

Online Communication Skills

Chapman Learning Commons



Questions to Consider

1. Consider the reason you're communicating: what is the complexity of the question, and how urgently do you need a response? What kind of response do you want?
2. How do you identify levels of formality when communicating with different people?
3. What circumstances might be preventing someone from communicating effectively? How can you approach a conflict without escalating tension?

Summary: How do students address these challenges? (Advice from CLC Assistants)

1. Choose the Mode of Communication

- a. Consider the complexity (how detailed a response needs to be, or how many back-and-forth exchanges are needed) and urgency of the question to help identify the appropriate communication method. Consider your recipient, your own preferences, and what you need from a response.

2. Identify the Level of Formality

- a. Respect names/pronouns, be cautious with humour, and follow communication norms for each mode (e.g. tone, response times, attire, formatting, etc.)
- b. Start with more formal communication when you don't know someone well. You may shift to less formal communication as you get to know their preferences.

3. Avoiding and Addressing Conflict

- a. Keep records and refer to them to effectively identify where miscommunications happened.
- b. Be careful what you post online, but know that it's okay to acknowledge your mistakes and show that you have changed. Keep an open mind as posts may not accurately reflect someone's views.
- c. Agreeing upon ground rules (e.g. response times, which communication methods work best, etc.) before problems arise can help group collaboration, aid in time management, and reduce stress.
- d. If you are ever uncomfortable with addressing inappropriate behavior, reach out to third-parties (such as your instructor or a trusted loved one) for intervention. You don't have to do this alone.

Key Resources

[Gender Diversity](#): Learn more about gender diversity and how to communicate inclusively.

[Respectful Dialogue and Debate \(PDF\)](#): Engage with others' ideas with mutual respect.

[Communicating Effectively](#): Tips on how to communicate with groups more effectively.

[Supporting Collaboration](#): Resource about how to share work and work collaboratively.

