

KEY. social COMPETENCES

Przemysław Ziółkowski



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Bydgoszcz 2018

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Wyższej Szkoły Gospodarki, Bydgoszcz 2018

ISBN 978-83-65507-15-0

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Introduction

Social competences have been discussed for a long time. However, it seems that their properties have gained most interest recently. Unfortunately, social competences have not been defined clearly and widely accepted in literature on the subject. Researchers dealing with social competences ask themselves a question whether they are some kind of general social skill which becomes apparent in all types of situations or whether they include many specific, sometimes unrelated skills. Effective functioning in relationships with others is an essential skill particularly in case of these people whose work requires constant dealing with other people. Teachers, managers, advisors, social workers, businessmen are the groups of professions where sensible and fruitful contacts with others are a necessity and social competences are the indicator of effective functioning of the individuals in real life situations. In colloquial language, the notion of social competences is associated with the ability to live with other people, including collaboration with them. In some contexts, social competences are perceived as interpersonal, self-presentation skills as well as skills of coping with stress or being assertive.

Intuitively, we all know that if 'hard skills' refer to professional skills, the 'soft skills' are related to psycho and social skills. And indeed, the behavioural competences focus on the way a human being behaves, attitudes which enable the person to behave effectively in a given situation.

Soft competences mainly are:

- personal skills – managing one's life and work efficiently, the ability to motivate oneself and organise tasks;
- interpersonal skills – they involve communicating with others, persuading others to our arguments, motivating, inspiring, managing teams.

No matter what kind of work we do we need to collaborate with others, communicate with others, working out a common position. All the time we also need to maintain motivation, work on it and develop hard skills. Therefore, soft competences are a basis of any work on the account of their universal character and the universality of application. Due to the fact, this publication is aimed at a wide circle of people interested in their own personal development. The book is a synthetic course dedicated to students of various forms of personal and professional development. However, it is mainly aimed at students from non-European countries who, starting their studies in Europe or in Poland, seek the synthetic source of information concerning standards, rules or customs which are observed in Poland or in other countries of central Europe.

Each person, regardless of the position held, work performed, education possessed, devotes considerable amount of time to relationships with other people, and taking into account the fact that communication with other people also takes place with the use of mimics, gestures or body language, then we perceive that we communicate something almost all the time, both consciously and unconsciously, verbally and non-verbally, in an official and unofficial way.

The view that the ability to communicate is one of the basic conditions of achieving success by an individual is right. However, we should remember that one of the most significant elements of communication is the so called first impression phenomenon, that is self-presentation which is strictly connected with ethics and the etiquette, at the same time forming the whole compendium of personal competences.

Dynamics of changes taking place in the contemporary society and the digitalisation progress transfer personal relationships to the area of modern information and communication technologies – social networking sites or the world of emails where the rules and principles

concerning communication, self-presentation or savoir-vivre are totally different than the ones in real relationships. Therefore, let us hope that good manners, personal everyday culture, effective skills of coping with emotions or interpersonal communication will not remain only in this and other books but they will be a natural element of functioning of our society in the years to come.

Due to a wide range of the problems discussed, the attention was entirely focused on presenting the most significant theoretical knowledge concerning effective communication, social relationships, working in a team, self-presentation, dealing with stress, assertiveness, negotiations, effective time management or savoir-vivre, which constitute personal competences useful in everyday life of any human being.

Social influence

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1. The notion of social influence

Social influence is a process which results in changing one's behaviour, an opinion or feelings of a person following what other people do or think. The change takes place under the real or imaginative persuasion of other people.

Notions connected with social influence

Social influence is also associated with the notion of hyper-conformity which means that in spite of the lack of real persuasion, people undertake some tasks which sense is difficult to understand. Other notions related to the phenomenon of social influence include:

- **Conformism** – the change of own behaviour in order to adapt to the reaction or own performance to the activities of other people (pressure is not required).
- **Compliance** – the change of own behaviour as a response to a direct demand.
- **Obedience** – the change of own behaviour in response to the order given by a person who is an authority to us.
- **Copying** – copying one's behaviour in own activity (i.e. one person yawns – all the people yawn; a mother opening her mouth while feeding the baby)

Persuasion or manipulation?

In order to answer the question if a given behaviour is persuasion or manipulation, first it is necessary to define both notions. The mutual part of both notions is the fact that both of these tools are used to take advantage and to force the other person to behave in a way we expect it.

Persuasion differs from manipulation by the fact that a person who is being persuaded has the possibility to take a decision consciously and he or she knows that we want to take advantage. The example of persuasion can be such a sentence:

“I am sorry. Can I pay for my shopping first? I only have two items and you have a full trolley” – if it is the situation at the till in the supermarket.

PERSUADING OTHERS	
PERSUASION	MANIPULATION
It does not harm the other person; the other person is conscious and feels free to take a decision; he or she learns about our advantage from the aim we want to achieve.	It harms the other person; it deprives others of consciousness and does not accept the free will in a given situation; leads to financial or emotional loss.
AIM: TAKING ADVANTAGE	

Characteristic features of manipulation:

- **secret aim or hidden modus operandi** – an acting person tries to hide the real aim of his or her activity, the means that this person uses in order to achieve the aim or often even the fact of acting actively,
- **own advantage** – the aim of the activity is entirely connected with the conscious achievement of own interests by the person who manipulates, often with the possibility to anticipate evident harm to the person against who the activity is taken and the manipulating person treats the other person subjectively, that is does not pay attention to this person's interests and needs,

- **limiting the possibilities to choose from** – the person who is manipulated finds himself/herself in a situation of limited choice but this person preserves the subjective sense of control over the situation, the sense of free choice,
- **situational advantage** – the person who is the object of manipulation has little ability to recognize the situation, the factors influencing him/ her (the person is unaware of the real intentions and the ways of acting of the person who manipulates) and the manipulating person may additionally make it difficult for the manipulated person to recognize the factors in order to take advantage or manage this person's behaviour,
- **revealing 'harms' of the person who manipulates** – revealing the intentions of the secret activities, the aims of the person who manipulates prevents or significantly lowers the chance to achieve the aims and exposes the manipulating person to lose the social trust.

R. Cialdini's six key principles

Reciprocity principle

If you get something – repay for the given goods. There is a view that if you give something to somebody, you secure yourself that you will receive help if you need it. In our society this principle is extremely powerful because we feel obliged to repay for the nice gesture or a gift. Otherwise, we are condemned to social disapproval and being mean. And the principle clearly says that if somebody does a favour for me, I should repay it. In everyday life we can often use this technique, but often we are unaware of it.

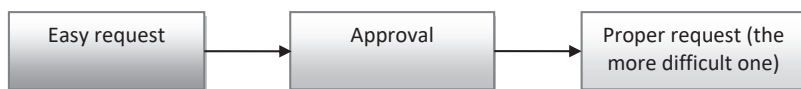
Commitment and consistency

It is some type of a trap we get inside – if I am waiting and I devoted a lot of time to waiting, there is no point in resigning from it. It happened to you that you went to the shop, specially to buy a discounted product, and when you got there it appeared that it was

not on special offer any more. In spite of that, you bought the thing – if you got there, you withdrew the money from the cash point, or you asked an acquaintance to accompany you asking him or her for advice. If we get engaged in some activity, we often feel sorry to quit it. Besides, we want to be consequent and if we decide to do something and take steps in order to achieve it, it is difficult for us to withdraw. There is a Polish statement which precisely shows this mechanism: ‘If you said A, say B’.

Cialdini distinguished two persuasion techniques based on the commitment and consistency mechanism:

- **‘foot-in-the-door’** – in order to encourage the other person to fulfil our request, first we direct the request which is easy to fulfil (not to discourage the person with the difficult task). Fulfilling the first request in a positive way motivates a person to undertake a new challenge, this time the more difficult one. The engagement is bigger and as a result the success seems to be guaranteed. The mechanism of the ‘foot-in-the-door’ technique:



- **‘foot-in-the-mouth’** consists in the consequence trap – if you say you feel good, make others feel the same (i.e. if asked how you feel you publically declare that you feel well while collecting money for charity, you are more eager to participate in the action to help the others if you realize that your help can help somebody who is disadvantaged and that they will feel happy).

Social proof

It is a problem of people being influenced by the opinions given by other people and copying their behaviours, the so called conformism. Often – based on simple deduction we find something as good, tasty or nice because a lot of people use it, eat it, and wear it. Being prone

to copying other people can be easily applied as a persuasion tool. Therefore, the advertisements refer to millions of people who use the given washing powder or a toothpaste.

We can distinguish two types of social influence:

INFORMATION ONE	STANDARD ONE
Treating others as a source of information about the real world.	The ways people behave result from the need to become similar to others in order to tighten contacts with a given group and obtain their approval.
Aim: own right – if others think the same, they are right.	It does not mean to 'be right' but it results from the will to have 'friends'.
If our judgements are to be right, we need to connect them with the opinions expressed by others.	People behave in the same way as others (they wear similar clothes, they express the same opinions) in order to gain something.
Problem: if we are not experts in a given field or our internal opinion results from uncertainty.	However, this way you also lose your individuality.

The justified is the Polish proverb 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do'. The tendency of people to copy others may be a powerful tool of social influence. It is used in advertising, propagating ideologies, creating fashion concerning behaviours and clothes.

Liking

We can easily spot the clear regularity – we are more eager to fulfil requests and accept the proposals given by other people if we like the person rather than if we have neutral or negative attitude towards this person. Basic principles of interpersonal attractiveness:

- physical appearance – this information comes to us as the first one. Attractive people are often perceived as the people who possess positive features such as i.e. intelligence, kindness. We listen to these people more willingly.
- liking the people who are similar to us (e.g. the same height, pace of speech, interests, etc.).

The interesting phenomenon is the use of flattery to win favour of other people. The experiments proved the effectiveness of this technique. It brings a lot of advantages (liking, positive attitude, increasing your self-esteem and self-confidence, facilitating communication, etc.).

Authority

We often fulfil the requests of people who are our authorities. The indicators change but it is still a very powerful tool of social influence. The professional position, often only clothes signifying the social status of a person (a suit, a leather briefcase, an elegant car, etc.) decide about recognizing the person as an authority. Being submissive to authorities carries various traps (a human is only a human and makes mistakes). It also harms – ignoring people without this status.

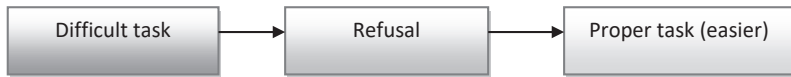
Confidence in authorities helps us take right decisions but not always. Sometimes it leads to disadvantageous situations.

Scarcity principle

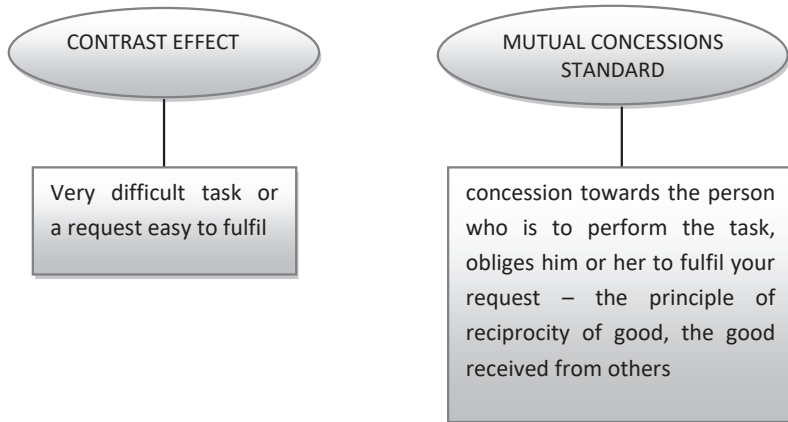
Inaccessibility of goods and information makes them more valuable for us. Therefore, we get into panic when we receive the information about the increase in prices for a given product and we buy the products in excess ‘for later’. Cialdini gives an example of the ringing phone – we answer it every time although it may appear to be the author of the changes in our plan. We are afraid that the situation may not repeat. It is the uniqueness of the situation. The other example are the books, once of limited accessibility to the recipient. The reading rate was much higher in the past than these days when the shelves in bookshops and libraries are bending under the load of literature. It proves the saying: The more difficult to get, the more we are willing to possess the thing.

‘Foot-in-the –mouth’

The technique of social influence which aim is to persuade the other person to fulfil your request. First you give the more difficult task to fulfil on purpose in order to, after the refusal to do it, ‘meet somebody half-way’ and present the easier task.



Two mechanisms are responsible for the effectiveness of the technique:



It is the reversed assumption as compared to the ‘foot-in-the-door’ technique where the request is easier at first and then follows the task which requires more effort.

‘Low ball’

It consists in the assumption that first we present the more attractive proposal. Even if it loses its advantages, the performer undertaking it continues it. If the person taking own voluntary decision aims at achieving it without pressure, then even if the conditions change into the disadvantageous ones, the person feels obliged to continue the undertaken activities.

2. Working in a team

Working in a team is one of the most effective teaching methods which is often given as one of the so called key skills.

The general definition of working in a team in education says that it is a teaching process which central element is a student collaborating with other students (in small 3–5-person groups) in order to solve a problem or a precisely defined task. In such a system, the individual students are assessed only for the part of the task they perform themselves and the teacher acts as a consultant or a helping hand who facilitates the process of learning and solving the task.

The aims of working in a team are:

- satisfying the developmental needs of the students related to the cognitive, social, emotional and artistic activity,
- learning from each other,
- learning how to take decisions on one's own and the ones which are reached as a result of negotiations,
- developing cooperation, collaboration and joint responsibility skills,
- counteracting isolation of some of the students,
- creating a chance to overcome own shyness,
- motivating students,
- encouraging students to creative search while solving problems,
- integrating the class.

During the classes when students work in groups the teacher takes the role of:

- *an advisor* – being at students disposal while performing a task,
- *an animator* – initiating methods, presenting the teaching aims and preparing materials,
- *an observer and a listener* – observing students while working and sharing his/her feedback with them,
- *a partner* – ready to modify the earlier prepared lesson depending on the situation in the classroom.

On the other hand, during the classes students can split into groups or they can be divided into groups of different types. The types of groups include:

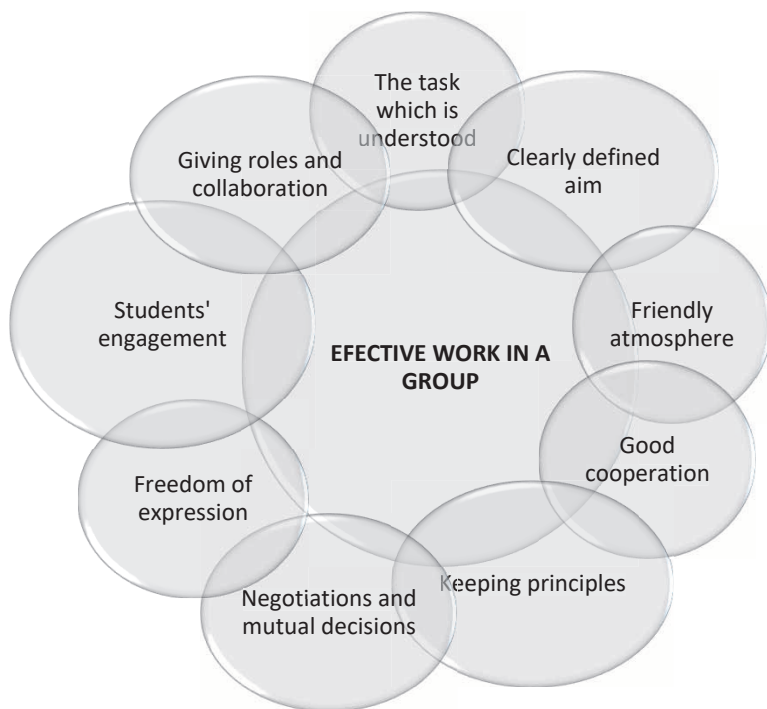
- homogeneous group,
- group of diversified level,
- group of friends,
- purposive sampling group,
- random groups.

The selection of students to form groups is organized by the teacher depending on the aim and the goals of the classes. The students perform different functions working in teams. All roles need to be taken in order to make the whole team work well. Taking decisions in groups is taken in accordance with the roles assigned.

The well-organized work in a team facilitates the right relationships and cooperation between the teacher and students. During solving tasks in a group, there is confrontation of different points of view, which results in making students cognitive activity more dynamic, consequently leading to new ways of understanding: giving arguments, explaining and formulating thoughts. The educational value of working in a group develops the sense of community and cooperation with the team members, which counteracts the development of egoistic and egocentric inclinations being shaped under the influence of individual competition. Team failure is less unpleasant than the individual one and the failure experienced by a group does not give the impression of being less valuable, which is often the consequence of school failures.

A few conditions presented in the drawing below must be fulfilled in order to make the group work achieve the expected results.

Conditions for the effective work in a group are illustrated in the drawing below:



Source: own study.

In accordance with Joseph Cuseo's theory concerning cooperative learning, there are at least six elements which decide about the success of the undertaking which organizes the work in a group for the participants:

1. The group should be formed intentionally in order to optimise its possibilities. The group members are selected by the teacher in accordance with the precisely defined criteria (such as the level of knowledge and abilities, learning style, social and ethnic background, personality profile). The appropriate selection of team members and its homogeneity are to serve to maximise the intellectual potential of the group and enable the application of various thinking perspectives.

2. The group should continue collaboration and work at the defined and the same pace. The group members meet on regular basis at time allocated to perform a task which allows them to create some scheme and also the system of work and collaboration and to create the strong and internally homogeneous unit. Correlation within a group means the situation when the individual group members perform their tasks which influence the mutual motivation and taking responsibility for own activities. Each of the group members should perform a defined role in a team (a manager, a leader, a secretary, a spokesperson, etc). These roles should be defined at the beginning of the group formation process.
3. Individual responsibility for own achievements within the assessment of group performance means that the work of students is assessed individually. It aims at reducing the sense of lack of individual responsibility for the group performance and the result of the work. There is the need to verify the involvement of each team member.
4. The attention should be also focused on social functioning of the group – students should be aware of the need and the interpersonal communication skills, collaboration with other group members, etc. They should also be able to assess own contribution in team work and own interpersonal skills (self-assessment).
5. The teacher should take the role of a consultant, an instructor, a helper undertaking intervention just in case of a sudden need, explaining inaccuracies and encouraging students to increase effort. However, the teacher should not suggest the ready solutions.

Working in a group influences the increase in students' motivation, develops the communication skill, increases respect to own and other people's achievements, broadens horizons, builds tolerance towards other than own methods and styles of teaching and learning.

There are also some indications regarding the things which should not be done during group work. Therefore, we should not:

- have the same group composition (while working on various projects or tasks);
- expect that all the people will work with the same materials or with all possible materials and sources of information;
- assess all group members in the same way;
- assess 'exaggeratedly';
- change the rules of work when it is in progress;
- use too detailed instructions and rules of work (leave something for students creativity)

However, we should remember that the group should have the chance to present the results of their work. It is very important to work out the rules for working in a group with students. Mutual setting and approving the rules facilitates keeping them. It is important that during the next lessons organized in groups the roles should change. Let us give each of the students a chance to test himself or herself and do his or her best. The teacher, organizing the work in groups becomes a coordinator of the activities undertaken by students who helps, gives hints, is a person who helps students learn themselves and learn in an active way. The teachers should only stop group work when they are convinced that it is necessary.

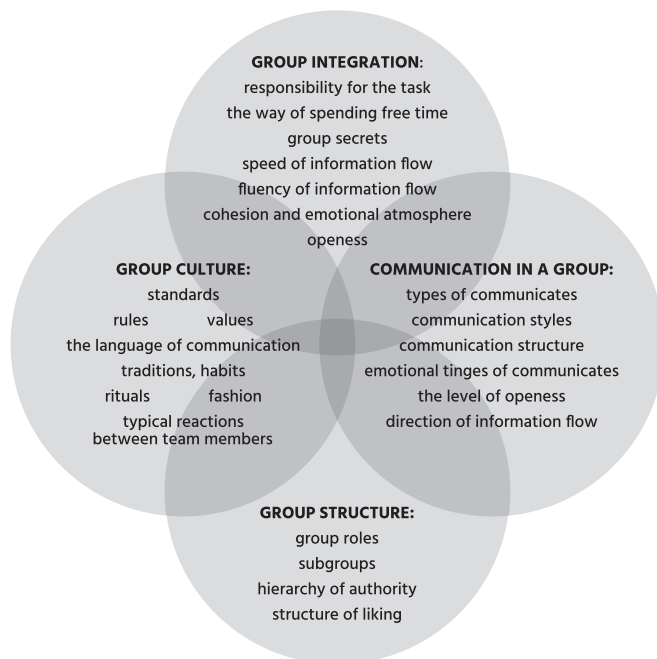
There are a lot of arguments for using this method: students learning with this method are eager to reflect critical thoughts, are more engaged in performing tasks, have more chances to become known as individuals, their responsibility for success of the task performed by all team increases, the fear of making a mistake lowers, they learn more about themselves and others, working in a team also creates the sense of approval and is less stressful. However, classes run in groups are not the easiest ways of work. Working in groups must be well thought and precisely organized by the teacher. It is also worth paying attention to the features of the collaborating group, such as:

- understanding, planning and achieving the set aims,
- group members clearly, directly and precisely communicate with one another, take care of giving precise information about the tasks,
- taking advantage of the potential (knowledge, abilities, skills, energy) of the group members,
- taking decisions in a team (everybody takes part in the decision process and the opinions of the minority are analysed in detailed),
- working out the mutual solutions instead of lobbying or persuading others to individual ideas,
- roles taken by group members are flexible and non-destructive,
- resolving conflicts (finding solutions) which arise within the group,
- there is a division of tasks and responsibilities for their performance within the group,
- it is concise and attractive to its members,
- it does not limit the independence of its members.

Team roles in group work

Group roles can be shortly defined as social roles which we undertake in small groups. Forming a new team, meeting new people, more or less consciously we take some position, we start to behave in some way, we present some own features. To put it in a word, we start to play some role.

Areas of functioning of a group



source: M. Owczarz (red.), Poradnik edukatora, ed. CODN, Warszawa 2005, p. 213.

In the effectively functioning team, each of its members takes some roles. Roles which we take may result from our natural characteristic features which we possess or the tasks which we need to participate in working in a given group. The following roles taken by the participants of the group work can be singled out. The roles are presented in the table below:

Role	Contribution in group work	Permissible weaknesses
Thinker (propagator)	Creative, imaginative, progressive. Solves difficult problems.	Omits details. Too busy to communicate effectively.
Resource prospector (the man of contacts)	Extrovert, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores possibilities. Establishes contacts.	Too optimistic. Loses interest at the time when the first enthusiasm passes.

Role	Contribution in group work	Permissible weaknesses
Coordinator (natural leader)	Mature, self-confident, a good chairperson. Sets aims, encourages to take decisions. Precisely assigns tasks.	May be perceived as a manipulator. In his/ her work he/ she uses others to do the work.
Motor force (the man of action)	Sets challenges to the team. Dynamic, needs pressure, courageous and determined.	May provoke others and hurt their feelings.
Judging critic (judge)	Businesslike, astute, has a strategic talent. Recognizes various options. Able to assess objectively.	Little energetic. Cannot inspire others. Excessively critical.
The soul of the team (the man of a group)	Cooperating, attentive, gentle, diplomatic. Listens, builds, prevents frictions, and introduces peace.	Indecisive in emergencies. Influenced by others.
Executor (practical organiser)	Disciplined, trustworthy, conservative, efficient. Transforms ideas into actions.	Not very flexible. In new situations, reacts with a delay.
Scrupulous executor (perfectionist)	Industrious, conscientious, restless. Looks for mistakes and negligence. Punctual.	Has the tendency to worry too much. Unwillingly assigns tasks to others. Can be pedantic.
Specialist	Self-reliant, with an initiative. Can set himself one primary aim, prone to sacrifice himself/herself. Possesses unique skills or knowledge.	Acts in a narrow scope. Focuses on details. Does not see the overall picture.

Source: M. Rosalska, Warsztat diagnostyczny doradcy zawodowego. Przewodnik dla nauczyciela i doradcy, ed. KOWEZIU, Warszawa 2012, p. 92.

3. Group processes

The group which is formed in many everyday situations (school, university, peer group, professional group, etc.) shapes itself on the basis of certain specific stages. Due to this, the stages putting in order the process of group development are presented below. The presented scheme of forming a group is based on the example of the training group:

Stage 1 – Orientation and dependency

The first stage of group functioning means its formation. During this stage, participants are accompanied by quite high level of anxiety resulting from a new situation and also from the fact that they do not know the other group members – participants of a diagnostic and training game.

Due to the fact that the higher the anxiety, the more unclear the structure of the meeting for participants is – their roles and the role of the chairperson – it is worth having the trainer familiarize the attendees with the training programme, its aim and give a general idea on how the group work will be like at the beginning.

