



Mindful Communication for High-Performing Teams

Great communication starts with mindful communication – bringing awareness and presence to both speaking and listening. Follow these golden rules of mindful communication to help build trust, psychological safety and openness on your team.

REFLECT

TAKE ACTION

1. Strike a balance between talking and listening

Consider how you interact in the workplace:

- Do you talk a lot in meetings? Is it possible you're keeping others from chiming in?
- Or, do you rarely speak up during team conversations? Could you contribute more?

Take note of your speaking and listening balance for a week, then make adjustments

MINDFULLY MANAGING MEETINGS:



Encourage quieter employees to speak up



Let dominant speakers know you're seeking everyone's input.

2. Recognize and quell judgments and biases

For trust and psychological safety, teammates need to feel unjudged by one another when communicating. Notice where you may be inserting personal judgments and biases, and aim to keep them out of the workplace.

Consider how you react to different peers or new ideas:

- Do you shut down ideas you don't personally like?
- Are you pessimistic about certain employees' work because they're young/inexperienced, or hold different political or religious beliefs than you?

3. Favor face-to-face communication

If you're mostly or all remote right now, you can boost face-to-face interactions via video or by taking advantage of joint office time.

- In the office, bring questions to nearby colleagues in person
- When you need team input, opt for a short, impromptu video call instead of email
- Schedule 1:1s with your teammates

4. Deepen and practice your empathy

Building stronger empathy skills is a continuous, lifelong journey.

*Source: LaRae Quay, Smartbrief, Empathy Makes You a More Effective Leader

- Let go of getting your way/being right
- Try to see others' perspectives. Validate them even if they're different than yours
- Ask, "Is everything OK?" when someone seems off instead of ignoring it
- Listen without judgment and communicate that you understand another's experiences*

5. Pay attention to body language

Nonverbal communication reveals more than verbal. Mind your body language to understand how others perceive you, and notice others' to gauge unexpressed feelings.

- Give your undivided attention (no phone-checking) when conversing
- Use open body language to convey approachability and acceptance:
 - Avoid crossed arms or legs
 - Point your face, torso and feet towards the other person
- Make eye contact; smile and nod your head while listening



Mindful teams are better because they have:

- More engaged, connected members
- More empathetic listeners
- Higher individual and team performance