

# UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF COMMUNICATION



Współfinansowane przez  
Unię Europejską



GREEN  
INDUSTRY  
FOUNDATION

**BABA**  
**HUSKY**

# What is good communication?

Good communication is the process by which information, thoughts, feelings and ideas are effectively communicated and understood between people. It is a fundamental skill that plays a key role in all aspects of personal and professional life.



## Key aspects, in good communication:

- Clarity - based on a clear and comprehensible message.
- Active Listening - focusing on listening to the other person with full commitment.
- Empathy - requires the ability to empathise with the other person's perspective.
- Non-verbal communication - part of communication is 4 non-verbal communication, i.e. gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice and other signals not directly related to spoken words.
- Questions and Feedback - help to understand more clearly the intentions and needs of the other party.
- Time and Patience - Does not rush, gives appropriate explanations and pays attention to the needs of the interviewee.

# Why is communication in the area of green topics so important?

- Raising Awareness
- Promotion of Green Technology and Innovation
- Impact on Attitudes and Behaviour
- Social mobilisation
- Education and Information





# Communication as a green leader

Understanding communication as a ,green leader' means recognising and considering environmental and sustainable aspects when communicating as a leader. This includes being aware of the environmental impact of activities and being able to communicate in a sustainable manner.



# Environmental awareness

As a green leader, environmental awareness entails the capacity to identify, comprehend, and integrate environmental and sustainable development factors into decision-making processes, communication strategies, and team or organizational leadership.

# Main elements, environmental awareness:

Understanding the Environmental Impact of Activities - knowledge of what processes, products and practices can lead to negative impacts on ecosystems, climate and natural resources.

Life Cycle Analysis - understanding how the different stages, from raw materials to disposal, affect the environment.

Promoting Education and Awareness - communicating the benefits of environmental action and encouraging informed choices.

Setting an Example - personal engagement in environmentally friendly practices and contribution to an organisational culture based on ecological values.



## The value of communication in green leadership as a tool for motivation and coordination

The value of communication in green leadership manifests itself as a key tool for both motivating and coordinating action in the context of environmental protection and sustainability. Effective communication is the foundation for building engaged teams and achieving sustainable goals, by affecting the emotional level, inspiring action and being able to coordinate action among diverse stakeholders.

The value of communication in green leadership as a tool for motivation and coordination

# The value of communication in green leadership as a tool for motivation and coordination

- Motivation through communication
- Inspiration as a Motivational Factor
- Coordination of Actions through Effective Communication
- Avoiding Disinformation and Confusion
- Building Team Spirit



# ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR GREEN LEADERS

Ability to adapt one's communication style

The most common cause of poor communication is different communication styles, which can lead to more

serious problems such as unclear priorities and increasing stress levels.

# ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR GREEN LEADERS

## Active listening

Active listening requires focus and conscious engagement. The main aim of this type of listening is to understand the message, not just to receive the sounds. The ability to listen effectively is something that can be developed - it requires practice to become better and more effective at it.



# The role of empathy in relationship building and engagement

Empathy plays a vital role in building relationships and creating engagement in the context of green leadership. By providing a foundation for mutual understanding and collaboration, empathy enables a green leader to better connect with employees, volunteers and sponsors, leading to more effective green actions.





## Inspiration and Vision

Inspiration in the context of green leadership refers to a leader's ability to evoke strong emotion, passion and motivation in others through their actions, message and personal example. An inspirational leader becomes a source of energy, enthusiasm and determination for his or her team, employees, volunteers and sponsors. It is not just about getting others to act, but more importantly about building an internal desire to change, act and contribute to environmentally friendly initiatives.



### Ingredients of Inspiration :

- **Personal Example ,**
- An inspirational leader lives by the principles he or she promotes. His or her personal commitment and actions are a strong source of motivation for others.
- **Passion and emotions,**
- A leader creates excitement through strong conviction and commitment to sustainability. His/her passion translates into the commitment of others.
- **Shared Vision,**
- An inspirational leader is able to clearly communicate his or her vision of a better future, where pro-environmental actions bring positive change. This vision is to encourage others to act.



## Feedback to the Green Leader

Green leader feedback is the process of providing assessments, feedback and comments on leader's actions, behaviour and approach in the area of sustainability and green activities. It is a mechanism whereby other employees, team members or co-workers provide the leader with information on the way he or she behaves in the context of green activities, their impact on the team and the organisation as a whole.

- Uncovering the Invisible Aspects We often fail to see all our achievements and mistakes. Feedback helps to show us new perspectives.
- Enjoying progress Any feedback is worth appreciating, whether it points to our successes or areas for improvement.
- An atmosphere of open communication Strive to create an environment in which giving and receiving feedback is natural and positive.