The stage of orientation and dependency is a time when group members meet each other, learn about their roles, positions. However, it should be emphasised that the self-presentation is usually superficial, short and schematic here – often the scheme is imposed by the first person who presents. It results from the natural anxiety to be assessed by others and the need to find out if the group is a comfort zone to talk about yourself. Due to this fact, it is worth providing participants with some space to learn about each other and support this process, i.e. by suggesting types of information participants can reveal about themselves (at the same time we should remember that the information at this stage should be ‘safe’ for the participant, i.e. the name, the profession, interests, a favourite colour, etc.).

The first stage of group functioning is the time when the individual expectations and aims connected with participating of particular participants in the training are defined. Simultaneously, it is worth mentioning that the ones who are present usually express their satisfaction with being in a group, not talking about their emotions or fears. At this stage, due to the low sense of security, the group members avoid showing diversity, which leads to conformism and sometimes a bit forced kindness (i.e. feedback does not include criticism, instead of it there are only praises).

Referring to the above, it does not surprise that the group efficiency at this level of development is rather low. The role of the leader is to build the sense of security among the participants (i.e. by providing space to get to know each other and establishing group rules together).

Stage 2 – Diversification

At the second stage of the group process, individual differences between the participants come to the fore. The ones who are present start to emphasize their diversity and feel the need to single out from the rest. Independence gains significance.

Together with emphasizing differences, the first open discussions start within the group as well as misunderstandings and frequent conflicts – the group stops being homogeneous. Gradually, the differences concerning the preferred group roles start to crystallize. It is a natural process and contrary to appearances, it does not constitute a negative signal – it implies that there is more trust in the group and the participants are ready to get more engaged. At this stage, participants mainly want to act individually – yet they do not see the positive role of mutual communication and collaboration.

At the stage of diversification, there is a lot of tension in the group; therefore, the role of the trainer is to actively monitor the group in order to find constructive solutions to misunderstandings and rivalry that occur.

Stage 3 – Crisis

After the diversification stage, there may be the group crisis. It is the time when the participants may express their dissatisfaction with various elements of the meeting, its course or the way of running it. It provokes frustration and it may translate into expressing doubts concerning the aims accepted by the group.

The crisis stage frequently occurs in the groups led in a non-directive way and focuses on the leader – there are often the claims related to unfulfilled expectations. The protest can take a form of refusal to take part in exercises, disobeying rules or even an attempt to take control by some of the participants.

In groups run in a more directive way, the crisis stage is not so clear which does not mean that it does not appear at all. What we can observe is mainly the competition between the participants in order to achieve the high position in the group. There may be also the resistance against the need to introduce changes in the previous behaviour or the

way of thinking – participants start to realize such a need but they prevent themselves from it...

The crisis stage is the evidence to build trust among group members (otherwise participants would not try such confrontation). The role of the trainer is to support the group in resolving conflicts which appear and break the internal resistance (not avoiding it) – when it takes place, the group productivity increases and the group moves to the next stage of development.

Stage 4 – Collaboration

At this stage of work, the group has a great sense of security and mutual trust. It is mature and homogeneous – the existent differences disappear and also they do not provoke conflicts. Diversity concerning personality features, experiences, views influences the effectiveness of group work in an advantageous way.

Participants are focused on performing tasks, realizing the essence of mutual support and collaboration. At this stage, participants' engagement is the highest which can be reflected by very high productivity. The division of work is conscious and adequately adjusted to individual predispositions of particular participants. Participants draw many constructive and essential for them conclusions and they also look for optimal solutions.

It is the stage when the trainer may assign difficult and important tasks to the group, because participants are able to cope with them and gain a lot of benefits from them. The atmosphere in the group facilitates acquiring knowledge and the development of skills.

Stage 5 – Conclusion

At this stage participants are aware that collaborative work comes to an end. There may be some extreme emotions such as sadness, sorrow, anger but also joy and satisfaction.

It is the time to summarize and draw final conclusions. Participants wonder how to implement the newly acquired skills and worked out solutions. Totally new aims often appear. Some of the groups may deny ending the process of group work by i.e. arranging meetings together.

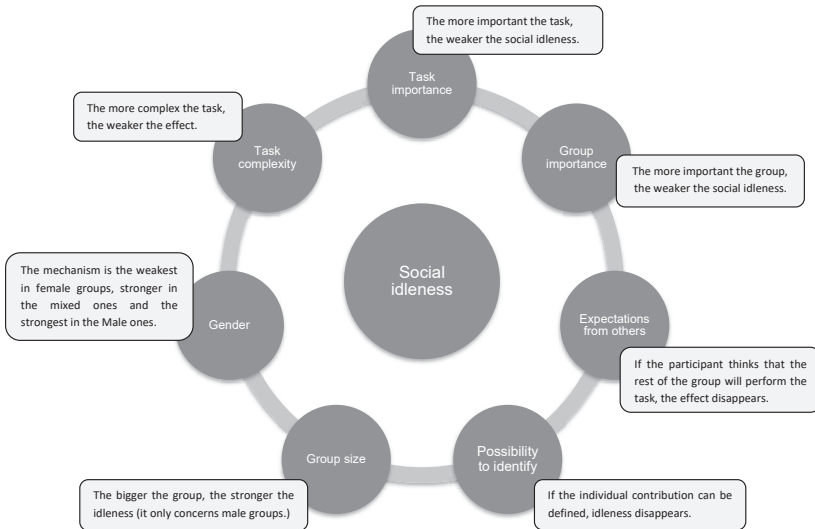
At the final stage, the role of the leader is very important. He or she should sum up the work with the group, stressing the fact what the participants achieved together and making them aware of the advantages resulting from the work done. It is necessary to officially finish the group work.

Mechanisms influencing the work of the training group – social idleness and facilitation

Working in a group, including the training group, carries both positive and negative aspects. It is worth when the person who runs the training realizes the various mechanisms which can appear during such form of work. Two psychological mechanisms are presented below which are worth remembering while carrying out trainings with the use of diagnostic and simulation games, because they can significantly influence the effectiveness of work of team members. The mechanisms discussed are the effect of social idleness and the effect of social facilitation.

The social idleness phenomenon means the decrease in individual engagement at work when it is performed in a team. The basis of this mechanism is a belief that collaboration in a group makes it significantly hard to assess individual effects. What is essential, this mechanism influences performance of simple tasks in a negative way whereas in case of the difficult tasks – in a positive way. It probably originates from the fact that extreme tensions accompanying performing the complex tasks are a bit eased in a group due to which the level of agitation of an individual becomes optimal to perform difficult tasks.

Factors which may influence the mechanism of social idleness are presented below:



Source: Own study based on Wojciszke, B. (2004). Człowiek wśród ludzi. Warszawa: Scholar.

Indirectly, the phenomenon contrary to social idleness is social facilitation. It is understood as the tendency to perform easier tasks more effectively and the more difficult ones – worse in the presence of other people, in the conditions which facilitate the assessment of individual achievements.

This phenomenon is explained by some factors:

1. The presence of other people influences our agitation – other people make us more alert and careful being prepared to possibly react to their unforeseen behaviour.
2. Lack of concentration – the presence of others may influence a decrease in our concentration resulting from the lack of concentration – it is difficult to focus on two things at the same time (performing the task and the presence of the second person).
3. The fear of assessment in the presence of others may evoke the internal tension connected with being assessed (Aronson, Wilson, Akert, 2006).

The analysis of the phenomena presented above shows that the possibility of assessment of individual work or the lack of such possibility influence the functioning of the group which can be reflected in the personal effectiveness of participants.

Interpersonal communication

2

You will succeed only if people communicate with each other, not when they give orders but when they exchange information. Communication will be successful when we control our ego and start listening.

Bill Walsh

1. Introduction

We do it all every single day: we exchange our ideas, thoughts, opinions and feelings with other people. We do it in the workplace, at home, in all aspects of our life. Communication is such an obvious thing that it became our second nature – we communicate without wondering about it, in the same way as we breathe.

If we stop to consider this phenomenon, we will notice that the process of communication is much more complex than we think and much more effective than we would like it to be.

Communication is bound with almost all things we do and even the slight improvement of our communication effectiveness may bring enormous advantages. No matter how, communication takes place almost automatically, the mistake would be the statement that

it always brings the desired outcome. In many cases, people do not hear what we say or they do not understand what we mean. Effective communication takes place only when we are aware that it is a complex process which requires constant attention and training.

! **Interpersonal communication**, perceived as both verbal behaviour and the non-verbal one takes place all the time – each social situation involves the process of sending and receiving various pieces of information. Even if we do not utter a word, our bodies constantly emit signals which express our physical and mental state, attitudes.

! Most often we treat **communication** as transmitting messages between the sender and the recipient. This process consists of the following elements: the sender, the message, the recipient and the situation when the communication takes place. Naturally, each form of interpersonal communication has its specificity and complexity, which mainly depends on the situation and the relationships between people who take part in it.

The significant thing in communication is mainly the subjective treatment of the speaker that is recognizing somebody as equally important as us. We need to create conditions to constant and comfortable expression of what somebody does and what for. The model one and the most desired and effective in interpersonal relationships is the multidirectional communication which takes into account individual differences between the sender and the recipient and which creates positive interpersonal relationships between the discussants. The real change of opinions and attitudes of the people who communicate becomes essential with regard to the outcomes of the communication process. Equally important is the atmosphere of trust between the people involved in communication. The sender of the message should be mainly trustworthy to be perceived as the competent one in the field which is being discussed by the recipient. The recipients of the messages sent to them receive the intention of the sender in more positive way if they notice that he/she wants to offer them a helping hand and not only gain – by persuading the recipient – own advantage. It is also worth remembering that in the process of communication, the sender plays a great role in forming the psycho of his/ her charge not even realizing it. Therefore, he or she cannot shape the recipient according to his/her own image

assuming what he should be like. Definitely, we need to remember how many different environments the recipient can come from and we should bear it in mind while 'adapting' to him/ her. Such ground of interaction requires a lot of empathy and flexibility of action from the sender of the message. The important factor which builds bridges in communication is creating situations which create favourable conditions to exchange opinions, which can be achieved as a result of appropriate planning of the timetable. Another significant element which facilitates interpersonal communication is taking care of the balance while exchanging opinions.

2. Aims of interpersonal communication

Communication between people can be used:

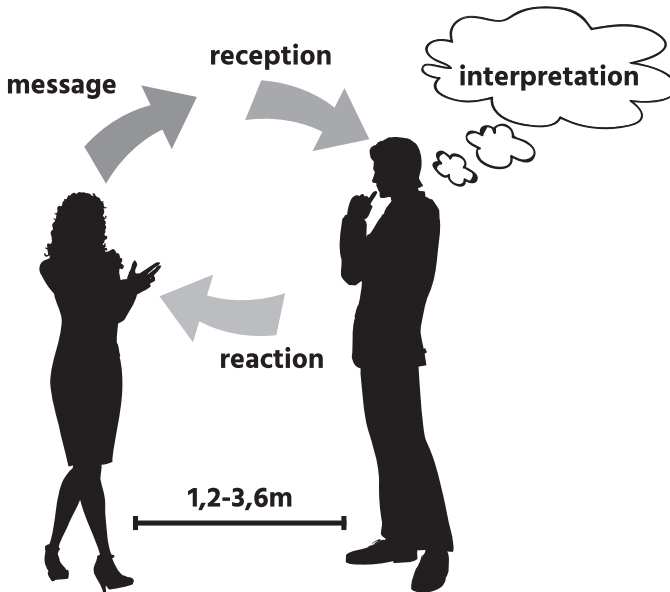
- to get in touch,
- to obtain information,
- to give information,
- to persuade others,
- to manipulate,
- to reach agreement,
- to persuade to own rights,
- to satisfy one's needs.

The most important communication aims:

- presenting yourself and meeting others,
- shaping beliefs and attitudes of other people,
- exchange of information and experiences,
- comparison of various ideas and thoughts,
- agreeing on various transactions,
- providing pleasure and entertainment for yourself and others.

Communication is a process

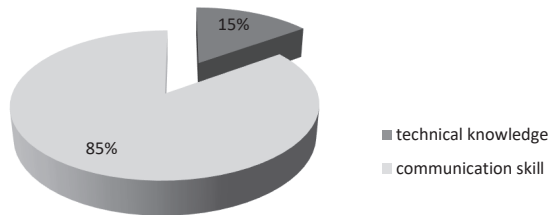
Communication means sending and receiving messages. Communication perceived in this way requires the sender and the recipient. When we intend to improve our communication, we need to focus on our role as a sender (the ability to speak, present, and write) and our role as a recipient (the listening skill, the ability to observe, read).



3. Effective communication

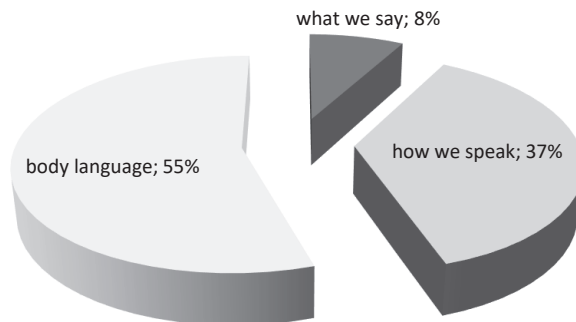
15% of technical knowledge and 85% of communication skills amount for the efficiency of activities undertaken in contemporary business. Negotiating, selling, managing people, telemarketing – these are the aspects of business where the communication skill is the key to success.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



Certainly, you will be interested or even surprised that:

- Only 8% of the communication process is made with the words.
- Further 37% means pronunciation of words –pitch, pace, tone and strong sound.
- Almost 55% of the information gets to us through the body language.



4. Non-verbal communication

Face mimics and body gestures

These are the most important channels to send signals concerning emotional states, starting from such important ones as smile and finishing with such subtle ones as the expression of being slightly

surprised. If we can read the type of emotion from the face, we learn about its intensity from the gestures and body movements.

Eye contact

Its psychological function can at least be compared to ‘touch at the distance’. Establishing eye contact can be preceded by the possible direct contact. It should not be too long or too short. Certainly, we do not need the stopwatch to determine the appropriate length of the look. It is enough to remember that due to eye contact we can be taken as an insistent or an absent and an inaccessible or an open person.

Physical distance

It is the representation of the mental distance; it can be treated as spatial representation of what is going on in the unobservable dimension of mutual attitudes.

The average distance between the speakers in our culture amounts 1.2 m. Obviously, there is not a universal distance. While talking, we need to be aware of the fact that we are not too close or too far away from the interlocutor – in the first case he/ she can feel at risk whereas in the second one he/ she may experience the lack of contact.

Body posture

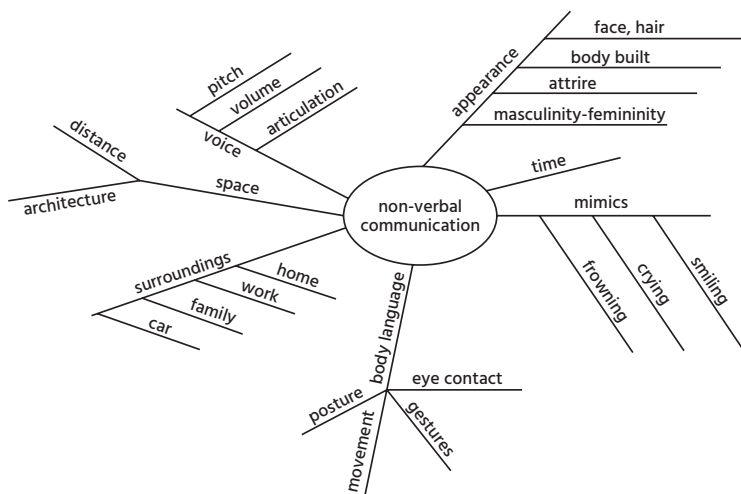
It expresses the internal tension or relaxation. It is worth remembering that the body posture taken by the sitting person seen by us for the first time is the basic criterion to create his/her psychological characteristics. Being stooped, stiffness, turning your body to the side of the speaking person suggests the feeling of risk and readiness to defend oneself. On the other hand, the relaxed and open posture suggests the feeling of security and self-confidence. However, too relaxed posture means showing disrespect.

Appearance and attire

Attire, accessories, cosmetics and the hairdo – everything carries information about the social status, the profession and also the attitude towards other people. We should take care about our appearance to make others feel good while talking to us.

Voice intonation

It is not indifferent as regards the content – sometimes the way of speaking is more important than what we are talking about. Giving somebody a cold welcome does not sound convincing, similarly as we are not scared when we are being criticised in a soft and friendly voice. The whole variety of intonation types lets us use this phenomenon in the conversation to achieve various aims.



5. Communication barriers

It is worth remembering that the barriers in interpersonal communication are very often rooted in the speaker himself, his intentions, his lack of empathy, the willingness to manipulate and the lack of understanding of what the sender meant sending the given message.

A language barrier is a factor which constitutes an essential source of misunderstandings in communication. The source of mentor's frustration, which disturbs the communication process frequently, is the superficial knowledge of the language which is used by our partners or reluctance to understand it. It happens in case of oral communication when speakers use the colloquial expressions or slang. Different

messages and sometimes even their contradiction (i.e. folded arms and a board smile), often become the basic interpersonal communication barriers which constitute serious disturbance in the communication process owing to their improper interpretation. It is frequent that during the conversation both one and the other party interfere with the personal zone of the speaker which he at the same time considers exclusively as his. The most sensitive to this type of behaviour is the group of adolescents as well as the students whose social status is higher than the one of the other people from the class or school. Entering somebody's personal space influences communication in a negative way if the sender and the recipient are of the opposite gender. Body postures taken by the speakers send a series of messages (i.e. settling the teacher comfortably at the desk during all the classes makes that the student takes a negative attitude towards the teacher, whereas the same position interrupted by moving in the room significantly facilitates communication both ways, creating the impression of readiness to cooperate and partnership).

Signals sent by the teacher such as brisk arm gestures or pointing at students with the index finger are often perceived as the signs of threat and they lead to closing the student for the further communication process. Frequently used paralinguistic messages such as raised intonation and frequent pauses, lead to confusion among speakers. The person sending the message of such characteristic features is perceived as the one who has a limited amount of knowledge or only the superficial knowledge at his/her disposal. It happens that both senders and the recipients do not always interpret the information resulting from articulation correctly and they do not pay attention to the context of the conversation which is the key one in the process of communication. Messages contained in the appearance and attire may place the person in a hopeless situation or the person may appear to be a great winner during the first contact with the charge. Careless and sloppy appearance leads to reluctance to any form of communication. The youth often manifest their belonging to a social group through clothes which can lead to forming stereotypes concerning these teenagers by adults. Additional false information is given by the language of colours – the colours of the clothes. Wearing a lot of jewellery leads to pigeonholing such a person and as a result making a false image of this person and placing this person in a group

or associating him or her with a social status where this person does not belong. All these elements weaken the verbal communication or deny it making the process of communication difficult. Often, the low level of motivation of the charge relates to his/ her passive listening during the conversation. Thinking about the other matters during the conversation does not bring good outputs. The other communication barriers also include the lack of objectivity, the lack of adjusting the speech to the perceptual abilities of the recipient; external disturbances i.e. noise, destructing clothes, feeling bad physically, social norms, stereotypes, prejudices, lack of time, concentrating too much on the message, not the recipient, lack of empathy. It should be also mentioned that communication is not facilitated by constant interruptions and assessing the speaker's speech, inability to empathize with other people's situation or emotions, one-way or two-way disrespect and ignorance, excessive distance, unpleasant denying, spiteful jokes and also pure pessimism of one of the speakers.

There are some well-tried methods of overcoming communication barriers which should be worth remembering. These include mutual communication, that is positive feedback (e.g. asking questions, expressing opinions), keeping credibility and empathy (understanding interlocutor's situation and point of view), being sensitive to sender's needs, checking and confirming during the conversation if and how the message was construed, regulating the information flow (not too much information at any one time), being aware of the abundance of different forms of media (the use of various communication channels and forms of communication). The research shows that some attitudes or types of behaviour are in favour of communication whereas the others create the unfavourable conditions, triggering unfavourable attitudes in people.

Communication barriers:

1. Are often rooted in the person himself or herself, this person's intention, the lack of empathy and the willingness to manipulate.
2. Decoding, deciphering what the author meant.
3. At the level of interpretation – we do not understand what the sender says.

Communication barriers:

- lack of interest by any of the parties,
- lack of objectivity,
- vagueness of the statement,
- not adapting the statement to the perceptual abilities of the recipient,
- mental disorders of the sender or the recipient,
- external disturbances, e.g. noise, distracting clothes,
- feeling bad physically,
- moral standards, stereotypes, prejudices,
- lack of time,
- too much concentration on the message not the recipient,
- lack of empathy.

Attitudes which stop communication:

- underlying the sense of identity,
- feeling superior to others,
- being impatient,
- hostile attitudes,
- indifference,
- rigidity of attitudes,
- absolute certainty in one's rightness,
- suspicion,
- tendency to manipulate.

Communication is not facilitated by:

- interrupting the partner when he/ she speaks,
- constant assessment and judging,

- unpleasant denial,
- showing disrespect,
- spiteful jokes,
- becoming determined as a reaction to partner's speech or behaviour,
- pessimism.

Techniques for the sender

Mutual communication (positive feedback) – asking questions, expressing opinions; being aware of the language and its significance; keeping credibility–good preparation and honesty, being sensitive to sender's needs–understanding interlocutor's situation and point of view.

Techniques for the recipient

Active listening; sensitivity to sender's needs.

Techniques for the sender and the recipient

Keeping track of the information – checking if and in what way it was construed; regulating the information flow –not too much information at any one time; being aware of the abundance of different forms of media –various communication channels and forms of communication.

The research shows that some attitudes or types of behaviour are in favour of communication whereas the others create the unfavourable conditions, triggering unfavourable attitudes in people.

Attitudes which facilitate communication:

- Stressing the sense of togetherness
- Acceptance
- Being patient towards the partner
- Sympathy
- Empathy

- Trying to reach a compromise
- Readiness to change a point of view
- Openness
- Spontaneity

The favourable conditions to start communication can be provided by:

- real interest in other people's matters,
- revealing own thoughts and feelings,
- showing respect and understanding to your partner,
- smile and positive emotions.

6. Effective communication techniques

Express your point of view and ask the other person to give his/her opinion

When you present your own point of view, be logical and concise. Be aware of the difference between facts and opinions. When you express your own opinion, start the sentence with: 'I think', 'I believe', 'I feel', 'I hope that'.

RESULT: subjective and objective types of information are separated, which can result in the fact that the communication is directed at the aspect of message. By diversification of the statement we 'force' the conversation partner to do the same.

Repeating the message

If the second party does not react, it is necessary to repeat the message without getting angry.

RESULT: the partner is forced to listen and the aspect of the content becomes the central part of the conversation.

Admitting that criticism may be justified

If you admit that there is a possibility that criticism is legitimate, you do not try to defend yourself. However, you should ask the other person why he/she thinks so.

RESULT: at the time of criticising the aspect of the relationship may be in the centre of attention and the aspect of the message can disappear from view. By accepting criticism, the aspect of the message comes back to be in the centre of attention and the matters related to mutual relationships move aside.

Honesty

Say what you really mean.

RESULT: the one who speaks realizes the fact that he or she asks the other person to do something and expresses it clearly. The other person knows what the first one means and will be able to react in an obvious way.

Showing understanding

You should clearly show that you accept the other person and understand this person's needs.

RESULT: due to the fact that the needs of the other person were recognized and understood, this person will tend to understand the needs of other people.

Reasonable compromise

Try to reach a reasonable compromise – you are the one who will have to achieve it. Limit the requirements.

RESULT: the content of the conversation becomes central, relationships are of less importance. It is also not essential who is right, who has the power but the fact that work will be effectively performed.

7. The role of subconsciousness in communication

Everybody knows that the human mind consists of two spheres: consciousness and subconsciousness. The conscious and subconscious processes are only the two areas of activity of the same mind. Thinking takes place in consciousness; by thinking you make a choice of i.e. a life partner, a place of living. On the other hand, the internal processes in the organism are not subject to your will. Subconsciousness takes everything you instil and in what you consciously believe at face value. It depends on you what thoughts you will give, if they are going to be destructive and devastating or good and optimistic. Sooner or later they will bear appropriate fruit which will make real in your life.

8. The magic of the words

The basic interpersonal communication tool is speech. This way people give the majority of the information. If you want to learn how to talk to the other person to achieve the intended aim it is worth being aware what 'magic' power some of the words have.

8.1. The first of the magic words is the word 'NO'

We say it a dozen times during our conversations, not realizing the fact how powerful it is.

- *Do not think about the blue.*
- *Do not imagine a cat; do not also hear its meowing.*
- *Do not think about your child.*

Did you notice that the word 'no' is absolutely ineffective while counteracting a suggestion? It is like this because the human mind in order to give some sense to the order first needs to refer to a given notion and then may try to stop the activity. Certainly, unsuccessfully. Understanding this is the basis to learn the art of suggestion.

We know how we react if somebody says: "Do not be nervous, because I have something to tell you" – the feeling of nervousness appears immediately.

Many of us avoid the word 'no' as the one which thwarts our efforts at work. MISTAKE! If we know how the word works it is possible to make it work to our advantage.



Do not think now about what will happen here today.

Do not think about holidays on sunny Crete which you could spend if you had money.

