

Tips for Interpersonal Communication

Do a self check by using the following:

Check for Understanding:

- What are my reasons for doing or saying this?
- Am I completely objective or have my personal feelings affected the way I view this matter?
- How would I feel if someone treated me this way?
- What would my family say if they found out about this, would I be embarrassed by my actions?

Listen effectively:

- It is important that you avoid jumping to conclusions, you should also try not to develop any premature judgments about the individual or the situation, and you want to avoid comparisons to others and criticisms.
- It is important to understand what the reasons are behind the statements or actions of the individual you are speaking with. Ask them to clarify or explain.
- Remember that there are two sides to every story and it is important to hear from all key parties involved.
- Make sure you focus only on the facts, and make every effort to obtain the information in an objective manner.
- At the beginning of your conversation make sure to take time to get a full understanding of the point of view of the other individual, this will help prevent misunderstandings in the future.

You will need to determine what kind of information you would need to change your mind. You may also want to read any relevant policies and procedures that apply to the situation ahead of time.

It is also important that you remain professional and respectful. Attempting to embarrass someone or mistakenly directing your anger at them will not help to resolve the issues you may have. This can also shift the focus on the discussion from what can be done to resolve the matter to your behavior.

Offer non-verbal cues to let the person know you are paying attention and following what they are saying. These can include nodding your head to indicate that you are listening. Make good eye contact is also very helpful. This indicates you are listening and you are not distracted. Your facial expressions will also indicate to the individual if you understand, agree or may be a little confused about what they are saying.

It is important to verify what you have heard. To do so you should repeat back to the individual key points or phrases they have made. Be sure to check with them to ensure you have understood by asking if what you have restated is correct.