



HEALTH ASSOCIATES®

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## Prevent Misunderstanding in Your Team

When working with others, you're likely to encounter people from different backgrounds with various levels of experience and education. In addition, each person also brings his or her own unique personality to a group. When joining all these differences together, you need to learn how to handle the inevitable misunderstandings and miscommunication that can come from people's diversity. Follow the tips below to learn how your team can optimize communication.



### Pay Attention

- When speaking with another person, don't focus on paperwork, the telephone, the objects on your desk, or what you are going to say next.
- Try not to have preconceived notions about what a person is going to say to you. You may suspect that a person is coming to you for a certain reason, but don't let that rule your mind. If you don't give close attention to the person and what is being said in the present moment, you could miss something very important.
- Take nonverbal cues into account. Body language, tone of voice, nervous giggling, or smiles may give you insight into what the person is really trying to say.

### Checking for Understanding

Notice if someone looks puzzled when you are talking. He or she may not be following what you are saying. You can help by asking questions that require feedback on what you said and how well you said it.

Ask questions like:

- Did that make sense?
- Can you repeat back to me your interpretation of what I said? I want to see if I missed anything.
- Did I describe that adequately?

### Use Facts

Try to use facts, rather than opinions, when demonstrating a point. If coworkers come to you with a disagreement, ask for the facts, and try to help using those facts.

### Give Your Time

Some people are quick to catch on to a procedure, while others take a little longer. By spending enough time to ensure understanding among every staff member, you'll know that everyone is on the same page. Have patience when working with each person and you will notice improved work and attitudes throughout the whole team.

Make sure to communicate with your workers at various times, not just when you have criticism. This will help create more positive relationships with workers, and they may be more willing to talk to you when they need assistance or guidance. Be supportive by following these three tips:

- Be polite and cordial with everyone.
- Share good news about accomplishments and achievements.
- Talk about concerns and giving feedback.