

Challenging the Common Sense: Communication Skills Always Lead to Positive Outcomes

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S: Good day, everyone. Think about this: We've always heard that having good communication skills is a key to success, better relationships, and personal growth. In a survey we conducted with 237 students at Akita Kosen, also showed that 97 percent of students believe that being good at communication is very necessary.

K: Yes, communication is more than just words and is a powerful tool for connecting with others. But is it always the path to positive results? What if I said there's more to this story? Today, let's look at the different sides of communication and see if it always leads to good outcomes.

1. Lack of understanding creates a communication gap.

R: Let's begin with a scenario we've all seen. Some people are great at talking, but they don't always try to understand those who find it difficult to communicate. They assume that others share the same level of skill, forgetting that not everyone can express themselves with ease. Some people may struggle with communication due to factors like a lack of skills, social anxiety, different personalities. This lack of understanding can create a significant communication gap.

S: Yes, you are right, I couldn't agree more. Each person has a unique way of communicating, and that can really change how they interact with others. Our survey data showed that when we asked this question, "Do you understand the feelings of people who are good or not good at communication?" 66% of students believe they understand how others feel about communication.

K: That sounds like a good sign, doesn't it? This data brings a critical question: Do we truly understand the feeling of people who are not good at communication? Actually, it's a double-edged sword. To bridge the understanding gap, it's important to develop empathy and active listening skills. Rather than assuming everyone communicates like us, we should make an effort to understand others' standpoints and struggles.

2. Some communication can be hurtful.

R: Let's move to second scenario that many of us can relate to: handling people who are excellent communicators but sometimes use their words to hurt others. In our survey, for the question: Have you ever hurt people in communication? 53% of students answered that they "have" hurt people.

S: It's interesting to note these individuals may not be aware of the harm they're causing. Whether it's using offensive language, the wrong tone, or making jokes that go too far, words can hurt. And let's not forget the universal culture of gossip and rumors. These seemingly harmless actions can actually damage relationships, leaving lasting emotional scars.

R: Imagine you have a friend, Kanto, who's an excellent talker and can hold a

conversation easily. However, he sometimes makes jokes that cross the line. Let's say, Hiro, another friend in the group, is dealing with a challenging math problem. In such situations, Kanto might say something like, "Hiro, why can't you get this? It's so easy!" Even though he may not aim to hurt Hiro, his words can make him feel embarrassed and discouraged.

S: I can relate to Hiro because I've had a similar experience that I can't forget.

K: So, what's the lesson here? It's quite simple: we need to be mindful of our words. Even if we are excellent communicators, we should always consider how our language may affect someone emotionally. Our words have power, and if we use that power responsibly to avoid causing pain from offensive language or hurtful jokes, we can foster healthier and more supportive relationships.

3. one-sided communication

S: Now, let's shift our focus to our last point: one-sided communication. Have you ever been in a situation where one person holds all the power in a conversation? They control decisions, and others depend on them for information. This one-way communication leads to a lack of interaction and a power imbalance within a group. In the classroom, many Japanese students hesitate to share their opinions in groups to maintain harmony. According to our surveys, 90% of students have experienced one-sided conversations.

K: When they were asked how they feel in one-way communication, 42% told that they don't feel like speaking up. The results are clear: students who are pushed aside feel frustrated and powerless. So, to break the cycle of one-way communication, we need to ensure that everyone gets a chance to speak. We should encourage open conversations, ask everyone for their thoughts, and respect different opinions. When people feel heard and valued, it helps better relationship and allows individuals to speak up, eventually leading to more balanced and effective conversations.

R: In closing, the survey we conducted at Akita Kosen revealed crucial insights into how we communicate. It helped us see where we stand out and where we need improvement in our conversations. This survey also showed us that communication isn't just about words; it's about understanding others and being mindful of what we say. By considering these findings, we aim to create more inclusive, empathetic, and respectful communication environments at school, fostering better relationships both personally and professionally. Communication is a powerful tool in our hands and using it thoughtfully can lead to better connections among us.

Thank you.