

Communicating how the prospect wants to communicate



Do you provide information to each prospect the way he or she likes to get it? Do you know how they like to get information? Do they know? You'll be much more successful if you provide information to each prospect the way he or she best receives it.

Different people absorb information differently. For business development, adjust your approach to match what works for each prospect, rather than doing what's easiest for you or what you've always done. In order to correctly tailor your communications approach, you need to find out what works best for them. You can either ask internal supporters who know the key people, or ask the key individuals yourself!!

How they absorb information

- Listening – Some people understand best by listening. In addition to being their preferred way of digesting content, listening to you face-to-face lets them observe the non-verbal signs that indicate what kind of person you are.
- Reading – Some people like to read. Reading lets them go over information a few times, and perhaps take notes and even reorganize their notes until they have structured information into a framework that really works for them.
- Reading and then listening – Some people prefer to read what you send them and mark it up, and then want to talk with you.
- Seeing a graphic – Some people are very visual and can understand a graphic much more easily than the equivalent words.
- Watching a demonstration - For some, seeing is believing. Seeing a version of what they will get is often part of sales, and could be part of professional services business development.
- Watching a video – A good video can provide a compelling combination of a demonstration and an opportunity to listen.

Few professionals make the effort to change how they communicate based on what their prospects, or even their clients, prefer. Doing what works for them will make you much more effective.

What they are looking for

Each prospect has a different degree of interest in different aspects of what you might communicate. The more you know about what they are looking for, the more able you are to ensure they get what they need. Is your prospect focused on:

- The details or the big picture? This depends both on their role and their personal interests.
- The benefits or the process? Typically, people at higher levels in an organization tend to be more interested in the benefits they'll get and the less in the technical details of making it happen.
- The work you'll do or how it will fit in and function with their company? Integrating the results of your efforts with the rest of the organization may be the most difficult challenge. In some cases, then, how you'll integrate your work may be of more interest than how you'll do it.
- The statements you make or the questions you ask? Prospects are trying to figure out how you and your team will be valuable to them, and good questions may demonstrate that better for some than the proposal.
- What you'll do or who you are? Both are often important.

Try to be sure to emphasize the aspects of your communication that will matter most to them.

Something to try this week

Look at your two most important clients. Do you know how they like to communicate? If not, ask them. Are you communicating that way?

Consider the proposal you are working on. Do you know how the intended recipient likes to receive information? Are you planning to give them what they prefer?

What are these tips?

These monthly tips are intended to help professionals create more business and enjoy their work more. We focus on how to start relationships, how to build relationships, and how to convert those relationships into sales.

Can you answer my questions about business development?

We'd be delighted. Please send any questions you have to questions@bridgewellpartners.com and we'll do our best to help you out. Or call us at 312-863-3489. Or visit www.bridgewellpartners.com to learn more about how we coach and train professionals to be better at business development and to enjoy it more.