

Helpful Communication Guidelines

What You Should Do	How You Should Do It
Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the specific conflict and desired outcomes
Arrange to talk with the other person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask the other person to name a time when it would be convenient to meet ● Choose a location where you will not be interrupted
During the meeting focus on behavior and events, not on personalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Say “When this happens...” instead of “When you do...” ● Describe a specific instance or event instead of generalizing
Listen carefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen carefully to what the other person is saying instead of getting ready to react ● Avoid interrupting the other person and take turns speaking ● After the other person finishes speaking, rephrase what was said to make sure you understand it ● Ask questions to clarify your understanding
Identify where you and the other person agree and disagree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summarize the areas of agreement and disagreement ● Ask the other person if he or she agrees with your assessment ● Modify your assessment until both of you agree on the areas of conflict
Set priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss which areas of conflict are most important to each of you to resolve
Develop a plan to continue working on each conflict, starting with the most important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on the future ● Set up future meeting times to continue your discussions
Follow up on your plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue meeting until you have worked through each area of conflict ● Maintain a collaborative, “let’s-work-out-a-solution” attitude
Build on your success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Look for opportunities to point out progress ● Recognize the other person’s insights and achievements ● Congratulate each other when you make progress, even if it is just a small step

(Portions of this material are adapted, with permission, from UC Riverside’s Human Resources Web Site.)