

20 Communication Tips

for creating a lasting impression



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Introduction

First impressions are important. But lasting impressions linger. It is the lasting impression of your business communication that is the one that spells success or failure.

Whether it is in person, online or in a paper format, your business communication is the face of your business. The smallest detail can produce unintended consequences.

What lasting impression does your business communication give your audience?



This ebook offers 20 communication tips to create a lasting impression you can be proud of. Throughout this ebook are links to posts you may find helpful. The green color designates a link. Check out [Simply Stated Business](#) for more Tips, Tools & Templates.

Tip #1 - Do your homework.

How much do you know about your targeted market? Before you leap in with your latest product or service, do your homework.

- Study your potential customer's business or circumstances.
- Understand their issues.
- Research what's not working and why.

Search ...



Search engine.

Tip #2 - Be welcoming.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? And it is. But day-to-day challenges can muffle our enthusiasm.

Recognize and welcome all customers - old and new.

- Embrace each customer contact (even the tough ones).
- Smile - in person, online, and on paper.
- Make time and make that time count.



Tip #3 - Be accessible.

How many times have you called a business and could not reach the person you were calling? After a while, it gets frustrating. Surprise customers - pick up their call.

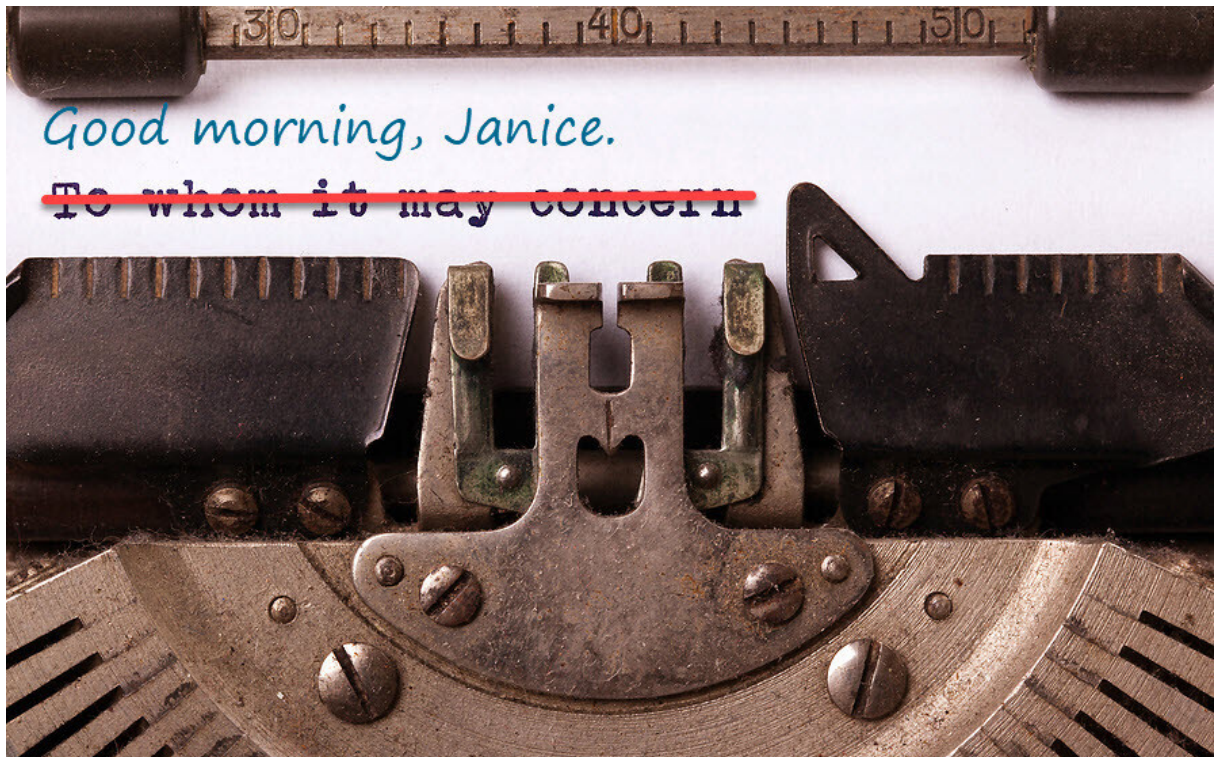
- Make sure customers know how to reach you.
- Share contact information (email, phone, business address).
- Include contact information in ALL business communication.



