Communicating the right way

Consider the different needs and expectations of your target audiences before reaching out to them.

**Your boss**
- When your boss interacts with you, he wants to hear about what you've been doing.
- When dealing with your boss, you should:
  - **Stay positive.** If you have a challenge, come up with a solution as well.
  - **Make sure there are no surprises.** If you've made a genuine mistake, admit it and give your manager a chance to prepare for any possible fallout. Depending on what it is, your manager may be as much on the line as you, so have him as your ally instead of your enemy.
  - **Be inclusive.** Don't complain about other people to your boss. Don't be seen as self-serving or obsequious. It makes you sound desperate, like the "comedian" who can only make people laugh by poking fun at others. Be credible and great at your job, not someone who every time brings up a problem, with the hope that your boss will push the problem on another manager. Know your boss's style.

**Your client**
- This is one of the more difficult relationships to manage as it really is about positive influence, not positional power. Some people have more in common with you than you think. If you can establish a positive working relationship with your client, they will be more inclined to work with you.
- When dealing with your client, you should:
  - **Set the communication temperature.** Set up regular meetings with your client to inform them of things happening in the business, which they may be interested in, and give them the opportunity to share their own ideas.
  - **Set up regular engagement interviews.** These need to be only once a quarter or maybe twice a year, depending on how many people you have in your team. Spend at least one hour with your client during the course of a normal week that you are in contact with so many different people during the course of a normal week. They also need something in return — they appreciate your time, your knowledge and network to add value to your client.
  - **Ask lots of questions.** Gather information and understand your client's passion, what they enjoy about their job, why they stay with the company and how you can make their lives easier. Your client needs to only be seen once a quarter or maybe twice a year, depending on how many people you have in your team. Spend at least one hour with your client during the course of a normal week that you are in contact with so many different people during the course of a normal week. They also need something in return — they appreciate your time, your knowledge and network to add value to your client.

**Your direct reports**
- Just as you will want to impress your boss, your direct reports will want to do the same thing with you. They also need information about the business from you, how their job fits in with it and how their work contributes to the bigger picture. They also need to know you care about them and their development.
- To meet those needs, you should:
  - **Set up regular briefings with your team members.** Inform them of things happening in the business, which they may be interested in, and give them the opportunity to share their own ideas.
  - **Set up regular engagement interviews.** These need to be only once a quarter or maybe twice a year, depending on how many people you have in your team. Spend at least one hour with your client during the course of a normal week that you are in contact with so many different people during the course of a normal week. They also need something in return — they appreciate your time, your knowledge and network to add value to your client.

**Your client’s preferred mode of communication**
- Your client’s preferred mode of communication is likely to be the key to closing the deal.
- Understanding your client’s preferred mode of communication could be the key to closing the deal.

**Article by Sarah Schubert, a professional voice coach and leadership development consultant. She will be delivering a talk on the subject of Inclusive Communication at the BM Workshop on Aug 20 from 9.30am to 11am. Visit www.catsrecruit.com/slovak for details and registration.**

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