



# Checklist for Improving Speaking Skills



Do you use these communication skills when you are talking?

## Body Language

- face the person you are speaking to
- nod your head when the other person speaks to show you're listening
- make eye contact to connect with the other speaker(s)
- use body gestures (move arms and hands) when you speak
- relax, be engaged and listen to the speaker(s)

## Fluency

- use pauses effectively
- don't say "um" and "ah" too much
- speak loud enough so the other person can hear you  
(no hands covering your mouth when you speak)

## Interactive Communication

- start a conversation
- introduce new ideas into the conversation
- keep a conversation going by using questions like "How about you?"  
"What do you think?"
- check in with the other speaker to see if he/she has understood you
- listen and respond to the other speaker appropriately to the situation

## Pronunciation

- is understandable and can be followed by the other speaker
- use some variety in your voice (volume, rate, pitch and rhythm)
- use stress and intonation
- emphasize key words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)



## Content

- give an opinion
- ask a question
- ask for clarification
- offer to help
- agree or disagree
- politely interrupt someone
- make a suggestion
- give advice
- get information from the other speaker
- provide information
- summarize what the speaker has said
- discuss important issues
- introduce yourself

## Vocabulary

- use some advanced words
- use a variety of words
- use some idioms/phrasal verbs where appropriate

## Grammar

- use short responses/phrases, not just yes/no answers
- form simple sentences in the correct word order
- use a variety of verb tenses where appropriate
- use a variety of sentence structures
- connect ideas with and, but, so, etc. (coordinating conjunctions)
- connect ideas using adverb clauses
- connect ideas using relative pronouns (adjective clauses)
- use transition words and phrases so others can follow your sequence of ideas

## Self-Assessment

- I use \_\_\_ of these 41 communication skills.
- I think my communication skills are \_\_\_ excellent, \_\_\_ good, \_\_\_ average, \_\_\_ poor, \_\_\_ terrible.
- I think I \_\_\_ can \_\_\_ cannot improve my communication skills.

