



**CONTEXT COMMUNICATIONS**  
transforming ideas into words

## **6 Cs of Communications for the business leader**

### **1. Clear**

- Have a purpose.
- Stick to key messages.
- Check for understanding:
  - verbally through active listening (ask open-ended questions; clarify; paraphrase)
  - in large groups or written materials, through follow-up
- Avoid acronyms and industry jargon.

### **2. Concise**

- Be brief.
- Communicate one idea per sentence.
- Remove redundant or complex language.
- Wherever possible, use bullet points and headings to lead audience through material.
- Be graphically concise, too. Eliminate visual clutter. Leave as much white space as possible. Avoid complicated graphics, backgrounds, fonts or text treatments.

### **3. Compelling**

- Be specific.
- Provide relevant detail and metrics.
- Be sure to include your 'ask' or 'call-to-action'.
- Where appropriate, use examples, case studies, stories, metaphors to enliven your text.

### **4. Coherent**

- Follow a logical flow.
- In written material: Introduce purpose, elaborate by providing evidence/detail, summarize/close.
- In presentations: "Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them."
- Align your channel to your purpose.
- Choose the appropriate channel.

*Channel = medium (e.g., in person, phone, electronic, written) and vehicle (e.g., seminar, large group presentation, one-on-one meeting, web chat, newsletter, announcement, training manual, email message, advertisement, special event, etc.)*

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## 5. Correct

- Facts, spelling, grammar, format.
- Whenever possible, have someone else proofread.
- Leave as much time as possible between drafts.

## 6. Consistent

- Repeat message frequently.
- Use multiple channels, over time, to reach different audiences or the same audiences in different ways.
- Once you open a channel, keep it open: create regularity in schedules, formats.

## Remember:

### Communication is two-way.

If you've communicated but you haven't been understood, you've not communicated.

### There are many ways to communicate.

Use a variety of methods because different people have different learning styles and communication preferences. Pay attention to what works best for your individual staff members. Whenever possible, deliver messages in the way people like to receive them.

### Everything a leader does communicates *something*.

Watch your tone, body language, mood.

How you say it is just as important as what you say.

Be as careful about what you *don't* communicate as what you do.