

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Employers are searching for people who possess the ability to effectively communicate with others. There are five communication skills you should be aware of:

1. The Knowledge of Open vs. Closed Questions

- open questions encourage people to talk openly
- they cannot be answered with a “yes” or a “no”
- they help a person better understand what another is saying
- closed questions tend to result in one word answers, such as “yes” and “no”
- there is little real communication, but they can assist with identifying facts

2. Paraphrasing

- simply repeating back to the other person the essence of what he/she has said
- this is an important skill to have because it demonstrates understanding

3. Non-Verbal Behaviour

- eye contact, body position, tone of voice, etc.
- this often contributes more to what is being said than the actual words
- good eye contact, a comfortable body position and a calm tone of voice encourage positive communications

4. Reflection of Feelings

- when a person paraphrases the feelings of another person (“it appears that you are feeling angry...”)
- understanding a person’s feelings can help to make the meaning of what they are trying to say much clearer

5. Summarizing

- summarizing is different from paraphrasing because it usually occurs after several minutes of conversation and helps to ensure what is being said is being understood