## Communicating with various recipients as a green leader

Communicating with various recipients as a green leader is about skillfully tailoring our messages to be understood and accepted by diverse audiences. It is crucial to understand that our own beliefs, experiences and values can shape our perspective, but we cannot assume that everyone else shares the same vision of the world

It is of great importance to be aware that when communicating with people of different cultures and backgrounds, we must avoid ethnocentrism and prejudice. To be effective in communicating with different audiences, we should:

- **Avoid Figurative Language:** Choose clear and direct wording, avoiding phrases and metaphors that may be incomprehensible or confusing to people from different cultures.
- **Understanding Nonverbal Communication:** Cultures differ in the expression of emotions and non-verbal signs. We need to understand that our facial expressions, gestures and other non-verbal elements may be interpreted differently in different communities.

- **Focus on Simplicity and Brevity:** Concise and clear communication is key to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings resulting from overly complicated messages.
- **Ask Questions and Reformulate Comments:** Engage in dialogue with the audience by asking questions and actively listening to their feedback. Rephrasing comments will help ensure that we understand what they want to communicate.
- **Know Language Preferences:** Study the language preferences of different groups. What pronouns or forms of politeness we use can make a big difference to the effectiveness of communication.

# Non-verbal communication has a variety of functions

- Pragmatic function: used to express membership of a particular community and to influence the behaviour of the person with whom we communicate.
- Semantic Function: Modifies the verbal message, giving it additional meaning through emphasis, negation or other expressive accents.
- Regulatory Function: Helps to organise and manage the conversation, enabling smooth dialogue.
- Syntactic function: Helps to synchronise the speakers, creating the right atmosphere for comfortable interaction. At the same time, it signals specific conversation stages.

# Non-verbal communication as a Green Leader

Non-verbal communication is an intrinsic part of any human interaction in which people convey information and emotions through gestures, facial expressions, body posture, eye contact, tone of voice and other elements that are not directly related to verbal language. It is the subtle, often unconscious expression of thoughts, feelings and intentions through means beyond words alone.

# Who are the stakeholders in project management?

Project stakeholders are individuals or groups who have a key influence on or are affected by a sustainability initiative. They can be employees at different hierarchical levels, business partners, local communities, NGOs, policy makers or even consumers. Although their role may vary, their involvement and opinions are important to the success of the project. Even if they are not directly involved in the day-to-day process, they have an impact on the outcomes and long-term effects of an environmental initiative.

# Two types of stakeholders you may encounter in a project

In a green leadership perspective, we can distinguish between two main categories of stakeholders in a project: internal and external. Internal stakeholders are those who are directly related to the company's activities and the project. They include all employee from subordinates to management who contribute to the project. External stakeholders, on the other hand, are individuals or groups outside the organisation who have a connection to the project. They can be clients, agencies, subcontractors, users, investors, suppliers or other external partnerships.

# How to identify stakeholders?

Before managing stakeholder expectations, a key step is to understand who they are. It is important to consider both those internal to the organisation and those external to the organisation. To achieve this, it is useful to ask yourself some important questions :

- Who is interested in this project?
- Who has the potential influence on this project?
- Who has the ability to influence the fate of this project?
- Who is in a position to approve or reject this project?

# What is a stakeholder map?

In a green leadership perspective, stakeholder map is a tool for identifying the key people or groups involved in a green initiative and analysing how their involvement can influence the project. The map is based on two important aspects: the level of impact and the degree of interest. With a stakeholder map, you gain a deeper understanding of which stakeholders are likely to be critical to the success of your project and who is more or less involved in your initiative. This in turn allows you to communicate effectively, tailored to the needs and expectations of each stakeholder, in the context of your green efforts.

# Examples of stakeholder maps

- Control and benefit degree matrix
- With this approach, stakeholders are grouped according to their level of influence on the project and the benefits they can derive from the project. In this way, it is possible to better understand who has the ability to shape the project and who can benefit from its effects.
- Control and impact matrix
- The model focuses on the level of influence and control of stakeholders, but additionally takes into account their degree of involvement in the project. This provides a better understanding of who can make decisions and how interested they are in the outcome of the project.
- Impact and change matrix ,
- In this case, stakeholders are classified based on their involvement in the project and their ability to make changes to the project. This identifies those who can have a real impact on the shape of the project and what changes they are capable of implementing.
- Model of materiality,
- This model groups stakeholders according to three key aspects: the ability to control, the importance of their involvement and the equity of that involvement. This provides an understanding of who has the ability to influence, who is key to the project and who may have moral authority in the context of the project's implementation.



