



Working Remotely: Tip of the Week

December 7, 2020

Balancing Communication Preferences

Communications are key to relationships, to getting work done and feeling confident that we are effective in handling various tasks involving multitudes of people.

Consider your preference (and your team's preference) for daily communications. Are simple communications conducted mainly through emails, or is it more common for short and spontaneous face to face (F2F) (telephone, Zoom) calls to occur? Do team meetings typically have a set agenda, roles, and predefined outcomes, or are they run with more open agendas and with greater emphasis on group participation?

Where too much of one communication preference exists, it means less of another which can have negative effects. For example, too much daily email exchange between co-workers can lead to inefficiency and impersonal relations, whereas too much spontaneity and openness in meetings can result in too little focus and attention given to urgent tasks.

In general, communication preferences have two opposing orientations: direct, clear, deductive, and specific VERSUS indirect, context rich, inferential, and implied. We can recognize some of our own communication preferences using the following questions.

- Is email your primary way to communicate with your colleagues and clients, or is face-to-face (telephone/Zoom) your preference?
- Do you easily write emails that are short, concise, and clear? Or do you write more descriptively and at length, bringing in many factors before addressing key points?
- Do you value meetings that are highly organized and have conclusive outcomes? Or do you prefer meetings that allow for spontaneous interaction, and you are comfortable even when the meeting moves off-topic?

As effective communicators and leaders we need to balance both direct speech and open dialogue, follow specific agenda items while allowing for times when things change in mid-course as problems are spontaneously being examined. When our communication preferences are so dominant that we feel frustrated when others do not share the same expectations, then an imbalance exists. Learning to communicate differently is a powerful way to build relationships and work more effectively with diverse individuals and teams.

Going further...



Tip of the Week
Zoom Room

If you are interested to chat or have questions about today's tip, join in an informal gathering with other MC colleagues. Register in MC Learns, choose the personal development learning category, and click on "**Zoom Room**" to obtain the Zoom link for Thursday, 2:30-3:30 p.m., to continue learning about the Tip of the Week topic.

For more Tips on working remotely, please visit <https://bit.ly/mc-remote-working-e> and watch for the next tip in January 2021.

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