

How to Communicate to Get What You Want

Getting others to see your point of view isn't always easy. And in fact, the more you try to push your ideas on others, the more they'll shy away from you, which will further prevent the communication from being successful.

To get what you want in any situation you have to employ a communication skill called verbal aikido. Quite simply, verbal aikido is a skill that enables you to maintain control of the conversation. It keeps you from reacting to people emotionally and it trains negative people to take their hostility out on someone else. Finally, because it helps you focus on what can be done rather than on "the blame game," people will want to work with you and will see your side of things.

Following are the principles of verbal aikido that can make your communications easier and more direct.

1. Get in the other person's shoes.

Figure out why he or she is behaving or communicating a certain way. This will help you respond rather than react so you can focus on the end result. Ask yourself "How would I feel if I were in his/her shoes?" By being able to identify with the other person, you can pinpoint roadblocks that you need to overcome.

2. Don't explain or defend yourself when something goes wrong. Be accountable!

Explanations come across as excuses, and no one wants to work with someone who always gives excuses. Instead, agree with the person if what he or she is somewhat true. Acknowledge, apologize, and act versus explain. For example, suppose a customer yells at you for not receiving an item that they requested two weeks ago. In this case, you want to communicate in a way that gets the person to calm down and stop yelling. Therefore, don't blame the oversight on someone else, even when you know who made the mistake. Say, "You're right. It has been two weeks. I apologize for this and I will get it to you today. Please call me tomorrow if you don't receive it." Now the customer has no other option but to be nice and stop yelling.

3. Don't deny or become defensive.

For example, suppose someone tells you that you are intense. Don't say "I'm not intense!" Instead ask, "What do you mean?" This puts the ball back into the other person's court and you will discover the reason. With that knowledge you can adjust your behavior or communication in

general so the person better understands you and you can get what you want. Remember, by not reacting, you can get more information that will aid in your efforts.

Verbal Aikido – The Communicator’s Secret Weapon

Getting what you want does not have to be difficult. It’s all a matter of keeping the other person’s perspective in mind and being a responsible communicator. The more you can help others gain understanding, the better your chances of everyone embracing your point of view.

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