8.2. The next magic word is the word 'TRY'

It is a favourite word of a vast group of people because they seem that it encourages us to act and it supports us a lot in this activity. However our conscious mind performs precise instructions which it gets. 'Try' after all is not the same as 'do'.

It was found that if we pay attention to avoid saying 'try' and to replace it with the direct order, then people more frequently perform orders.

Much better results can be obtained by giving instead of:

- *Try not to be late.*
- *Try not to slam the door.*

the precise order – in form of:

- *Come on time.*
- *Close the door silently.*

However, similarly as the word 'no', the word 'try' may work to our advantage, e.g.:

Could you try to call other companies and try to find something better for you?

Try to stop coming up with other useful examples now. And try not to think about the benefits which the use of 'magic words' will bring you.

8.3. The last word of special power is the word 'BUT'

Examples:

- *You are right but ...*
- *What you say is wise but ...*
- *You look beautiful but ...*

What does this word cause? We acknowledge the right but at the same time we deny. The short word 'but' has the magic power because the word cancels the sentence which precedes it or at least its part.

This dependence may be used in any contexts remembering about one extremely significant thing. The content of both parts of the sentence, before and after 'but', CANNOT stay in the casual relationship. It is essential and the key one to use this structure.

You are right to think that our offer is too expensive but as we are talking I would like to present the advantages coming from the charity actions organized by us.

9. Active listening



Active listening during the conversation makes the recipient start to open himself or herself. The sender, helping the listener, uses own words to express own understanding of the message sent by his charge. "Would you like to add anything more about this issue?" –and the confirming replies such as 'yes', confirmed by nodding the head, build the positive relationships with the student. Similar bridges teachers find during practical classes at school. It allows students to acquire the process of non-verbal communication, that is gestures, mimics, distancing, eye contact, etc. The helpful ones become the public speeches such as 'self-presentation' or the activities concerning negotiations and dealing with stress. The indispensable element of communication is the language efficiency as well as the language culture. Non-verbal communication is important: dynamics, space, touch, vocalization, negative reflexes (e.g. frowning), tone, pitch, facial expression.

Therefore it should be remembered that active listening is mainly characterised by:

- tactics which allows us to direct the conversation and which influences the quality of contact;
- the ability to cooperate with the speaker, helping the speaker to express himself or herself as well as to make him understand and faithfully recall what he is to tell you;
- a collection of techniques which can be learned;
- work which requires a lot of activation, including the appropriate selection of techniques to adapt to the circumstances, the situation or the interlocutor.

Summarizing, the person using active listening should remember about:



- reflecting emotions in relation to the interlocutor;
- focusing on the most important issues of the conversation;
- the ability to form questions in relation to the discussant;
- showing interest in given by the speaker content of the conversation;

and try to remember the most significant issues of the conversation.

Being successful in achieving the aim which you would like to achieve when talking to the other person and the quality of this conversation depend on you yourself to a great extent. Since you can communicate in a conscious way, taking the role of an active listener, at the same time you have a greater chance to reach the final effect which satisfies both parties. Therefore, obeying this alphabet of active listening will allow you to avoid communication barriers and factors responsible for provoking the communication chaos.

10. Reflecting feelings and emotions

Usually we feel better, safer and more freely being accompanied by the people who behave in a similar way as we do. Reflecting the behaviour, mood, posture, gestures, freedom and speed of movements, tone of voice, pace of speaking, vocabulary, we keep the distance, we become a better speaker in the eyes of the other person and we are better perceived by the people we are talking to. We show that we understand the speaker and can empathise with his/ her situation. Reflecting consists in giving the atmosphere by our behaviour and the behaviour of our interlocutor. While reflecting we should behave similarly to our interlocutor but not the same. Reflecting does not mean repeating everything what our interlocutor does, copying, mimicking or parodying the other person.

We can reflect the behaviour of our interlocutor by:

- using similar gestures,
- taking similar posture,
- using similar mimics,
- eye contact,
- similar speed of movements,
- keeping similar distance,
- speaking equally loudly,
- using a similar pitch,
- using similar vocabulary.

Clearly and ostentatiously, hostile behaviours should not be reflected. It is too risky, although in exceptional situations it can be prove to be effective. However, reflecting unwillingness, disapproval, boredom, withdrawal most frequently does not only helps the situation but it leads to deadlock or escalation of negative behaviours and consequently to deterioration of relationships between the speakers. If your interlocutor shows the unfriendly attitude and behaviour, break the negative model, behaving contrary to the pattern.

In order to overcome the negative attitude of the interlocutor, you should do the following:

- do not wait to what the interlocutor does and take the initiative first,
- surprise the interlocutor, leave your role, do something unconventional, original,
- keep a sense of humour, do not get offended, make fun of yourself, keep smiling,
- do not take interlocutor's behaviour to yourself,
- focus on positive characteristic features of the interlocutor and look for the similarities not the differences,
- show the interlocutor your acceptance by being pleasant, open, showing interest and respect.

11. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means repeating with own words what you understood from the other person's speech.

The emotional aspect of paraphrasing used to build the atmosphere.

PARAPHRASING:

- You tell the interlocutor that you are interested in what he is talking about and that you want to understand it better. It is the signal sent to the other person that this person is important to you – and this way you make the interlocutor feel positive. The condition allowing it is the soft formulating the paraphrase, which means you try to avoid personal references.
- You encourage the sender to further more detailed and free expression of his/her thoughts because he/she has a proof that you are listening to him/her without any prejudices.
- You put sender's speech in order. It is useful especially when discussing the complex issues.

The information aspect of paraphrasing, used to direct the conversation

PARAPHRASING:

- You gain the distance to the statement given by your interlocutor, especially the ones of emotional character, e.g. giving other points of view than yours or even they are attracting you or the values which are important to you.
- In the conversation with a very emotional partner, you will slow down its momentum and ease the tension. Paraphrasing allows you to get the speaker to the state when the conversation at the subject matter level is possible.
- You make sure if you understand well what your partner says. It appears very often that he/she wants to say something completely different than what you understand.

12. Techniques of asking questions

The basic communication tools are questions. They are set in a logical planned series or used with counterarguments when doubts appear – they become the key to success.

The way of asking questions determines the answer. Your interlocutor may easily say ‘NO’ as the answer to the question starting with “DO YOU” or “DON’T YOU”.

General questions starting with “do you” or supposed “don’t you” are the so called **closed questions**. They limit the possibility to express your interlocutor to such an extent that this person may feel as if he was asked which stops his willingness to continue the conversation. We usually answer them ‘yes’ or ‘no’. They help us to achieve coincident, unanimous positions and points of view. They lead us to take decisions. Using them, you narrow the subject of the conversation leading to the situation when the interlocutor utters the reply in form of agreement or denial, previously planned by you. Use them especially when you expect confirmation or while negotiating the issue or the point of view expressed in the question from your interlocutor.



Make questions in a way as to make the interlocutor give a more complex answer, that is the **open questions**, which very often start with: ‘who?’, ‘where?’, ‘how much?’, ‘when?’, ‘how?’, ‘why?’. They require giving broad, extended replies giving useful information. Owing to them you will learn about the facts necessary to analyse the problems and determine the needs of the client. They are especially useful at the initial stage of the conversation when you try to gather as much information as possible.



REMEMBER!

1. Avoid metacommunication– if you say ‘I will ask you one question...’, you make the interlocutor face the defensive situation.
2. Do not group the closed questions– if you keep asking: ‘do you...?’, you make the impression of being interrogated, the interlocutor does not feel comfortable.
3. Avoid questions which suggest something –if you often say: ‘You will certainly agree with me that ...’ or ‘Don’t you think that ...?’, then certainly you will make the person annoyed.
4. Do not give the reply instead of the interlocutor–if you say: ‘I know what you want to say...’, you may frustrate your interlocutor, interrupting him to express himself or herself.

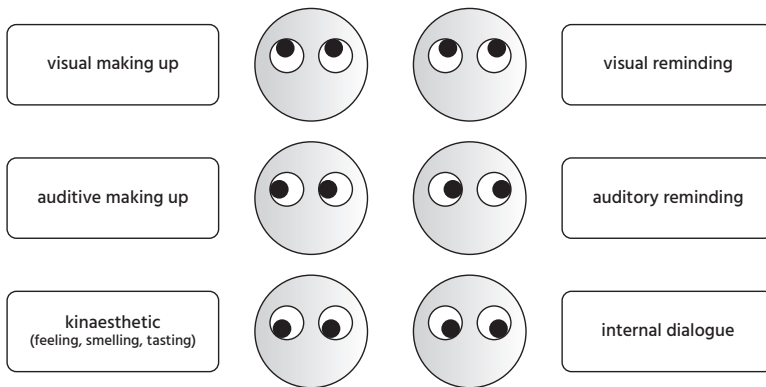
13. The representation system

Each of our senses – eyesight, hearing, taste, smell and touch – has its internal equivalent, the mirror system. Everything which gets to our brains through the perception organs, gains significance and creates the subjective experience that is the representation of the perceived outside world.

Information from the world outside gets to us, it is coded and stored with the use of four main representation systems:

- Visual (W) –eyesight;
- Auditory (S) –hearing;
- Kinaesthetic (K) – feeling, smelling, tasting;
- Internal dialogue (DW) – talking to yourself.

People's behaviours may give some clues due to which we may easier find the preferences.



14. Types of communication personalities

EMOTIONAL

Free –people, feelings, relationships

Friend

Emotional Listener – may be perceived as: relaxed, nice, patient, sensitive, focused on receiving emotions, informal, acting slowly, democratic, understanding.

He/she is often characterised by smile all the time, weaker eye contact, fewer gestures, more distanced posture, slower pace of speaking, he/she thinks what to say before doing it, speaks more

silently, uses more pauses, unwillingly gives his/ her opinions, focuses on relationships, prefers to talk informally, is flexible concerning time, less formal in behaviour.

Enthusiast

Emotional Speaker – may be perceived as: sociable, expressive, enthusiastic, informal, optimistic, vivid, aiming at cooperation, aiming at relationships, visual, full of energy.

He/she is characterised by smiling a lot, vivid mimics and posture, gestures, shortening the physical distance, open gestures and posture, maintaining eye contact, faster pace of speaking, fewer pauses, replies quickly, interrupts, rarely asks questions himself/herself, willingly expresses opinions and statements, takes decisions quickly, focuses on relationships, is flexible concerning time, shows more willingness and devotes more time to informal conversations, is less formal in behaviour.

RATIONAL

Formal –task, thinking, control

Analyst

Rational Listener – may be perceived as: analytical, focused on details, formal, impartial, considerate, systematic, precise, logical, acting slowly, focused on rationale premises, clearly expressing himself/herself.

He/she keeps the physical distance, less frequently smiles, is characterised by less vivid mimics and gestures, weaker eye contact, more static posture and formal, is slow while speaking, thinks before saying something, uses more pauses, has less emotional voice, focuses on tasks, asks difficult questions concerning details, informal conversations are less important.

Leader

Rational Speaker – may be perceived as: resolute, dominant, knows how to get what he wants, demanding, assertive, impatient, focused on acting, focused on rational premises, full of energy, competing, formal.

He or she is characterised by less vivid mimics, keeping the physical distance, is more formal and official, smiles less frequently, maintains eye contact, has less emotional voice, appears to be impatient, replies quickly, interrupts, expresses statements and opinions, focuses on tasks, details are important to him/her, runs fewer informal conversations, time is important – moving to the task fast and finishing.

15. Communication with difficult interlocutors

In order to present how to talk with difficult interlocutors, first you need to recognize what attitude they adapt. Appropriate behaviour will let you break their unwillingness and make it possible for the dialogue to be constructive, and then it will be easier to reach an agreement.

HAUGHTY ATTITUDE

A haughty person looks down on the others. This person knows everything better, disrespects others, is one-sided, talks only about himself or herself and his/her matters, does not pay attention to the interlocutor's reactions. This person presents the attitude 'I know the best'. This person feels superior and frequently instructs others and gives advice to the interlocutor even if this person does not request it. Such people often like to show off with their knowledge; they speak for a long time and in a roundabout way, choose elaborate, difficult words.

How to talk to a haughty interlocutor:

- Keep to the facts, be matter-of-fact.
- Pay a compliment.
- Ask about arguments and justifications.

SCEPTICAL ATTITUDE

A sceptical person questions the statements given by the interlocutor. Such a person casts doubt on everything what he/she hears, often not giving own arguments at the same time. He or she expresses own opinions which contrasts what he or she hears.

Such people often assume that they know everything themselves and they do not want to hear anything new. Such an attitude leads to jumping to conclusions and judging others. Sceptical people are very

critical towards themselves and even more towards the others. They tend to criticise, simplify, fall into stereotypes and are governed by prejudices.

How to talk to a sceptical interlocutor:

- Do not deny and do not admit that they are right.
- Ask them to justify their points of view.
- Tell them that this person's point of view is one of many possible ones.
- Refer to objective justifications, facts, numbers, and authorities.

DOMINANT ATTITUDE

A person who takes a dominant attitude imposes the structure of the conversation and makes it impossible to have a conversation. This person starts talking first and always tries to say the last word. He or she quotes others, focuses the attention on him/her, does not give the others the opportunity to express themselves. Dominance can either take the form of jovial behaviour or the cold, official one. It is a stubborn person. He or she presents only one point of view and does not want to change it. He or she ignores points of view presented by other people.

How to talk to a dominant interlocutor:

- If other interlocutors participate in the conversation, turn directly to them.
- Refer to objective conditions, e.g. defining the time of the meeting.
- Limit the conversation to going to the heart of the matter.

CONFRONTATIONAL ATTITUDE

The person presenting the confrontational attitude treats the conversation as a duel. He or she wants to win and defend his or her point of view until the end. He or she fights with everybody who presents another point of view. This person attacks his/her opponents.

How to talk to a confrontational interlocutor aiming at confrontation:

- Do not take the challenge.
- Do not question what the interlocutor says – you do not have to agree with him/her.
- Instead of formulating statements, ask questions.
- Use presupposals: ‘Will you agree that ...’, ‘As you know ...’
- Look for common elements and similarities.

WITHDRAWAL ATTITUDE

A person who does not take the floor and is passive during a meeting. This person often takes the closed attitude or shows boredom. He or she does not say what he/ she thinks, agrees with others, and waits for the others. Such people are often scared that they have nothing to say, they are afraid that they will bore others to death, they will perform badly or they do not want to make an effort necessary to make a conversation. Withdrawal is a way to avoid facing others. Due to the fact that such people do not participate actively in a conversation, they lose themselves in own thoughts, they withdraw from the conversation and instinctively express boredom.

How to talk to a withdrawn interlocutor:

- Ask questions, ask for opinions and ask them to elaborate their replies.
- Come closer or lean towards the interlocutor.
- If more people participate in the conversation, turn directly to this person.

There are also others, more general principles to recognize the interlocutor who has communication problems.

How to recognize a bad interlocutor? This person:

- is too talkative, gets off the subject.
- is dominant, arrogant, emphasizes his/her importance, talks only about himself/herself or own matters.

- interrupts the interlocutor.
- is not confident enough, shy, gives the impression as if he or she was not convinced to what he/ she is talking about.
- does not pay attention to interlocutors' reactions.
- speaks silently, with the same monotonous voice.
- treats the remarks and questions from interlocutors as attacks on himself/herself.
- looks down on interlocutors, feels superior, gives advice even not asked to do so, instructs. In this case, there is the divergence or contradiction between the body language and the content of the message.
- expresses himself/herself in a convoluted, vague, ambiguous, imprecise way; uses abbreviations and terms which the interlocutor is unfamiliar with.
- shows non-verbal signs of impatience, boredom or absent-mindedness.

Each of the troublesome interlocutors requires an individual approach. However, there are some principles due to which conversation will be easier.

How to talk to troublesome interlocutors?

- Keep calm. Be self-confident; show a positive attitude towards the interlocutor with the use of body language (mimics, posture, gestures, body position, and vocal modulation). Show kindness, warmth and acceptance.
- Show interest, look at the interlocutor no matter whether he does the same or not.
- Show enthusiasm and engagement in your conversation.
- Do not take negative remarks and signals to yourself and behave as if you did not spot the taunt, provocation, aggression, irony and sarcasm. Be self-controlled, be consistent, no-nonsense, positive in what you are saying

and this way you will change negative attitudes towards the interlocutor easier.

- Avoid confrontation with the unfriendly interlocutor. Do not place him/her in a difficult situation; do not question his/her credibility nor show bad emotions. Do not try to show his/her lack of knowledge, do not laugh at him or her nor humiliate. Avoid gestures, mimics and attitudes which your interlocutor may consider as the sign of showing disrespect. Behave tactfully and politely. Listen to what the interlocutor wishes to tell you. Do not try to change his attitude by force.
- Focus on similarities and what you have in common and not on what separates you.
- Be able to understand the emotions and the mood of the interlocutor. Reflect the positive and neutral signals. Look at issues from your interlocutor's perspective.

16. Persuasion principles

We all are subject to influences of others and we also influence them. The social influence may be a conscious, deliberate effort or an unconscious action. Knowing and using persuasion techniques we may effectively influence others. Simultaneously, the knowledge of persuasion techniques helps us recognize and consciously react to the attempts of persuading us. The most frequently used ways of persuading others include the use of the following principles: reciprocity, consistency and commitment, social proof of rightness, liking, authority and limited accessibility.

1. Reciprocity principle

It is easier to ask somebody for a favour, help or persuade somebody to do something we want if we do a favour first. The reciprocity principle requires returning a favour. Somebody we do a favour for feels obliged to do a favour for us in the future. The typical application of this principle in practice is giving something before asking somebody to do something for us. The variant of the use of reciprocity principle is offering a concession in order to obtain another concession

in exchange. The particular example is the unreasonable favour which the person cannot fulfil and then the less significant one (which we are really interested in). The person asked to do a favour feels obliged to fulfil it because he or she refused before.

2. Consistency and commitment principle

The consistency and engagement principle consists in persuading somebody to accept some commitment. Then, the person is eager to agree to grant another request, consistent with the first entitlement. The typical application of consistency and commitment principle is putting forward bigger requests gradually. The person who granted a small request feels obliged to grant the next bigger request, etc.

3. Social proof of rightness

As all the people do it, it must be right and I will also do it. The social proof principle is based on the belief that all the people cannot be wrong. The application of this principle consists in referring to the opinion of the majority; the fact that others do it (the more these 'all' are like us, the more they are, the more they are known, the better). This principle mainly works when we are not confident and the behaviour of others becomes a point of reference for us.

4. Liking principle

It is easier to influence people who like us and we like the ones who like us. We also like the ones who are similar to us and also the ones who recognize us – therefore the power of compliments is so important. Compliments make that we like others better and because of that we are more prone to offer them concessions. We also like the people whose good side we know. The more positive experiences connected with a given person we have, the more we can influence this person.

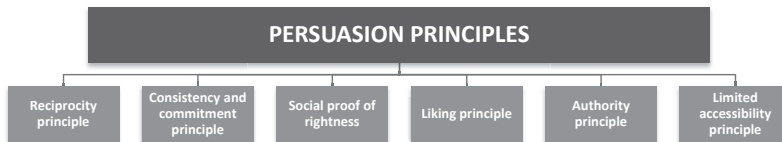
5. Authority principle

It is easier to influence others from the position of authority. The majority of people tend to submit to authority and follow their orders. The more the authority is recognized, the more it persuades the others. We often count on authorities without thinking. In such

case we respond more to the symbols of the authority such as: the title, the attire, cars more than to the real authority. Usually, the people who respond to the symbols of the authority do not appreciate its influence on their decisions.

6. Limited accessibility principle

It is easier to make others take a decision showing them that what we offer is not available to all. In accordance with this rule, people appreciate more the opportunities which are less accessible. The typical application of the limited accessibility principle consists in suggesting that the offer is limited in time, that the number of products on offer is limited and that not all the people can benefit from a similar offer (elite clubs, universities, districts, hotels). This principle is based on the following assumptions: the things more difficult to get are more valuable, the lack of access to the given thing speaks in favour of its uniqueness and when the things are no longer accessible and we are deprived of a chance to choose them, the more interested we are in them. The limited accessibility to something makes people more interested in getting it and they appreciate it more.



17. Susceptibility to being influenced by others

Persuasion principles are some attempt to manipulate other people's behaviour. All of us succumb to others. Sometimes we do it consciously and with consent and sometimes we allow others to manipulate us unconsciously and against our will. Every day we also influence the behaviour of others more or less intentionally. However, some of us are much easier subject to manipulation than others. How can the people who are prone to persuasion differ from the ones who are resistant to being persuaded by others?

People who are more prone to be influenced by others:

- have low self-esteem,
- are not self-confident,
- are emotionally dependant on others,
- do not know themselves,
- need to be reassured by others,
- need others to manage them,
- do not have any knowledge about other people's behaviour,
- do not know the persuasion principles.

People more resistant to being persuaded:

- know their value,
- are self-confident,
- are assertive,
- have their own opinions,
- know people and their behaviour,
- know persuasion principles.

18. Intercultural communication

In the era of globalisation and the time when the cultural differences vanish, the more and more significant phenomenon is the intercultural communication that is the ability of effective communication with the representatives of other cultures. Below there are features and conditions which should be remembered in cross-cultural relations.

Japan:

- men bow keeping their arms of tights, women keeping their hands together in front of them;

- the way of wrapping the gift – the Japanese wrap the gifts in an extremely exclusive way, showing the highest standards;
- being invited to a house should be treated as great honour;
- while greeting you need to keep a distance – not less than 1 m;
- punctuality is an extremely appreciated feature;
- the Japanese are extremely modest.

Arabic countries:

- Muslims greet effusively, with a hand shake, patting each other and even kissing both cheeks (only men);
- you should avoid any discussion about politics, critical comments about the rules of Islam, the role and appearance of Arabic women, etc.;
- Arabs pay a lot of attention to gifts; they appreciate high quality things and gadgets;
- alcohol cannot be a gift – religion forbids to drink it;
- during the conversations feet should be placed on the ground because showing soles is considered bad manners.

Germany:

- punctuality is one of the most important features in mutual relationships;
- a hand shake should be firm and friendly;
- the appropriate topics of the conversation include travelling, football and hobby;
- topics connected with the World War II, politics and personal matters should be avoided;
- they do not pay a lot of attention to the appearance;
- they are very tolerant towards guests and if somebody commits a gaffe, they are not offended and they may turn this awkward situation into a joke.

China:

- a hand shake (even 10 seconds) is an acceptable form of greeting others;
- in China, the surname is given first, then comes the name;
- sudden gestures with one's hands should be avoided, the face mimics should be under control, bursts of laughter or showing other emotions should be avoided;
- it is not good manners to touch or slap the backs of the Chinese;
- spitting in public places is not allowed and can be punished with a fine;
- the following gifts should not be handed: watches, umbrellas, tissues, chrysanthemum or other white flowers, sharp objects – e.g. knives, any things offered in the sets of four (number four is considered unlucky by the Chinese);
- clothes exclude shorts, short skirts (over the knee), low necklines and ostentatious jewellery; the best preferred height of shoes for women is flat or low heels.

France:

- it is not good manners to kiss French women in the hand while greeting as they are not big fans of this habit;
- Frenchmen are said to be not very hospitable;
- punctuality is not the strongest side of this nation;
- they regard smoking cigarettes between courses of the meal as bad manners;
- wines, champagne or perfume are not used as gifts.

USA:

- mainly under no circumstances should you joke at terrorism;
- conversations on political issues are not recommended;

- typical conversation topics are the weather and sport;
- it is not worth crossing the authorities, especially policemen.

Stress in interpersonal communication

3

1. Stress

Stress is the unavoidable part of our life. It is the normal biological reaction of each organism, the normal physiological phenomenon connected with life processes. Stress accompanies each of us. It is the natural reaction to everyday challenges and life changes not only the negative ones but also the positive ones. The stressful thing can be the university entrance examination, master's defence as well as the first day at work or job loss. One of the ways for the successful life is skilful coping with stress. It is not the stress itself which is harmful for a human being but the way we react to it. Frequently, stress is induced by negative thinking. If you interpret the new situation thinking: "Definitely I will not manage it", then there is little likelihood that we will react efficiently rather than in case when we perceive the new situation as the one which you can cope with.



There are a few definitions of stress which can be classified in three main categories:

- a) Stress as an incentive – unpleasant, disturbing and stopping the activity: this category attempts to describe various unpleasant situations which take place in the workplace and which trigger stress, i.e. noise in the workplace, an unpleasant event of being dismissed or an illness.
- b) Stress as a reaction to an unpleasant stimulus from the outside – this category attempts to describe reactions

which occur in the human body and mind as a response to unpleasant situations, i.e. performing the task worse than before.

- c) Stress as a dynamic reaction between a human and the surroundings which can be assessed by an individual or the one which requires specific amount of effort in order to adapt or the one which is impossible to fulfil.

2. Stress as the state of tension of the organism



The state of tension and activation of the organism which is the reaction to negative physical and psychological stimuli, and which in a longer period of time, can lead to physical and psychological disorders. People perceive stress only as a negative phenomenon. However, stress is neither good nor bad, it is invested with significance due to interpreting its phenomenon and our attitude to it. We live in the times of constant changes both concerning our workplaces or our personal life. They are often considered as the cause of stress. Unjustly. Everything changes, although at different pace. The change can result in the fact that one can leave the comfort, safe zone but it may become a good and developing experience.

