



December 2020: Communicate with Kindness

**MINES
& ASSOCIATES**
A National Business Psychology Firm



“Sometimes it takes only one act of kindness and caring to change a person’s life.” – Jackie Chan

Welcome to the December 2020 edition of **TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the 8 dimensions of wellbeing. We’re going to end this crazy year with a look at kindness and communicating respectfully with others. Sometimes communication with others is hard, even more so to do with kindness and respect. However, effective communication, especially when respectful/kind, can lead to more effective conversations, less misunderstandings, and better relationships. This is why it is important to understand the way you communicate as well as the communication styles of others. Check out the tips and articles below for advice on both of these important factors.

Also, we want to remind everyone that we are smack dab in the middle of the holiday season which can be anything but peaceful and relaxing. In fact, it is one of the most stressful times of the year. If you or any of your household members are feeling the holiday strain this year, please give us a call and we can help with work/life balance needs, financial concerns, and stress management We are here to help!

As a quick reminder, your online portal, [PersonalAdvantage](#), also has helpful articles, tips, and resources on being kind, dealing with those that are not so kind, and communicating effectively. Please log on today for articles, self-

This Month’s Focus

Free Webinar:

[How to Have Difficult and Sensitive Conversations](#)

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[National Alzheimer’s Awareness Update](#)

[Back to School During the Pandemic](#)

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help tools, health assessments, and more.

To your total wellbeing (and Happy Holidays!)

The MINES Team

Keys to Effective Communication

In order to connect with people and help them understand where you're coming from, you have to do more than just state your point.

Communication is complex, and often learning how to communicate effectively requires practice and skill. Fortunately, there are specific things you can do to build your communication toolbox. Follow the suggestions below to learn some of the key techniques and become a more thoughtful and effective communicator.

Create an Atmosphere of Trust

- When speaking in a group, show others that you are a good communicator. Listen openly to each person; this will show people that you won't embarrass them or twist their words.
- Try to avoid judgment or unnecessary criticism. If you do have to provide criticism, make it constructive.
- Give praise and positive feedback.

Get Your Thoughts Together

- Do research beforehand. Create notes, know the pros and cons of what you are presenting, and do your homework on the subject.
- If necessary, use visual tools or documents that can help your audience understand.
- Be specific, accurate, and honest about the subject.

Adjust to Your Audience

- Consider what the other person already knows.
- If you reach a point where communicating becomes difficult, try to keep communication lines open so everyone can come to a level of understanding.
- Try not to use jargon or terms that are too technical; only use language that your listeners can understand.
- Pick an appropriate place to talk. If the subject is personal, pick a private place.

Invite Feedback

- Ask your listener what he thinks of a subject, how he just interpreted what was said, and how he feels about the issue. Invite feedback, constructive criticism, and ask about the pros and the cons of the idea at stake.

Use Appropriate Tone of Voice and Body Language

- Adjust tone and body language as needed, as these two things can actually influence what the listener hears.
- Note if you sound urgent, hesitant, angry, pleased, calm, or belligerent. Only use tones that are appropriate.

- Check your body language. If you are avoiding eye contact, crossing your arms, fidgeting, or leaning in too close to the listener, you may not be sending an effective message.

Remember, your Employee Assistance Program is here to help if you with any stress around difficult conversations or confrontations. This includes counseling, self-help tools, wellness coaching, and more. **If you need additional information, or to access services, please call MINES and Associates at 1-800-873-7138 today.** Also, [PersonalAdvantage](#) has a ton of great resources and FREE [webinars](#).

Styles of Communication

There's a lot more to communicating than just knowing how to string words together and provide straight-forward answers to questions. It's important to recognize that there are many different ways to communicate and that each way is dependent upon the individual. Whether you're a manager working with a team or a team member working with your coworkers to reach a goal, here are the different communication styles you might encounter:

The Director

- Looks for direct lines of communication and stays focused on tasks.
- Makes decisions quickly, confidently, and practically.
- Can be dominant in discussions, which may lead to being impatient and insensitive.
- Doesn't like being questioned, especially if he or she is the one providing directions.
- Doesn't waste time and sets goals to get things done quickly.

The Team-Player

- Supports others.
- Has an enthusiasm that makes the individual approachable.
- Speaks with animated gestures.
- Is willing to make changes and be creative to reach goals.
- Thinks out loud and involves others in decisions.
- Desires to support others and is sensitive to their needs, making the person vulnerable to criticism.
- Decisions are based on personal wishes, needs, and desires and often lack details and follow-through.

The Contributor

- Tends to support the decisions of others rather than provide his or her own direction.
- Is dependable, relaxed, and supportive.
- Listens carefully to what others have to say and provides genuine responses.
- Can be seen as being too passive or indecisive, because of his or her support of others.

- Doesn't always share true feelings to keep from creating confrontation with others.

The Thinker

- Is always prepared, ready to analyze, and searching for the details.
- Likes to make lists so that he or she can keep all of the facts out in the open.
- Strives for accuracy when trying to get his or her point across.
- May be too cautious or inflexible when it comes to making decisions.
- Adheres to high standards that others might find critical or insensitive to the needs of the group.
- Likes to ask questions and look for solutions to problems that others have overlooked.

Question(s) of the Month

Did you recognize what style of communicator you are from the styles above? Did you determine the styles of your coworkers or managers? Once you recognize the differences between how you and others pass along and interpret information, you can begin to see where there are positive and negative relationships between those styles and how to build solutions to any problems that stem from differences in communication styles.

Training Suggestions to Support This Month's Topic

Check out these training suggestions that help support respectful communication and kindness. Use them in a series or by themselves. MINES is always happy to consult on issues of wellbeing and suggest training that would support your goals. Check out our training manual [here](#) to see other training offerings:

1. [Advanced Communication](#)
2. [Communication in the Workplace](#)
3. [What Does it Take to Be Civil These Days? Creating a Civil Workplace](#)

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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