

Effective Communication: 12 Reasons to Have a Direct Conversation

Did you ever imagine that you would have to remind people that they know how to talk? Surprisingly, management in today's business world often needs to!

Today, it is so much easier to not have to talk to people for many things. PDAs and Internet-enabled email systems allow for information to be communicated at any time of day. In many cases, this is a great benefit since email allows people to communicate non-critical information on their own time schedules and process messages in batch.

However, there are many times when a two-way live conversation or a direct phone conversation is much more productive. Conversation is the quickest and most effective way to clarify any uncertainty and allows for visual and verbal clues to be used to help navigate the dialogue. Dialogue can also help to diffuse any misunderstandings or improper reactions and can uncover new information that is valuable to the situation.

Communications that have emotional content, require conflict resolution, require group discussion or contain sensitive information are some examples of when conversation should likely be used. It's important for people to recognize when these situations exist so they can make the right communication method choice.

The following examples and consequences are provided to help better identify these situations. These are common cases where email is used when talking directly would be more effective:

- *Conflict resolution is attempted via email. This can create long threads of public arguments and drawn-out emotional strife.*
- *A reprimand is sent through email. This can make the recipient feel like they were "convicted without a trial."*

THEMES

- *Recognize situations where direct conversation should be used instead of email.*
- *If there's any form of uncertainty, disagreement, or emotional content in an issue, having a discussion is the best choice.*
- *Talk It Out When In Doubt!*

- *Brainstorming or problem solving is attempted via email. This can also create long threads of messages with large distribution lists and usually generates less than optimal results since immediate two-way communication is not viable.*
- *A message is sent containing content that may cause a strong emotional reaction. If an adverse reaction occurs, hours or days may pass before the sender can address the issue. Or worse, the sender may never understand that the recipient had an adverse reaction to the message.*
- *Group decisions for complex issues are made via email. Since two-way interaction is limited and many people are less comfortable speaking out on email, only a portion of information that would be available from a group discussion is used to make the decision.*
- *Negotiations are done via email. The ability of the sender to convince or persuade the recipient is much more limited over email. It's very difficult to break down someone's concerns or read their immediate reaction without direct interaction. Also, once the recipient "publicly refuses" a request over email, it is more difficult to get them to change his or her position.*

As obvious as it may sound, reminding people that "talking is an option" may provide great benefit at times. People get so used to communicating via email that they often forget this point. Talking also helps to build informal relationships and networks that are critical to an organization's success. Usually, if there's any form of uncertainty, disagreement, or emotional content in an issue, having a discussion is the best choice. And if there's any doubt whether an email will be effective, you should probably talk it out instead.

For more information on this and other topics regarding effective communication, please visit <http://www.emailless.com/> .

Talk It Out When in Doubt! - 12 Reasons to Have a Direct Conversation

- 1. When you are mad or emotional.*
- 2. When the other person is mad or emotional.*
- 3. When there is a conflict on an item.*
- 4. When you need to convince someone to change his or her position.*
- 5. When you aren't sure that others will interpret your email properly.*
- 6. When someone sends you an email that seems out of character for him or her.*
- 7. When you aren't sure how to interpret someone else's email.*
- 8. When someone asks you something ambiguous or general over email.*
- 9. When you believe repeated two-way dialogue or lengthy explanation is required.*
- 10. When you are concerned how the other person may respond and want to address his or her response immediately.*
- 11. When many people need to provide repeated input into an issue.*
- 12. When the tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, etc. will add value to communicating or understanding an issue. For example, you may want to express concern, show empathy or get an immediate read on the other person's reaction.*

Please visit <http://www.emailless.com/> for more articles and information on communicating consistently and effectively as an organization.

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