Tip #4 - Get personal.

Have you ever run into a person you met only one time and they greeted you by your name? Pretty impressive, isn't it? Using a customer's name is a trait that leaves a lasting impression.

- Shred the canned approach - personalize business communication.
- Ask individuals about their interests (for example: music, sports, or reading).
- Develop a system for remembering personal details (jot down those interests).



Tip #5 - Show respect.

Social media platforms do not hold the exclusive rights to rude behavior. Unintended messages creep into customer interactions that show a lack of regard for the individual. Fortunately, simple gestures and actions can demonstrate an honest respect for customers.

- Be on time for meetings and other scheduled events.
- Keep correspondence and dialog brief and to the point.
- Care about what your customer has to say.



Tip #6 - Acknowledge.

Have you ever sent an email or left a voicemail and the only response was the sound of crickets? You begin to question if the person (or business) received your message. The first time it happens, you may think it's an isolated incidence. When it becomes a pattern, you get ticked. And so do customers.

This tip holds hands with the prior, *Show Respect*, tip. **Acknowledge** each message to create a lasting impression of reliability.

- At a minimum, confirm you received individual messages.
- Respond swiftly (in addition to any automated response).
- If unable to act immediately, provide reasonable time for response.



Tip #7 - Listen.

Each of us want to be heard. Is there anything more aggravating than being ignored or having someone talk over us? Think about the last time it happened to you. Why does a car salesman come to mind?

Listening - really listening - is harder than it sounds. You may need to practice. But listening is one of the best lasting impression you can make.



Tip #8 - Remain present.

You're at a meeting with a potential customer. While the customer is speaking, they look at you and see a blank stare. What impression are you giving? You don't care? You're bored? Probably not the message you want to deliver. Learn to remain present in all business communication.

- Focus on what's being said.
- Ensure your body language (or response) shows interest.
- Silence the distractions (cell phones, coworker interruptions).



Tip #9 - Avoid silent messages.

The most well-written or spoken business communication is lost when **silent messages** of bias, disinterest, or arrogance weave a path through your words. Become aware of those message triggers and silence them before they silence you.

- Refrain from negative body language (crossed arms, yawns, frowns).
- Show confidence in word and body language without tipping into arrogance.
- Eliminate bias-sounding words and **tones**.



Tip #10 - Ask questions.

One simple way to show interest and demonstrate respect is to ask questions. Then follow that up with Tip #7 and Listen to your customer's response.

Asking questions is the magic wand to learning what is important to your customers. Ask - Listen - Act. That's the formula for a lasting impression.



Tip #11 - Validate concerns.

While we all want to be heard, listening is more than hearing the words. It's taking our customers seriously. You validate their concerns.

- Show you care by accepting what customers have to say.
- Validate by asking questions and confirming concerns.
- Respond to each concern.

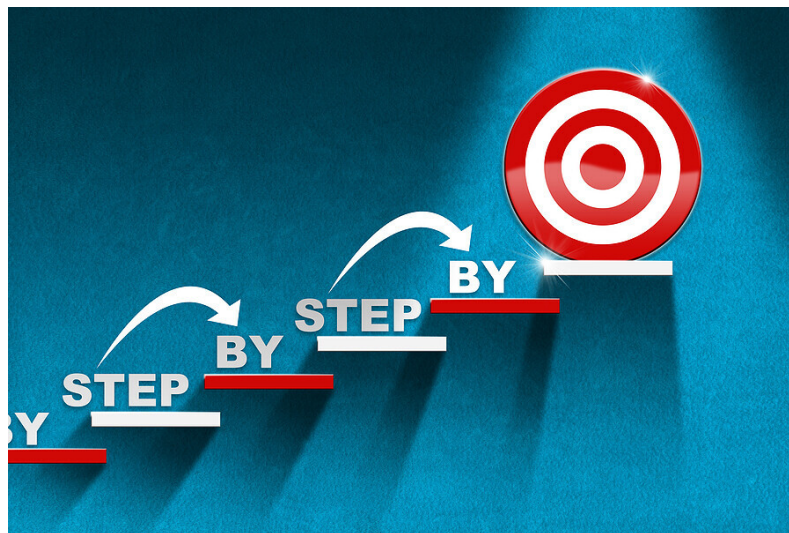


Tip #12 - Identify next steps.