3. Stress mythology

- a) **“All stress-related symptoms and psychosomatic illnesses are in my psycho, therefore they cannot do any real harm to me.”** This commonly revealed opinion is not true because stress does not only influence our psycho but it also influences our body. A psychosomatic illness resulting from stress is a real illness (e.g. allergies or high blood pressure), which can be hazardous to your health.
- b) **“Only weak people suffer from stress.”** It is true that the ‘work fanatics’ working hard and excessively tending to succeed are mostly susceptible to diseases induced by excessive stress. However, all of us can be exposed to it.

- c) **“I am not responsible for stress in my life, these days stress is unavoidable – all of us are the victims.”** In fact we are responsible for most of stress in our life. It is like that because stress results not only from what is happening but also from the way you react to it. Stress is often your unconscious choice.
- d) **“I always know when I start suffering from excessive stress.”** In fact, the more you are subject to stress, the less sensitive you become to its symptoms until stress gets to such a level that its symptoms cannot be ignored.
- e) **“It is easy to establish the causes of excessive stress.”** This statement is only partly true. In case of many people, the cause of stress can be easily recognized, diagnosing the symptoms of stress and analysing the environment from this point of view. In case of some people, the symptoms of stress do not reveal until the sensor disappears. In such cases, symptoms take the form of mental and/ or physical fatigue.
- f) **“All people react to stress in the same way.”** This statement is totally wrong. In fact, each person is different. We differ a lot as it comes to factors inducing stress, symptoms and illnesses which we suffer from as a result of excessive stress as well as therapies which prove to be effective for us in such cases.
- g) **“When I start suffering from excessive stress, it is enough for me to sit and relax.”** Although relaxation is a very useful tool to overcome stress, a few people know how to enter the state of deep relaxation. Such techniques as meditation and quiet contemplation are usually the most effective ways of deep relaxation in contrast to watching TV or listening to the radio. Remember that holidays and the other recreational activities are not always relaxing.

4. Sources of stress

Before we move to discuss the ways of coping with stress in detail, it is worth wondering what causes such feelings as tension, tiredness and fatigue in us. One of the sources of stress could undoubtedly be all life changes. Each change – even the positive one – is very stressful for a man, it reduces the resistance of our immune system and carries the risk of becoming ill in a short term. The more significant the change for a human, the higher the chance of becoming ill (according to Holmes and Rahe). What can it mean in the context of coping with stress? Should we avoid changes? Obviously, not – but we must be aware of the fact how they will influence us. If we plan any change or we know that it will take place soon, it is easier for us to prepare the ways of coping with stress. Serious crises. Unfortunately, there are some moments in our life, the tragic events which we are totally preoccupied with.

What should we start with?

It is extremely important to realize the fact that you are responsible for your level of stress. It is very often connected with the way you think about the world. Learn how to control the level of your stress – increase it when you need some agitation and reduce it when you feel overwhelmed by it. It is worth thinking about where the stress originates from while choosing the method of coping with stress:

- a) If it is induced by the external factors, i.e. relationships with our closest (problems with communication) – the most effective ones will be the imaging techniques and positive thinking;
- b) If you perceive stress as an adrenaline rush in your body – the important one will be relaxation and lowering the adrenaline level.

5. Stress-inducing factors

The objective stress – inducing factors include the ones which influence our organism irrespectively from our conscious perception:

- a) environmental parameters – temperature, humidity, air dryness, air pollution, etc.,

- b) the amount of light,
- c) space limitation,
- d) noise.

The subjective stress-inducing factors include the events which take place in our immediate surroundings, which are partly consciously recognized by our mind. They are not objective in a sense that they cannot act on us if we are not aware of their existence:

- a) frustration – unfulfilled desires, not meeting needs,
- b) depression – dejection, discouragement, resignation,
- c) threat – connected with yourself or your closest,
- d) being overburden with work, duties, many errands to do,
- e) excessive or insufficient motivating excitement,
- f) information overload – a deluge of information,
- g) uncertainty, destabilisation,
- h) time pressure, being in a hurry,
- i) cognitive dissonance and the internal conflict,
- j) problems with interpersonal contacts – shyness, humiliation, fear, shame, fright,
- k) day-to-day events – everyday problems, troubles,
- l) life changes – critical moments in life.

6. Stress versus behaviours

General physical tension of the body which can take the form of higher blood pressure, indigestion, and stomach rumbling, the throat feeling dry, excessive sweating, shivers, feeling weak.

- a) Coordination disorders.
- b) Slow reflexes.
- c) Fear and being muddle-headed.
- d) Inability to focus and think.

The results of the optimal stress level

- a) Physical relaxation and simultaneous flow of energy.
- b) Being aware of being fit and functioning well.
- c) Acute attention, being self-confident.
- d) Quick reflexes.
- e) Being interested, being engaged, easiness while dealing with tasks.

Results of too low level of stress

- a) The feeling of being bored and uselessness.
- b) Lack of interest and engagement, outflow of energy.
- c) Depression.
- d) Conviction that everything is pointless.
- e) Perceiving simple tasks as enormous tasks.

7. Symptoms of a stress reaction

Muscle- related symptoms –tense posture, clenched jaws, tense neck or back(hunched) muscles, folded arms (closed posture – defensive, and at the same time making it difficult to breathe), knitted brows.

Breath – related symptoms –shallow breath, fast breathing, sometimes gasping for breath.

Pain reactions – headaches, backaches, pains in the neck, stomach aches, chest pains, general oversensitivity.

Reactions of the digestive system – diarrhoea or constipation, indigestion, excessive appetite.

Other symptoms – nervous movements, quickened, sometimes irregular pulse, scratching, red skin, sweating, the throat feeling dry, thick saliva, gritting teeth.

8. Symptoms of stress

Physical level

- a) I sweat excessively.
- b) I feel tightness in my stomach.
- c) I often suffer from headaches.
- d) My blood pressure is higher or lower.

Emotional level

- a) I suffer a lot, I often feel lonely, abandoned and alienated.
- b) I am often dispirited, sometimes without any special reason.
- c) I wish the Earth would swallow me.
- d) I have a few opportunities to express myself and release my feelings.
- e) I have lost control of myself lately.
- f) I feel at risk, I am more fearful than in the past.
- g) I often do not have any plan or aim.
- h) I have had a lack of motivation to solve my problems lately.
- i) My reactions are often inappropriately violent.
- j) I am more nervous and blocked than in the past.

Psychological level

- a) My ability to concentrate in stressful situations is much worse than it used to be.
- b) I am not interested in my profession, I also do not do anything in my free time.
- c) My self-control and self-discipline have lowered lately.

- d) I forget about important things more often than in the past.
- e) I have difficulty with acquiring new things.
- f) I often feel indifferent and incapable to take decisions.
- g) I often feel that I have nothing important to say.
- h) Many things start to be beyond my capabilities.
- i) I can handle fewer things one after another.
- j) I often lose the thread during the conversation.

9. Stress reduction techniques

Therefore, the stress reduction techniques can be grouped in three categories:

- a) Environmental methods (they concern reducing the stressors which underlie in the surroundings), i.e. reduce the importance of the event, reduce uncertainty, listen to the soothing and relaxing music.
- b) Physiological techniques (suitable when we feel the sudden spike in adrenaline), i.e. muscle relaxation, controlling breath.
- c) Mental techniques (appropriate when the psychological factors significantly increase the stress level), i.e.: imaging relaxation, rational positive thinking, recalling successful events and achievements, self-suggestion.

Examples of stress reduction techniques:

- a) Deriving satisfaction from life.
- b) Deriving satisfaction from work.
- c) Reading motivation books.
- d) Cheerfulness of the morning
- e) Forgiving
- f) The role of music

- g) Creative thinking
- h) Changing your convictions
- i) Inspiring statements
- j) Expressing own feelings
- k) Helping others
- l) Cultivating love and friendship
- m) Finding the sense of fear and pain
- n) Finding positive aspects of situations
- o) A million of smiles
- p) Do not plan anything
- q) Take advantage of the wisdom of your advisers
- r) New habits
- s) Personal code of rules
- t) Recharging your batteries
- u) Aim in life
- v) Working with your body

10. Stress in the workplace

Stress is a serious problem in your workplace. It causes that you:

- a) think worse,
- b) are emotionally unstable,
- c) feel bad.

YOU MUST OVERCOME STRESS IN ORDER TO WORK EFFECTIVELY



How to avoid stress in the workplace?

- a) Work until late only if you really have to.
- b) Take regular breaks, even if they only last a few minutes.

- c) Learn how to live a moment. Break. Breath out. Relax.
- d) Life only means problems, you decide how to deal with them.
- e) Stop complaining.
- f) Let yourself make mistakes. Nobody is perfect. The bigger the mind, the more stupid the mistakes.
- g) Do not take work-related problems home.
- h) Do not rush to get home in order to complain about your boss and colleagues. Calm down, think about pleasant things which are awaiting for you when you get there.
- i) When you get back home, do not spend time on the internet. It resembles work which you did all the day.
- j) Avoid food which induces stress. Caffeine is a motivating substance and it stays in the bloodstream for many hours.
- k) Learn to be assertive. The feeling of being discontent with yourself rises when you let others ignore you.
- l) Require less from others. People are only people with all moods, eccentricities and peculiarities.
- m) Praise yourself and reward yourself for the well-done work.
- n) Make a list of all tasks you need to do and which cause stress and deal with them at the time you get the energy boost.
- o) Ask for help if you need it.
- p) Relax. The more mature you have to be at work, the more childish your entertainment should be.
- q) Do not exaggerate stress.
- r) Tidy your desk on regular basis. This way you will gain time to think, you will relax your body and you will get rid of the pieces of junk.

Self-presentation

4

1. Factors which influence the effectiveness of communication and self-presentation

Making impression on others – the ability to be likeable:

The impression the person would like to make	The impression the person would not like to make
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly, nice • Intelligent • Attractive • Sociable • Open-minded • Honest • Amusing • Caring • Communicative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boring • Conceited • Stupid • Unpleasant • Superficial • Egocentric • Unattractive • Ungenerous

Self-presentation definitions

- *Self-presentation – a process through which we aim at controlling the impression we make on others; a synonym to manipulation with the impression we make on others.*

according to:

Douglas T. Kenrik, Steven L. Neuberg, Robert B. Cialdini

- *The process of controlling the way others see us is called self-presentation or image manipulation.*

according to: Mark Leary



Self-presentation dilemma:

The more the individual aims at making impression during the interaction, the more sceptical the addressee reacts to the self-presentation.

Self-presentation is rarely a deception, it usually consists in emphasising the real advantages and diminishing disadvantages.

Main aims of self-presentation

- Being likeable
- Presenting yourself as a competent person
- Showing the status of a leader – authoritarianism

Why do we use self-presentation?

- To obtain the desired resources
- To build the positive image of yourself
- To make social interactions go smoothly

When do we use self-presentation?

- When we think that we are in the centre of attention
- When the people surrounding us can help us achieve aims
- When we think that the observers perceive us in a different way than we wish

according to:

Douglas T. Kenrick, Steven L. Neuberg, Robert B. Cialdini

Motivation of an individual to manipulate the impression made on others depends on the extent to which:

- a) the person is convinced that there is the link between the impression made and the aims which the person wishes to achieve;

- b) the aims are important for this person;
- c) there is a coincidence between the image the person would like to present and the one which is perceived by others in this person's opinion.

Describing yourself	Describing oneself in such a way as to convey the desired impression on others
Expressing attitudes	Expressing attitudes suggesting that the individual possesses some features, not the other ones
Public attribution	Explaining own behaviour in a way which is in accordance with the defined social image
Manipulating memory	Real or stimulated remembering or forgetting about self-presentation aims
Non-verbal behaviour	The facial expression, gestures, the posture taken and the way of moving
Social relationships	Manifesting some relationships with certain people and cutting off from others publically
Conformism and giving in	Behaving in accordance with the social standards or the preferences of the other people
Decorations, props and lighting	Using the elements of the surroundings for the need of self-presentation aims

BUILDING THE IMAGE



Image manipulation means caring about the details. If the person wants to impress the other person, it is not enough to choose the appropriate verbal arguments. It is also necessary to care about such details as the attire, gadgets which make the attire or a place where one works complete.

Joanna Konopko

Non-verbal communication

The good first impression can be included in the 4 x 20 principle which can be seen as:

- 1. First 20 steps** – your interlocutor notices you and sees:
 - your appearance,

- the way you walk,
 - your posture.
2. **First 20 centimetres** – your interlocutor sees in your face:
- its expression,
 - smile or its lack,
 - your look or avoiding eye contact.
3. **First 20 seconds** –while greeting your interlocutor:
- feels the touch of your hand,
 - observes your movements and gestures.
4. **First 20 words** –your interlocutor hears:
- the tone of your voice,
 - your way of speaking,
 - your pronunciation,
 - your language.

The physical image is one of the strongest communication channels. The attire is a showpiece which as an element of self-presentation can let us manipulate the impression made.

It defines:

- the professional status,
- performed public functions.

It emphasises:

- professionalism,
- professional preparation.

The attire and accessories should be adjusted to the situation:

- dark muted colours – build prestige,

- metallic colours – splendour, wealth,
- bright colours – dynamism, activeness,
- light colours – openness, modernity,
- pastel colours – subtlety, delicacy,
- accessories – give the impression about the material status and emphasise the individuality of a person.

Professional etiquette

- the attire adjusted to the place, time, circumstances, other people,
- avoiding any exaggeration,
- moderation, simplicity and elegance.

Distance zones

- intimate zone – to 0.5 metre,
- personal zone – from 0.5 to 1.3 metre,
- social zone – from 1.3 to 3.5 metre,
- public zone – over 3.5 metre.

ATTENTION!

Invading someone's intimate zone can cause the person to feel aversion, aggression, withdrawal.



Words that is how to speak?

- clearly, do not slur the endings,
- preferably using the low tone,
- using the simple language – not everybody needs to know our trade,
- it is necessary to avoid complex sentences,

- using proper stress and intonation,
- the pace of 120-150 minutes per minute.

How to make the presentation more attractive?

- Talk with engagement.
- Talk yourself to people, tell a story.
- Surprise the audience.
- Draw the attention of the audience by your introduction and conclusion.
- Use a quotation, a metaphor, an anecdote or an example.

2. Presentation

Stages of work on the presentation:

- preparing the presentation,
- preparing yourself to present,
- delivering the presentation.

Main principles of building the presentation - the transfer of message

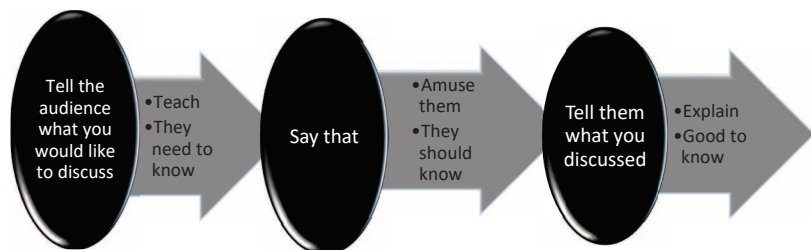
- Come **from the known** issue **to the unknown** one.
- Come **from the easy** issues to **the difficult** ones.
- Come **from facts** to **abstract information**.

5W method

WHO?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is going to participate in the training? • How many people • The average age • Gender • Knowledge of the subject matter • What do the audience members have in common? • Do you know the participants? • Do they know you?
WHY?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the training to take place? • Aims • Outcomes
WHERE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is the training going to take place? • The choice and the arrangement of the venue
WHEN?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When is the training going to take place? • Time allocated to run the training, individual classes, modules
WHAT AND HOW?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What and in which way? • Which contents at what time and how?

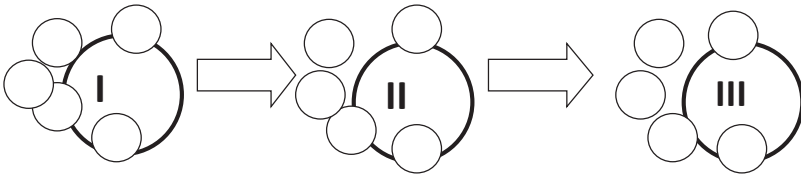
'3P' method

Before you start, write down all the points associated with the subject of your presentation and arrange each of them to the suitable categories they relate to:



Midnight Knowledge method

- choose three key pieces of information
- complement them with additional information
- build connectors



Preparing the text

What should be done	And what shouldn't be done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple direct words • Use verbs in the active voice • Make your speech colourful by using adjectives • Give examples and analogies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use jargon • Do not digress from the subject • You do not have to be literal • Do not flood the audience with too many details • Do not try to be a mentor • Do not copy someone's style

The principles of making a multimedia presentation:

- the text should contrast the background; the background should be rather uniform;
- the text should contain the characters of the appropriate

size and font;

- the text on one page should not contain more than 7 lines;
- each line should contain no more than 7 words (7 x 7 principle);
- one slide can contain three graphics at most;
- all the presentation should have the same pre-arranged graphics;
- graphical effects are used to convey information and to draw attention.

What should the presentation contain?

- The title of the lecture
- The introduction and the map of the presentation
- Appropriate content of the presentation - in form of simple short sentences
- The summary – conclusions and information which should be memorized

Features of a well-prepared slide:

- Information is presented with the use of a simple language in form of bullet points.
- The slide is not overloaded with the message, it should convey a single thought or a problem, emphasise the discussed notions.
- The slide is of coherent colours.
- One font is used.
- The text was placed on the right side of the picture.
- Graphics is adequate to the content.
- The slide is the background to the discussed contents – motivates to take notes.

- It can be read from any place in the room.

Equipment:

- make sure that all the necessary files are in one folder together with the presentation file,
- make sure that the fonts you use may be read from the computer,
- transfer the whole catalogue which contains the presentation and all the necessary files,
- in case of the internet website, check it if it works with different screen resolutions,
- make sure that the computer you wish to use for the presentation contains the CD/DVD reader,
- make sure that the computer used for the presentation has all the necessary equipment (i.e. sound card, speakers) and software (i.e.. multimedia player).

Assertiveness

5

1. Assertiveness in interpersonal communication

How do we respond if people:

- a) criticise us,
- b) shout at us,
- c) blame us unjustly,
- d) disturb us,
- e) exploit us,
- f) keep us in suspense.

In such cases, many of us use the defensive tactics: “It’s not my fault. I wanted to do my best.” Others respond with the attack: “You always know the best, you should try to do it yourself!”

When you use the defensive tactics, you behave **SUBMISSIVELY**.

When you attack the interlocutor, you behave **AGGRESSIVELY**.

You still have the third option, you can behave **ASSERTIVELY**.

Submissive behaviour

You place the interest of the other person in the first place, whereas yours in the second place, you accept the other person as a more important one, you put the needs of others ahead of your own ones.

We talk about the submissive behaviour when:

- a) we cannot fight for own rights or we do it in such a way that others can easily ignore us;
- b) we express our thoughts or feelings in an apologetic, tentative way which overshadows the person;
- c) we are not able to express our thoughts or feelings at all.

Aggressive behaviour

You place your own interests in the first place, whereas the interests of the other person in the second place, you impose your rights to the public and consider yourself as the most important one.

We talk about the aggressive behaviour when:

- a) we fight for our own rights, at the same time infringing the rights of the other person,
- b) we express our thoughts, feelings or values in an inadequate and unsuitable way, even if we are sure that we are right.

Assertive behaviour

You consider yourself as important as the other person, you represent your own interests but you take into account the interests of the other party; you do not violate dignity of others and you do not allow others to violate your personal dignity.

We talk about the assertive behaviour when:

- a) we fight for own rights without violating the rights of the other person,
- b) we frankly and openly express our point of view at the same time understanding the position of the other person.

2. Four-stage procedure of grading responses

Stage I – Giving information

If the behaviour of the other person disturbs me, teases me, makes me angry etc. I reprimand this person and ask this person to behave in a different way. At this stage, I inform the other person how I feel and what is going on with me because of this person's behaviour.

Stage II – Expressing feelings

If somebody does not change his/her behaviour in spite of the fact that he/she knows that it disturbs me, then I show my irritation. Once again I persuade the person to change his/her behaviour, this time more firmly. If this person, despite irritation more intensively expressed by me, does not change his/her behaviour, then in order to avoid helplessness, it is necessary to focus on the thing which can be done to change our own situation – that is to move on to the third stage.

Stage III – Referring to the back-up

If somebody knows that his/her behaviour disturbs me and in spite of the anger expressed by me, he or she keeps on doing it, I inform him/her what I am going to do if he/she does not change it. At this stage, I use the back-up. The back-up is something what I can do in order to stop the situation which is unfavourable for me. It differs from the threat because the main aim of using it is not punishing the other person or revenge, etc. but defending my own rights.

Stage IV – Taking advantage of the back-up

If the situation does not change, I do what I said earlier. It is necessary to choose such back-up which I am really able to apply. If it is the emotional back-up, the third stage becomes the fourth stage.

3. How to deal with criticism?

Our difficulties related to accepting criticism most frequently lie in the fact that we treat it as a kind of an objective, overall truth about us or some kind of judgement against which we protest. However, we forget

that it is only the opinion of the other person – very often the one which is difficult for us, but at the same time, one of many possible ones.

Treat difficult judgements as opinions!

Each person has the right to possess his/her own opinions, but nobody has the monopoly on the truth. Treating somebody's judgement as an opinion about us, it is easy to express your point of view without getting involved in polemics and explanations. The sense of dealing with criticism in an assertive way is a deliberate manoeuvre – treating judgements only as opinions (one of many possible ones) and skilfully moving from painful generalities to the concrete terms.

The ways of reacting to criticism:

- a) 'Searching for criticism'
When you hear devastating criticism from the other speaker, try to get the information what exactly the second person has on his/ her mind. Searching for criticism, you do not submit yourself to general judgement and you can react in a constructive way even in the most difficult situation.
- b) 'Unmasking illusions'
Searching for criticism directly is extremely difficult when the judgement is not given straightforward but in form of allusion – the way of coping with allusive criticism is unmasking illusions, persuading the partner to express his or her critical judgement straightforward.
- c) 'Defogging'
It consists in the fact that we admit the possibility that there is the hidden grain of truth in the presented accusations. At the same time we admit that we are not perfect. By doing so we overpower the one who criticises us because being 'carped' we do not respond with aggression and we do not break communication (the phrase 'maybe' is of a key value here).
- d) 'Forestalling criticism'
Somebody criticises us in a nasty, persistent way and although he or she refers to many details, he or she really

means something different. He or she simply ‘carps’ us. If we wish to stop this type of contact softly, we may apply ‘defogging’: ‘maybe’, ‘perhaps you are right’.

The other expression of assertiveness is assertive refusal: it is the firm and clear statement which should include three elements:

- a) ‘no’,
- b) the thing which we do not wish to do,
- c) short justification (we can relieve the overtone of our ‘no’ talking about our feelings and attitudes).

Negotiations

6

1. The basics and how to understand negotiations

Each person who takes up a challenge to negotiate should ask himself or herself a question what negotiations mean to him/ her and what it means to be successful in negotiations. All the knowledge that we acquire in our life, experience and skills are important and necessary matters but the priority is how we perceive the sense of negotiating.

Negotiations are often compared to a game. The game is aimed at some target and values. Each player is restricted in his or her moves. There are things the player can do and the ones he or she must not do. In any game, a set of rules which determines their profits and losses decides about the behaviour of the players. There are also certain rules in negotiations, however in contrast to the game; they originate from the widely-understood life experiences, personal attitudes and values more than some of the universal regulations. Perceiving negotiations simply as a game means starting talks in a competitive way. In such a situation, the negotiator tends to achieve the goal being in opposition to the other participants of the negotiation and hopes that only he or she will achieve the aim. Even if he could persuade others to 'play' the same game, he would still take the risk of a complete failure instead of a complete victory.

The aim of the negotiator should be not to achieve a complete victory but to reach an agreement. Both parties must be sure that they gain something. Even if one of the parties has to resign from many things, at the end of the day the party needs to feel that he or

she has gained something. Negotiating consists in taking and giving. It does not mean that you need to resign from your own interests. Each of the parties carefully observes the other trying to find the slightest sign of weakness which could become advantageous to this party.

However, it should be remembered that all parties should leave the negotiating table with some of the needs satisfied. It does not happen when one of the parties is defeated and devastated. Sometimes, when the opponent seems to be in retreat, there is a temptation to press the person as hard as possible. But this blow can become the last drop which overfills the cup. To put it simple, one of the first rules that a negotiator needs to learn is: when to stop? It is very easy to forget about this rule, especially in the fever pitch which accompanies negotiations.

Summing up, negotiating is a process which requires cooperation, finding advantages for both parties. However, it is not a game where one party wins and the other tastes the bitterness of the defeat. The result of good negotiations is a win – win situation, which means the advantage to both parties.

The subject of negotiations

The most basic element of negotiations is their subject. It is the subject of negotiations that we discuss when we present our demands, when we take the stand on something, when we propose a compromise or defend our position giving arguments.

conciliatory 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 tenacious
determined

Take a determined position but also be ready to give concessions, at the same time bearing in mind your own aims.

