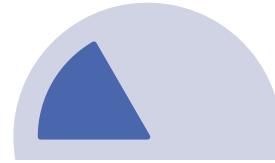


The 3 Abstracts of Communications: PTA...



A Discussion-Based
Best Practices Review
by Kimberly Manchester



...And How To Work Them to Your Advantage



Being Present

Your **physical presence** communicates a lot without saying a word!

- Body Language
 - Nervousness
 - **Emotional response**
 - Attention span – interested or bored?
- Choice of Environment
 - Quiet office or public location?
 - **Working from bed?**
- Clothing Choice
 - Respectfully dressed or **looking shabby?**
 - “Shirt and shoes required” does not imply “pants optional”



Phoning It In

When we meet remotely, we lose out on a lot of communication cues:

- Office Setting
 - **Formal** or casual?
 - Organized, organized chaos, or plain **chaos**?
 - Happy, smiling employees or misery?
- Collaborative Energy
 - Are you *really* **laughing out loud** or just typing “lol”?
 - Eye contact, to convey sincere interest
- Read the Room!
 - Do people look **interested or bored** with what you are saying?
 - Are side conversations starting or are all ears listening to you?
 - Is your audience looking at their phones/texting?



Make the Time to Be Available

Being present and being available **are not the same thing!**

- Interruptions are inconsiderate
 - Unless it is an actual *emergency*, do not give away the time you have **reserved for others**
 - Patience is a learned skill; delayed gratification the teacher
- Don't be ashamed to **reschedule**
 - If you know you are going to be interrupted, **be respectful** and ask if the other party would like to reschedule
 - If you truly cannot reschedule, choose your priority and make it clear to all involved if they are one or not; your behavior will soon tell them anyway



Be Mentally Present, Not Just Physically Present

Pay attention to those who are communicating with you!

- Are you talking to someone, or **talking at someone**?
 - Do they look bored, confused, or otherwise unable to follow or understand you?
- **Listen to understand, not to respond**
 - Has the other person brought new knowledge to the table?
 - Does everyone in the room have all the necessary facts?
- Tune out the distractions
 - Give others the **attention** you would like to **receive**



Don't Be a Stalker!

Is the other party aware of your interest in them?

- Always err on the side of caution when paying attention
 - Make sure the other party is aware of your presence
 - **Don't eavesdrop on private conversations**
 - If you find yourself in the middle of a confidential conversation (such as, in the lavatory), **make your presence known** so others know that you are there
- If your communications do not receive a response, know when to speak up, and when to walk away
 - Emails not receiving a response? Call or use **read receipt**
 - **Phone calls/texts** not being answered? Check the number
 - Still no response? **Respectfully walk away** and wait for the other party to initiate contact



Summary



Presence

Your physical presence communicates so much more than you realize. If you cannot be physically present, be aware of your surroundings and how you present yourself



Time

Show respect for others by being fully present in the time you have allotted them. Do not be ashamed of having to reschedule to do other priorities; better to meet at a time when they will be your priority than to be disrespectful of another's time



Attention

Give others the attention you want to receive. Do not attend to communications meant for others – be it an overheard conversation or a missent email or text. Don't be a stalker; always make sure that others are aware of your presence in meetings or moments of confidence.

A 3D white figure stands inside a circular frame, holding a rectangular sign. The sign has the word "Questions?" written on it in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The figure is positioned on the left side of the frame, with its right hand resting on the top edge of the sign. The background is a light gray gradient. In the top-left corner, there are decorative blue circular lines and a small blue sphere. A blue arc is visible on the right side of the circular frame.

Questions?