

Strategize Your Way to Better Communication

Communication is a key component to leadership. If you are communicating, then you are leading in some way. Here are five principles that you can begin using immediately to help you communicate, and thus lead, better.

1. **Use positive language.** Draw people to your point by inspiring them. If you paint a brighter future, people will desire to listen and follow. A quick listen to great speeches like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address or Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech faced the difficulties of the present day. But they also move on to describe the promise of something greater.
2. **Avoid alarmism.** Leading through times of crisis is necessary. Creating a constant environment of crisis is demotivating. Eventually, if every circumstance is a cause for alarm, people will stop listening and simply give up hope. Change is inevitable and and it is always accompanied by a cost. However, you can help people through it by not sounding the crisis alarm with your language.
3. **State how it is easy to understand what we are doing.** The constant use of phrases like "This is tough to understand" or "This will be hard for some people to do" becomes principles to follow rather than warnings to help. Instead, as you prepare, plan out simple steps for everyone listening to follow through on easy actions.
4. **Use more simple words.** Speakers and leaders read so much on the subject matter in which they lead that the natural tendency is to get bored with the standard language and a slight obsession with new words that accompany their discipline. Remember that your audience has not done the same. It is fine to introduce a new vocabulary to your audience but you must do so in such a way that it does not distract from your core message. Instead, use more simple language than complex so that you are immediately and easily understood.
5. **Tell great stories.** Everyone loves a great story and stories are everywhere. You can write an original illustration, adapt a real-life situation, use a historical narrative, or find something from the recent news headlines. Telling great stories will help the audience connect all of the principles you teach to the every day life that they lead.

> [Read more from Philip.](#)

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