

What are your New Years' Communication Resolutions?

 By John French

8 Jan 2014

It's that time of year again. January is the month when goal-oriented people reflect on the past 365 days, examine their past successes and failures and decide how this new year they *CAN* make things better. There is something very significant about the beginning of a new year that causes us to reflect and set goals for future self-development.



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Successful people set intelligent worthwhile goals. The world economy is becoming more and more competitive and it is becoming more and more important to have the competitive edge. Skilled communicators tend to rise above the disadvantaged masses and build their businesses based on excellent communication principles and strategic communication skills.

Here is my communication advice to help you to lift your game and improve your success in 2014:

1. **Set communication goals.** First define what it is you want to achieve *BEFORE* you begin to speak, present, write, sell or negotiate. If your mind is focused, your communication messages will also be.
Define your communication goal in one short sentence every time before you begin to communicate.
2. **Manage your stress.** Stress sabotages communication and destroys business relationships. We simply cannot communicate effectively when we are stressed. Stress negatively impacts our body language and vocal tone and our overall communication messages.
3. **Simplify your communication messages.** Keep your communication messages clear and simple in order to be easily understood.
4. **Become more Emotionally Intelligent.** Business in the 21st century is becoming increasingly more intuitive and relationship-based. People want to do business with people they like. Enrol on an E.Q. (Emotional Quotient) course or

read books on how to increase your personal EQ.

5. **Answer e-mails and voicemail messages within 24 hours.** Failing to respond timorously must surely be South Africa's worst communication habit. Show your clients that you are responsible and professional. Acknowledge all your voicemail and e-mail messages within a 24 hour period.
6. **Use the magic words whenever you can and smile, smile, smile!** Irrespective of whether you were taught to say "please" and "thank you", learn to use these two magic words. Your smile will influence your vocal tone over the telephone and light up the darkest room.
7. **Communication proves that The Law of Attraction works.** The attitude you project outwards when you communicate will determine how you are treated in return. Therefore, choose your approach and attitude intelligently whenever you communicate. It is your invitation to others to treat you in a particular way.
8. **Learn from your mistakes.** Get regular feedback from those you trust and work on your weak communication areas. Remember, it is only a mistake if you don't learn the important lesson that comes along with an unfortunate experience.
9. **Improve your communication habits.** There really is no such thing as a bad communicator. There are simply bad communication habits. The correct communication training will help you to become the best communicator you can be, and it will help you to maximize on your unique personal strengths.
10. **Enrol on a communication course this year.** The best sports professionals never stop going for coaching: the better they become the more coaching they attend.

Improve your communication skills in 2014 and watch how your business and life improves. It really is almost impossible to succeed if you cannot communicate effectively. Have fun communicating and good luck!

ABOUT JOHN FRENCH

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