The balance of power

The essence of negotiations is a certain active relationship between two parties based on interdependency. It means that parties are dependent on each other to some extent. In reality, this dependency is unequal. It often happens that one of the parties needs the other much more

than the other. Therefore, using power at the negotiation table, try to keep the balance of power.

defenceless 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 militant
determined

Be determined. Do not allow your opponent to dominate you but do not try to dominate him as well.

The contact between the negotiators (atmosphere)

The important element in negotiations is the personal relationship between the negotiators. It is indispensable to establish good rapport with negotiators and keep the determined position concerning the subject of negotiations at the same time. It is essential to find the balance between two extremes: being committed – overfamiliar when we face the risk of domination or the lack of trust by our opponent. On the other hand, demonstrating hostile and unfriendly behaviour we expose ourselves to the risk that the negotiations will become very difficult.

committed 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 hostile
determined

A good negotiator shows his engagement and kindness.

Firstly, ‘kick the ball not the man.’ You will avoid the situation that the discussion turns into fight.

Secondly, emphasize the interdependence and join them to reach the agreement.

Exploration, investigation

The significant element is the approach to negotiation. The extreme situations connected with it are active and passive negotiations. The passive negotiator is reserved or even sidesteps the issues. This person does not express own points of view or interests, does not ask the opposing party about real interests and motivation, does not look

for alternative solutions. The active negotiator always tends to find a solution, looks for alternatives, is flexible and takes initiative.

active 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 **hostile**

A good negotiator is an active negotiator.

Only by being active you can achieve the desired effect in form of victory.

2. Typology of negotiator personality types

The social type – an enthusiast

The social and the enthusiast type may be described in a few words: open, funny, enthusiastic, sociable, lively, talkative, and convincing. He can motivate others to act and stimulate enthusiasm in others. This person works at fast pace. He uses the help of others in order to achieve his aims. When this person loses control, this person may react in an uncontrollable and emotional way. This person feels bad when he or she cannot talk. This person is greatly influenced by the surroundings. When this person talks, he or she uses a lot of gestures. His non-verbal communication is expressive and dynamic.

The negotiation style of the social type: he or she is often so excited that the person loses control over the excitement. The person does not see the realities. During negotiations, the person uses the relationships with the other person as arguments, for example, 'Mr. X, won't you do it for me?'

How to adapt the negotiation style to the social type?: a sociable person values the dynamic way of negotiating. Negotiating with this person, it is better to focus on general things rather than details or facts. This person reacts well to a sense of humour of the other person. This person willingly finds those who listen to him or her in their surroundings. He or she does not like great distancing and reacts badly to formal procedures. Informal behaviour makes a good impression on this person. The negotiation style should have the following characteristic behaviour:

- energetic behaviour,
- fast pace of speaking,
- social proof,
- smile and a good sense of humour,
- finding space for informal social conversation,
- good eye contact,
- informal way of speaking and contacts,
- taking care of good atmosphere during the conversation.

A nice type – a friend

A nice and friendly type can be briefly described: collaborating, supporting, emphatic, patient, delaying, sensitive, relaxed. A nice person is usually carefree and unsystematic. During a conversation, this person often makes eye contact. This person's gestures are calm and safe. This person tries to avoid the conflict situations and confrontation. This person speaks quietly, calmly and at slow pace. He or she does not often express what he or she thinks. There are a lot of family pictures and souvenirs in this person's workplace. He or she does not like to take decisions on his or her own and usually follows the crowd.

The negotiation style of the nice type: negotiator of this type of personality tends to reach a compromise which satisfies all. This person's aim is not a victory in negotiations that much as finding satisfaction by all the interested ones. His or her favourite strategy is withdrawal and delaying taking a decision. This person avoids confrontation and conflict situations.

How to adopt the negotiation style to the nice style?: the partner of this type of personality takes decisions slowly and if we press him or her to speed up the process, we will cause his resistance. All kinds of recommendations, expert opinions are very important for him or her. He or she pays attention to the quality of contact and the attitude of the other person. In great measure, this person focuses on emotions; therefore the technical details are less important for him or her.

The negotiation style should be characterized by the following behaviour:

- taking care about the friendly atmosphere of the conversation,
- maintaining eye contact,
- asking about this person's opinions,
- encouraging this person to express his or her doubts,
- paying attention to the emotional side of negotiations,
- emphasizing this person's friendly attitude,
- avoiding being forced to take decisions,
- setting the action plan and the time of finishing the work together.

The analytical type – an analyst

The analytical type may be characterised in short: serious, well-organized, systematic, logical, matter-of-fact, and reserved. If we look at the analyst, we will often notice that his or her attire seems impeccable and conservative in his or her style. He or she is well-organized at work and in everyday life. This person aims to obey the rules and demands the same from others. This person often criticizes himself or herself for own failures. An analyst is a perfectionist and pays attention to details. This person values being supported by other people a lot but he or she also likes loneliness.

The negotiation style of the analyst: negotiating, the analysts tend to transform into the demanding partners. It is important for them to have everything under control. The numbers make the greatest impression on them. They base their arguments on numbers. They do not like emotional 'scramble'. They strictly follow certain rules and procedures. They are often of little flexibility.

How to adopt the negotiation style to the analyst?: analysts love all types of facts and information. They do not like when their counterparts want to make personal relationships with them, they value the distance. Do not expect that they will tell you something personal. They do not want you to share your personal experiences. If you want

to convince him or her, emphasize the rational and logical aspects. The negotiation style should be characterised by the following behaviour:

- paying attention to details,
- being precise,
- muted voice and slower pace of speech,
- formal way of speaking and behaving,
- presenting number data, reports and all types of facts,
- presenting advantages and disadvantages,
- toning down possible benefits,
- punctuality,
- precise and concise language,
- writing down the agreements,

The leadership type – a leader

The leader type may be described as: resolute, independent, focused on result, effective, considerate, dominant, taking responsibility. During a conversation, this person establishes eye contact with the interlocutor. This person usually moves fast and in an energetic way. This person expresses himself or herself clearly and speaks at fast pace. He or she uses the direct language. This person spreads the atmosphere of confidence and trust around himself or herself.

The negotiation style of the leader: while negotiating, he or she focuses on one aim – his or her victory. This person negotiates in order to win and the victory in negotiations means for him or her that somebody needs to lose. His or her weak point is the fact that he focuses too much on one selected issue and his or her point of honour is to solve this problem as he/she intends. In order to achieve it, he or she can neglect all other matters, because this only chosen point is the indicator of victory for him or her.

How to adopt the negotiation style to the leadership style?: if you want to encourage the person with the tendency to be a leader to listen to you, you have to address him or her concisely, succinctly,

and to the point. What you say should be certainly of practical use for your interlocutor. Let this person know how valuable this person's time is. Arrange what is the most important for this person. Give him or her the sense of winning. The negotiation style should be characterised by the following behaviour:

- maintaining eye contact,
- concise and to the point way of speaking,
- moving to the point fast,
- pointing out the advantages and results,
- fast pace of speaking,
- showing that the person is self-confident,
- providing minimum amount of information.

3. Negotiation styles

A good negotiator can be very flexible in choosing the defined style of acting. His style may also be a subject to constant changes depending on the situation he is in and on his opponent. The choice of style is therefore an element of strategy planning.

However, regardless of the taken style each of us has some determined preferences, behaviours which are more or less close to us. In practice, this means that if we are extremely conciliatory people, then it may be impossible to take the competitive and hard position for us.

Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trying to force own position • trying to impose own point of view at all costs
Avoiding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placing responsibility for solving the problem on others • avoiding tensions at all costs • ignoring conflict points • not expressing opinions which may be controversial
Adopting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasising the issues which both parties agree on • resigning from own feelings to the benefit of the opponent • being hypersensitive to other people's feelings • accepting the opponent's point of view in order to avoid conflict

Compromise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resigning from some goals to the benefit of others • accepting the point of view of the opponent if he accepts us • an attempt to adopt most comfortably to the points of view
Exploration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constant turning to the opponent to ask for help in finding the optimal solution • an attempt to get the most detailed information concerning interests and contradictions

4. Preparing for negotiations

All negotiations are preceded with suitable preparation. The better we are prepared, the more likely it is that we achieve the satisfying results.

The preparation phase consists of the following stages:

- defining the subject of negotiation,
- determining aims,
- analysis of the situation of the other party,
- determining the scope of negotiation,
- a choice of strategy,

Determining the subject means preparation of the most detailed list of issues and problems which can be discussed by any of the parties. We should remember that if we are not sure whether the given problem can be discussed by the other party, it is better to take it into account than to be surprised during the negotiation.

The next step, after writing down the negotiation issues is determining the degree of importance of the given issue, both for us and the other party. Such analysis will let us focus our efforts on what is the most important for us and determines these elements when we would be most eager to give concessions. Information about the importance of the negotiated issues for the other party lets us take into account and anticipate the reservations of our negotiation partner.

After determining the subject of negotiation it is necessary to establish our aims for each issue which we will negotiate. Establishing aims we should set the maximum aim (the ideal effect) and the minimal one (the bottom line).

Negotiation stages

In spite of many forms which negotiations can adopt, the majority of the effective negotiations are characterised by a certain structure in which each of the stages is connected with various activities taken by parties.

- First handshake
The atmosphere in which negotiations take place is often the direct source of their success. The key to the appropriate atmosphere is what will happen during the first few seconds during the meeting of the two parties. The mutual exchanges of politeness, getting accustomed with the surroundings, handshakes are the first stage of getting to know each other, first impressions and opinions.
- Setting the rules of procedure
Setting the rules of procedure means opening negotiations. Setting together the rules and the code of procedure models the mode and the atmosphere of further talks in a favourable way. Therefore, it is worth setting: the concrete subject matter of the talks, the way of running negotiations and recording the decisions, the time allocated to the meeting and the rules of running discussion at the beginning of the negotiations. Moreover, at this stage it is worth verifying the decision powers of the negotiators. It will save us from unpleasant surprises at the end of negotiations when the reached agreement may be doubted by the people not participating in the talks.
- Exchange of first positions
At this stage, negotiators present own offers and try to reach first agreements. The most important aim of this stage is presenting own interests and the best understanding of the interests of the second party. It is worth remembering about the following rules:
 - focus on the interests not positions – remember that each position hides important interests of the other party,

- present your interests clearly and persuasively
 - present your most important needs and motives in such a way so as their importance and variety could be understood by the partner,
 - learn about your partner's interests in an active way and do not judge – using the rules of active contact can help the other party to name his or her interests,
 - formulate common interests and refer to them in case of deadlock – show the other party what you have in common.
-
- Arrangements concerning particular issues

The aim of this stage is to come closer with the positions of both parties. The basic rule of this type is giving concessions by both parties. It is the basis of negotiations and in accordance with it, in any case when we agree to give a concession; we should ask the other party to give a concession of a similar value. It is important to have an immediate exchange of concessions. If you do not ask the other party for a concession, it will forget about the value of your concession or will minimize it with time. It is also important for our concessions to be of lower value as the negotiation progresses.

The key to reach the final stage of negotiation is to offer more valuable concessions at the first stage and during the next stages to decrease the attractiveness of subsequent concessions.
 - Checking the limit of concessions

The aim of it is to check the limit of concessions of the other party. If we feel that the party reached the limit of concessions which they do not want to exceed, we need to offer an agreement, if it is within the range of our assumptions and aims. On the other hand, if we approach our limit, we must clearly and firmly inform the other party about the limit of our concessions. Credibility is important while presenting our final offer. Therefore, we

need to reject firmly any attempts to modify the offer and emphasize the issues which have been agreed and show the advantages resulting from the negotiated agreement and maintain good rapport between the parties.

- Reaching an agreement
Both parties must be satisfied in order to reach the advantageous agreement. If the negotiations are constructive and focused on problems, both parties leave the negotiating table as winners. Always congratulate the other party on reaching the agreement. Never 'triumph' and do not show that you have won. The other party cannot feel that they are the losers.
- Signing the contract
Try to make your party be responsible for preparing the written version of the agreement. While drafting a contract, there are a lot of details which are to be worded. If you are the party writing the contract, you have a chance to obtain additional benefits apart from the ones which result from negotiations.

5. Persuading others

All the techniques must be used in moderation and the goods, services or finally the form of transaction itself which we propose cannot be aimed against our clients. If the thought 'I finally cooked his goose' comes to your mind, it should be the warning sign to analyse the whole transaction. Otherwise, it will be our last 'successful' exchange with this client.

- The contrast principle
If thing X significantly differs from thing Y, then there is the tendency to perceive thing X as even more different from Y on the condition that we saw thing Y earlier. The contrast principle does not need to concern the material things.
- The reciprocity principle
In accordance with this principle, people exchange favours done to them by others.

- Free sample' technique –the technique which consists in giving our partner a small sample of our product (it may be a small gift or a gadget). Owing to it, he or she may test the product in order to take a conscious decision to buy it. In fact, it is a present for which the client needs to reciprocate (a favour for a favour).
- 'Foot-in-the-door' technique – if we want somebody to fulfil our request or accept our offer, it is sometimes worth presenting a much bigger request, taking into account the fact that it can be rejected. Then we make a concession and present the real offer. This way the other party feels obliged to repay us for the concession and often decides to accept our offer.
- Consistency principle
This principle assumes that if we make some choice, even not the best one for us, there is great pressure both from us and the surroundings in order to be consequent and in accordance with the thing we get engaged.
 - 'Foot -in-the-door' technique - this technique is to stimulate the client and make him form some position. The technique starts with making relatively harmless – a small request in order to get the agreement while requesting something bigger.
 - 'Low ball' technique – consists in showing some positive feature of a given product in order to build a positive attitude and increase engagement in the client. When there is the confrontation with the negative features of the product, in accordance with the consistency principle, the engagement does not let the client withdraw his position and forces him to be consequent.
- Social proof principle
The behaviour of others and beliefs are the bases for taking our personal decisions. In other words, we may persuade others to do the given things if we only manage to get the

appropriate evidence that others do it. The social proof principle is the most effective in two cases: if people do not know well what could be the best for them or if the evidence comes from the people who are similar to them.

- The influence of liking

The influence of liking can be seen in a simple principle. If we like somebody, we are eager to be influenced by this person than the person who is neutral or hostile towards us. It means that we should make every effort to make others like us.

- *Halo effect* – the tendency to assess a person based on one feature which we see in this person. In other words, one very positive feature ‘brightens’ all the other features and makes us perceive this person as ‘excellent’.
- *Similarity principle* – means that we have the tendency to like people similar to us.
- *Exchange of liking principle* – we like people who like us. According to this principle, it is good to show others (in moderation) our kindness, liking and to complement people.
- *Frequency of contacts principle* – liking increases with the number of positive and nice contacts.

- Scarcity principle

It consists in attributing more value or attractiveness to possibilities, things which are more inaccessible. The reason for this condition is the fact that things which are inaccessible seem to be more valuable and also that the inaccessibility is perceived by people as the loss of free choice. It provokes aversion in us and the sudden need to possess the thing which is inaccessible.

6. Negotiation tactics

- Limited authority' TACTIC – possessing the real or imaginary supervisor who although does not participate in the negotiations, takes the final decision.

Counteracting: checking the authority at the beginning of negotiations, the condition is to have a decision-maker participate in the negotiations.

- 'Let's meet half way' TACTIC –giving the appearance of a just compromise. Formulating an unrealistic offer so that the compromise gives a satisfying outcome.

Counteracting: explaining the reasons of the unrealistic offer.

- 'False concessions' TACTIC –a concession which has no notable benefits to us.

Counteracting: analysis of insufficient concessions.

- 'The dead fish' TACTIC– adding a demand to the negotiation which has no meaning to us but to which the client will react. Then withdrawing it for the price of concessions.

Counteracting: own dead fish, "OK, but on the condition that ...".

- 'Good – bad cop' TACTIC – often opens negotiations, leads to the deadlock; the good one – the one who is more flexible, seems to be conciliatory but forces to find quick solutions.

Counteracting: imitation of the technique, refusal to collaborate with the bad cop, naming the technique.

- 'A shocking offer' TACTIC–starting with a totally unrealistic offer. Persuading the other party to revise own proposal.

Counteracting: explaining the reasons of the unrealistic level of the offer.

- ‘The Russian front’ TACTIC – presenting two ‘unpleasant’ options, one of which is definitely the unacceptable one for the other party.
Counteracting: referring to own objective, checking if it is really the only alternative, naming the technique.
- The trial balloon’ TACTIC –probing the reaction. The technique applied when we do not have enough information concerning the aims and aspirations of the other party.
Counteracting: ‘You must be kidding ...’, ‘This offer is beyond the means I can accept’.

7. Overcoming barriers in negotiations

Despite the attempts to maintain the pace of negotiations, sometimes negotiations get to the deadlock. In order to overcome the impasse, we need to make the appropriate correction of the strategy or the tactic. However, we definitely need to answer the following questions:

- Which of the needs of the other party are not satisfied?
- Isn’t our behaviour the cause of impasse?
- What can we do to overcome the impasse?

The ways of overcoming the impasse

- the summary of the progress to date,
- calculating the profits resulting from the finalization of the negotiations,
- calculating the costs and losses if the negotiations are broken,
- redefining the disputable issues,
- giving an additional symbolic concession,
- referring to good relationships between the parties in the past,
- counting advantages resulting from good relationships in the past,

- transfers in the negotiating team,
- inviting the independent experts,
- forming a work group to solve disputable issues,
- changing the seat by the negotiator,
- an unofficial meeting off the record,
- proposing to use the mediator.

Defence against pressure and manipulation

There are situations at the negotiating table when we are subject to various pressures and manipulation. It happens because they often appear to be very effective. To a great extent, they are based on formulating assessments about us, sometimes accusations against us, persuasions, threats, etc. Therefore, these are the situations where our emotions are to be engaged as well as our sense of value. They are often difficult to defend mainly because it is not easy to distance yourself from them in time and see them as an opponent's tool. When we encounter a difficult situation, the natural reaction is counter-reaction, submission or breaking relationships. This kind of behaviour is the biggest mistake to be made in negotiations. During the negotiations you do not need to control the behaviour of the other party but only yours. Stop the natural reactions and next buy time to think. Use it to focus on the reward – the agreement which satisfies your interests better than BATNA.

Instead of getting angry or trying to settle the score, focus on what you really want. Moreover, there are a lot of counter-tactics which enable effective defence at the time when we are subject to pressure and the other party tries to use our emotions. They include:

- *A broken record* – it consists of two important elements: maintaining contacts by using paraphrasing or expressing own feelings (feedback), the 'key' sentence – repeated many times firmly but calmly.
- *Setting boundaries* – it consists of a few subsequent steps: a request, feedback information, demand, opposition, announcement of sanctions.

- *Searching for criticism* – moving from ‘painful’ general issues to details.
- *Fogging* – allowing the possibility that the given accusations contain a grain of truth in them. The key meaning has the word ‘maybe’.
- *Forestalling criticism* – it works well in situations when we make an obvious mistake and we expect being reprimanded. It defuses tensions and neutralises the attack.
- *Revealing allusions* – it relies on direct looking for criticism in the situation when the assessment is not given straightforward but in the form of an allusion.
- *Turning assessment into an opinion* – it works well if we are ‘covered’ with massive criticism concerning assessment. It consists in treating the harsh assessment as one of the possible opinions. Instead of wording it: it is true, you are right, we should use the following words: I do not agree with your opinion, I think something else about myself, I agree with you, I think the same.

Time management

7

1. Setting the aim

The effective company management is possible only when the company pursues its clear and unambiguous aims and when the degree of their implementation is checked. Aims are the challenge for all the engaged and they trigger activities: the man knows what he/she wants and what final result he/she is to obtain. The aims are also the measure while assessing achievements. Setting goals is a very powerful technique which can reflect the achievements in all spheres of life. Due to it, we know what we should focus on, what should be improved and what obstacles exist. Setting aims enables focusing on proper tasks, gives long-term vision and short-term motivation, and also helps to organise resources. The aims become the challenge and they release energy necessary to undertake appropriate activities; they are also the measure which is used to assess efficiency. Setting aims is a permanent process. They cannot be set once for all because they undergo constant transformations.

While setting aims, we should follow a couple of principles:

- they must be clearly determined;
- we should make sure if they are related to specific tasks;
- they must be short;
- they must be real.

The parameters determining the properly set aim are the features called SMART, which come from the English words:

- Specific
- Measureable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time – bound.

2. Planning

Planning day-to-day work, mid- and long-term activities and other events always means time advantage, success and more freedom every day. Spending more time on planning we can reduce the time indispensable to perform tasks and gain time. At some time, the process of planning achieves the optimal point, from which the time devoted to planning is not effective any more (excessive planning). Each stage of planning should be given some time on planning to itself, however not more than 1%.

The application of the ALPEN method while planning one's time brings multiple profits at a little amount of effort (10 – 20 minutes a day). There are five stages of the ALPEN method:

1. Writing down the assignments
2. Assessment of time spent on the activity
3. Reserved time on unexpected activities
4. Setting priorities, shortening and delegating tasks
5. Control of the checklist - transferring the unsettled tasks

Organisation of the day

Psychophysical efficiency of each individual is subject to certain fluctuations in accordance with this person's natural rhythm. We can talk about 'early birds', 'sleepyheads' or 'night owls'. People defined by researchers as the ones of 'the early rhythm' can work most efficiently

in the morning whereas they are tired in the afternoon and they need to finish their work early. People with the 'late rhythm' are at their best in the afternoon and they willingly work until the evening or late at night. None of these basic types works better or worse, just in a different way.

3. The Pareto principle

In 1897 the Italian economist, Vilfred Pareto, on the basis of the analysis of the income of the population in Italy, announced that 80% of the wealth of Italy is possessed by 20% of the population of this country. Half a century later in the USA, the other economist Joseph Juran started the research on the notion of quality. He noticed that 80% of all the problems are caused by 20% of reasons. This 80 to 20 relation started to repeat regardless of the subject he analysed. Therefore, he called it 'The Pareto principle'. This principle is so often noticeable that it is worth taking it into account if someone runs a business. Although it does not work precisely – the relation may amount for example 75% - 25% or 90% - 10%, there is one conclusion which is worth being remembered: a little part of all causes is responsible for a part of the outcome.

This way, the Pareto principle became the tool – the sieve in time management which allows to 'separate the wheat from the chaff'. Owing to it, we know that we should focus on what brings notable effects and reject the things which take our time and distract attention. Everything is done to achieve maximum results in minimum time.

Examples of the Pareto principle:

20% of drivers cause 80% of accidents,

20% of clothes we wear 80% of time,

20% of workers generate 80% of products,

20% of the text lets us understand 80% of the content,

80 % of complaints in the supermarkets are filed by 20 % of customers,

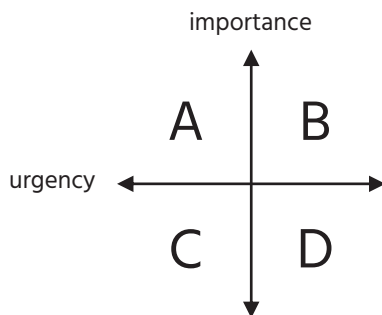
80 % of bad loans is in the hands of 20 % of debtors.

The ABC analysis originates from the Pareto principle. In accordance with this method, our activity and tasks can be divided into three groups. The first of them will contain the ones which we want to perform with the

efficiency of 80 % within 20 % of time during the day when we are able to do it. Group B means duties which we can perform with the efficiency of 15 % and which will take 30 % of our time. Finally, group C relates to tasks performed with the efficiency of 5 % and we can devote half of our time to them. The ABC method and the Eisenhower matrix can be applied at the same time. In each case, being aware how we can function and when and how efficiently we can act can let us spend more time on the most important matters. At the same time, it should not take too much time. It is worth remembering that the outcomes are not always adequate if compared to the effort made but if everything is under control, it runs more efficiently and effectively.

4. The Eisenhower principle

One of the presidents of the United States of America – Dwight D. Eisenhower was famous not only for his wisdom but also, or maybe mainly, because of his excellent time management. He is the author of the so called the Eisenhower Matrix, later also called the Eisenhower Field/ Grid/ System/ Square. Another popular name of this principle is the Priority Matrix. The Eisenhower Matrix is one of the popular ways to manage time. Its structure resembles a system of coordinates, where the ordinate axis is the importance of the given activity whereas the abscissa axis – means urgency. However, the way how we plan our tasks is not that important (whether we use matrices, tables or a simple division according to the points). The most important thing is the way how the tasks are divided.



In order to apply the Eisenhower matrix correctly, it is essential to understand and properly select the important and urgent tasks. Certainly, it is influenced by many factors: personal priorities, emotional values, financial values, priorities of other people, changes of schedules and many others.

How should the division in the Eisenhower Matrix be interpreted?

Quarter A: important tasks but also the urgent ones which we should do ourselves or delegate to others (under the pressure of business). These activities should be dealt with in the fastest possible way because if we do not perform them, they can carry long-lasting consequences, including a lot of business to attend to. The tasks which can be included in this quarter are usually the sudden situations, difficult to predict or the results of neglect and not performing regular work. They can contain: crisis situations, the result of work not previously performed.

