



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CARDS REPLIES

Communication & respect: Active Listening, Effective Questioning, Intercultural Communication

01| Since we live in a multicultural world, learning and understanding different cultures help you understand why people do things the way they do. When you identify with other people, you sympathize with their situation and avoid misunderstandings.

02| Effective communication encourages team members to rely on each other, promoting positive feelings and relationships, eventually leading to improved morale and work experiences.

03| Active listening helps you build connections with people who will be more interested in communicating with you on a regular basis.

04| Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by creating positive feelings and a sense of reward, giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth, helping you connect with other people. It could be small acts of kindness towards other people such as spending time with friends or relatives who need support, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

05| Verbal and non-verbal signs are the two pillars of communication and are equally important to clearly deliver and/or understand a certain message. Next time you will discuss with a friend, play this simple game: cover your ears and let your friend tell you a story as they normally would. Once they have finished, try to wrap it up and see what you were able to understand by simply paying attention to the non-verbal signs.

06| Active listening and effective questioning are part of everyday conversation for all of us, and can be used not only to listen and perceive carefully the reasons and feelings of others, but also to facilitate a clear and correct expression of emotions and arguments.

07| Research suggests that we only remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we see and hear, 70% of what we discuss with others, 80% of what we personally experience, 95% of what we teach others

08| Raising the eyebrows or tilting your head to the side are, in fact, alternative ways of asking: “are you sure?” or “could you be more specific?”, and are more appropriate when we discuss with friends or people we are familiar with.

09| In Mediterranean countries, Europe, South America and Russia, facial expressions used to communicate are expansive and often instinctive, while in northern Europe and Buddhist cultures, for example, they are interpreted as voluntary communication and, thus, expected to be controlled. In Europe, during a conversation, you usually look into the eyes of the person in front of you, but in many Asian and African cultures the same behaviour is not allowed when talking to a superior.

10| Feeling heard and understood is a universal need. It's that feeling of being known, empowered, accepted, and loved. It's knowing that you exist and belong. Active listening allows you to listen effectively to get the complete message from the conversation without judgment and interruption, eventually making a positive impact on someone's feelings.

11| Good listening skills benefit your personal and professional life, including helping you do well at work, at school, gain friends, and communicate effectively with loved ones. If you want to build a strong relationship with another person, your ability and commitment to listening attentively and empathically is essential.

12| The tendency for egocentrism is deeply ingrained in our social reality and often undermine open and effective communication. Empathy, therefore, is a means to force yourself into functioning apart from that default. You move from being affected by others to intentionally working with the effects of others, taking their perspective and think, feel, and act as if you are them.





13| Asking effective questions demonstrates how well you would fit in at a company. Interviewers, for example, consider if your questions demonstrate that you understand what the company does. Your questions also reveal whether you are a good fit for the area where you would potentially work. For instance, someone seeking a position as a project manager should ask questions that focus on the company's recent projects, teamwork and deadline expectations.

14| Intercultural communication is the mechanism whereby people of different groups perceive and try to make sense of one another, contributing to the creation of solid relationships between people with different cultural identities (friends, partners, family, and co-workers) by increasing cultural knowledge, challenging previously held stereotypes, and learning new skills.

15| When embarking on a trip, most people's difficulties can be traced to distortions in communication. Therefore, to understand and come to embrace a new culture, it is crucial to understand communication habits. Here some useful tips to learn about communication customs: check out a guidebook from your local library and flip to the customs section to read up on these cultural guidelines, or do a quick search online; talk to friends who are from or have spent some time in those countries, and ask them what they think are the biggest differences between your native communication habits and those of that country; try to take a few language classes to understand the communication patterns of that country while flexing your mental muscles, and learn key phrases like how to hail a taxi, express any dietary allergies or preferences, and ask for directions.

16| Some of the key characteristics of an active listener are: being neutral and non-judgmental; being patient (periods of silence are not "filled"); giving verbal and non-verbal feedback to show signs of listening (e.g., smiling, eye contact, leaning in, mirroring); asking for clarifications; reflecting back what is said; summarizing.

