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# March Newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of our monthly newsletter. We are hoping everyone is coping with the busy season, and of course these high temperatures. This month we would like to delve into the heartbeat of success - communication.

Communication stands as the cornerstone, in this world that is ever-evolving with the role of technology in shaping the way we connect. So, the ability to communicate effectively has become more crucial than ever, especially in the workplace.

We will explore the multifaceted aspects of communication - why it is important in the workplace, non-verbal communication and what Eskom has taught us about the lack of communication.



# Why communication is important?

Communication in the workplace involves both verbal and non-verbal methods, including written messages, body language, and interpersonal interactions. Effective workplace communication is essential for the smooth functioning within an organisation. It plays a pivotal role in the overall success of the individuals and teams in the organisation as well as, the organisation as a result.

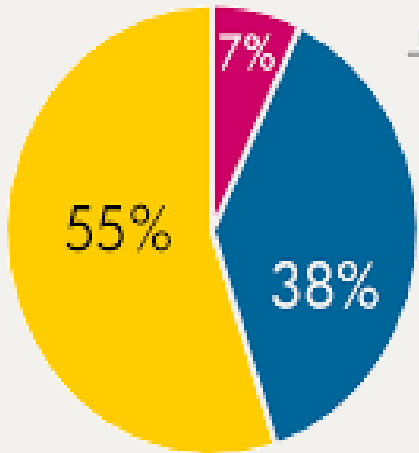
## Some key aspects highlighting the importance of communication in the workplace:

**1. Team Collaboration:** Clear communication fosters collaboration among team members. When individuals can convey their ideas, share feedback, and understand each other, it creates a cohesive work environment, leading to improved teamwork and productivity.

**2. Conflict Resolution (the big one!):** Misunderstandings and conflicts are inevitable in any workplace. Effective communication provides a platform for addressing and resolving conflicts promptly. It encourages open dialogue, helping to prevent minor issues from escalating into larger problems. In times of conflict, always try to communicate face-to-face to reduce any misunderstandings and/or misinterpretations. Once all parties have communicated their concerns and hopefully have come to an agreement or solution, then proceed to document it in writing (e.g. email or message).

**3. Adaptability to Change:** In a dynamic business environment, change is inevitable! Effective communication helps employees understand the reasons behind changes, alleviating uncertainty and resistance. It promotes a culture of adaptability, continuous improvement and individual success.

# Non-verbal Communication



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

## Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

Non-verbal communication involves conveying messages without the use of words. It includes facial expressions, body language, gestures, posture, tone of voice, and other subtle cues. As you can see in the image on the left - body language constitutes 55% of communication. Non-verbal communication can often speak louder than words, therefore plays a significant role in conveying emotions, attitudes, and intentions.

— Non-verbal communication serves as an integral component of successful interpersonal interactions. Mastering these skills allows individuals to convey messages clearly, understand others more fully, and build strong positive relationships. Please be aware of your own, as well as pay attention to others body language, tone of voice and facial expressions. They provide important cues about a person's feelings, reactions and helps in interpreting the underlying emotions of a message.



# What has Eskom taught us about communication?

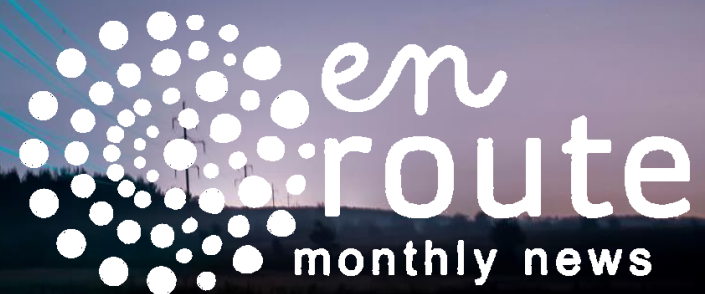
Loadshedding has been a part of our lives since 2007. Take that in, a total of 17 years. As South Africans, we have adapted. The procurement of solar, generator, fuel and inverters as alternative energy sources are annually budgeted as personal or corporate expenses. We have apps on our phones that broadcast loadshedding schedules more frequently than the weather is monitored. We plan our lives around when we do and do not have electricity. We use this information to navigate when to leave our homes and endure traffic, with or without traffic lights or when the food in our fridges / freezers will expire.

We know all this. The question was; “What has Eskom taught us about communication?”

**Well, everything! Mostly that not knowing the facts, leads to speculation. Speculation that nothing is being done to stabilise our electricity grid and therefore supply. I need to add a disclaimer here: These are the views of the author and not those of Routes Coaching!**

**My personal speculation is that nothing is being done. Nothing. The loadshedding man went on holiday in December 2023, therefore we had no loadshedding. In essence, no information leads to possible or incorrect speculation.**

**By Debbie Wheal**



# “what can we learn from this? communicate, communicate, communicate!”

I personally speculate that nothing is being done to save our electricity system. I may well be completely off track. Perhaps there are people fighting the good fight for many hours a day to get a constant and reliable source of energy to me and everyone else in South Africa.

However, I simply don't know. I do not have that information.

Therefore, I fall back on negative speculation.



A fun fact: humans are hot wired to err on the side of negativity in the absence of positive information. I would like to know how many people are working on this 17-year-old problem. I would like to know when my phone app will become obsolete. So often I have encountered people who think that communication is not important. I have often heard the statement: “well, my managers should just know what I am up to”. Managers and team members need to know what is happening. This way we can know for sure what's our progress and not speculate.

Please do not assume that people know what is happening and more especially what is expected. We need to learn the art of communicating to be understood, then to listen to ensure we are understood. So many misunderstandings that could lead to conflict would be avoided if we seek to be understood.

Saying this, I still don't understand why we have loadshedding, after 17 years!  
This is a rhetorical statement, no comment required!

Don't be like Eskom. Communicate! If you are unsure of how to communicate effectively, contact us.

# Thank you for reading!

A closing thought - in the working world where we work with other human beings, communication is essentially our lifeline. Communication builds relationships, enhances collaboration, holds the ability to express ourselves authentically, and creates an environment where individuals can thrive both personally and professionally.

Debbie Wheal

[debbie@routescoaching.co.za](mailto:debbie@routescoaching.co.za)

Please feel free to  
contact us for more on  
communication! 😊

Cassie Quiterres

[cassie@routescoaching.co.za](mailto:cassie@routescoaching.co.za)