Quarter B: important tasks but less urgent which we can do over a period of time or on regular basis. The examples of activities which could be classified here are: physical exercises, preparations to participate in the important project but to be carried out in the long-term, regular self-improvement and self-development.

Quarter C: urgent tasks but of little importance – we should do them or delegate them to others in the second place, just after the tasks from quarter A. The activities from this quarter are not essential but they require to be performed as quickly as possible. They can include for instance paying the bills or a visit at the hairdresser's (although the last one is based on individual preferences).

Quarter D: tasks which are of little importance and not very urgent – in other words – ignore them. The best place for the activities from this quarter is the rubbish bin. They are not significant for us, therefore we should easily get rid of them. They are usually the so called time wasters – pointless watching TV during the boring programme, playing computer games for many hours, attempting to read a book if we do not feel well.

Savoir Vivre

8

1. Etiquette, precedence and the principles of greeting others

Introduction

Contemporary savoir-vivre means the extremely practical and useful social norms, which introduce some order to one's life. However, a lot of people perceive the savoir vivre principles as a collection of dinner party postures making life difficult and behaviour stiff. This approach – how wrong – often supported by the fact of being unconscious of the gaps in this respect, often results from the lack of knowledge, and it is really what the principles concern.

The knowledge of these standards is an absolute necessity for all the people these days, particularly the ones who hold high positions.

Etiquette – it is a set and binding way of behaviour for example of diplomats, businessmen. Talking about the ordinary people we rather refer to good manners or savoir-vivre principles.



What is etiquette?

It is simply a set of behaviours which are consciously used to present yourself as a professional, a classy man who is held in high esteem by everyone, who is trusted, provides for soundness and honesty in acting, who respects own dignity and dignity of others, who is consequent and constant as far as basic values are concerned. We trust such a person

and we like to be in his/ her company. All these attributes of a classy person are achievable, within our arms reach! It is enough to develop or strengthen a dozen of features and skills.

Which etiquette assumptions do we use?



The most important skill while using the etiquette is the ability to show respect to our partners and the use of principles of precedence that is the priority.

Apart from the priority principle and its skilful application, it is worth learning the basic principles of elegance. Also, controlling our gestures, mimics and the body posture can form the company etiquette. Besides, a skilful use of traditional letters and the electronic mail allows us to feel comfortable and confident in difficult and untypical situations both concerning the everyday existence in the company and the world of big business. All the elements given above will help us avoid awkward situations which often make us embarrassed.

Due to the basic assumptions of the business etiquette we use the positive influence of the personal culture on the quality of contacts with clients. They also allow us to present ourselves in the right light – as a successful person – and behave properly in any situation.

PRESENTATION

How to introduce yourself?

When introducing others you should loudly and clearly mention your surname. Let us remember that the surname is obvious for us ourselves but for the other person may be totally unknown. During business meetings we should approach each person individually, every time mentioning our surname.

In the situation that you see someone who should recognize you but does not, you certainly introduce yourself. It is generally accepted these days, also in case of women. Naturally we need to obey the good manners, i.e. we neither get between two people who speak nor disturb a person arranging something or even during the reception. We wait for the proper moment. The thing you should tell the recipient

depends on the situation and the aim of the meeting. Mentioning your surname, you also give the position and the name of the company you work for.

Many people believe that we should only mention the surname, because the name is not important. However, people often tend to give both surname and name these days.

And here are the reasons for it:

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- a) the name is a completion of your image, in case of popular names it prevents mistakes;
 - b) when you give your name, the person you introduce yourself to learns about your voice, articulation, pronunciation; then the person better understands and remembers your surname given as the second one;
 - c) you will even strengthen the effect introducing yourself in a full sentence, i.e. 'My name is ...' or 'My surname is ...';
 - d) introducing yourself with the name and surname is widely accepted in the world; whereas Americans often limit it to the name: 'I'm John. Nice to meet you'; however it does not mean that you immediately start addressing each other using your first names and you may treat this person without respect this person deserves.
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- e) the people who hold some titles or aristocrats are recommended modesty; therefore doctor Anna Nowak introduces herself as Anna Nowak, and countess Zofia Iksińska as Zofia Iksińska.
-

Names are strictly connected with surnames. When we mention our name while being introduced to others, this way we give additional information, breaking the barrier of distrust.

While introducing ourselves we can say: 'I am ...'. It is a clear and unambiguous formula which requires giving your name. 'I'm Kowalski', 'I am Nowak' – does not sound good. Therefore, it is better to say: 'I am Małgorzata Kowalska', 'I am Wojciech Nowak'.

Double barrelled surname should be given in full. You are not to assess whether the woman should take her husband's surname or whether should add it to hers.

The unmarried woman who is an adult should be addressed Mrs/ Ms unless she insists on being addressed 'Miss'.

Introducing a person awarded the scientific title we mention the title, e.g. 'Professor Nowak', 'Doctor Kowalski'. We do not mention the profession, i.e. a barrister. Addressing such a person we should not forget about the title and if the person has a couple of them, we only mention the highest one. Colleagues in the same line of work omit the

titles while talking to each other; however it does not mean that the outsiders should do the same.


We usually address the people holding some political or religious functions mentioning their position, e.g. 'The mayor' or 'The bishop'.

With reference to women, still the masculine form of address is used, e.g. 'the barrister', 'the judge', 'the editor'. Women are not tiled with their husband's titles.

There are countries where the accepted custom is to address the interlocutor with the surname, mainly during the greeting and saying goodbye, i.e. 'See you later Mr Smith' (in the USA). Then remembering the surname and its proper pronunciation are of great significance. Such a form provides more personal atmosphere of the meeting but we should not overuse it. In Poland, there is no custom of addressing somebody with the surname. When we know each other better and by mutual agreement we call each other with the name i.e. 'panie Tadeuszu...'. Therefore, if we talk to a German, an Englishman or an American, it is nice to mention his name from time to time. If we address a Pole, we will say: 'Good morning, what's up?'; but talking to a German 'Good morning Mr Braun, how are you doing?'

If you want to be certain that you do not breach the rules of politeness, the best idea is to ask for information how to address the given person. Asking about it is a better solution than uncertainty which cannot be hidden.

We will be well respected in the society if we prove that we remember the surnames of our interlocutors. It may appear to be very difficult considering the need to remember a few or a dozen of new surnames.

 While making new acquaintances, memorize the names as school poems or even try to take them down in a secluded place. A crib can help you a lot. However, if you forget someone's surname, ask the other people discreetly. Finally, you can always ask the person: 'I am terribly sorry but I forgot your name, can you help me?'. However, remember that you can ask such a question only once! If it happens again, you must cope with it in a different way. You must not use the phrases like: 'What is your name?'. We need to ask about it in the least insulting way to the interlocutor.

Before you attend a meeting try to find out who is going to participate in it, check their surnames and learn them.

Introducing two people

In the situation when you introduce a client or a new worker to your supervisor, there is the rule that first you mention the name of the client/ worker to the supervisor and then you give the name of your supervisor. If we are outside the workplace, the younger person is introduced to the older one and then the older one – to the younger one. The man is introduced to the woman, and then the woman's name is given. When we introduce ourselves to the other person, we say 'It is nice to meet you' after giving our surname and hearing the surname of the other person.

Principles:



- a) make the people you know acquainted with one another and do not introduce one person to the other,
- b) make sure to provide the most important person with the information first.

Introducing – presentation of people can be originated with the words: "May I introduce you?" or: "I would like to you to meet each other".

Remember that while introducing people, the person ranked higher in the hierarchy should be introduced to the person ranked lower first. Even if you believe that for instance – the trainee knows the chairman of the board:from the workplace, from public speeches or by sight,you need to introduce him or her. The chairman needs to know what information about him or her you give to others.

If you would like two people to be introduced to each other:

- a) the head of the department Nowak and a new worker, Malinowski. It is the hierarchical company; therefore you say: "I would like you to meet: Mr Malinowski, Mr Nowak";
- b) two equally ranked people: then the age criterion is binding – the younger person is introduced to the older one and the gender criterion– a man is introduced to a woman;

- c) a host and a guest: the host should learn first who comes to him; first you introduce the guests, then the host; the same procedure applies in case a client comes to your office;
- d) a colleague and a client: your colleague is submitted to the client, therefore you will introduce the colleague first;
- e) your supervisor and a client. It depends on the venue and the fact how significant the guest is for your company. If the supplicant and the supervisor take equal positions, the binding rule is the one of introducing the guest first. If not – the guest is the most important person. If you for instance accompany your boss to the other stand at the trade fair, think twice whether in this case the host principle is the binding one here. Then you say: My boss, Mr Nowak – my client, Mr Malinowski. But if your boss is much higher than your client? Then, introduce the client first.

If you need to introduce more people at the same time, the same principle as in case of the individual introduction applies. First you introduce the person of the same or higher rank to the people and then the person learns who the other people are. You start with the person who is ranked the highest and you go down the hierarchy level. The greeting follows the same rules. When all the surnames are mentioned, the person with the highest rank approaches the newcomer and they shake hands. Then the rest of the people do the same.

Introducing a group of trainees to the boss, remember that the boss is the most important. First you mention the names of the trainees and then you introduce your boss which is followed by the boss greeting them one by one.

Business cards

In order to get to know the surname of the given person and address him or her correctly, the business card will be very useful. Use it whenever you can. Most frequently you get it by exchanging business cards. Give your business card to your interlocutor and he or she will probably do the same. Keep it with the print directed at the person to whom you are handing it in. Never place it on the table while

handing it in but give it to the person's hands! If you are sitting, place the business card you receive in front of you on the table and keep it there during the whole meeting, and if you are standing: put it into the bag (if you are a woman) or the inside pocket in the jacket, never to your trousers (if you are a man). After being given the business card, read it (name, surname, position).

Apart from the name and the surname the business card contains additional information which may be useful while starting a conversation. You will also learn from the business card if the interlocutor has the title. The business card should contain the name and the surname, the name and the address of the company the person represents, the academic title, the telephone and fax numbers and the email address. The name and the surname may be placed in the middle on top or on the left side of the business card. The academic title should be placed before the name and the surname, and the position should be placed below. At the bottom there should be addresses and additional information. The central part should be left empty. This is the place for correspondence. The private telephone number is not placed on the business card. Credit cards determined the size of business cards. The most appropriate size is 8.5 x 5.5 cm. We do not hand in business cards in case of private or social relationships. If you would like to meet somebody, you do it with the help of a person who knows both of you. In case of retail trade, the exchange of business cards is practised only when entering more important trading relations. Therefore, where should you get the surnames of the regular customers from? Simply, ask about them. In case of doctor-patient relationships, leave it to the medical history and train your memory. Asking the patient about his or her surname, you will arouse suspicion that he or she is the next case for you, not an individual person.

GREETING GUESTS

The behaviour when you welcome a guest depends whether it is an important client or only a colleague, a supervisor or a trainee, somebody you know very well, a man or a woman. In fact, everything depends on how you assess a person who comes to visit you. In every situation, there is a rule that a guest should not open and close the door. Open the door for the guest and after the meeting see this person

to the door so as to make the person feel appreciated. Moreover, it is good if the guest does not have to turn back to see all the room where he or she is. It gives him or her the feeling of security and makes him or her develop the positive attitude towards the host even unconsciously. Never turn your back to your guest. Turning back, you show the lack of interest. Therefore, always remember to stand facing your guest. A low bow, which makes the man little, defenceless and helpless is reserved for a few especially ceremonial occasions. Whereas slight regards, a light bow may be practised both by a woman and a man. If you come to visit somebody, knock at the door before you enter the room or the reception desk to forestall the person being inside.

Rules of greeting:

- a) we show by the way we behave that we are calm and glad meeting the person;

- b) we speak slowly and clearly;

- c) we introduce ourselves giving our names and surnames, we do not use our titles or positions;

- d) both men and women stand up;

- e) introduction should be preceded by a short handshake (we do not shake hands until the end of the introduction);

- f) faster the introduction we should start the conversation politely, for instance "You are the author of the book about the wines";

- g) the phrase "It is nice to see you" is acceptable but it may suggest that we are not ready to meet the other person.



To stand up or sit?

We always stand up when we greet a guest. It takes place in the situation when we go out to meet the person halfway and also in case of an unexpected visit when the guest surprises us with his or her sudden visit.

In social situations, when there is also 'some etiquette', women can sit while greeting, especially when they greet a man. In business relationships, it is different. Everybody, irrespective of the gender, should stand up. This way we show respect towards our business partner, we let him or her realise that he or she is worth making some

effort for him or her. The host should always and everywhere behave this way – in his or her office or the meeting room or in any other office space. The one who stands up while greeting others, immediately creates a common ground for communication.

If your interlocutor is significantly taller or shorter than you, try to level this disproportion:

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- a) while standing keep some distance so as not to make any of them look up while greeting;
 - b) offering to take a seat right after the introduction;
 - c) never try to show that you are shorter if you are the taller one. Your guest might take it as if you were leaning over the person on purpose. Save him or her from this misunderstanding.
-

Hierarchy

The one who spots the person he or she knows, says good morning first. However, the worker who is of lower rank needs to greet the supervisor first, even if the supervisor spots him or her first.

The decision how close the greeting should be, that is whether it should be accompanied by a handshake, always depends on the person who is of higher rank.

This means that a 28-year-old director gives hand to a 63-year-old officer, not vice versa. In case of the same positions, the older person gives his or her hand to the younger person, a woman to a man, although it should be noted that the gender related customs gradually disappear in business.

A host gives his or her hand to a guest inviting him by this gesture to his or her area. Therefore, if you are the host, you give hand first no matter what your position or function is. If you are the office worker of the reception desk, i.e. in the bank or at the hotel, you do not need to act as a host. The person to whom the guest comes, takes these duties. If you come to the company or a private house as a guest, wait until the host gives you the hand, allowing you to enter his or her area. By doing so you signal that you can really be self-restrained in your behaviour. It usually causes difficulties for co-operators from the region who are used to approaching others and giving hands automatically.



Eye contact messages:

- a) direct contact means readiness to communicate with others,
 - b) breaks mean avoiding the given topic,
 - c) lowering your eyes, looking to the sides can mean the 'internal dialogue',
 - d) looking at one point means inflexibility and the rigidity of one's thoughts.
-


Maintain eye contact while greeting the other person. Look into this person's face but only for a moment, not too long to avoid interpreting your look as a threat or a warning. However, during the conversation try to maintain eye contact with your partner. In European culture, eye contact should be aimed directly in the eyes or the eyes area (from above the nose to the eyebrows) for at least 60, up to 70% of the conversation time.

Improper eye contact:

- a) looking into the face below the eye line – social contact means that the thoughts of the speaker differ from the main subject of the conversation,
 - b) looking below the face (neck, neckline, body) – intimate contact means that the speaker is interested in us more than in business matters.
-

Handshake

You do not always have to shake hands. Theoretically, it is enough if you express the willingness to communicate by loud "Good morning" with a polite smile. It refers to various situations, also accidental meetings in various places. However, the hand shake creates the occasion to come closer to a complete stranger. Short distance between the people who shake hands – the length of two forearms – will automatically increase after the greeting – depending on the need of closeness – reaching the distance up to 1.5 metre.

 Keep the distance and find out which distance your guest would like to keep. After greeting, wait in the waiting position, standing with the legs a little apart, trying to assess the distance on the basis of your partner's reaction. If the person moves back, you should also move back. If the person comes closer, stand keeping the distance which will be appropriate for both of you.

You can strengthen the politeness of the greeting with friends by placing your left arm on this person's right shoulder, while shaking hands with the right hand. In business contacts such a gesture is inappropriate as it might be taken as the symbol of power. A handshake is an occasion to reduce the distance between the people. Therefore, do not make unnecessary barriers.

Never shake hands over a table or a desk. If you are a guest, avoid approaching the table which would force shaking hands over the obstacle. Approach the interlocutor diagonally or from the side. In business contacts, it is not accepted to kiss somebody on the hand or on the cheek. Such gestures are reserved for the social or private relationships. It may occur that you will have the impression that a person in front of you, even if he or she is a host, is waiting for you to take the first move. Maybe the person is used to it or – if you are a doctor or a lawyer – tries to show you some special respect. In such a situation, you need to give your hand first.

The same principle refers to the situation when you say goodbye: you stand up; you accompany the person to the door, shake hands – according to the seniority principle.

We do not shake hands when:

- a) the person we are to greet is highly placed in the hierarchy;
- b) the person we are to greet has the right hand occupied;
- c) we are late and all the people are sitting at the table.

Guests clothes

Take a coat, a jacket or an umbrella from your guest. According to the tradition, men always accompanied all guests. Today, women also help their guests to take off the coats, both women and men.

The exception to this situation is the circumstance when you are visited by a woman and a man. Then the man always helps the woman he comes with. Be careful with things which belong to other people. Hang the clothes in the wardrobe or on the stand in the hall and place the umbrella in the special container. However, never take personal belongings from your guest such as a briefcase or a handbag

unless the person asks you to do so. Otherwise, it would mean interfering this person's private zone.

Taking seats

As a host you are the director of the meeting and therefore you show the seat to the guest.



Remember:

- a) to sit on the two sides of the corner of the table with your guest which will spare the person the fear of confrontation;
- b) to have the proper lighting for all of the people;
- c) to give the guest a chance to see the door, which will give him or her the subconscious feeling of security;
- d) to make sure the guest sits down first; he or she needs to sit when you are still standing in order to help him or her if needed.

It may occur that you are allocated an unfavourable seat. The sun will be shining into your face or you will have to move to the sides to see your interlocutor or an important document. It may be a deliberate situation or a purely incidental one. If the seat seems to be unfavourable, try to help the situation. When all of the participants of the meeting take their seats, ask the host for instance if he or she does not mind your moving to the right to see him or her better.

2. Everyday culture, phone calls and business correspondence

EVERYDAY CULTURE



In every case, the observer, noticing inconsistency between your body language and your words, will assess you on the basis of your body language. The body simply does not lie.

Probably nobody can present himself or herself in the way so as the interpretation of his or her behaviour is exclusively positive. However, you can focus on particular aspects your body language influences.

Here are some important areas in communication:

- a) face,
 - b) back,
 - c) arms,
 - d) feet.
-

Face

Smile has some particular value in relationships with others. Even children know about it. And psychologists confirm that people who smile are considered to be better and more honest and at the same time they are assessed milder than the ones who always keep the beetle-browed face.

Your interlocutor will always find it pleasant if you smile to him or her naturally or if you give a heartfelt smile. Regardless of whether your smile is authentic or tactical, remember that the impression you make is important. It is always better to seem to be a good-natured person than a sourpuss one. It is the smile which 'opens the door' and 'is viral'. It only depends on you whether you are friendly towards your interlocutor or whether you would like to communicate your sorrows to him or her with your mimics.

Back

You make a good impression if you keep straight. If you consciously lean your back, it is a sign of humbleness; if you do it unconsciously – it can be commented as a sign of sadness.

Will straightening up your back help you when you are sad? It may be helpful to recall the situation when you were 'great'. In any case, taking the straight position you make an impression of being bigger, taller and dominant. You raise your head, see brighter, breathe more deeply, think more precisely, your voice becomes more powerful, you speak forcibly. Can you give at least one argument against this position?

Maintain eye contact with others – do not turn back to them because you may expose yourself to danger of being suspected of showing disrespect to others.



Arms

Focus on the interlocutor, his or her actions and reactions. Then you will forget about your arms and you will behave in a natural way.

It is true that:

- standing for half an hour in one place with your arms down and wearing a dark suit you resemble a penguin;

- if you fold your arms, your interlocutor may feel pushed away;

- the index finger pointing out at something may be taken as a threat;

- crossing arms at the back may be taken as a sign of shyness or even the opposite – a sign of dominance.

All of it is possible, therefore you should increase your awareness of the body language and the instinctive reactions. Then, whenever your brain signals you: 'I crossed my arms,' you will be able to avoid it. The reason why you did it, you will consider later, when you are at home.

What should you do if you notice that you keep putting hands into pockets? Maybe you feel more powerful because of that, so you may consciously tend to provoke such an effect. Anyway, take them out every time, calmly, not being angry with yourself. There are some metaphoric gestures, but mainly the sensible ones. The more your gestures emphasize the uttered words, the more significant it is; it makes the impression of being more authentic. We can observe enough people whose gestures are unbelievable because they are artificial and staged. Try to be different. Due to it, you will gain in interlocutors' eyes.

Feet

We often underestimate them but they carry us. You feel comfortable wearing health sandals, however at work you need to wear laced up shoes if you are a man or court shoes – if you are a woman. Therefore, you need to take care of your feet because they have to carry you the whole day. Your body posture significantly depends on your feet. Heels close to each other, tips of feet a bit apart, loose knees, and the whole body turned towards the interlocutor – if you stand in this way, your interlocutor will think that you are confident, flexible, eager to make contacts.

Punctuality



Be on time! The way you treat your partner's time, your partner will take as a measure of your attitude towards him or her – no matter whether you are a host or a guest, punctuality applies both to a supplicant as well as a supervisor.

If you know that you are going to be late for a meeting, call the person you are to meet in advance. In such a situation you also need to give the reason for your being late and the estimated time of your arrival. If you anticipate to be late much longer, suggest changing the date of the meeting to the one which will be the most convenient time for your business partner. Even if the fact of being late resulted from reasons beyond your control, it is necessary to say 'sorry' as due to your being late, the person waiting for you was inconvenienced.

When you get to the meeting late – give the reason, apologize to the person waiting for you and ask for forgiveness. Coming to a meeting which started without you being there, take the appointed seat discreetly and having the opportunity – for instance during the coffee break – approach the host and explain the situation to him or her.

If you happen to come to the meeting too early, you may report to the secretary or the receptionist asking her or him to announce your arrival not earlier than at the appointed time. Otherwise you could be taken as being impatient.

If you are invited to a private house, avoid coming too early. Wait in the car or go for a walk. If you as a host anticipate that you are going to be late, inform your guest or at least your assistant about it in advance. The assistant can entertain the guest until you come.

Please, thank you



Use the words 'please' and 'thank you'. Completing your request with the word 'please' is logical and obvious. If you also smile while saying that, your 'please' will encourage the interlocutor to comply with your request more than the terse 'Do it, please'.

Regardless of whether somebody keeps the door for you or helps you with the coat while saying goodbye, your thanks are a proof that you appreciate his or her behaviour and it will become some form of encouragement to behave in the same way later.

However, it should be mentioned here that the phrase ‘thank you’ requires some reply. It can be ‘Not at all’ or ‘My pleasure’ or at least ‘You are welcome’.

Using office space

Try to provide nice atmosphere in the room where you work. The criteria according to which you can take the analysis of the workplace are as follows:

- a) Do you use plants – to refresh the air and separate the room – separating the different workstations?
- b) How strong is the favourable influence of the daylight? How do you regulate its intensity?
- c) Can you install individual sources of light next to your workstation? It is recommended to have the lamps which emit the light which is similar to the natural one.
- d) How to make up for the possible lack of sunlight and at the same time warm the atmosphere in the room with the use of the light elements of the interior?
- e) Do you really use the power of colours? Remember: light colours increase and the dark ones decrease; the darker floor with lighter ceiling and walls can give better sense of spatial imagination than the light floor with dark walls.
- f) How do you make use of the influence of structure? The surface of a given structure offers rest to the eyes whereas the plain structure tires them because eyes aimlessly look for some form.
- g) Is the furniture you use in the office ergonomical? The back rests if the height of the table and the armrest of the chair can be easily adjusted.

It is possible that you may not have a chance to shape your workstation in accordance with your taste. The type of work, i.e. regulations concerning health and safety at hospital may also restrict these possibilities. However, something can be done: a picture on the

wall, a colourful button on the desk will add life to the interior. Should you need it, buy a bouquet of golden flowers.

Among colleagues

It is impossible to avoid all sorts of disagreement in the office. Colleagues make coincidental society regardless of the fact whether they see each other every day or from time to time, whether they like each other or dislike. They have different attitudes and needs. Therefore, it is difficult to expect that everything has always worked harmoniously together. Despite that, they should always follow the fair play principles.

A new colleague

The thing that a newcomer needs is mainly a kind reception of the newcomer by supervisors and colleagues as well as tolerance to the possible mistakes they can make.



If you start working for a new company, remember to:

- a) learn about the rules which are binding in the new workplace and do not to guess them on the basis of the behaviour of your colleagues and some speculations;
- b) ask precise questions and insist on being given precise replies; your questions should not only concern work itself but also the dress code, punctuality, breaks at work, the way of answering the phone and the way of addressing your colleagues;
- c) accept the things as they are instead of proposing the improvement schemes; it does not mean that with the time you are not allowed to propose some changes; however, it will be deftly if you first check the conditions and then you will try to find a chance to prove that the variant suggested by you is better; it may be only your variant;
- d) forget about the phrases like: ‘at our workplace we did it in such a way...’ or ‘I know the other way’;
- e) if possible try to establish amicable relationships with your colleagues and avoid spontaneous alliances; it means

that you may find yourself in a disadvantageous situation for you too soon.

As an experienced colleague take into account the fact that the one who seem to be cautious and reserved, maybe would just like to get in touch with you and the extroverts wish to have this kind of contact in particular.

