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Helping Organizations Retain Their Most Valuable Asset

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Study Strategies for School Success

These study strategies are fundamental for all ages.

- Beat procrastination! Teach your child, by example, not to put off tasks.
- Instead of denying your child privileges for not studying, offer him rewards or incentives for getting his schoolwork done.
- Get organized! Ensure that your child has separate sections in her notebook for notes, homework, and graded materials for each class.
- After class or in the evenings, encourage your child to write a review of key ideas from each class.
- Teach your child to be an active reader who outlines and annotates her textbooks. If she is not allowed to write in her books have her keep these notes in a special notebook.
- Encourage him to read through textbook sections before they're reviewed in class.
- When studying for a test, suggest that your child arrange class and reading notes chronologically to ensure she's studying the appropriate material.
- Help him create "fact sheets" of key ideas and terms scattered randomly on a page. If he can recall details in random order, they're stored in his brain.
- A combination of memorization and concept comprehension will yield the longest-lasting and most complete knowledge.

Source: TM and © Scholastic Inc.



It's always easier to be aware of another's conversational mistakes than our own. Our own mistakes are so habitual, so well-intentioned, they easily escape our notice. We are just being ourselves, right? Nonetheless, others making mistakes can be our teachers, if only by serving as negative examples.

These conversational mistakes apply to both social and business conversations. They are mistakes because they injure the integrity of the conversation by blocking its flow, creating frustration, and reducing understanding and satisfaction.

Here are six of the most common mistakes that spoil conversations:

1. **Blabbermouthing-** Talking too much, way out of balance, going on and on without giving the other(s) their turn. The one who hogs the talk-channel soon frustrates others and they tune out the blabbermouth. Involved in their own monologues, blabbers feel some satisfaction in carrying on - even when they have lost the involvement of the (former) listener.

Some professionals suffer from the occupational hazard of this mistake - professors, clergy, speakers and trainers, and others who are paid to talk for a living.

2. **The "take-away" and "me-too" syndrome** - A talker begins a topic and the listener grabs it away and opens a me-centered monologue. You say, "I saw a great movie last weekend..." and the listener-soon-to-be talker says, "Oh? I saw one, too..." and begins to describe their experience.

The initiator of the movie topic is unable to complete their thought because it's been high-jacked. This is a very childlike and frustrating behavior, and eventually drives people away.

3. **Unsolicited advice** - Some people are quick to give advice as soon as the other person mentions a problem. "Have you thought of...?" "Why don't you...?" erupt quickly from their overflowing volcanoes of counsel. Men seem especially prone to this tendency, although women are not immune from it. It is also prevalent among "professional know-it-alls" such as teachers, managers, administrators, and some lawyers, ministers, and counselors.

When offered to friends and other peers, the advice-giver assumes the authority or even parenting role and that can be off-putting. Better to let the person finish and then, perhaps, to ask, "Are you asking for my opinion?" or "What alternatives have you thought of?"

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4. **Interrupting** - This means butting in before your partner has completed the thought. Usually this is done because the interrupting people are impatient and are afraid of not getting their thoughts expressed.

Many of these interruptions occur on TV interviews when the host has guests with opposing views. The guests butt in, over-talk, even shout in order to get in their words. (According to some producers, this makes for exciting television. I think it simply creates an annoyance.)

5. **Contradicting** - This is the ultimate conversation-blocker. Although great in structured debate, direct disagreement is not helpful in conversation, which is at its best when it's mutual and collaborative.

"I disagree with you," or the more gingerly, "Yes, BUT," are in plentiful supply in many conversations and another form of the "I'm right, you're wrong" game. (If chocolate is right, must vanilla be wrong? Or just different?)

The better way is to hear out the point of view being expressed, check that you understand it, then offer "My view is different from yours. Let me explain." People who feel heard and understood are more likely to hear

14 Of The 20 Most Abused Drugs In he U.S. Are Prescription Drugs

Prescription medications can be effective when they are used properly, but some can be addictive and dangerous when misused. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 14 of the 20 most abused mood-altering substances in the U.S. are prescription drugs.

Many people become "unwitting" addicts. These are often individuals with no prior history of drug abuse, who begin using prescription drugs for a legitimate medical problem. Then, at some point they start increasing the dosage on their own because the drug makes them feel better. Gradually, the abuse becomes full-blown addiction.

How to avoid prescription drug misuse or abuse

1. Educate yourself about any prescribed or over-the-counter drug you may take, in particular the drugs that can be addictive. The most frequent offenders are pain and nerve medications, tranquilizers, diet pills and cold medicines. Before taking any medication ask what is in the medication and what effects can be expected.
2. Keep your doctor informed about all medications you are taking, including over-the-counter medications.
3. Be sure to use medication only as prescribed. If you have questions or concerns, contact your doctor.
4. Get a second opinion before going on a medication for any length of time. Long-term use for more than 27 consecutive days can be addictive (This does not apply to medications that simply provide what the body is deficient in, such as insulin, thyroid, and antidepressants).
5. Low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and feeling of isolation and detachment are the most common problems associated with drug dependency. Seek professional help or other resources to help you solve these problems, instead of covering up the symptoms with medication. Make yourself a priority and take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

HMS is here to help

If you or a dependent needs help to overcome a problem with prescription drug abuse or addiction, Human Management Services (HMS) can assist you with CONFIDENTIAL counseling, referrals and information. HMS counselors are specially trained to help people get the right help for a problem with prescription medications or other drugs, and can help you determine the extent of your problem and what treatment is needed. If you need help, why not call an HMS counselor today? We're here to help. All HMS services are free and strictly confidential.

and understand someone expressing a different view.

Stingy contributors - This describes the people who listen, take and receive, but don't give.

They contribute little enthusiasm, information, self-disclosure, acknowledgement, compliments or other elements that lift a conversation. They like to "pick the brains" of others, but contribute nothing. They take few risks, and while others share personal experiences, the "stingy contributor" remains cool and contained with personal matters. This cautious, ungenerous style causes an out-of-balance conversation in which real trust can never exist.

When you find you are becoming frustrated or annoyed in a conversation, there is a good chance that the other party is exhibiting one of these mistakes. You are experiencing how these mistake patterns cause problems. With your heightened awareness, now work to eliminate them from your own repertoire.

Loren Ekroth, Ph.D. is a specialist in human communication and a national expert on conversation for business and social life. His articles and programs strengthen critical communication skills for business and professional people. His weekly skill-building ezine, *Better Conversations*, is complimentary and can be subscribed to at his website, <http://www.conversationmatters.com>.

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