Methods of Communication

by Sophia

1. Methods of Communication

Communication can come in many hybrids, but for this tutorial, there are three communication methods for you to look at:

- Virtual
- Face-to-face
- Written

1a. Virtual

Virtual meetings include things such as conference calls, GoToMeetings, Skype, Google Hangout, and any other virtual method that allows people to meet when they're not in the same geography. This type of communication is convenient, it's conducive to rapid brainstorming, and you can go back and forth with some ideas. There's a sense of in-person exchange where there's this possibility of collaboration.

However, there is a threat of technical interruption. The meeting is cut short if the internet is interrupted in some way. Generally, when something is tech-based, there may be a delay in communication. There may be an overlap when people are talking or an awkward pause because people are afraid to overlap. You also miss nonverbal communication, or body language. It is also possible to mute a speaker and have a different conversation while you're communicating something else.

When is the virtual method the best to use?

The virtual method is used best when geography is a challenge, when meetings repeat or you have repeating check-ins, when you're presenting information, or when you're needing a group discussion and you need some rapid-fire brainstorming.

1b. Face-To-Face

Unlike the virtual method, face-to-face interaction does have the benefit of non-verbal communication. You can see if someone's uncomfortable with some information. There's clear audio and easy visuals.

The con, of course, is geography. You're limited to the people in your office, city, or area.

When is the face-to-face method the best to use?

This method is best used when collaborating, designing, discussing sensitive or personal topics, or sharing complex information, particularly if participant location isn't an issue.

1c. Written

Written communication is nice because you have documentation; you can see a history of exchange. It allows people to process the information on their own time, and you can include attachments, links, and any other information. You have decreased interruption because you can digest that written communication when it's best for you. You have the time to be cohesive and organized.

One con is that the collaboration speed is decreased while you wait for the response. There's also an increased risk of misunderstanding and misinterpretations of tone.

When is the written method the best to use?

The written method is used best when recapping processes or plans, when you need clarification, or when the communication is simple and straightforward.

☆ BIG IDEA

Communication Method	Pros	Cons	Use Method when...
Virtual	Convenient Rapid brainstorm Sense of in-person	Technical interruptions Unseen body language Overlap or awkward pauses	Geography is a challenge Meetings repeat/check-ins

	exchange Share screen/whiteboard		Presenting information Needing group discussion
Face-to-face	Body language Clear audio Easy visuals	Geography/location	Collaborating Designing Discussing sensitive topics Sharing complex information
Written	Documentation Processing time Attachements Decreased interruption Cohesive/organized	Collaboration speed decreased Increased misunderstanding Misinterpretation of tone	Recapping process or plan Needing clarification Simple and straightforward

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📋 SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about three **methods of communication**: virtual, face-to-face, and written communications. Each method has its pros and cons, along with certain situations of when you should each method.

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