You walk out of a customer meeting feeling really good. You accomplished a lot and the feedback was excellent. Do you know what's next?

After the euphoria wears off, you may find there is confusion as to what is going to happen next. Before you walk out that door or hang up that phone, make sure you and your customer are on the same page.

- List items for follow-up.
- Compare your items with those of the customer.
- Identify who does what and when.



Tip #13 - Deliver on details.

So, you have your next steps. Now you have to deliver on the details. But next steps don't always go as planned - especially in today's pandemic reality. You have to be ready for anything.

- Deliver on what you promised, when you promised.
- If commitments change, let your customer know.
- Do a final check to ensure all commitments have been met.



Tip #14 - Follow up.

Follow-up is a promise to do what you said you would do. But it can also be an opportunity to rack up good impression points - the kind that last.

- After acknowledging a message left by a customer, follow up on promises.
- If outsourcing tasks, follow up to keep progress on track.
- After finalizing, circle back to the customer to see if you met expectations.



Tip #15 - Share.

Sharing information your customers can use makes their life simpler. Who doesn't like that? While sharing that experience is what customers pay you for, you can go above and beyond to help customers with the issues challenging them.

- Share your knowledge and experience of similar issues.
- Teach customers new skills.
- Provide tools for learning and tips for better results.



Tip #16 - Honor commitments.

Typically, commitments are a multi-faceted promise made to your customer in some form. It could be a handshake or a formal document. Regardless of the commitment, you make a lasting impression when you hit on each note of that promise.

- Honor what you promise or don't make that promise.
- Deliver how you promised (for example: full replacement).
- And get it there when you promised.



Tip #17 - Keep it simple.

If you want to make a lasting impression with your business communication, keep it simple. As attention spans shorten and you struggle for visibility in an overcrowded space, simple works.

- Be brief and to the point.
- Don't lose your message in the delivery - technology should support not take over.
- Replace the complex with simple words or explain what it means.



Tip #18 - Keep it clear.

What is the point of your business communication? Could your audience identify the main message? Messages buried in words and too much detail drown out what you're trying to say. If you want to create a lasting impression, stay focused on your message.

- Identify the problem or point of your message.
- Understand how to fix it.
- Explain how you get there.



Tip #19 - Keep it unique.

One of the biggest challenges to leaving a lasting impression with your business communication is the overwhelming amount of *stuff* out there. What can you do to stand out? Start by believing in your business. It shows.

- Ask yourself what's different about what you offer.
- What's unique about your customer?
- Tailor your business communication to that uniqueness.



Tip #20 - Be thankful.

Being grateful for your customers is a no-brainer. But the pressures associated with any business can take over your intent to share that gratitude with customers. Businesses with customers who feel appreciated leave a lasting impression.

- Be sincere in expressing your gratitude with customers.
- Share something extra "just because."
- Say *Thank You* often.



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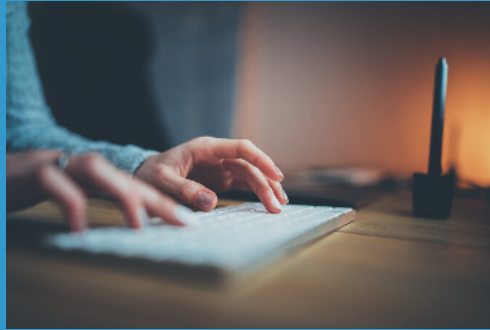
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About Simply Stated Business



My name is Cathy Miller. In 2008, after a long corporate career (some would say too long), I started my own professional business writing company.

I always loved writing and was eager to write full-time. But, there was something else driving me. I wanted to simplify business communication.

Originally, Simply Stated Business (SSB) was my business site. In addition to its blog with communication tips, SSB held my portfolio and other information about my professional writing services.

Today, SSB centers solely on content that promotes better business communication. I call it the Triple T of business communication - Tips, Tools & Templates.

Check out the site and have a look around. Let me know if there are topics you would like to see to help you keep business communication simple, clear & uniquely yours.

Thank you!