

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.
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