



## **Course Name: Communication - 5 Ps (part 5 Personal)**

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### **Course description:**

Because effective communication is difficult, we have to work daily to improve this skill. In previous lessons we looked at communication through prayer and the necessity of preparation in our planning to communicate more effectively. We also talked about how to pay attention. In last week's lesson we looked at how to practice effective communication. In this lesson we learn that communication must also be personal.

### **Course Objectives: By the end of this class students will have:**

- A. Listed 5 ways our communication can be more personal in nature.
- B. Identified a minimum of 5 ways to personalize communication from leaders.

### **Outline of the class:**

- A. Effective communication is about dialogue, not monologue. If we are not personal in our approach, then effective communication rarely occurs.
- B. Make sure the class is divided into groups of three and four. Take about 10 minutes to ask each group to make a list of 4-5 ways to make our communication more personal.
- C. After each group is finished, ask them to share their lists one at a time until everyone has used their suggestions. A few possibilities to add, if they are not mentioned, are below.
  - 1. Transparency: Secrets are destructive to relationships. When we hide information from others, they begin to wonder about everything. Steve Moore, CEO of [growingleaders.com](http://growingleaders.com) says, "During times of change, it is imperative that leaders communicate more clearly and frequently. Negativity can prevail, because people are down on what they are not up on."
  - 2. Honesty when sharing our feelings: Emotions are challenging to communicate. We struggle to identify the type of emotions we experience. We also tend to think that emotions like anger, fear, sadness, etc. are negatives and should not be expressed. Emotions are neither good or bad. They are just emotions. How we react in connection to our emotions can be good or bad. It is critical to learn how to share our emotions honestly and openly.

3. Stop sending sensitive communication by text or email: Few suggestions are as important as this one. We have become a culture that tends to do everything by text and email. The problem is we cannot read true emotions in a text or email. We are often left to assume the feelings behind something said. This assumption can cause more damage to relationships than just about anything else. When it comes to sensitive subject matter, avoid at all cost the use of text or email. Remember that while using technology in this way can be good and useful, it can also mislead others in their understanding and ultimately hinder growing stronger and better relationships.
  4. Phone: Obviously, the phone is a way to personalize our approach to communication. The phone is certainly better than text or email, but even then, the phone can challenge a personal connection. If it is essential, use the phone, but remember that people cannot see body language, even though they may hear the tone of voice. Without the last step to consider, the phone is not always the best approach to making our communication personal.
  5. Face-to-face: Nothing replaces the value of personal communication than meeting someone face-to-face and discussing whatever matters need to be handled. Certainly, there are times when face-to-face is not possible and other means like Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc. can be helpful. However, these do not mean we should use them exclusively. When we have situations where communication needs to be personal, then the face-to-face presentation is always the best approach.
- D. Take a few moments to discuss what “personalized communication” means. Below are some ideas to start with and use for the class.
1. “Personalized communication is when the marketing message is adapted to each individual by using information from a database and utilizing it in the various, different media channels available today.” ([diva-portal.org](http://diva-portal.org))
  2. From a biblical perspective, this is what we see in the letters written by Paul. His letters to individual churches and to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon all represent personalized communication. Even within the Revelation, Jesus spoke on a personalized level to each of the 7 Churches of Asia. The message was adapted to each specific situation and need.
  3. One of the key thoughts expressed by Paul to the elders at Ephesus was the need for them to “be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). When elders know the people in the congregation, they are aware of the best practices for communicating any message to them. Make it personal.

- E. Ask each group to take a few moments and write out 2-3 ways personalized communication can help leaders to communicate with the congregation more effectively.
- F. Once everyone is finish, ask each group to share and then, if the ideas below are not already mentioned, share them as time allows.
  - 1. Spend time with each member to develop a closer relationship. Knowing members on a personal level will help personalize communication.
  - 2. Remember each person's name and use it when talking to them. Focus on each person. Remove any distractions.
  - 3. Keep a file with personal information about each individual. Make notes beyond special days (birthdays, anniversaries, deaths, etc.). What do they like and not like? What kind of activities / hobbies do they enjoy? What are the types of places they like to visit?
  - 4. Hand write notes that are addressed to the individual, personally. Let them know what needs to be communicated. Think, this is exactly what Paul did with each letter. He customized each thought to the specific needs of that congregation or individual.
  - 5. Tailor the activities of the church and messages to address the information that is gathered about each individual and family.
  - 6. Learn to communicate with the following model based on Paul's letter to Philemon. It is good to have everyone open their Bibles and discuss these.
    - a. Express gratitude and prayer for the person
    - b. Compliment their strong points
    - c. Show value for everyone involved
    - d. Appeal to character
    - e. State the request plainly
    - f. Express confidence in them
  - 7. Ask for, listen to, and utilize feedback from the congregation to move forward with greater and more positive changes.

**Conclusion:**

- A. In our lesson today, we talked about how to make our communication more personal in nature.
- B. We also discussed how leaders can personalize communication to the congregation.
- C. As leaders move forward in developing more effective communication skills, review the lessons that have been shared in this series. Revisit them periodically to aid better communication.