

Putting it together

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

Effective communication requires that the recipient is able to receive a message. If someone is distracted or cannot hear adequately, they will not be able to communicate effectively.



Be direct

It is useful to express directions to a specific person to catch their attention. "Julie, will you please begin chest compressions?" is more effective than "somebody start chest compressions". Without specific identification, providers may assume that someone else will do it.

Remain calm

Maintaining a calm demeanor will help team members also remain calm. A frenetic or noisy environment increases stress and distraction, and the likelihood for errors.

Maintain respect

In stressful situations, it is also important to maintain respect among all team members. This may help ensure that their attention is focused on the task at hand, rather than an emotional reaction to some perceived affront. Addressing everyone by name, if possible, acknowledges their importance. Pleasantries, like saying please and thank you, may be useful, when feasible. Provide positive reinforcement when appropriate.

Be brief

A brief message is more easily understood than a complex one; directions should be expressed in simple terms. Avoid multiple-step directions. When possible, provide additional specificity to simplify the task for the recipient. For example, instead of saying, "please lower the bed", you may say, "please lower the bed with the foot pedal in front of you".

Close the loop

Closed loop communication is an effective way to ensure that your message was received appropriately. By acknowledging or repeating the direction, you know that the right person received the right message, and do not have to make unnecessary assumptions.

Listen

Listening may be just as important as speaking to ensure good communication. Asking for team member support or suggestions acknowledges their value, and may help you provide direction, or understand their viewpoint if it is different from your own.