



**SOUTH MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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**Student Governance &
Inter Club Council
Student Officers
and Members
Guide on
Communicating &
Presenting**

For more resources visit the SMCC Student Life page at
<https://www.southmountaincc.edu/current-students/student-life>

Effective Communication

First, we would like to take this time to thank you for your time and service in student advocacy at South Mountain Community College as a student officer or member. Whichever club, program, or organization you are a part of...you are now part of a team! Take this opportunity to shine, to develop, to learn from and listen to others.

Effective communication is critical to any organization. It is important to understand that communication needs to be accurate, brief, to the point, continuous, and specific. Professional communication refers to the oral, written, visual, and digital forms of delivering information in the context of a workplace. Most problems in an organization arise as a result of poor communication.

Effective communication ensures a smooth flow of ideas, facts, decisions, and advice. This eliminates interruptions in achieving the organization's target. Poor communication may lead to the loss of time, human life, money, opportunity, and energy.

While communication comes naturally to some college students, there are many others who just haven't mastered the art of good communication, and they are not able to be heard and get their points across. If this sounds like you, below are a list of eight tips that will help to enhance your communication skills.

1. **Choose Your Words Wisely** – Avoid speaking jargon or slang in conversations. It is important to choose your words to ensure that you are

conveying what you truly mean. This is true in both oral and written communication.

2. **Use Podcasts** –Use audio books, videos, or podcasts for developing your communication skills. This is a great way to be able to listen to numerous speakers and get a feel for their styles.
3. **Ask More Questions** – Communication is a two-way street. If you aren't asking questions and showing that you want to learn, it could be taken as you not being interested.
4. **Listen More** – This goes along with asking questions. You can ask a million and one questions, but if you aren't listening to the answers, you may as well not be asking the questions in the first place. You really need to hear what the other person is saying. Listen, and then ask questions based on what you are hearing.
5. **Be Willing to Step Back** – No matter what you may like to think...you are not always right, and you need to know when to step back and be willing to do so.
6. **Have the Right Attitude** – When it comes to good communication, it is important to have the right attitude. You need to show that you are confident in yourself and in your ability to communicate. It is also important that you learn how to communicate with a positive mindset.
7. **Use Good Judgement** – Before you speak with someone, know what you want to achieve through that communication. When you use good

judgement before speaking, it will make it a lot easier to know what to say and when to say it, as well as what not to say.

8. **Get Feedback** – If you are unsure about your communication skills, ask others how you are doing. Remember, you are going to receive both positive and negative feedback. You will need to learn how to deal with the negative so you can turn it around into something positive.

Accuracy is one of the most vital features of communication. The relayed information needs to be correct. Inaccurate information cannot be viewed as credible. Effective communication also needs to be accurate even in things such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Finally, communication works two-ways. As it flows downwards from a superior to a subordinate, so should it flow upwards. All organizations will have different needs, interests, and desires based on their members. Therefore, communication needs to be tailored to meet the specific needs of the target audience for it to have the desired effect or impact.

Presentation Skills

Presenting information clearly and effectively is a key skill in getting your message across. Today, presentation skills are required in almost every field and you will be required to give presentations on occasions. While some people love the challenge, others find it much more challenging.

This section with a bit of work from you is designed to help improve your presentation skills. Many of us feel

terrified when asked to talk in public, especially to large groups. However, these fears can be reduced by good preparation which will lay the foundation for an effective presentation.

There are any number of occasions when you may be asked to speak in public or to a group of people. These are considered a presentation:

- Presenting at a meeting, conference, or event
- Objecting to a proposal or vote at a meeting
- Making a speech at a wedding or commencement
- Impromptu speech or presentation about the club, the college, or about yourself. Be ready!
- On behalf of a team, introducing a keynote speaker or presenting a gift to a guest speaker
- Seeking funding for your club or seeking a loan to help you start a business or buy a home

They do not, however, all require the same approach. You would not necessarily use a PowerPoint to thank a colleague who was leaving. However, a conference audience would be surprised not to see slides projected onto a screen. There is no single set of rules that apply to all presentations, but there are some things that every presentation has in common.

You will present better if you have prepared effectively. This does not necessarily mean that you have written out your speech verbatim and rehearsed it until you know it by heart. It does, however, mean that you must be confident that you are saying the right thing, in the right way, to the right people.

You need to be clear about your audience and your message. Every presentation will be better if you have

clearly considered the message that you need to convey, and how best to convey it to your audience. These two pieces of information drive your style, structure, content, and use of visual aids.

You must never overrun your allocated time. In other words, don't overstay your welcome and start on time. Almost every speech or presentation is better if it is shorter. Nobody minds leaving early, but everybody minds being held up.

Always remember that the audience starts on your side and are there voluntarily. They have chosen to listen to you, and they want to enjoy your presentation. The occasion is yours to lose. When you present, you are in control of the room. The audience has effectively handed you control and is sitting back waiting for you to do something. You may have prepared a specific talk, but if you see that isn't working, you can always change it.

You can skip through some slides to a section that they may find more interesting. Ask your audience whether there is information that they were expecting that you are not providing. Or ask the audience at the start of the presentation what they are expecting and what they want you to cover. That way, you can tailor the presentation to fit their expectations.

Lastly, you want to help your audience get the most out of your presentation. The best way to do that is to accept feedback which may include smiles, nods of interest, or people getting their phones out. The most important tip of all is to remember that it's all about your audience and your presentation skills will almost instantly improve.