Online fundraising tools

Published on May 18, 2021 We have two ears and one mouth for a reason—effective communication is dependent on using them in proportion, and this involves having good listening skills.The workplace of the 21st century may not look the same as it did before COVID-19 spread throughout the world like wildfire, but that doesn't mean you can relax your standards at work. If anything, Zoom meetings, conference calls, and the continuous time spent behind a screen have created a higher level of expectations for meeting etiquette and communication. And this goes further than simply muting your microphone during a meeting.Effective workplace communication has been a topic of discussion for decades, yet, it is rarely addressed or implemented due to a lack of awareness and personal ownership by all parties.Effective communication isn't just about speaking clearly or finding the appropriate choice of words. It starts with intentional listening and being present. Here's how to improve your listening skills for effective workplace communication.Listen to Understand, Not to Speak There are stark differences between listening and hearing. Listening involves intention, focused effort, and concentration, whereas hearing simply involves low-level awareness that someone else is speaking. Listening is a voluntary activity that allows one to be present and in the moment while hearing is passive and effortless.Which one would you prefer your colleagues to implement during your company-wide presentation? It's a no-brainer. Listening can be one of the most powerful tools in your communication arsenal because one must listen to understand the message being told to them. As a result of this deeper understanding, communication can be streamlined because there is a higher level of comprehension that will facilitate practical follow-up questions, conversations, and problem-solving. And just because you heard something doesn't mean you actually understood it.We take this for granted daily, but that doesn't mean we can use that as an excuse.Your brain is constantly scanning your environment for threats, opportunities, and situations to advance your ability to promote your survival. And yet, while we are long past the days of worrying about being eaten by wildlife, the neurocircuitry responsible for these mechanisms is still hard-wired into our psychology and neural processing.A classic example of this is the formation of memories. Case in point: where were you on June 3rd, 2014? For most of you reading this article, your mind will go completely blank, which isn't necessarily bad.The brain is far too efficient to retain every detail about every event that happens in your life, mainly because many events that occur aren't always that important. The brain doesn't—and shouldn't—care what you ate for lunch three weeks ago or what color shirt you wore golfing last month. But for those of you who remember where you were on June 3rd, 2014, this date probably holds some sort of significance to you. Maybe it was a birthday or an anniversary. Perhaps it was the day your child was born. It could have even been a day where you lost someone special in your life.Regardless of the circumstance, the brain is highly stimulated through emotion and engagement, which is why memories are usually stored in these situations. When the brain's emotional centers become activated, the brain is far more likely to remember an event. And this is also true when intention and focus are applied to listening to a conversation. Utilizing these hard-wired primitive pathways of survival to optimize your communication in the workplace is a no-brainer—literally and figuratively.Intentional focus and concentrated efforts will pay off in the long run because you will retain more information and have an easier time recalling it down the road, making you look like a superstar in front of your colleagues and co-workers. Time to kiss those note-taking days away! Effective Communication Isn't Always Through Words While we typically associate communication with words and verbal affirmations, communication can come in all shapes and forms. In the Zoom meeting era we live in, it has become far more challenging to utilize and understand these other forms of language. And this is because they are typically easier to see when we are sitting face to face with the person we speak to.Body language can play a significant role in how our words and communication are interpreted, especially when there is a disconnection involved. When someone tells you one thing, yet their body language screams something completely different, it's challenging to let that go. Our brain immediately starts to search for more information and inevitably prompts us to follow up with questions that will provide greater clarity to the situation at hand. And in all reality, not saying something might be just as important as actually saying something.These commonly overlooked non-verbal communication choices can provide a plethora of information about the intentions, emotions, and motivations. We do this unconsciously, and it happens with every confrontation, conversation, and interaction we engage in. The magic lies in the utilization and active interpretation of these signals to improve your listening skills and your communication skills.Our brains were designed for interpreting our world, which is why we are so good at recognizing subtle nuances and underlying disconnect within our casual encounters. So, when we begin to notice conflicting messages between verbal and non-verbal communication, our brain takes us down a path of troubleshooting. Which messages are consistent with this theme over time? Which statements aren't aligning with what they're really trying to tell me? How should I interpret their words and body language?Suppose we want to break things down even further. In that case, one must understand that body language is usually a subconscious event, meaning that we rarely think about our body language. This happens because our brain's primary focus is to string together words and phrases for verbal communication, which usually requires a higher level of processing. This doesn't mean that body language will always tell the truth, but it does provide clues to help us weigh information, which can be pretty beneficial in the long run.Actively interpreting body language can provide you with an edge in your communication skills. It can also