A leader must be able to communicate effectively in order to build positive working relationships. Effective communication is the foundation to all leadership discussions. Being a skilled communicator allows you to lead thoughtful, meaningful, and respectful conversations. Good communication cultivates and strengthens relationships and encouragement.

**A skilled communicator:**

- Takes time to make good decisions about what information to give, to whom to give the information, and the best time to give the information

- Tells the truth, clarifies misconceptions, and works to ease feelings

- Listens with both the head and the heart

- Listens to understand, not to judge or to defend

- Speaks to share information needed by others

- Knows that the best outcomes are the result of clear, honest, and focused exchange of ideas and information