

## Gain the Respect You Deserve: The Correlation Between Self-Esteem and Effective Communication

*By Rosa Chillis*

I don't know about you, but the one thing I will not tolerate from people I meet and know is disrespect; in turn, I show others the utmost consideration. I'm certain you feel the same way. But what if you are not treated with the dignity and respect you deserve? What happens to your self-image? Do you feel like a small and inferior person? When you are not treated with dignity and respect, what could be the reason? Could it be the way you talk or present yourself? In other words, how you say what you say?

In fact, researchers have found that only three elements are communicated each time we speak: verbal 7% (the words we use); vocal 38% (tone of voice); and visual 55% (non-verbal cues, e.g. body language, clothing).

If how you sound is holding you back and holding you down, what can you do about it? Answer: you can improve your communication skills, which includes improving your vocal quality. Are you willing to do that?

This article will reveal five simple ways to improve your communication skills and as a result create an image that projects confidence and self-assurance.

1. Begin a self-improvement program at once! People judge your convictions and abilities based on your voice quality. By using the assessments and practicing the exercises you find in voice and articulation handbooks, you will learn how to present your ideas, feelings, and opinions with boldness. (A suggested resource follows this article.)
2. Talk about things that make a difference. Researchers believe those with low self-esteem feel they bring little value to the conversation; what they have to say is of no importance. Talk about things that matter. You will be passionate and enthusiastic about what you say, which is contagious. Your message will be engrossing and enlightening. People will want to listen to you.
3. Say what you mean. Meanings of words are not always clear. Be aware of cultural differences. An effective communicator will be careful of jargon and slang. For instance, will all of your listeners understand what you mean if you say "hold your horses," "sleep on it," or "pig out"?
4. Use words that build a healthy self-concept, not words that tear you down; use the language of success. Certain words you use in communicating shape how others see you and how you see yourself. For example, rather than "I never get anything right," why not say "I am capable." Or rather than "I don't like learning," why not say "Learning is a pleasure."
5. Listen (the "king" of communication). Listen actively, which means to focus and pay close attention to what others talk about. Be involved. Be responsive.

Where can you apply better communication skills?

1. On the job: staff meetings, selling, customer service, job interview, negotiating for a raise, etc.
2. In school: team projects, individual and group presentations, cross-cultural interactions, etc.

3. At home: family get-togethers, parent-teacher conferences, conversations with a friend, church groups, etc.

Studies have shown people are evaluated to a great extent on the basis of their manner of communicating. This article explained the correlation between self-esteem and effective communication; and offered five strategies to change your communication behavior.

Without question, in today's society if you desire respect and acceptance, improving your communication skills is vital! With improved communication skills your personal impact will make a difference in both your business and personal life. You will be judged by others as credible and competent; in turn, your self-perception will change. You will feel good about yourself—your self-esteem will soar! You will command respect! Isn't that what it's really all about?!

Why not get started today?

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Rosa Chillis is president of Adasane & Associates, Inc., and a communication instructor specializing in oral communication, interpersonal communication and voice & articulation skills. She is author of the e-book titled *Your Voice Is Your Image: Four Ways to Improve Your Speaking Voice*. Find out more at <http://www.communicationmarketplace.com>