be used as a tool to connect with the individual you are speaking to. This process is deeply ingrained into our human fabric and utilizes similar methods babies use while learning new skills from their parents' traits during the early years of development.Mirroring a person's posture or stance can create a subtle bond, facilitating a sense of feeling like one another. This process is triggered via the activation of specific brain regions through the stimulation of specialized neurons called mirror neurons. These particular neurons become activated while watching an individual engage in an activity or task, facilitating learning, queuing, and understanding. They also allow the person watching an action to become more efficient at physically executing the action, creating changes in the brain, and altering the overall structure of the brain to enhance output for that chosen activity.Listening with intention can make you understand your colleague, and when paired together with mirroring body language, you can make your colleague feel like you two are alike. This simple trick can facilitate a greater bond of understanding and communication within all aspects of the conversation. Eliminate All Distractions, Once and for All As Jim Rohn says, "What is easy to do is also easy not to do." And this is an underlying principle that will carry through in all aspects of communication. Distractions are a surefire way to ensure a lack of understanding or interpretation of a conversation, which in turn, will create inefficiencies and a poor foundation for communication. This should come as no surprise, especially in this day in age where people are constantly distracted by social media, text messaging, and endlessly checking their emails. We're stuck in a cultural norm that has hijacked our love for the addictive dopamine rush and altered our ability to truly focus our efforts on the task at hand. And these distractions aren't just distractions for the time they're being used. They use up coveted brainpower and central processes that secondarily delay our ability to get back on track.Gloria Mark, a researcher at UC Irvine, discovered that it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds for our brains to reach their peak state of focus after an interruption. Yes, you read that correctly—distractions are costly, error-prone, and yield little to no benefit outside of a bump to the ego when receiving a new like on your social media profile.Meetings should implement a no-phone policy, video conference calls should be set on their own browser with no other tabs open, and all updates, notifications, and email prompt should be immediately turned off, if possible, to eliminate all distractions during a meeting.These are just a few examples of how we can optimize our environment to facilitate the highest levels of communication within the workplace. Actions Speak Louder Than Words Effective communication in the workplace doesn't have to be challenging, but it does have to be intentional. Knowledge can only take us so far, but once again, knowing something is very different than putting it into action.Just like riding a bike, the more often you do it, the easier it becomes. Master communicators are phenomenal listeners, which allows them to be effective communicators in the workplace and in life. If you genuinely want to own your communication, you must implement this information today and learn how to improve your listening skills. Choose your words carefully, listen intently, and most of all, be present in the moment—because that's what master communicators do, and you can do it, too! More Tips Improving Listening SkillsFeatured photo credit: Mailchimp via unsplash.com Getty Images Got a cause? Now, instead of following a link to take you to a fundraising page like GoFundMe, Facebook announced this morning the introduction of "Personal Fundraisers," which will allow you to either set up your own page or donate to a cause right on the app. While they introduced the ability to donate funds last year, this new update will allow people to set up their own fundraisers, pending Facebook approval, of course. They will spend the next few weeks testing the new feature, allowing people to set up pages that fall into one of six categories: Education: such as tuition, books or classroom supplies Medical: such as medical procedures, treatments or injuries Pet Medical: such as veterinary procedures, treatments or injuries Crisis Relief: such as public crises or natural disasters Personal Emergency: such as a house fire, theft or car accident Funeral and Loss: such as burial expenses or living costs after losing a loved one The additions will also include a "donate" button available during Facebook Live broadcasts. According to the announcement, the feature "gives public figures, brands, businesses and organizations new ways to fundraise on Facebook for the nonprofits they support.' While this is a great addition and will surely do a lot of good for charities and causes, let us pause for a brief moment of silence in honor of yet another victim of the vicious appetite of the social media megalodon. We're sorry, GoFundMe, but the reality is, you were just a tasty little guppy aimlessly floating around in an ocean of apex predators. You had a great run. This content is created and maintained by a third party, and imported onto this page to help users provide their email addresses. You may be able to find more information about this and similar content at piano.io Showing 1-20 of 123 products # of Recommendations # of User Reviews Average Rating Alphabetically (A-Z) Blackbaud FundraisingBlackbaud Fundraising is a cloud-based donation management platform, which helps businesses automate processes related to payment actions and track donor activities using communication tools. Key features include event management,... 