17| The main advantages of having friends from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures is that it encourages acceptance and promotion of the differences within races, cultures and religious backgrounds. It shows you how their practices or beliefs are different from yours, and yet, how it leads to their growth. It teaches you to accept differences and to build an understanding that no religion or culture is better than the other but that each has its unique features.

18| A question is only as good as the answer it evokes, and questions thus contribute to success or failure across different contexts. When you have to prepare for a job interview, for example, trying to anticipate the questions that the interviewer may ask you is not enough: to be a successful candidate, you should prepare a list of questions to be asked at the interview, increasing your chances of getting your ideal job. Examples of appropriate questions are: Why is this particular position available? How will the job performance be assessed, and how often will it be reviewed? What are the long-term opportunities for me in this position? What kind of support is planned to improve my qualifications and skills? What are the main challenges related to this position? How would you describe the typical working day for someone in this position?

19| There is a wide range of skills and competencies that can help you meaningfully value others' culture, language and beliefs. Here some examples: Respect ("valuing of others"); Self-awareness/identity ("understanding the lens through which we each view the world"); Seeing from other perspectives/world views ("both how these perspectives are similar and different"); Listening ("engaging in authentic intercultural dialogue"); Adaptation ("being able to shift temporarily into another perspective"); Relationship building (forging lasting cross-cultural personal bonds); Cultural humility ("combines respect with self-awareness").

20| In most of the English-speaking world, as well as in several other countries, the "ok" sign means that everything is fine, great and/or perfect. In Brazil, however, it is considered a rude gesture. The "V" sign has two formats: one with the palm faced outwards, and another with the palm inwards. While in the US, both ways refer to victory and peace, in other places, such as in the UK, Australia and South Africa, the same gesture with the back of the hand facing the other person is considered to be an extremely insulting. The "L" sign indicates the number 8 in China, where it is considered a lucky number, while it means loser in English-speaking countries.





21| Thomas Gordon is widely recognized as a pioneer in teaching communication skills and conflict resolution methods, including active listening. He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for three consecutive years (1997, 1998 and 1999) thanks to the value of his work with families and schools, with the aim of facilitating a democratic and peaceful relational climate for the development of the individual's potential.

22| According to the objective you are trying to achieve and the message you want to communicate, it is plenty of basic techniques you can practice in your daily interactions. Among them, there are: active silence, empathetic mirroring, non-verbal signs, reformulation.

23| Asking questions shows a genuine interest and naturally leads to a better conversation! You may even find that your conversation partner mimics your behaviour and asks you a question or two in response.

24| What about your reality? Do you live in a multicultural or intercultural society? Take a few minutes to critically think about it and write down the main reasons that justify your answer.

25| When differing priorities (task/time versus relationship) are unclear or not taken into account, the result is misunderstandings among professionals that can lead to frustration, loss of trust between teams, missed targets and goals. That's why it is important to recognise the diversity that characterises the many national cultures co-existing under the European umbrella.

26| A lack of understanding and accommodation, resulting in unfair discrimination in employment, is an unfortunate reality for many religious minorities in Europe. Although equality laws have been in place to protect individuals from discrimination in employment for decades, these have not reflected the multi-faith character of our society. For this reason, it is extremely important that managers proactively engage in communication skills assessments and make necessary adjustments in order to address the needs of today's increasingly diverse workforce.

27| The exercise is meant to improve creative communication and active listening skills. Finding creative ways to communicate, even if there are barriers, is required to make sure that the message you want to deliver is not only heard but truly understood.

28| By placing focus, through active listening, squarely upon the speaker, it is possible to avoid most of the communicative mistakes that cause the erection of barriers and misunderstandings, while grasping the feelings and emotional experiences embedded in all types of communication that often remain in the background or are not perceived.

29| Albert Einstein once said: "If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes".

30| Communication is a two-way process. Many people do not listen and do not understand what the other person says or feels because they do not know the difference between hearing and listening. While "hearing" is a passive process in which a sound is perceived by the ear. Very little or no effort is required as your mind may be occupied with other thoughts; "listening" is an action in which you choose to actively concentrate on what you hear, and need to put in a lot more effort in terms of attention, processing, thinking, and analysing. To be an active listener, you need to hear and listen at the same time!

