



Show your value with  
good communication

## Description

# In seeking employment, communication skills are a critical factor for success!

Even if you are not involved in communications, marketing or advertising, good communication skills are an enormous asset. To begin with, these skills will help you on a daily basis in your future job (working with colleagues, maintaining good relations with clients, etc.), which is why recruiters look for these assets. At the same time, good communication skills will also allow you to enhance your profile and therefore make finding a job easier. In short, everything involved in seeking a job requires good communication skills!

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## **Good communications means knowing how to demonstrate your value**

Good communication skills provide a significant advantage when it comes to demonstrating your value. They allow you to present yourself at your best, put value on your strengths (without needing to boast) and can even transform your shortcomings to your best advantage. Many points which will help you find a job!

It is important to remember that a portion of relational skills are based on empathy. This means that you must be able to put yourself in your interlocutor's shoes so that you can adapt your way of communicating. When looking for a job, you need to ask yourself what the recruiter or employer you want to convince expects. Analyse his behaviour, reactions and responses and adjust your way of communicating accordingly. Such an approach requires a lot of practice, but by rehearsing you can make enormous improvements.

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In concrete terms, here is how your communication skills will help you in seeking a job:

### **In writing: applications that will make you shine**

The first contact with an employer is often made in writing. The most common approach is when you send your application (in response to a job offer, or simply applying spontaneously). This means you need solid communication skills to draw up an attractive application that enhances your value and is persuasive so that you stand out from the crowd.

To do this you must take care of the content as well as the form. Obviously, you must not allow any errors or faults in your writing. Make sure everything is written correctly, in a clear and well spaced manner so that it is easy to read. The same advice applies to your LinkedIn profile. When adding your photo, choose one with care: a good quality image in which you appear professional and have a welcoming expression.

'The first contact with an employer is often made in writing.'

In the same way, pay particular care when you exchange emails with a professional. Each of your messages must send a positive image of yourself.

### **Verbally: captivate with your excellent expression**

Verbal communication is another essential aspect in your job search. If your application passes the first stage and the recruiter telephones you, you must also work on your verbal expression. It is even more important when your contact cannot see you; everything rests on the voice.

In short, you need to express yourself very well in order to draw his attention and enhance your value. Here are a few tips to help you:

- In spite of being nervous, do not speak too quickly and articulate well.
- Breathe calmly so that you can control your voice.
- Avoid particularly disagreeable verbal mannerisms on the phone ("Eh", coughing to clear your voice, etc.).
- Make sure your "voice smiles": Yes, a smile can be heard on the phone!



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- ~~Be attentive to what your contact says: active listening is the key to a fruitful conversation.~~
  - Repeat his questions to be sure you have understood (and therefore can answer correctly).

‘It is better to transform an inconvenience into something positive than to lie.’

Another useful piece of advice to maximize your chances: be honest and do not lie to a potential employer. It is better to transform an inconvenience into something positive than to lie. For example, instead of saying “I do not know how to do that”, say “one of my objectives is to learn how to do that”. The meaning is the same, but the form puts you in a far better light!

## Face to face: the importance of the non-verbal

The last step is the interview. When you meet face to face, the non-verbal becomes just as important (if not more important) than the verbal. In fact, it is considered that the non-verbal, that is body language, counts for more than half of the interpersonal communication.

In other words, you need to take care of:

- Your physical appearance: professional clothing, careful hairstyle, impeccable hygiene, etc.
- Your gestures and posture: head high, back straight, arms open, hands which accompany your words, no nervous ticks, etc.
- Your facial expressions: smile, pleasant expression, reactions to your interlocutor, etc.

‘... the non-verbal, that is body language, counts for more than half of the interpersonal communication.’

Often, non-verbal communications are directly related to the emotions. In order to send the best image possible when meeting someone face to face, you must master your emotions and control the non-verbal. Once again, this requires practice.