These are the people who easily make relationships with others and who suffer from the feeling of being alienated in a new workplace. They are used to being in relationships with colleagues, to having private contacts with them. Indeed, the introverts – statistically – complain about the lack of new contacts in the new workplace less frequently but even they will feel disappointed quickly if the reality differs from their expectations.

! In any case you should help the novice to integrate with the team. You are helpless concerning the weather but you may influence the atmosphere at the workplace in an active way. Getting somebody acquainted with the arcane knowledge of the workplace, you contribute to creating the atmosphere.

! **The rules of accompanying and precedence**

As a host you are the director of your meetings. You give way to the guest if you have a short distance of the hall in front of you, for example five metres without any obstacles on the way. You ask the guest to follow you if the way is complicated, leads through different corridors, nooks and rooms full of people.

On the way, you open all the doors no matter if you are accompanied by a man or a woman and irrespectively of your gender. Therefore, it means that if you let your guest in as the first one, then you have to overtake him or her. You always do it from the left.

The guest enters the door first and you close the door after him or her. If you continue going further after entering the door, you need to decide whether you are to lead or follow the guest. However the rule is that the first person to go can be the one who knows the place. And hospitality imposes opening all the doors for the guest on us.

In case of clumsy situations, when the guest takes the initiative and starts hastily to the door handle, you inform him or her what you

are going to do, it is by no means an explanation or an excuse but just a comment, for example: 'Let me show you the way, Sir' or 'Will you follow me, please, Madam'. Such words prevent misunderstandings and remove the possible obstacles.

Stairs and lifts



At present, there is a binding rule of protecting others while going up or down the stairs. It says that the woman goes up first, while the man goes down first. Even if the stairs are broad, the man who would like to be extremely attentive does not go up and down next to a woman but a step behind or before her.

The behaviour in the lift should be also examined from the point of view of protection and comfort. Before entering the lift, you open the door for your guest and assess the situation; if there is enough space for both of you, you allow him to get inside first and then you enter it, close the door and turn to him or her face to face or stand next to him or her.

While leaving the lift, the practical aspects decide. If there is enough space, you open the door and help the guest leave the lift first. But if it is difficult, you leave the lift first and keep the door open as long as it is necessary. Entering the lift, say good morning to the people who are there and say goodbye when you leave it. It is in favour of good atmosphere.

In the car

Simply open the door, allowing the guest to get into and when he or she does it, close it. If you are a man, you know this way of behaviour well. You often use it with women. Use it also in case of your co-workers. If you are a woman, you can react in the same way while dealing with a man who is your guest. Only after the passenger sits comfortably, may you move to the driver's side and take the seat.

The seat next to the driver is reserved to the most important passenger. You can get into effortlessly, you can see well and the contact with the driver is easier than from the seat at the back.

A person taking the second position in the passenger hierarchy sits at the back of the car, on the right, the one who is the

third important one sits behind the driver and in the middle - the most uncomfortable seat is taken by the guest who is the least important. If you are in a favourable situation that the car is driven by the chauffer, the honorary guest takes the seat at the back of the car on the right. On your left, there is a guest number two and the last one from the list sits next to the chauffer.



Summing up:

- the car with a driver:
 - a) the most honourable seat is at the back on the right,
 - b) the second place is on the left side at the back,
 - c) the seat in the front of the car, next to the driver is taken by the third important guest,
 - d) the host sits in the middle between the first and the second guest;

- if the driver is the host:
 - a) the most important seat is next to him or her,
 - b) the second – on the right at the back of the car,
 - c) the third one – on the left,
 - d) the fourth one – in the middle between the second and the third.

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE AND CALLS

If you call:

-
- a) greet the person,
 - b) give the name of the company or the department,
 - c) give your surname,
 - d) give the reason for calling.
-

If somebody calls you:

-
- a) greet the person,
 - b) give the company's name,
 - c) introduce yourself.
-

It is important to talk concisely and straightforward, in an informative way adjusted to the interlocutor!

Due to the fact that your interlocutor does not see you:

- a) he or she needs to identify you on the basis of the information received from you; it should be concise but full, not dependent on your present mood or condition;
- b) he or she will learn about your mood and reactions, very often unconsciously; therefore talking on the phone remember to behave in a natural way and present the company well; your interlocutor may hear that you are placing your legs on the desk; sit down and stand up, during the longer conversation walk in the room as much as you can; smile when you answer the phone;
- c) you should signal your interest; you need to greet the interlocutor; you should let this person feel that you are listening to him or her in an active way: murmur assent loudly, interrupt giving the answers, show your presence by repeating 'yes' or 'I see';
- d) focus entirely on the conversation and do not deal with other matters at the same time, your interlocutor will hear you opening the envelope or writing something on the computer keyboard; he or she will also spot that you are thinking about something else. Focus on the interlocutor which will let you finish the conversation faster. During the conversation you definitely need to take notes which increase your concentration span and then they facilitate work.

The way of speaking

Due to the fact that your interlocutor only knows what he or she hears, words become of great significance. Use this fact:

- a) not to discourage the person phoning but rather offer your help, i.e. tell this person "The managing director is in a meeting. Could I be of any help to you?";

- b) to avoid long sentences; speak shortly but do not tell the person about it; the statement ; 'I need to describe it to you in short...' is inelegant and often not true; try to explain the matter concisely rather than tell the person about it;
- c) if you need to discuss something for a longer period of time; you can use the phrases like: 'I have three arguments to justify it. Firstly ...' – then your interlocutor will focus on them and will listen to you carefully;
- d) first to describe the initial situation and then ask or inform; using the scheme: reason – condition – question; due to this structure of your statement, your interlocutor can take some time to think and adequately react to your question;
- e) to sympathize with the partner; tell him or her for example: 'You are also thinking about it ...' instead 'This is absolutely wrong way of thinking';
- f) to repeat important information; use paraphrasing, do not say: 'All right, let us do it this way' but 'Therefore, summing up, the delivery of the computers is going to take place here or there, on that day and at that time';
- g) to thank for having the conversation irrespectively of how it was running.

If you call:

- a) treat the phone call as the arranged meeting: prepare yourself to take part in it and if possible try to avoid talking in the presence of others;
- b) deal with the phone calls one by one not to stop working many times during the day;
- c) choose various times for making phone calls: choose the time convenient for the person you call, respect his or her habits; if you call a private flat, the appropriate time is usually from 9 to 13 and from 3 p.m. to early evening; you should never call after 10 p.m.;

- d) give the surname and the name of the company where you work clearly; if you seldom talk with a given person on the phone, add some more detailed information so that the person can identify you;
- e) before you go to the core of the problem, give the approximate time you wish to talk to the person on the phone; say for example: 'I hope I do not disturb you. May I talk to you for five minutes?' Keep the time limit. Remember to think the conversation over and then dial the number.

If somebody calls you:

- a) in this case, identification as well as precision and concentration also apply;
- b) if somebody interrupts your way of thinking suddenly, quickly write down what you were thinking about; then answer the phone; you will talk calmly then, without being worried that some valuable thought will disappear;
- c) if the phone calls if you are really busy, do not answer the phone or ask a colleague to answer it; the conversation should be calm;
- d) if somebody calls you directly and does not use the secretary, give: the name of your company, then possibly the department; finally your name and surname; we usually do not give the name on a business call but during a private chat yes; actually the first person to introduce himself or herself and the reason for calling should be the person calling us; next, the interlocutor has to or may give his or her surname and give more information;
- e) give your first words a friendly and expectant sound; to finish the first question raise your voice a little bit giving it a nice tone and intonation suggesting a question, which will encourage the interlocutor to answer it;

- f) in all cases let the person who calls speak; do not take the advantage to tell the person what you wanted to tell this person long time before; he started the conversation and he is the director of your talk;
- g) when the interlocutor is aggressive and rude – at the beginning surprise him or her being extremely polite, talk more slowly than usually; despite everything you need to stay polite until the end of the conversation.



The telephone – general rules (summary):

- a) answering the phone after the 2–3 ring (if you call, you should not wait endlessly),
- b) introduce yourself (name, surname, company),
- c) speak slowly, clearly, use the low tone, smile,
- d) after introducing yourself give the recipient a minute,
- e) make sure you can take a couple of minutes (exception: when we call the assistant/ secretary).
- f) short and concise conversations (but the private small talk is possible),
- g) summing up the arrangements,
- h) thanking for the conversation and saying goodbye,
- i) the person who initiated the conversation finishes it,
- j) the interlocutor has a priority over the person on the other line and the ones who enter the office,
- k) the telephone should not be placed on the table in a café, the restaurant, at home,
- l) you must not use the phone in churches, the opera, the theatre, the cinema, etc. you need to switch it off or put it on mute unconditionally,
- m) in public places (train, restaurant) – the phone can be only used discreetly.

An answering machine

Your initial message on the answering machine in the office should:

- a) sound polite and be concise at the same time;
- b) give the person who calls the possibility to identify the caller by the surname or the phone number;
- c) include the greeting and thanks;
- d) include the request to leave the message – ask the caller to wait until the last signal, then give his or her name, surname and the phone number; you should give an example, also speaking slowly and clearly;
- e) be correct concerning the language and pronunciation, also if it is made in the foreign language.

If you phone and want to leave the message for the person who is not available, you should speak in a way as to be heard and understood:

- a) wait until the last signal;
- b) give your surname and telephone number clearly; remember that the one who listens needs time to write it down;
- c) give the regards to the person you are calling;
- d) give the date and the time and brief the person on the matter you are calling about;
- e) express yourself concisely;
- f) thank at the end.

Telephone – difficult situations

- We forget to switch off the phone during the meeting. – Answer it and tell the person that you will call him or her back.
- The secretary does not want to connect you. – Leave the message telling the person who called, what about and ask to call you back.

- The second line. – Tell the interlocutor about the other phone call, apologize and inform that you will disconnect just for a minute, answer the second phone and immediately inform that you are talking with somebody else and promise to call back; get back to the first call, apologize for the inconvenience; after finishing the phone call, call back to the other caller.
- The client comes during the conversation. – Excuse the caller for a moment informing him or her about the situation, greet the client, ask him to wait a minute, finish the call as quickly as possible, come back to the client and apologize for the inconvenience.
- You cannot talk, inform that you will call back; the caller does not want to accept it. – Keep informing the person that you will call him or her back in a minute and do not give any other information.
- You do not recognize the person hearing his or her voice. – Admit it, for example ‘I am sorry but I do not recognize the voice, who am I speaking to?, or possibly ‘my telephone changes the voice’.
- Being cut off suddenly. – The person who initiated the phone call calls again.



Correspondence

Before sending the letter, read what was written as if you were the recipient. Then you will make sure that your reader will know who, when, what, what for, why and how did something or is to do something – assess if you need to change something in this letter.

Using titles in the opening addresses in the letters

Academic titles

- a) Dear Dr ...,
- b) Dear Prof.,
- c) Dear Sir,

- d) Dear Madam,
- e) His/ Her Magnificence

Titles of the clergymen

- a) Your Eminence (archbishop)
- b) Your Excellency (in the catholic church: bishop, archbishop)

Official functions

- a) Dear Sir,
- b) Dear Madam,
- c) Dear Mr ...,
- d) Dear Mrs / Ms/Miss ...,
- e) Your Excellency (the ambassador)

Using titles in addresses

Academic titles:

- a) Mr
- b) Dr Jan Kowalski
- c) Professor ...
- d) Dr Sabina Kowalska
- e) Professor Maria Nowak, PhD
- f) Rector of the X University in Y

Official functions:

- a) Dear Mrs/Ms/Miss ..., The Director of
- b) Adam Kowalski

Letters of condolence, thank you letters, and congratulations should be sent by traditional post.



The official letter:

- a) should be written on a sheet of white A4 format paper;
- b) should contain the handwritten, legible heading, signature and the closing formula;
- c) should contain the address of the sender and the recipient;
- d) should be given the reference number and a short description;
- e) should be concise, clear and with unforced courtesy;
- f) should be written in a block style;
- g) should contain the titles in the heading.

Folding the letter: first we fold the paper vertically, then horizontally; the first page containing the text should be inside; in the envelope - the folding should be placed at the bottom.



The private letter should be answered within a week, the business letter:

- a) urgent – within three days;
- b) with the determined date – in accordance with the given date;
- c) normal – 7 or 14 days.

Principles of writing business letters:

- a) official style;
- b) limiting the letter to one page;
- c) clear, comprehensible editing;
- d) unambiguous and precise determination of the problem;
- e) courtesy of the letter;
- f) using the accepted phrases and schemes;
- g) completeness of the letter;
- h) clarity, care and correctness;
- i) evocative transmission of the point of view;
- j) the letter should refer to one problem.

The parts of the letter:

- a) heading,
- b) name and surname and the address of the sender in the left – hand upper corner of the page,
- c) name and surname of the recipient and his/her address (on the right, the beginning – one line below the last line of the sender’s address),
- d) the reference number,
- e) content of the letter,
- f) signatures,
- g) attachments.

The fax machine

You need to use it carefully:

- a) you must not send the official messages, letters of condolence or congratulations by fax;
- b) a fax machine does not provide confidentiality;
- c) letters sent by fax do not need to be legally binding, because the original does not contain the handwritten signature; annotation ‘the original to be sent’ heralds sending the original letter by post;
- d) numbers and other detailed data such as surnames and foreign words are readable well with the font 14 or more;
- e) nobody can be sure that the fax gets to the right person; be polite: if you receive some fax by mistake, fax it back or send it to the appropriate addressee with the suitable annotation; however, if the fax you sent got to the wrong place and was returned to you, confirm it with short ‘thank you’.

E-mail

Even faster than by fax you can communicate using electronic mail sent and received by anybody in the world around the clock. It is difficult to preserve the individual character of correspondence which a handwritten letter has. We can only use the personal form of the opening and closing address on the internet. Take advantage of this opportunity to differ from the hundreds of computer users who only care about the time.

Your recipients will notice the difference. They will thank you for the effort you made and that you devoted more time to them.

The suitable forms of address to start the letter:

- a) official: Dear Sir or Madam!, Dear Sirs!, Dear Sir, Dear Madam, Dear Mr..., Dear Mrs/ Ms/Miss ...,
- b) unofficial: Dear Marta!, / Hi Marta!

Appropriate form of closing the letter:

- a) official: Yours sincerely, Yours faithfully.
- b) semi-formal: With regards.
- c) informal: Bye for now/ regards.

The letter should be clear and easy to read:

- a) written in a block style,
- b) one empty space between the blocks,
- c) formatting should be avoided (bold, italics) or the use of symbols – the recipient may use the other electronic mail programme,
- d) spelling mistakes make it difficult to read the messages, they are annoying.

Principles:

- a) if the main content of the email is added as attachment, a few words should be written about it in the email,

- b) it is unacceptable to send the same message to many recipients and making their addresses available to others,
- c) spelling mistakes discredit the sender,
- d) business emails should be signed with the name and the surname,
- e) it is not considered good manners to write the whole email with block capitals – they signify screaming,
- f) each mail should contain the title, which should be short and comprehensible to the addressee,
- g) all business emails should be answered within the same day, the private ones – up to a week,
- h) some of the business emails carry the official channels – it is worth remembering about it,
- i) it is not elegant to write the reply by forwarding the email, especially when it contains attachments,
- j) before you send an email, read it once more and check (the information should be unambiguous),
- k) it is not accepted to send the ‘chains’, jokes which sometimes block the email account as they have a couple of MB.



3. Business Meetings

From time to time, there are some meetings organized on a bigger scale: information meeting with co-workers, clients, partners, general public, presenting the company or anniversary gatherings or the meetings to celebrate boss's birthday.

Invitations

The more important the celebration, the earlier invitations need to be sent. Due to it, it is more likely that the invitees will take our celebration into account in their schedule.

In case of the event organized for one hundred people, you send the invitations at least four to six weeks in advance; whereas if you expect some public figures – even a quarter earlier.



The invitation should:

- a) specify whether you expect the guest to come alone or with an accompanying person and whether you accept the person to be represented by some replacement;

 - b) determine the time of the event: the date and the precise time;

 - c) indicate the venue and the room number, in case the event takes place in the hotel, also the access route;

 - d) give the occasion to meet, i.e. the opening of the showroom with the standing reception, the ceremonial lecture with a banquet, etc.
-

The abbreviation R.S.V.P contained in the invitation expresses the request to reply; it can be added until when the invited person should reply and whether he or she will participate in the celebration.

The invitation should be worded in an ambiguous and tactful way.

- a) respect the internal hierarchy which exists in the company; therefore, for example, first mention the administrative director and then the head of the secretariat;
- b) if you invite a couple, first mention the person who you have closer relationships with, i.e. 'Mr Andrzej Kowalski and Mrs Anna Kowalska' or 'Mrs Maria Nowak and Mr Jan Nowak';
- c) always give full names and titles of both spouses; the forms of address 'Mr Jan Nowak with a wife' or 'The Nowaks' should not be used;
- d) if you invite a single person with a partner who you do not know, you simply write: 'with an accompanying person.'

The reply form should be also carefully worded if you attach it to the invitation or in case of a business invitation – you send it by fax. In order to avoid misunderstandings, you word the replies in a way so that the invited person can choose the right space: "I will come:

- a) alone
- b) with ... (insert the surname of the person)
- c) no.

Do not insert the word ‘unfortunately’. The regret should be expressed by the guest, not the host. If the event consists of a couple parts, you add further details: ‘I will participate in ...

- a) the lecture
- b) the reception
- c) the banquet.’

If you are invited, respect not only the indications concerning the attire and the date of a reply given under R.S.V.P but also the form of reply. Never answer the written invitation by phone or in a direct conversation unless the host clearly wishes you to do so. As a guest, you should keep the time of starting of the event. If for example the invitation included ‘c. t.’, that is *cum tempore*, it means that you can come to the event with a 15-minute delay, but not later on no account. If there is a note ‘s. t.’, that is *sine tempore*, it means that you are expected dead on time.

Seating chart

Do not leave the choice of the seat to chance, not to disrespect anybody. In this case – similarly as during greetings and presentation – the rule of honouring the person is to give honours to the one who deserves it. You do not have to take responsibility for it yourself. Talk about it to your boss or another person who you trust a day before the event at the latest. Being familiar with some basic criteria can facilitate the decision ‘who where?’. As an exercise, make a list of guests and decide about their hierarchy in accordance with the following criteria of the official protocol.



What applies:


-
- a) the authority’s mandate (the nominated representative over the appointed one);


 - b) the age criteria: the older over the younger;

 - c) the first in the given area before the second
(the director of the hospital over the head of the hospital department);

 - d) the superior administrative unit over the subordinate unit
(the voivodeship over the district);

-
- e) science over industry;
-
- f) church over politics;
-
- g) at the equal rank: the foreigner over the countryman
(the head of the foreign company over your boss);
-
- h) at the equal rank: a woman over a man;
-
- i) a spouse near a spouse. If one of the married couple accepts the invitation, the person takes the seat reserved for this person, or sometimes the lower one.
-

 If you make a list of guests in such a way and you make a seating plan according to it, think which seat will be the best for the most important guest. Definitely, it is a seat: near the stage, in the middle of the row; with the door in view; on the right from the host.

 The nearer to the host the guest seats, the more important he or she feels. The honorary guests, speakers and hosts sit in the first row on specially reserved seats (the name cards are placed on their chairs). Due to it, nobody unauthorized takes the seat.

If the rows are very long, indicate rather the seats in the middle of the second row rather than at the end of the first one due to a better view and a central location. The host stands at the entrance to the door at least half an hour before the beginning of the celebration and greets all the guests himself or herself – also at purely social occasions. If you are a guest and you need to get to your seat along the row of the seating people, always do it with your face turned towards them. This gives them a chance to see your face and you have a chance to see the faces of the people you pass on the way.

Welcoming speech

The official opening of the event should always be encouraging in tone and at the same time – informative. How to achieve it?

- a) Stand freely at the appointed place. Give the public a chance to see you from head to foot, at least at the beginning so that they can get accustomed to your posture, gestures, mimics.
- b) Start your speech after you take the speaker's position and change the position only after the end of the speech.

You should stand feet firmly on the ground, in the upright position – it prevents suffering from the stage fright if you suffer from it.

- c) The first words are the most important ones. Clear your throat before you take a microphone and remember not to omit anybody in the welcoming speech. It can be for example: “Dear director, dear board members, and colleagues” or the other depending on the people who are present in the room.
- d) Greet people cordially and say why they were invited. For example: “I am glad to invite you all here at the centenary anniversary of existence of company X”.
- e) Mention the honourable guests – paying attention to their full titles – in the right order in accordance with the business hierarchy, at the same time looking at their faces. You should only mention the ones who are going to speak, i.e. the author of the lecture. Certainly you need to know where all of these people sit.
- f) Mention only these honourable guests who are distinctively superior to others. It must be clear to everyone why some of the people are mentioned with the name while the others are not. If the number of people who need to be individually presented exceeds six, you can greet them together by saying for example: “We would like to welcome the heads of the five subsidiaries in Greater Poland”.
- g) If you need to introduce yourself, do it during the welcoming speech: “My name is Jan Kowalski, I am a new manager of the marketing department and on behalf of our boss, Mr X, and I would like to wish you a nice evening”.
- h) If you chair a meeting, thank for attention and ask the next speaker to take the floor. Do the same during the other speeches. All the speakers should be clearly notified by the chairperson when to start speaking.

Stages of the welcoming speech:

- a) Take the position.

- b) Greet the participants.

- c) Mention the honourable guests.

- d) Introduce yourself if it is necessary.

- e) Express yourself clearly and explicitly.



Learn the welcoming speech by heart. Check what it is like if you are a guest and the host needs to read your surname and the title and also give the subject and the course of the event. Even the biggest culinary efforts will not substitute for feeling undervalued in case of the clumsy welcome.

Closure of the event

As a guest you have various possibilities in order to leave discreetly before the end of the event:

- a) If there are a few people present at the event, on no account can you leave without a word of explanation. In case of a serious reason, you should inform the host – while accepting the invitation and at the latest before the opening of the event – that you will have to leave early giving the reason for such behaviour. Before leaving, say goodbye to the people next to you and generally look around the room.
- b) If you participate in the lecture, the celebration to decorate others with the medals, you should stay until the end. If you cannot do it due to other entitlements, leave the room silently. And because we never know how long such a meeting can take, sit at the side. If you need to move between the chairs, always do it face to face, the same as in case of taking a seat.
- c) During a cocktail party after a lecture or a conference, the host is aware of the fact that the guests can leave discreetly after half an hour. Otherwise, he would only deal with

greetings and saying goodbye and would not be able to talk longer to anybody.

- d) During a banquet, you always stay as long as the others finish the last dish. Also, in this case you say goodbye - sitting - only to the people sitting next to you at the table not to cause general confusion.

In case of a conference or a lecture, everything seems to be very simple: you thank for the presence, attention, interest and the statements, you are happy to finish the meeting with general applause and finalise the meeting in the same accurately and openly way as while opening it.

However, if the meeting turns into a more social one, being a host you cannot leave earlier than the rest of the guests unless you say goodbye to the most important guests and you appoint your workers to 'be on guard'.

In practice, you have some possibilities of signalling in a skilful way that the event comes to an end:

- a) Changing the place - for example during a business meeting, moving from the table to the bar - becomes an occasion to leave for some of the guests. Keep calm: regardless of how fruitful the meeting is, there are always enough people who are happy that it is over.
- b) Being with a small group of people you can discreetly make an allusion, saying for example: "Sir, do you go back to the company at dawn?" or "Did you come by car or should I call a taxi?" Yawning would be obvious but at the same time inelegant and tactless.
- c) You will act more elegantly if you ask a guest you know very well or a worker of high rank to say goodbye to you in a visible way giving the others a signal to leave. Moreover, he or she can ask the other guest to drive him or her home.

BUSINESS RECEPTIONS

The business reception has paradoxically little in common with business. When the guest and the host meet at the table, the main aim is to get to know each other better and not to deal with the business which is the centre of our attention during other meetings. Certainly, you can talk about the business matter but not during the main course but during an aperitif or a cup of coffee.

Preparations

The choice of venue depends on your personal contacts with the guests, living conditions and catering options in the closest neighbourhood.


If you were invited to your guest's house, he or she may expect you to do the same. Therefore, the invitation to the restaurant could be interpreted as the willingness to restore keeping the guests at a distance. However, you may justify such a choice by, for example, the presence of little children who could disturb the meeting. However, you may want your guest to participate in your family life – then the guest will be welcomed at your place.

If you decide to invite your guest to your house, you must answer yourself the question if the place is fine enough. If being a young manager, you invite your guest to the rented studio, you risk losing face.


You must know how much time you need to prepare your flat to such a condition as to receive business partners with full honours. Certainly, your guests will not spot every speck of dust on the floor but during the party you will look at your flat as a critical guest due to which you will be seized with sudden anxiety. Therefore, it is better to examine your flat through a magnifying glass a day before the event.

If you decide to choose a restaurant as a venue, you must check the following factors:

- a) transport links, signs, parking;
- b) the relationship of prices to the level of services;
- c) the offer: regional or international cuisine;
- d) the atmosphere (if the place provides space for making conversation pleasant);
- e) cleanliness;
- f) the quality of service.

