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We live in the communication age. With more and more information shared via emails and chats, communication issues are on the rise. When it comes to male / female relationships, effective communication has become even more complicated. Effective communication is achieved when a message is clearly transmitted by the sender and clearly understood by the receiver. Here are my 6 key actions that will help improve communication between men and women.

1. **Share first.** Part of the challenge of effective communicating is determining the reason for the message. Men often view a barrage of back-to-back questions as an interrogation and not as communication. When you share your examples, experiences, perspective first, it allows the other person to get a better understanding of the reason for the conversation. Sharing your thoughts first also sets the tone, attitude, and disposition of the sender and the expectation of the receiver. 2. **Share at the level of detail that you would like to receive in the response.** This is part of the reason of sharing first. If you want a blow-by-blow response, sharing first allows you to give blow-by-blow examples. To ask for details without being willing to share details is not effective communication. Conversation is a process of giving and taking. It requires openly and willingly sharing at the level of detail that you would like to receive.

3. **Confirm the message that was received from the sender.** This is the “what I heard you say” part of communicating. When a message is shared, it is filtered by the thoughts, experiences, and preconceived ideas of the receiver. What the sender says and what the receiver hears can often be lost in translations. Confirming the message allows the sender the opportunity to clear up any miscommunication or misunderstanding. This is even more critical when emotions are involved. Men need time to process emotional responses so confirming the message allows them time to process.

4. **Use body language that supports the message.** This is even more important when communicating over the phone. A smile can be heard through the telephone. When communicating in person, 55 percent of the message is non-verbal so be mindful of the message your body language is sending.

5. **Talk more text less.** Texting is a poor form of communication. The messages are usually abbreviated and do not include punctuations. They also are riddled with acronyms that may be known only to the sender. If the message has the potential to be emotionally charged, pick up the phone and call the other person. Face-to-face meetings are the most effective, and they should be used whenever possible.

6. **Remove any and all distractions.** Real communication requires undivided attention. Turn off the cell phone, television, and video games or any other action that require your attention. You cannot communicate effectively when you are engaged in other activities. Some conversation should not be held until the right environment exists. This is the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver. Choosing the right time to have the conversation improves the likelihood of effective communication.

Men and women struggle at communicating so they must remember that people are more important than feelings and feelings are more important than the events that caused them. This will help to keep things in perspective. Never win the argument at the expense of losing the other person or the relationship. Share openly and honestly and expect the same in return. Following these simple rules can lead to the effective communication necessary to sustain a healthy relationship.

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