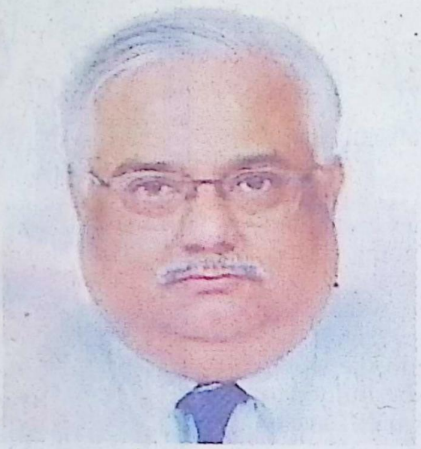
Guidance Note Series 5

Developing communication skills



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YOU must be wondering what happened to the Communication Guidance Note Series. Why is there a break?

This was a deliberate break to give you time to practise building up positive behavioral traits and skills for active participation in conversation. Surely, by now you would have had sufficient time for breaking the ice and start augmenting your communication skills. Now in this fifth instalment of the Guidance Note Series on "Developing Communication Skills", let us look into how to start a conversation.

Introduction

Everyone loves to talk to someone who is not only relaxed and at ease but keen to listen and contribute constructive views and suggestions. There is a certain attitude that makes any interaction more enjoyable and less stressful. How to achieve this shift in outlook?

Converse with Positive Attitude

Remember, social communication should not be treated as negotiation. Also, you should not carry any inhibition or hesitancy in conversing. Discard attitudes like

·If he approaches me, then I will talk to him

·If she listens to me I will help her out

·When he helps me I will return the favour

·If she does not make a move I will ignore her

Unless you remove your inhibitions, there would be barriers to interactions. These inhibitions are usually based on fear, lack of confidence and feeling of insecurity. In each case if you remove wanting something from the other person from the equation, the problem would disappear.

So, change your attitude and interact with others without trying to put yourself overtly at the centre of attention. And, for this you may follow certain simple rules.

Carry the conversation with all sincerity. This could be done in a number of ways such as -

·Smile, be friendly and make the other person comfortable

·Listen attentively to what the other person says

·Provide information that the other person is looking for and could be of help

The conversation should be a friendly exchange and not an interrogation. Avoid asking drilling questions. This is not a good way to talk as it does not benefit any one but estranges relations.

Enjoy Conversing

Do you not want that people are pleased to meet you and more attentive when you talk? And, you can achieve it if you follow the formula for right attitude. When you carefully listen to the other person, be caring and supportive, you will find that you are also getting reciprocal treatment. As all parties involved really care what others have to say, the conversation becomes interesting and enjoyable. So, try conversing with enjoyment.

Quotes of Benjamin Franklin

- · A countryman between two lawyers is like a fish between two cats.
- · A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.
- · A great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges.
- · A house is not a home unless it contains food and fire for the mind as well as the body.
- · A learned blockhead is a greater. blockhead than an ignorant one.
- · A man wrapped up in himself makes a very small bundle.
- · A penny saved is a penny earned.
- · Absence sharpens love, presence strengthens it.
- · All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones.
- · An investment in knowledge pays the best interest. Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one.
- · Anyone who trades liberty for security deserves neither liberty nor security.
- · As we must account for every idle word, so must we account for every idle silence.
- · At twenty years of age the will reigns; at thirty, the wit; and at forty, the judgment.
- · Be slow in choosing a friend, slower in changing.
- · Being ignorant is not so much a shame, as being unwilling to learn.