Each of your guests should reach the restaurant without problems, have the possibility to go back home (also by taxi) and feel good in the chosen by you restaurant. 

To satisfy guest's needs, you need to learn which restaurants he or she likes earlier. The ideal situation would be a restaurant of a bit higher standard to make the meeting with you satisfy the taste of the guest and at the same time make something exceptional to the guest. Simply suggest some restaurant during a free chat and pay attention to the reaction of your future guest. He may be enthused by your idea of experiencing Japanese cuisine. However, it is difficult to count on it if he speaks volumes about French cuisine or homemade Polish food.

Think about the financial aspect of this meeting. Take into account the prices in this restaurant and compare them with the company's funds. It is recommended to choose more expensive meals in an average restaurant rather than the cheaper ones in a very expensive restaurant. 

Reserve a specific table and make an appointment with the waiter who is going to serve you. You will be able to discuss all details with him/her earlier.

Menu

If you invite more than seven people, it is necessary to choose the menu and the wine list earlier just to save you and guests' time and avoid mistakes. At the extremely ceremonial occasions, it is recommended to prepare a menu for each guest to make all the invited guests know what choice they have.

The classical order of dishes of the full menu, in this case in accordance with German restaurants:

- a) Starter (cold).
- b) Soup.
- c) Starter (hot).
- d) Fish dish.
- e) Meat dish.
- f) Cheese.
- g) Dessert (cheese can be also served after the dessert).

Usually you are going to limit yourself to the menu which consists of three or four courses.

The three-course menu includes:


-
- a) Starter (cold) or soup or a starter (hot).
-
- b) Fish dish or meat dish
-
- c) Cheeses or dessert.
-

The meal should fill you up but it should not fatten you. Therefore, first choose the main course and then adequately choose the other ones to accompany it.


The palate likes variety. Avoid repetitions. You have five possibilities considering the dishes from the world of animals:

- a) shellfish,
- b) fish,
- c) poultry,
- d) meat from the slaughtered animals,
- e) venison and wild fowl.

These five groups could be served in many ways: boiled, roasted, steamed, fried, etc.

 The products do not need to be very expensive but they always need to be fresh and top quality. It is one more reason to use the regional produce and the seasonal one. In Poland, for example, you do not need to ply your guests with cauliflower in January.

Selection of alcoholic beverages

 If you organise a ceremonial reception at home or in the restaurant, you cannot skip wine. What kinds of wine to choose?

The answer is simple but it makes things worse: the criteria are flexible, the individual likes decide and the rigid and helpful rule “What should be drunk with which dish?” lost its value. It may occur that you will feel like drinking the Rhineland wine with beef steaks and the burgundy with the trout. Nothing can be done about it and even the waiter serving the wine will not give you an outraged look.

However, the party organizer should forget about his or her likes and follow the advice given by wine connoisseurs who know which kind of wine should be served with which dish best. Following their clues, we can choose the ones which satisfy the majority of guests. There are a lot of publications concerning wines. You can always ask the shop assistant or a head waiter for advice, by no means making the impression of being a dilettante.

And here are some basic rules you should bear in mind while asking for advice:

- a) With the meal, choose rather dry than medium-sweet wine. The last one you can serve with the dessert.
- b) Changing wines, move from the light ones to the strong ones and from the young ones to the older ones. Ask whether you selected the proper gradation.
- c) “Life is too short to waste it on drinking poor quality wine” – say the wine cellars’ owners not to increase their turnovers. It may appear that the wine which is extremely expensive does not need to taste as good as the one which is a bit cheaper. Ask if the wine quality is good value to its price.
- d) Ask how the dishes are prepared to make sure the wine chosen by you harmonizes with the aroma. Spices and the way of preparing dishes are frequently more important while choosing wine rather than the product itself.
- e) Light wine is served with light dishes which are seasoned a little.
- f) The heavier the dish, the heavier the wine.
- g) If the dish is seasoned with wine sauce, the same wine should be ordered to drink.
- h) The fragrances of dishes should reappear in wine or weaken them.
- i) In case of extremely spicy dishes, you may skip alcoholic drinks.



Never assume that all the guests drink alcohol. Make sure that there is enough water to choose from – the sparkling and the still one, without ice and also without lemon. Juices or other sweet drinks are not appropriate with the meal unless the guest asks for them.

You should come to the restaurant fifteen minutes before the guest at the latest in order to find a table and make any possible changes, and also to show that you are the host to give last orders to the waiter or to ask about the meal of the day. However, the guest should come on time – no matter whether it is the restaurant or the flat – not before the appointed time or after it.

Clothes at the meeting

As a host, you help your guests take off their coats. As a hostess you only ask them to do so. The conservative rule says: ‘Keep hands away from women if their husbands are nearby’. The husband helps his wife with the coat and you help him and take both of their coats.

If you come to the restaurant with your business partner, first help your guest take off his or her coat and then you do it yourself. The guest prefers if you have free hands while helping him or her. Leaving the restaurant, first give the coat to the guest and then take yours.

Certainly, the possible fee for the cloakroom is paid by the host, so keep some change in your pocket for such an eventuality.

Gifts

Guests invited to a business party in the restaurant seldom come with gifts. It looks different if they are invited to visit someone’s home.

Flowers

In most cases, flowers are suitable for any situation. Today you can even give flowers to a man, especially when he is responsible for the reception. However, then choose the ones in a subdued colour. You may give flowers in any number. In spite of the fact that flowers are usually handed in odd numbers, nowadays – when the florists developed the art of ikebana – this rule is no longer the binding one.

Remember that:

- a) red roses symbolise love,
- b) chrysanthemum – in Poland and also in other countries – are said to be the cemetery flowers,
- c) white flowers, especially callas, are the symbol of mourning.

Avoid too fragrant flowers and choose the cut ones. The ones in pots reserve for the openings of offices or when you visit the lovers of the potted ones.

Remember that:

- a) We give flowers without paper unless they are wrapped in gift-wrap. In other countries, they are given in wrapping paper as ordinary gifts.
- b) Whenever possible, one should avoid giving flowers in the restaurant. They will inconvenience the host. He or she will have to place them somewhere during a meal and next transport them home. Being a host and expecting some flowers, ask for a vase with water in advance. Vases of different size should be prepared and placed on a separate table just in case.
- c) As a guest, you will make it easier for yourself and the host if you send flowers instead of bringing them. But when to do it? Before the reception or after it? If you choose to do it after the reception, attach the thank you card. But then you can feel awkwardly, coming to the reception empty-handed. Therefore, it is better to send the flowers earlier. In this case you need to attach the card informing the host that you are happy to spend the evening together with him or her. If it occurs shortly before the reception that you are unable to participate in it, you should also send flowers with the suitable information card.

Other gifts

The gift should be personalised, however it is more important than its value. However, if the gifts are very personal, they are reserved only to close friends and relatives. One should not buy a scarf, a tie, soap or aftershave to a stranger. The best thing is if you find something between 'accidental' and 'intimate' things, having learned before what would please the host.

Before you buy a gift, learn what would make the host happy.

ⓘ However, if you only have business relationships with the host, do not bring any gift.

As a host, you should be happy with any gift. Unwrap it during the evening and look at it. You will show interest in this gift. In case of a gift which you are dissatisfied with, treat it as a gesture of good will of the donor and not as an assessment of you as a person.

Aperitif

An aperitif offers a chance to greet the guests and introduce the ones who do not know each other. It is the role of the host. Moreover, this time can be used to socialise the guests who come late and to make final preparations for the reception.

The opening address

Similarly as in case of bigger receptions, when there is the welcoming speech, the business reception should include the opening address.

And you:

-
- a) greet the guests even if there are a few of them;

 - b) give the reason to meet
(fruitful negotiations, the first closer encounter with business partners, ...);

 - c) briefly remind previous contacts (presentations, discussions);

 - d) inform about the plan for the evening;;

 - e) propose a toast to the health of the guests and the meeting

At the end, you can exchange some words on business topics unless your guests are accompanied by partners or if the partners are involved in other forms of entertainment at the time.

Drinks

An aperitif, as the name suggests is to 'open one's stomach', that is to stimulate the appetite. Depending on the budget at your disposal, choose champagne, sparkling wine or light white wine. After a long meeting to discuss something, the guest may ask for a pint of beer – why not? However, strong spirits or sweet cocktails should not be served.

You should not force anybody to drink alcohol, and the times when the ones who did not drink had to explain their behaviour are over.

An aperitif usually consists of one alcoholic beverage. Before you go to the table, leave the glass at the counter or in this part of the room where you are served it, possibly at the table dedicated to it unless the host provides the possibility to put it away. You take it to the table only when recommended by the host.

At the table

After the aperitif, the guests follow the host to the table.

In Poland and in many countries there is a rule that ladies go first, also the ones who are the guests.

Entering the restaurant, you should remember that:

- a) the man accompanies the woman on the left and opens the door for her; the woman enters the place, stops and waits until the man closes the door;
 - b) the man again moves to the left and not turning his back to the woman, leads her to the room.
-

If the woman is the host, after entering the restaurant, she goes first. Similar rules apply in case of a greater number of guests. The men should pay attention not to let women open the door themselves.

Seating guests at the table

If it is a small reception, you may resign from name cards but you should show the guests their seats. First of all, they expect you to be the director of the meeting and secondly, the success of the reception is strictly connected with seating guests at the table. Take advantage of this chance, directing the possibilities to develop contacts and exchange ideas.

The adequate seating of guests at the table aims at creating good atmosphere and the possibility to have a long and harmonious conversation. And its condition respects the hierarchy of importance and good arrangement.

- a) The more respectable the guest, the closer to the host he or she should sit. Therefore, it is more advantageous to have the round table and not the long rectangular one, which emphasizes the differences in the hierarchy of importance. However, if there is such a table, sit in the middle to have an opportunity to talk to the greatest number of guests.
- b) If you are the only host, place the most important guest on your right so that you could help him or her i.e. passing him or her some bread or butter. If there are only two of you, sit together at the one end of the table.
- c) If you are accompanied by your co-worker, he or she should sit opposite to you and on his right the second guest in the hierarchy of importance.
- d) If you and your spouse invite the couple you know, you sit diagonally opposite to each other – the invited woman on the right of the host and the invited man on the right of the hostess.
- e) Three couples at the table for six also sit alternately: the host and the hostess at the heads of the table, the men sit near the hostess and the women near the host. It needs to be taken into account that the couples should not sit next to each other.
- f) The ideal situation is to place the guests in accordance to their interests.
- g) Foreign guests should be placed near the people they will be able to communicate with, the silent people next to the ones who are talkative. This way, imperceptibly, you will transfer some of your duties as a host to others, due to which you will have a chance to manage your duties.

Making all necessary preparations, do not forget about yourself. The best place for you in the restaurant is the one from which you can see the waiting staff. At home, you sit close to the door leading to the kitchen.

How to sit, talk and stand up

Sit up straight – this way you automatically follow some of the rules you have known from the childhood:

- a) While eating raise your hand to the mouth and do not lean over the plate.
- b) Do not rest your elbows against the table. Both hands should be placed on the table, also the one we do not use, but only to the wrist – due to the restricted area. The other rule applies in the English speaking countries. It is considered good manners to keep the hand we do not use on our knees.
- c) You should not talk with full mouth. Taking small bites, it will be easier to follow this rule, even while speaking with animation.

If you need to leave the table for a moment during the reception remember to:

- a) do it only in emergencies;
- b) do it only when everybody finishes eating a dish;
- c) inform that you have to leave for a moment, not providing the detailed cause; “Excuse me for a moment” or “I will be back soon” will sound more natural than the one used only in England “I will powder my nose”; if the woman leaves the table and comes back after a minute, men ask themselves a question: should we stand up or not?; in this case there are various forms of behaviour: however in Europe, men usually do not react.

Mobile phone



On no account can you make a phone call at the table. We should not disturb the other guests or make them listen to someone talking on the phone. Excuse the guests if you have to leave the table for a moment in order to call somebody in an emergency situation.

You may leave your phone with the *maître d'hôtel* who can ask you to answer it should the need arise. In some restaurants where there is a ban on using mobile phones, such a solution is recommended to guests. If you are waiting for a phone call when you are at the business reception, you can answer it sitting at the table only in a situation when the information which is to be given also concerns your guests.

Smoking at the table

Smoking at the table is a matter which requires exercising particular tact.



Remember about a few rules:

- a) You are not allowed to smoke if at least one person is eating even if you share the table with strangers.
- b) The first cigarette can be smoked after the main course at the earliest – according to stricter rules – not until the dessert – so that there is smoky smell over the meals. It happened in the past that women went to the parlour after the meal and the men to the smoking room. These days are over. In Poland smoking is only allowed in separate zones, for instance at the bar. It is very advantageous for the group of non-smokers.
- c) Before the smoker lights a cigarette, the person should always ask the present ones for permission. At the big table, the consent to smoke given by the direct neighbours is enough, at the small table, first the hostess/host's consent, then the other guests' one.
- d) People, who smoke a lot, should leave a table to have a cigarette.
- e) The enthusiasts of cigars and pipes abstain from smoking.

If smoke disturbs the non-smoker during the reception, the person can discreetly point out that smoke disturbs eating food and ask the smoker to refrain from smoking until the meal finishes. It should be said accurately, calmly, possibly before the person lights up the cigarette. This way the problem will be solved for the benefit of all, without losing face by any of the advocates of the contradictory interests.

Service

Rules:

- a) All drinks should be poured from the right side.

- b) Full plates should be served from the right side.

- c) Dishes from the platter should be served from the left side; due to it, you do not need to reach them over the tray or a platter.

- d) Salads and bread are served from the left side.

- e) Glasses and plates are cleared away from the right side.

Certainly, there are some exceptions to the rule, if the guests are placed (i.e. on the bench attached to the wall), it prevents keeping the rules or when the guest is involved in a conversation with the person next to him or her. Then you should not disturb the people and they can be served from the other side.

Toast

A toast is a natural ritual which is an element of a reception. Its worthy introduction is raising the glasses. Here is the sequence of procedure:

- a) The host waits until all guests are served and in the restaurant – the waiter leaves the table.
- b) The host touches the stem of the drinking glass, raises it and looks around at all the gathered.
- c) Guests do the same even if they do not drink alcohol.
- d) The host says ‘cheers’.
- e) The guests respond.

- f) Everybody takes a sip.
- g) The guests lower the glasses and again look around.
- h) They put the drinking glasses back.



This ceremony repeats with every change of the type of wine, but not when the same one is topped up. You should not drink directly after a toast. You should always hold the stem of the drinking glass not to warm the drink and not to leave the fingertips on the glass. You should not drink without drying the lips. By doing so, we will avoid the marks on the edge of the drinking glass. If we clink glasses, we do it only at the beginning of the reception and only when there are a few people so as not to miss anybody. If the host does not say a few words during an aperitif, he or she may do it now. If it is the flattery concerning the contractor who is present at the reception, he or she should thank in a few short and nice words.

While eating



At the table you should:

- a) put the napkin on the lap before you start eating;
- b) carefully use the cutlery, not making gestures with the cutlery;
- c) not treat yourself with food on the table but ask a person sitting opposite to us to pass us salt, butter, etc.;
- d) if the guests at the table pass the platter, wait until the person helps himself or herself and then take the platter and give it to the next person;
- e) first take bread, then butter, a part of which you should put on your plate first, not on bread and you should do it with the proper piece of cutlery (special butter knife), or possibly your own butter knife;
- f) break bread and spread butter on small pieces which you put into your mouth at once;
- g) dishes served on platters should be taken only with platter cutlery;

- h) wait until the warm dishes cool down a bit and not blow them up;
- i) put your cutlery on the plate – even when not eating; even the handle should not touch the tablecloth which is to stay clean as long as possible;
- j) rising from a chair, leave the napkin on the table; everything which is an element of the table should not be on the chair due to hygiene;
- k) apply the cutlery etiquette; cutlery placed parallel at 4:25 signals the host or the waiter that you finished eating, if it is crossed at 7:25 – it means that you are taking a break or it can also mean – certainly if it is possible – that you ask to be given the second helping;
- l) put both the cloth or paper napkins a bit crumpled to the right of your plate after the meal;

Blunders and shortcomings

There are only two cases when you can question the wine served:

- a) If it is too cold or too warm. Then, the waiter brings another bottle or quickly adjusts the wine to the proper temperature. This is not your problem anymore.
- b) If the wine tastes the cork. You must inform the waiter about it nicely but firmly. The waiter will agree with you. If not, insist on taking a test. Ask about the glass half filled with warm tap water and top it up with a third of wine. Water will remove the fragrance, but the smell of cork, if it really is, definitely remains. Such a test should be done by the waiter on his initiative and in case your reservations are confirmed, the waiter should beg for forgiveness. However, it may happen that you made a mistake. Then apologize to the waiter and wave it aside. In the best restaurants, the test is omitted and new wine is served at once.

If you have reservations about food

We complain about the ordered dish discreetly and politely, without personal attacks. The waiter is not the cook and the cook himself should have a chance to emerge with his honour intact. Explain your reservations in detail and request the problem to be resolved.

You are authorised to complain if:

- a) the hot dish was served too cold;

- b) meat is underdone, overdone or stringy;

- c) food is too salty, etc.;

- d) you find a hair or a fly on the plate.

You may also complain if:

- a) the staff are impolite;


- b) you sit in a draught;

- c) you are disturbed by mosquitoes, flies, etc.

You need to react once you notice any failure. If you are a host, you also do it on behalf of your guests. If your guest or a person sitting next to you at the table commits small indiscretions, you should whitewash the situation.

Small talk

Some people are born to talk about nothing, others are afraid; the other ones think that it is pointless. If you regard small talk as a sensible way of getting in touch, your conversation is not to cause any problems.

 What to talk about? 'only not about the weather!'. And actually, why not? You do not need to treat the subject as a trivial one. Moreover, it is not the subject you offer but the way you do it more important – to make this conversation about nothing special turn it into something more serious. The same regards the first words you utter with a person in a lift, at the conference, while presenting a trade offer, in the notary office or the doctor's surgery. This rule applies everywhere when the strangers wish to spend some time together.

Five steps:**Step 1.**

Get ready to make a small talk, treat it as a form of conversation consciously and with unaffected warmth. If you got nervous before the business meeting, relax and start from the very beginning.

Step 2.

Start here and now, taking advantage of the circumstances. If it rains, it is sensible to refer to the weather. You may for example ask: “ How did you manage to keep your shoes dry?’. It will be a personal starting point and not a platitude.

Step 3.

Turn towards the interlocutor. Let him or her speak, ask him or her questions but do not ask too many of them.

Ask informative questions: who, when, where, who with, how. Do not trap anybody against the wall, avoid questions about the cause: why?, what for? These words are forbidden.

The more appropriate than the questions are the short impersonal statements about us which can encourage the interlocutor to make comparisons: ‘Recently...’ ‘Really? You too? I was there ...’ Or ‘Really? I have never been there!’. And you do not need to worry about the further part of your conversation.

This method can be also applied while talking to people who are not very talkative: first encourage them, then give them some time to reply, emphasizing the breaks in a conversation. Not all the people speak and think quickly but still they have something to talk about. Dealing with reserved people, do not give in the temptation to out-talk them. You will learn nothing about your interlocutor not giving him or her the possibility to express himself or herself whereas he or she will know everything about you, even if he or she is not interested in it.

Step 4.

Suggest topics. Tell an anecdote for example – not a joke – from your everyday life. In case of such topics as money (own or the other person’s), politics, genres, illnesses, death, morality or religion, you should be careful because the interlocutor may take a defensive position or get nervous.

The following subjects are relatively safe:

- a) current affairs and local news;
- b) architecture, art, culture – however do not try to educate others, showing off with your knowledge;
- c) free time entertainment – however you should not enthuse about your yacht because the interlocutor may suffer from some complexes:
- d) food and drink – however do not praise the reception organized by the competitors; wine is an ideal subject even if you know nothing about it; let the other person give you some information about it;
- e) professional life and family – these topics should be handled with care; some people may find them as the ones invading their personal zone;
- f) If you start talking about your children and you wait long time in vain for a reaction such as: ‘The same as mine’, you know that it is not your common topic. Find another one. It is not that difficult as you may think.

Step 5.

If the topics suggested by you are not of interest of your interlocutor, swiftly move to the others.

Try to find somewhere to start a conversation in order to move to a new topic.

You will do it easily using the phrase ‘apropos’, i.e.:

- a) the weather here → the weather in a different place → holiday → food and drinks, etc.;
- b) the weather → arrival → by train / car → impressions related to the journey, etc.;
- c) the weather → nature → free time → outdoor sport → holiday etc.;
- d) the weather → museum → art → theatre → cinema → the newest musical etc.

Listening – what to do and what to avoid?

You should not:

- a) become impatient and finish somebody's words, e.g. 'I know what you want to say';
- b) suggest words;
- c) use phrases which block communication: 'never', 'always', 'you have to', 'you should';
- d) express your opinions;
- e) be involved in doing something else;
- f) interrupt;
- g) talk more than listen;
- h) look around;
- i) correct the interlocutor's mistakes.



You should:

- a) ask for repetition if you cannot hear something;
- b) be patient;
- c) show empathy;
- d) maintain eye contact;
- e) show interest;
- f) if we do not agree with what we hear – present our point of view without criticising the other person;
- g) encourage the interlocutor to keep talking.



Conclusion

When the party is coming up to the end, being a guest, thank the host – at the same time express admiration to the dishes, drinks and the atmosphere of the meeting. In the next few days call the person or write to the person to thank for the invitation.



Being a host:

- a) thank the person for coming, for the nice meeting and constructive conversation;
- b) in the restaurant, ask the waiter for a bill, approach him to pay the bill; do not check the bill at the table; remark: before the meal, make it clear who pays to avoid the question: 'together or separately?'; words such as: 'I am happy that you are going to be my guests today' are clear enough; reserving a table make sure the waiter is to prepare the bill for you;
- c) in case of big receptions in the restaurant or the hotel, send the bill to the accounts after checking it;
- d) leave the restaurant in the reversed order than when you enter it: the host stays there until the end;
- e) ask for the coats;
- f) accompany the guests to the taxi or a car;
- g) wish a nice journey home to them.

FAUX PAS

Faux-pas, intact, awkwardness, a gaffe, a blunder, an indiscretion, acting not in accordance with the social norms. It means violating the unwritten rules of the given society. Something which is acceptable in one culture may be considered as a gaffe in another.

Faux pas during the introduction:

- a) not accepting the handshake,
- b) taking away your hand,
- c) kissing in cheeks (acceptable in social etiquette),
- d) cuddling up to somebody (and slapping somebody's back),
- e) touching.

Faux pas in non-verbal communication:

- a) keeping hands in pockets,
- b) sitting in a half-lying position,
- c) crossing one's legs and leaning the ankle of one leg against the knee of the other – forming four,
- d) sitting or standing with the legs apart,
- e) putting your legs very close together in the standing position,
- f) chewing gum, eating at the desk,
- g) leaning against (the wall, a pillar, a piece of furniture, etc.),
- h) placing your arms on hips,
- i) pointing something or waving with your finger.

Faux-pas concerning intonation:

- a) patronizing tone,
- b) fast pace of speaking,
- c) high pitch,
- d) speaking too loudly,
- e) ingratiating tone.

Faux-pas in a telephone conversation:

- a) not introducing yourself,
- b) unpleasant sounds and noises (eating, drinking, yawning),
- c) improper tone of voice of the interlocutor,
- d) finishing the phone call because of the other call,
- e) finishing the phone call before the person who called,
- f) the question 'Who am I talking to?'

Other examples of faux-pas:

- a) being late,
- b) lying,
- c) being too talkative,
- d) being too inquisitive,
- e) indiscretion,
- f) kissing one's hand during a business meeting or being in the open air,
- g) intact questions,
- h) lack of emotional balance

The End

Considering the significance of social competences we should learn about the data concerning the significance of basic social competences. The skills defined as emotional and social ones, which include the ability to put social influence on others, working in a team, the ability to negotiate, communication skills, empathy – make two thirds of the competences which influence performing the task above the average. High level of social competences is significant in case of entrepreneurs and managers and the communication abilities and skills are an essential element being the indicator of work effectiveness of teachers, being successful during job interviews or in case of achieving the professional status.

Deficiencies concerning social skills frequently lead to risky and disapproved forms of behaviour such as violence or vandalism. Negative patterns of social behaviour are a result being involved or engaged in pathological interpersonal relationships, being the source of negative patterns of social behaviour. Detailed analyses related to society in general let us state that over half of the population show deficiencies with regard to some of these skills.

A quite essential sphere where social skills are significant is the personal zone, the family zone. Satisfaction and close interpersonal relationships contribute to stability of marriages. It is frequently enough to have social skills training, aiming at improvement of the communication system between the spouses to make the seemingly unfortunate marriages the fully positive ones.

The author of this publication focuses only on the selected by him groups of social competences which include social relationships, interpersonal communication, self-presentation, assertiveness, coping with stress, time management, savoir-vivre and negotiations. The problems and tips presented in this book may be successfully used in professional work at different positions as well as in personal life. Due to limited publishing capabilities, some of the issues have only been indicated, however the literature suggested in the bibliography may be successfully used by all the people who would like to broaden their knowledge about the issues discussed.

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