## Relationship skills to expand your professional network

Your communication skills will also be of great assistance in developing your professional network. Remember, a good network is very important to allow you to seize opportunities and boost your career!

In concrete terms, communication will allow you:

- To be more comfortable with new people and to integrate more easily.
- To create durable relations with your contacts and maintain the best professional relationships.
- To know what to say, how to say it and to whom. Again empathy is vital!
- To present your profile, experience, qualities and expectations in the best possible light.
- To gain credibility. A person who is sure of themselves always appears more credible and legitimate.
- To be more memorable. People in your network will remember you and will be more inclined to talk about you, recommend you to their contacts, etc. This is the networking principle!

‘... a good network is very important to allow you to seize opportunities and boost your career!’



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## How can you develop your communication skills?

In practice, you will need to use the appropriate tools and apply the right communication techniques in order to develop your communication skills. There is no age requirement to develop and maintain these skills. Whether you are still a student, a new graduate, or have been on the job market for several years, you can always improve!

If you are rather reserved and timid by nature, improving your communication skills may require more effort than for someone who has an innate gift. But, through training and perseverance, you will become a good enough communicator to carve out a place for yourself on the job market.

## But, in practice, how do you develop your communication skills?

By practicing in your own way

Firstly, you can certainly practice on your own. Depending on your level and the aspects you want to develop, choose the appropriate exercises: record yourself on a dictaphone to analyse your way of speaking; simulate an interview in front of a mirror; work on your gestures; improve your visual contact; learn how to manage your hands when you are speaking, etc.

To progress more rapidly, take the example of people whose communication qualities you appreciate. It could be a TV host, a speaker you enjoy, your favourite teacher, or even your aunt who systematically manages to captivate her audience.

‘Depending on your level and the aspects you want to develop, choose the appropriate exercises...’

Analyse their performance (pace of speech, articulation, way of arguing, posture, gestures, micro-facial expressions, etc.) and identify the communication elements which seem to you to be most effective. Then try to apply them to improve your own delivery. Do not hesitate to take inspiration from several people and to combine their good practices!

## By asking for assistance from a pro in interpersonal communications

Secondly, it is preferable to pursue your training by actually interacting with someone. Instead of diving into the pond immediately, begin by practicing with a neutral person. This exercise, without any real consequences, will place you in a more realistic situation and allow you to obtain an outside opinion.

For example, organize simulated interviews or networking with a friend or relative. And most of all, ask for a constructive opinion of your communications performance. These remarks are sometimes slightly disagreeable, but they are essential to your progress!

To go farther, you can also ask for advice from someone you know who communicates well (professional or personal acquaintance). Before calling on an interpersonal communications expert, you can ask to consult a professor at your university, a guidance counselor or counselor from your Carrefour jeunesse-emploi.

‘Instead of diving into the pond immediately, begin by practicing with a neutral person.’



## Attending the conference of your Carrefour jeunesse-emploi!

Last but not least, come and discover a wealth of advice during the [conference of the Carrefour jeunesse-emploi Montréal Centre-Ville](#), to be held on Wednesday, November 14. Focussing on communications, it will be hosted by Nathalie Mailhot, Communications Coach and creator of the Teen Talk site. She will explain how essential it is to be sure of yourself and to express yourself with confidence, particularly in your job search, but also in your personal life.



Far from the formal presentations we often see, Nathalie offers an interactive conference full of fun and inspiration. Thanks to her, you will leave with a number of tools and tips that will help you stand out when you meet recruiters. So, be sure to mark November 14 in your agenda!

In the job search, communications are more than useful: they are absolutely necessary. They are what will allow you to present yourself in the very best light, enhance your profile and develop your professional network. So do not waste more time, develop your communication skills right away!

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*Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi Montréal Centre-Ville, working closely with the community, helps youth aged 16 to 35, located temporarily or permanently in downtown Montreal. We provide them with motivation and support in their education, professional, creative and entrepreneurial projects to enable them to access the job market in Montreal*



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### Date Created

October 2018