

# 2.2: 5 STEPS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

When there's a breakdown in communication, voids tend to get created, and oftentimes negativity fills those voids.

**POOR COMMUNICATION IS COSTING SHOP OWNERS 18% OF TOTAL SALARIES BEING PAID OUT ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.**



## COACHING MOMENT

*How well do you communicate with your team on a scale of one to ten, ten being the highest, what number would you give yourself and why?*

Think about what communication looks like from you to them and from them to you. Think about the connection you're making. We know that **connection creates engagement, and engagement increases performance**. We can connect in three ways: authenticity, humility, and vulnerability.

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## PEOPLE + PROFIT = PERFORMANCE

As a business owner, shop manager, service manager, or lead technician, your goal from a business perspective is to increase performance. Many start focusing on profit first, then process, and then people. But we know that people plus process equals profit. If we flip that around and focus on people first, then process, and then profit, we create a stronger foundation. If we serve our team the same way we serve our guests—taking care of them, valuing them, and making them feel heard—the transaction becomes a natural byproduct of exceptional service.



## CONNECTION BEFORE CONTENT

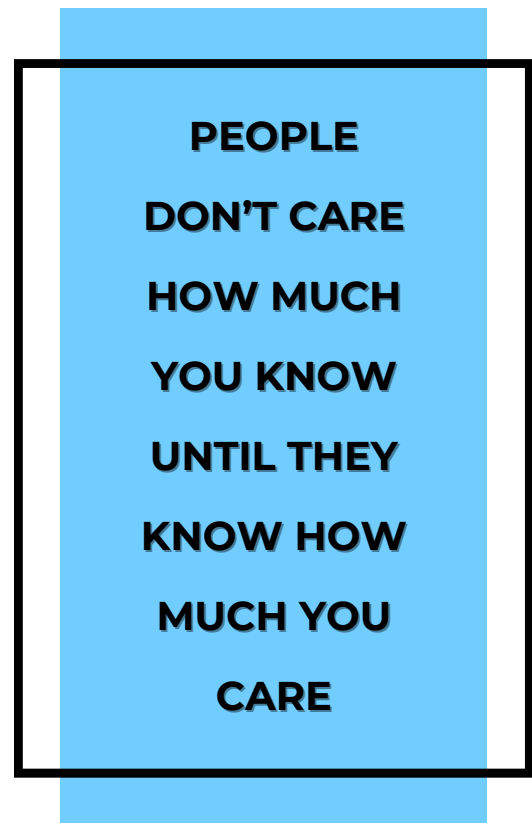
We can achieve the results described above by focusing on connection through communication. One of the key steps in this process is having a foundational conversation with team members. This is especially critical for new employees to ensure they understand clear expectations and defined standards. When expectations are clear, confusion is reduced, and alignment is achieved.

## CLARITY AND DIRECTION

People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. We need to create two things—safety and trust—so we can provide two things—clarity and direction. If you think about jobs you've left or lost, chances are you lacked both clarity and direction. **How are you providing both to your team?** We achieve this by focusing on the person first, then the process, and then the profit. During foundational conversations, you can share the five steps to effective communication:



Click [HERE](#) to read more on Grammarly's State of Business Communication.



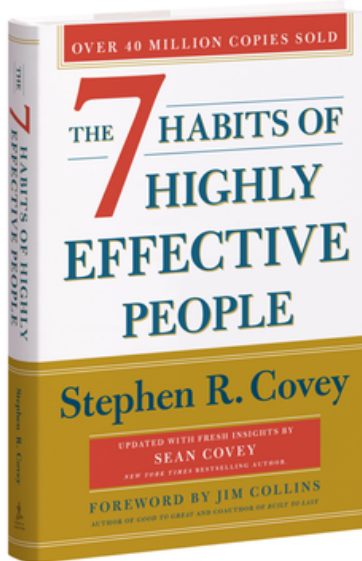
### 1. ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT

When we assume positive intent, we give the benefit of the doubt, allowing room to learn and gather details before jumping to conclusions. We're all human, we make mistakes, and not everything will go according to plan. This is why preparation is so important—so when something doesn't go as expected, we're ready.