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Read moreWhether it's for an annual appeal, capital campaign or special event, nonprofits in every sector use online fundraising tools to collect donations and connect with supporters. In fact, according to a report on charitable giving, online donations accounted for nearly 7 percent of all contributions in 2014: an 8.9 percent increase over the previous year. With this guide, you can learn more about how online fundraising platforms can help you handle these important donations. Here's what we'll cover: What Is Online Fundraising Software?Common Functionality of Online Fundraising Systems Key Considerations for Comparing ProductsCase Study: Click & Pledge Online Fundraising Software What Is Online Fundraising Software? Online fundraising tools power online donation processing. When users arrive on a website's donation page, they enter credit card billing, contact and other information into an online donation form. When the information in that form is submitted, the credit card is validated and charged. Donation pages in Kindful When processing is complete, the system typically sends donors to a confirmation screen and emails them a tax receipt. At the same time, the funds are electronically deposited in the nonprofit's merchant account, minus processing fees. Then, donor and contribution details can be reviewed and analyzed using reporting functionality. Reporting tools may be built into the online fundraising system, or users may choose to export the data and use different software. Some online fundraising tools are more comprehensive, allowing users to: Customize donation forms, such as the visual design, URL and donation amounts Add custom fields to handle "in memoriam" donations and other unique data, including gifts targeted to a specific program Automatically track and process recurring donations and pledges Process payments using multiple methods, including credit card, PayPal or electronic funds transfer (EFT) Create peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising pages that allow supporters to solicit donations from their friends, groups and social networks Accept and process text-to-give donations Common Functionality of Online Fundraising Systems Products can vary from vendor to vendor, but certain capabilities are offered by most systems. The most common are described in the table below: Custom donation forms Allows users to define donation form-fields and contribution amounts, then generates code to embed it on websites. Custom campaign pages Helps users create complete campaign websites, including donation forms, videos and images, goal progress counters, supporter comments, social sharing functions and more. Recurring payments Donors can choose to make automatic contributions—for example, $20 every month or $200 every December—without having to re-enter credit card and contact information each time. Mass communication tools Allow users to connect with supporters via emails and text messaging. Social sharing Many cloud-based fundraising platforms include built-in social media publishing functions, which let supporters share campaign pages on Facebook, Twitter and other social channels. Campaign reporting dashboard in Classy Key Considerations for Comparing Products Nearly all online fundraising products let users create custom donation forms, process payments and acknowledge supporters. Here are five other factors to consider when comparing products. Processing fees. Online fundraising platforms charge transaction and processing fees for each donation. The fee is either a flat rate (e.g., 30 cents per donation); a percentage of the total donation (usually between 1.5 percent and 9 percent); or a combination of both. Some vendors also charge a monthly or annual subscription fee to use the software, whether donations are processed or not. Tip: To calculate how processing fees impact the software's total cost, determine the number and dollar amount of donations your nonprofit expects to process through the platform in a month, year or single campaign. Then apply the processing fees for a ballpark estimate. Social fundraising. Social (or "peer-to-peer") fundraising functionality is built into many online fundraising systems. It lets supporters create and personalize campaign pages and share them with their friends through social media and email. If your nonprofit hosts events or uses social fundraising in its campaigns, look for products that specialize in peer-to-peer fundraising and that support individual and team fundraising pages. White label capabilities. If you've made online donations, you've probably noticed that some websites redirect you to a donation form on a different URL that doesn't match the look of the rest of the site. This confuses supporters and can reduce a nonprofit's trustworthiness. To prevent this, some products let users control the HTML and styles on the page, so donation forms match the core website. If your nonprofit wants to accept donations on its website, look for "white label" or "custom donation pages" in the vendor's features and benefits lists. Keep in mind that the skills of a Web designer or developer might be needed for this purpose. Constituent relationship management (CRM). When someone makes a donation on a fundraising page, the system should automatically email a receipt to the donor. But most nonprofits want to build a relationship with supporters beyond this interaction. If this applies to you, look for systems that retain donor information. Find out if the online fundraising platform lets you export donor information, or if it integrates directly with a best-of-breed donor management system. This allows your organization to track interactions and communicate with those donors in the future. Usability. "Usability" refers to how easy it is for people to learn and use a product. If software is confusing and hard to use, employees won't use it. So it's important to find a product that is simple enough for everyone in an organization to understand—no matter what their technical ability. Tip: If your organization relies on many short-term employees or volunteers to facilitate fundraising campaigns, usability is even more important, since there is less time to train them how to use the software. Look for such terms as "drag and drop," "WYSIWIG" and "turn-key": These often indicate that a product was built with usability in mind. Case Study: Click & Pledge Online Fundraising Software To learn more about how online fundraising platforms can help improve operations, consider the case of Immigration Equality, a New York-based legal services nonprofit that advocates for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and HIV immigration rights. The organization realized many benefits after implementing the Click & Pledge online fundraising system. In this case study, we explain how the software improved inefficiencies in the organization's donation forms, multiple payment accounts and donor management tasks.