

Communication for Geeks

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- Intro
- Basic conversation skills
 - Pause to let the other person talk
 - Gauge the other person's interest
 - Do they respond at length?
 - Are they trying to change the subject?
 - Make eye contact
 - Don't interrupt
- Technical knowledge
 - You might not know how familiar someone is with a technical topic
 - Do you err on the side of assuming they know more or less?
 - People are more comfortable saying "I already know that" than "I don't know what that means"
 - You can check in: "Does that make sense?" or "... right?"
- Active Listening
 - Paraphrase what the other person said back to them
 - Forces you to really listen
 - Can cause the other person to rethink what they're saying
 - Can be surprising how often you didn't really know what they meant
- Questions
 - Asking for an idea is often better received than giving one
 - If people have to respond to a question, they have to listen to it
 - Questions open the door to ideas you hadn't thought of
 - "PVC is too expensive, we should use wood!" vs. "Is there an option less expensive than PVC?"
- I-Statements and You-statements
 - You-statements sound like criticism and make people feel defensive
 - You-statements are arguable
 - I-statements encourage empathy
 - Hidden you-statements
- Nonviolent Communication
 - Developed by Marshall Rosenberg after mediating the integration of segregated schools in the 60s
 - 1. Observations (not judgements)
 - 2. Feelings (not thoughts)
 - 3. Needs
 - 4. Request (specific)

- When you ____, I feel ____ because I need ____, would you ____?
- Logical Fallacies
 - Well-known and standardized. Can save a lot of time pointing out flawed logic.
 - Ad hominem, strawman, post hoc ergo propter hoc, true scotsman, etc.
- Derailing
 - Wall of text
 - Branching topics
 - Meta-conversation
- Group Communication Strategies
 - Robert's Rules (and other procedures)
 - Keeping stack (even though it's a queue)
 - No one speaks twice until everyone has spoken once