



Self-Communication: Am I Talking To Myself?

Sherry Blair There is only one person with whom we communicate with 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, every year of our life. Ourselves.

Mastering communication with ourselves determines our quality of life as it determines our ability to experience life as we would like.

What is your internal dialogue like?

Is it positive? Do you always focus on your strengths?

When your self-talk is based on your strengths you will gain confidence, become motivated, and continuously improve.

Your strengths can be broken down into three categories: Attitude, Skills and Knowledge. Each of these will overlap in putting together a number of related strengths and abilities. Use the guide below to help you keep track of your strengths and possibly pinpoint where you need to do more work.

ATTITUDES

Dependability: showing that you are a reliable worker who does good work.

You know you are dependable when you...

- ✓ Show you have a desire to work
- ✓ Show you have a positive attitude
- ✓ Come to work on time
- ✓ Are organized and pay attention to quality
- ✓ Complete tasks that you said you would
- ✓ Are rarely absent from work

Concern for quality: striving for constant improvement.

You know you have a concern for quality when you...

- ✓ Do things to the best of your ability
- ✓ Know the things you do well
- ✓ Know the areas where you need to improve
- ✓ Check the quality of your own work

Independence and initiative: seeing what needs to be done, doing it, and being responsible for the results.

You know you display independence and initiative when you...

- ✓ Look for things that need to be done
- ✓ Ask yourself whether this is something you can do
- ✓ Fill the need if you are able
- ✓ Take responsibility for your results

Risk-taking: attempting new methods and approaches that you think you can handle, even though you are not sure.

You know you can take reasonable risks when you...

- ✓ Know how risk-taking is accepted in the work that you do
- ✓ Know the boundaries of the decisions you can make within your workplace
- ✓ Identify needs for improvement in your situation or work
- ✓ Figure out new ways of meeting the needs or getting the work done
- ✓ Estimate your ability to meet the needs or get the work done in new ways
- ✓ Find ways to back yourself up if the new way of doing things does not work
- ✓ Assess the results of your attempts to do things differently

Courtesy: showing a basic level of caring, concern and respect for those around you.

You know you have courtesy skills when you...

- ✓ Pay attention to the needs and feelings of those around you
- ✓ Listen to others when they speak with you
- ✓ Offer to help others before you are asked
- ✓ Follow the rules of politeness (i.e. "please" and "thank you")
- ✓ Treat others as worthy individuals

SKILLS

Adaptability skills: skills you use to make changes in your life in order to reach your goals.

You know you are adaptable when you...

- ✓ Have a realistic view of the situation you are in
- ✓ Know that life changes will cause stress
- ✓ Know how to manage stress
- ✓ Are prepared to make changes in your life
- ✓ Can compromise
- ✓ Are aware that you cannot control everything
- ✓ Are prepared for the unexpected

Problem-solving/decision-making skills; skills you use to identify a problem or issue, know you can respond to it, and then decide what response is best for you.

You know you have problem-solving and decision-making skills when you...

- ✓ Identify problems that you need to solve
- ✓ Are able to collect information about a problem
- ✓ See both the pros and cons of a situation
- ✓ Are able to identify possible solutions
- ✓ Make decisions

Communication skills; verbal, written and body language skills that let other people know what you are thinking, want to do, or want others to do.

You know you have communication skills when you...

- ✓ Have basic listening skills
- ✓ Have basic message-sending skills
- ✓ Pay attention to body language
- ✓ Have basic writing skills
- ✓ Resolve conflicts with others

Time management skills: using time in a satisfying and productive way.

You know you have time management skills when you...

- ✓ Have a balance in all the things you do in your life
- ✓ Plan how you will use your time
- ✓ Predict how much time things will take
- ✓ Check how you use your time and make changes for the better

Appearance and dress skills: presenting yourself in the workplace in a way that makes sense for the type of job and for safety.

You know you have appearance and dress skills when you...

- ✓ Bathe regularly
- ✓ Use deodorant
- ✓ Wash your clothes regularly
- ✓ Dress neatly
- ✓ Dress in a similar manner to others at work
- ✓ Wear hair, make-up and/or jewelry in a fashion that meets standards set for your workplace

Work and lifestyle balance: sorting and managing your personal and work responsibilities in a manner that is right for you.

You know you have work and lifestyle balance when you...

- ✓ Recognize the impact of work on your family
- ✓ Trust your family to support you in your work
- ✓ Find child care that you are comfortable with, if needed
- ✓ Fulfill your work, family and personal commitments
- ✓ Have time for yourself and activities you enjoy

Skills for overcoming unfairness: (dealing with the fact that sometimes people may treat you unfairly based on who they think you are, not who you really are.)

You know you have skills for overcoming unfairness when you...

- ✓ Know unfairness exists
- ✓ Believe that even if you are treated unfairly this will not prevent you from reaching your goals

Building relationships: developing and participating in relationships with family, friends, acquaintances and others that will help you and whom you are willing to help.

You know you can build relationships when you...

- ✓ Know you need help, ask for help, and use the help
- ✓ Are specific about the help you need
- ✓ Show a genuine interest in the interests of others
- ✓ Make the effort to identify the needs of others
- ✓ Find people who can connect you with other people who may be helpful

KNOWLEDGE

Ability to use learning opportunities: the skills to improve your skills.

You know you have the ability to use learning opportunities when you...

- ✓ Know the skills that you wish to develop
- ✓ Know the full range of learning opportunities that are available to you
- ✓ Take initiative when it comes to your own learning
- ✓ Keep track of what you learn

Understanding organizational operations: knowing how organizations work and why they function the way they do.

You know you understand organizational operations when you...

- ✓ Know what an organizational vision is
- ✓ Know how money enters the organization
- ✓ Know how money is spent within an organization
- ✓ Know how profit is made
- ✓ Know how workers add value to an organization

Unlike external things, your signature strengths are key to helping you effectively communicate with others and can help you in any situation and you have the ability and control to focus on them at any time. Focusing on and exercising your signature strengths is the path to true fulfillment, gratification, satisfaction and happiness. Continue to find ways to employ those strengths in your everyday experiences.

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"Complaints about a problem without posing a solution is called whining."

Teddy Roosevelt