When the pressure is on, we don't rise to the occasion; we fall to our highest level of preparation. By implementing the five steps to effective communication, we set ourselves up to win.

## 2. SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN BE UNDERSTOOD

This principle, from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey, emphasizes listening before speaking. Many leaders prioritize making themselves understood rather than understanding others first. By asking questions and seeking context before offering direction, we develop better communication and leadership skills. When we adopt a mindset of curiosity, we move into a growth mode that broadens our perspective and allows us to lead more effectively.



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## 3. FALL IN LOVE WITH ASKING QUESTIONS

Leaders should focus on providing *direction* rather than just *directives*. We must ask more questions to gain insight into our team members' thoughts and challenges. Effective communication is a two-way street. When people feel heard, they engage more deeply, which ultimately increases performance.



### RESOURCES

***Download and print both resources provided in *The Limitless Leadership Blueprint*, 2.2: 5 Steps To Effective Communication for additional support.***



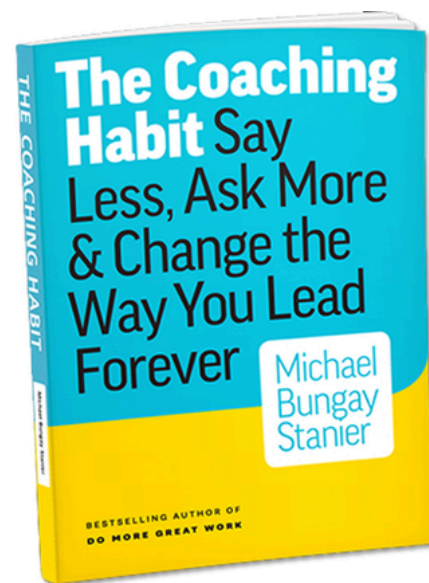
## COACHING MOMENT

***A simple coaching method for effective conversations is the three-step Roots to Results coaching method:***

- Ask a question (open-ended, not yes/no).
- Ask the recipient of your question to tell you more.
- Ask the **AWE Question**- “And What Else?” This prompts deeper thinking and allows for better problem-solving. When leaders ask meaningful questions instead of simply giving directives, they encourage team members to think critically, which leads to better solutions.

### 4. LISTEN

Communication is not just about speaking; it's equally about listening. Many people listen only to respond instead of listening to understand. When we actively listen, we process information and use it to better serve the person we're communicating with.



## COACHING MOMENT

**A four-step approach to empathetic listening:**

- Listen actively.
- Thank the person for sharing.
- Acknowledge their feelings.
- Ask more questions.

When people feel heard, understood, and validated, they are more likely to engage productively. Every voice should be heard, every opinion should be considered.

## 5. STAY POSITIVE

Staying positive does not mean being naive. Leadership comes with challenges, but maintaining a positive mindset prevents negativity from spreading throughout your team. Leaders set the tone—**our attitudes are contagious**. We can either infect or affect our team.



### COACHING MOMENT

**A simple framework to regulate emotions to stay positive is the Three P's:**

- Pause before reacting.
- Process what's happening.
- Pivot to a productive response.

There are three key ways to maintain a positive work environment:

1. **Go directly to the source.** Avoid gossip and speculation. If something seems off, ask the person involved rather than spreading negativity.
2. **Implement a "No Complaining Rule".** Complaining creates a toxic work culture. Instead, if you see a problem, pair it with a solution.
3. **Bring solutions, not just problems.** Identify issues, but also suggest ways to fix them. While this principle applies at work, it may not always apply at home. Sometimes, our loved ones don't want solutions—they just want us to listen.



By applying these five steps—assuming positive intent, seeking to understand first, asking more questions, listening actively, and staying positive—you'll dramatically improve communication with your team and even in your personal relationships.

Poor communication costs businesses 18% of total salaries every year, but by improving communication, we enhance team culture, engagement, and overall performance.

If you'd like to dive deeper into these principles, check out the books referenced in this lesson:

- **The No Complaining Rule by Jon Gordon**
- The Coaching Habit by Michael Bungay Stanier
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey
- **Leading a Legacy: How to Live Today to Make an Impact for Tomorrow**