## How to determine levels of influence and stakeholder interest

1 High influence and high interest

2 High influence and low interest:

3 Low influence and high interest

4 Low influence and low interest

# Stakeholders - Manage them!

Once key stakeholders have been identified and their needs understood, it is important to involve them in project planning sessions and kick-off meetings (if possible). Key stakeholders should also approve project elements such as project charters, plan, objectives and project scope.

As the project develops, make sure that every relevant stakeholder is informed of any changes and progress.

The next step is to implement the plan developed earlier. This stage constitutes the central point and directly influences the benefits of actively involving key stakeholders in the project.

Each action taken in accordance with the plan, which has been created at the previous stage, should be properly recorded, both by you and by the relevant people carrying out the actions.

# Common pitfalls in stakeholder mapping

- Lack of clear boundary setting
- Omission of stakeholders
- Late introduction of stakeholders

# What problems a green leader may face in communicating with stakeholders?

- Insufficient Awareness and Understanding
- Resisting Change
- Skepticism and Distrust
- Conflict of interest
- Information overload
- Limited Resources

# How to create content that resonates with your audience

Whether you choose a blog or other means of communication, the important thing is to create content that will genuinely gain favour with your audience and leave a positive mark in their minds.

# Some steps you can take to create effective and engaging content

- Understanding the recipients
- Personalisation and interesting forms of content
- Problem-centric approach
- Stories and education
- Practical action

# Difficult terminology in green topics, how to simplify

## it?

Difficult terminology in green topics involves the use of specialised words and terms that may be incomprehensible to average people or those without an environmental background. It is often scientific or technical language that can deter people from engaging with green issues. Examples of difficult terminology in green topics include words such as „ecosystem“, „ecology“, „anthropogenic“, „biodegradation“, or „ecosphere“.

How to do it?

- Using simple words
- Explanations and definitions
- Examples and analogies
- Avoiding abbreviations and acronyms
- Adaptation of words to the audience

# Examples of how to replace difficult terminology

Sustainable development - This can be called ,developing in such a way that the environment and future generations are not harmed’.

Energy efficiency - This can be defined as ,saving energy by using it more wisely’.

Renewable energy sources - These are simply ,energy sources that do not run out, e.g. sun and wind’.

Biodiversity - This is simply ,the diversity of life on Earth’.

Recycling - This can be called ,reusing materials’.

Climate impact - This is ,how our actions affect the Earth’s weather’.

Air pollution - This is ,polluting the air, which harms health’.

Loss of natural habitats - This can be defined as ,destruction of places where animals and plants live’.

Greenhouse gases - These are the „gases that make the Earth heat up”.

Sustainable corporations - These are ,companies that care about the environment and society, not just profit

# Challenges of green communication

- Complicated terminology
- The problem of ,greenwashing'
- Misinformation and scepticism
- Lack of community involvement
- Economic and political influence

# Problem of "greenwashing"

The problem of 'greenwashing' is the practice whereby organisations, companies or brands try to appear greener or more environmentally friendly than they actually are. It is an effort to gain image and marketing benefits by using environmental themes without actually doing anything to protect it. The problem of greenwashing is a significant challenge in the field of green communication and sustainability.

# Bibliography:

- <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/leadership-communication>
- <https://hbr.org/2022/11/how-great-leaders-communicate>
- <https://www.revolutionlearning.co.uk/article/what-is-effective-listening/>
- <https://www.usip.org/public-education-new/what-active-listening>
- <https://www.coursera.org/articles/active-listening>
- <https://www.mediaelite.pl/rola-empatii-w-budowaniu-relacji-interpersonalnych/>
- <https://www.karolinakarwowska.pl/dobrylider/>
- <https://rosnijwsile.pl/inspirujesz-czy-demotywujesz-jak-zapalac-innych-inspirujacy-lider-5-cech-lidera-inspiratora/>
- <https://www.corazlepszafirma.pl/blog/informacja-zwrotna>
- <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/behavioral-competencies/communication/pages/communicating-with-diverse-audiences.aspx>
- <https://semcore.pl/co-to-jest-komunikacja-niewerbalna-czy-odgrywa-istotna-role/>
- <https://asana.com/pl/resources/project-stakeholder>
- <https://nowoczesnymanager.pl/interesariusze-jak-ich-zaangazowac/>
- <https://ideacto.pl/blog/mapa-interesariuszy/>
- <https://powerdigitalmarketing.com/blog/how-to-create-content-that-resonates-with-your-audience/>
- <https://www.managements.coach/business-communication-strategies-tailoring-messages-to-the-audience>
- <https://www.yourthoughtpartner.com/blog/6-steps-for-effectively-connecting-with-your-audiences>
- <https://medium.com/tech-lead-hub/effective-communication-tailoring-the-message-to-each-audience-31f1cbbc64cc>