you said. They will not always remember what you did. But, they will always remember how you made them feel.”

3. What people hear—connecting verbally

Words are the currency of ideas and have the power to change the world. As Mark Twain observed, “The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

If you want people to be impressed, you can talk about your successes; but if you want people to identify with you, it's better to talk about your failures. “Four Unpardonable Sins of a Communicator”: being unprepared, uncommitted, uninteresting, or uncomfortable.

Introverts can exhibit extroverted behavior—[however] it really drains us and we need to recharge sooner than an extrovert.”

1. Connecting requires initiative. Go first
2. Connecting requires clarity. Prepare
3. Connecting requires patience. Slow down
4. Connecting requires selflessness. Focus on others
5. Connecting requires stamina. Recharge

Figure out what activities drain you of energy and avoid them if they're not essential. Pay attention to what charges your batteries and start making it part of your schedule. To accomplish anything of value, you must learn to manage and marshal your energy. What

I discovered that communicators I greatly admire, exhibits five qualities:

1. *They possess great confidence.* I have yet to observe a great communicator who didn't possess confidence it's difficult to connect with and enjoy speakers who are uncertain.
2. *They exhibit authenticity.* To connect with people, be yourself, at your best. That's something anyone can learn to do

3. *They prepare thoroughly.* I've never seen John unready to speak to an audience.
4. *They utilize humor.* Rare is the communicator who is able to connect with people without using humor."
5. *They focus on others.*

Max De Pree, author of *Leadership Is an Art*, asserts, "There may be no single thing more important in our efforts to achieve meaningful work and fulfilling relationships than to learn & practice the art of communication."

I was like the lady who was disappointed with the result of her husband's eye surgery. She told her friend, "We spent over \$4,000 on laser surgery for his eyes, and he still can't see things from my point of view!"

Why do so many people neglect to search for common ground and build upon it? There are many reasons, but I will give you what I believe to be the top four barriers to finding common ground. You must guard against them:

1. **Assumption**—I already know what others feel and want. Too often I have been guilty of making assumptions about people. I have often made generalizations when I should have been making observations.
2. **Arrogance**—I don't need to know what others feel or want
3. **Indifference**—I don't care what others feel or want. Comedian George Carlin joked, "Scientists announced today that they had found a cure for apathy. However, they claim no one has shown the slightest bit of interest in it."
4. **Control**—I don't want others to know what I feel or want

Some things to do:

Availability—I will choose to spend time with others

Listening—I will listen my way to common ground

Questions—I will be interested enough in others to ask questions

Thoughtfulness—I will think of others and look for ways to thank them

Openness—I will let people into my life

Likability—I will care about people

Humility—I will think of myself less so I can think of others more

Adaptability—I will move from my world to theirs

The word communication comes from the Latin word *communis*, meaning "common."

If you want to impact people, don't talk about your successes; talk about your failures. Civil rights activist Cornel West says, "Humility means two things. a capacity for self-criticism and allowing others to shine, affirming others, empowering and enabling others."

I want to give you four pointers to help you become a better connector.

1. Ask, do I feel what you feel before asking do you feel what I feel
2. Ask, do I see what you see before asking do you see what I see
3. Ask, do I know what you know before asking do you know what I know
4. Ask, do I know what you want before asking do you know what I want

When I want to really get to know someone, I ask three questions. People's answers to these give me great insight into someone's heart. The questions are:

- What do you dream about?
- What do you sing about?
- What do you cry about?

As leaders and communicators, our job is to bring clarity to a subject, not complexity.

1. Talk to people, not above them
2. Get to the point. All good communicators get to the point before their listeners start asking, "What's the point?"
3. Say it clearly
4. Say less
5. Take responsibility for your listeners
6. Communicate in their world
7. Be visual
8. Be the communicator you want to hear
9. Be the person with whom you want to connect
10. Connect with people at all levels

"Motivated employees are 87 percent less likely to leave an organization compared to an unmotivated employee." —Billy Hybels

"The first time you say something, it's heard. The second time, it's recognized, and the third time, it's learned." —William h Rastetter

People don't remember what we think is important; they remember what they think is important.

“A gossip is one who talks to you about others; a bore is one who talks to you about himself; and a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself.”

People need to know that you have high expectations of them

“Management is about persuading people to do things they do not want to do, while leadership is about inspiring people to do things they never thought they could.” —
STEVE JOBS

People need to see your convictions

People need to see your credibility

People need to see evidence of your character

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The great teacher demonstrates.

People need to feel your passion for the subject and them

Vision without passion is a picture without possibilities.

People need to feel your confidence in yourself and

People need to feel your gratitude for them

Say the right words at the right time

Give people an action plan

I once read the statistic that 95 percent of the people in an audience understand what's being communicated and agree with the speaker's point of view. However, they do not know how to apply what's being said to their lives. My desire is to help people move from “know how” to “do now.”

Make a commitment to continually inspire others

One linguist says that in up to twenty primitive languages, the words for “hearing” and “doing” are the same word.

Connect with yourself

Right your wrongs

Be accountable