

How to Communicate Effectively with Teachers



Seven Basic Strategies

- Make eye contact with the teacher as often as possible during class time
- Let the teacher know if you are having problems understanding material LONG before the test
- Ask questions before assignments are due
- Think about your non-verbal communication with the teacher
- When you goof up, admit it and apologize and promise to try harder
- Use "I" statements rather than "you" statements
- Be friendly

Eye Contact

- Don't be afraid to look your teacher in the eye during class and when you see the teacher in the hallways outside of class time
- The teacher will get to know your name more quickly and will be more likely to have a positive attitude about you
- Sit in a place in the front of the class if the teacher gives you a choice

Catch Problems Early

- You know when you are not understanding something that is being taught
- Tell the teacher right away instead of waiting until it is too late
- Don't just say "I don't understand the whole thing." That really annoys teachers!
- Be specific "I got the first two steps of the problem but got stuck at the third step."

Ask questions before assignments are due

- Don't wait until the last minute to ask a teacher for help with an assignment
- That means --- don't wait till the last minute to start assignments.
- As soon as you realize you are having problems, ask the teacher for help

Non-verbal communication

- Your body language communicates lots to the people around you
 - Crossed arms says "I don't want to listen to you"
 - Eye rolling says "I think what you just said was stupid"
 - Turning your body away from someone says "you aren't important enough for me to pay my undivided attention to"

Accept Responsibility

- When you make a mistake, admit it
- Apologize for it without “qualifying” it (I’m sorry, but it was ‘cause...”
- Promise to try harder

“I” Statements

- Being statements with “I” instead of “You
- “I feel this way when you do ...” rather than “you make me feel like...”
- “I don’t understand” rather than “You didn’t explain it right”

Be Friendly

- Smile at the teacher
- Show a genuine interest in the subject or at least try to seem like you are interested
- Greet the teacher by name “Good morning, Mr.; Good afternoon Mrs. ...”

Let's Review

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