

## Communicating Verbally - It's All Up to You

When you compete with others of similar experience and talent for the same work position, interpersonal skills make the difference in whether you will win the job. If hired, your long-term success on the job will depend heavily on your interpersonal skills. The key is verbal communication.

Kelly Services, one of the world's top staffing companies, surveyed 134,000 people. The traits identified by those surveyed as the most important in bringing good or bad attention to themselves were their verbal communication skills. The last *Career Headlines* identified seven ways to become a smart conversationalist. The following traits will also help.

**Be friendly.** We, subconsciously, are drawn to people who are friendly. Our perception of them is more positive.

**Think before you speak.** Do you say whatever comes to your mind just to have something to offer, or do you think first? Avoid speaking unless what you have to say is worthwhile.

**Plan ahead.** Prior to speaking, ask yourself, "How can I use only a few words to make my point?"

**Be clear.** Don't beat around the bush about what you have to say. Individuals who only hint at their thoughts lose their listeners.

**Practice humility.** Having a modest view of your self, called "humility," is one of the most respected traits you can possess. It is an important indicator of your attitude.

**Action:** What mistakes does Michael make in the following situation? What message is Ansley returning to Michael?

Michael: *Hi, Ansley, let me tell you about the idea I have for the end-of-year company party our boss asked you to plan.*

Ansley: *Thanks, Michael, I have the party plans almost finished. Will you send me an email. I'm on my way out.*

Michael: *I just need a minute, and it's a great idea. I thought of it this morning on the way to work. If we bring live reindeer in and provide a sleigh, people could take pictures with Santa. We could even invite employees to bring their children. It is a first-time thing, but maybe we could start a tradition. Ms. Segwich will really like my idea.*

Ansley (moving to the door): *I have an appointment, Michael, so send me an email please.*

Michael breaks in: *You do know this is the best thing we could do for the party, right?*



This is the last *Career Headlines* for the year.  
Have a great holiday. We'll be back on January 6.

**Note to instructors:** Ten lesson titles each from the *Job Ready Career Skills* topics of Speaking and Listening are listed below for your review. A total of fifty lessons on communication, along with other soft skills lessons, are contained in *Job Ready Career Skills*.

### Listening Lessons

- Reasons for Listening
- Benefits of Listening
- Barriers to Listening
- Listening Strategies
- Ways We Filter What We Hear
- Developing a Listening Attitude
- Show You Are Listening
- Asking Questions
- Obtaining Feedback
- Getting Others to Listen

### Speaking Lessons

- Using Language Carefully
- Showing Confidence
- One-on-One Conversations
- Small Group Communication
- Large Group Communication
- Making Speeches
- Involving the Audience
- Answering Questions
- Visual and Media Aids
- Errors in Presentation

