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# Women of Witness

TIPS TO BETTER YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

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## The 6 “Be’s” of Communication

By Jenni Catron

No one prepared younger me for the complexity of communication. Done poorly, it complicates our relationships and our workplaces. It slows us down and it trips us up. But communication done well can inspire, encourage, clarify and connect.

The more I study great relationships and great organizational cultures, the more frequently I find effective communication at the center of their success.

You’ve likely heard the axiom “everything rises and falls on leadership.” I would add to that and say *if everything rises and fall on leadership, leadership rises and falls on communication*. We can’t lead well without figuring out the communication conundrum.

Years ago, I had the privilege of co-authoring a book called **Just Lead!** with my friend Sherry. In it, we identify the 6 “Be’s” that are essential for good communication as leaders. I think about this list often in coaching and consulting conversations, and I think you’ll find it helpful as well.

- 1. Be a good listener.** Our temptation as leaders is to hurry through conversations and make quick decisions; however, earning equity and credibility with your team is often best achieved through intentional listening.
- 2. Be self-aware.** In order to help others understand us, we must first understand ourselves. Nancy Beach said it this way, “Most of us have blind spots about how we come across to others, and the huge challenge is to find ways to see ourselves more clearly and to identify where we are strong and where we need to improve.”
- 3. Be sensitive.** A Harvard Business Review article said this, “Communication isn’t as simple as saying what you mean. How you say what you mean is crucial and differs from one person to the next...” Not only do we need to be sensitive in how we say things, but we also need to be sensitive to how others receive what we say.
- 4. Be direct and confident.** Oftentimes when we need to deliver feedback or constructive criticism, we can be guilty of convoluting the message so much that the other person doesn’t understand our point or the seriousness of the message. Say what you need to say kindly, succinctly and honestly.

**5. Be well-timed.** A well-timed word of encouragement is absolutely life-giving, and a poorly timed criticism can completely demotivate or even derail them. Be quick to praise. Be slow to criticize.

**6. Be you.** Nothing you communicate as a leader will be effective if it feels inauthentic. Find your voice. Trust your instincts. Discovering your authentic voice as a leader will be one of the most important steps in your leadership development.

***When you apply these 6 “Be’s,” you’ll find yourself experiencing fewer of those dreaded communication blunders. Continue to develop your communication skills, and you’ll continue to grow as a thriving leader.***

<https://www.biblicalleadership.com/blogs/the-6-bes-of-communication/>