

## Five Levels of Communication

Communication between two people occurs on numerous levels simultaneously, each with its nuances and complexities.

These levels of communication are verbal, physical, auditory, emotional, and energetic.

### The Five Levels of Communication



#### Verbal Level of Communication

Although this is perhaps the most apparent level of human communication, people can spend a lifetime trying to master it.

This level includes our selection of words based on an understanding of meaning between the speaker and the listener.

There are multiple definitions for most words, and few of us hold the exact same meaning for each word.

Different words evoke different images, memories, and meaning for different people.

The logic and reasoning of a statement or argument (Aristotle's logos) influence the effectiveness of the receiving message.

*To communicate effectively on the verbal level, select the "right" words and usage for the context of the conversation (including moral, religious, ethnic and religious differences). Be clear and concise. When possible, formulate your thoughts to avoid rambling. This is an art in itself.*

#### Physical Level of Communication

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) brought the importance of visual cues in how we communicate to many people's attention.

Visual cues like eye contact, gestures, movements, stances, breathing, posture, and facial expressions influence how we feel and communicate.

When used with integrity, techniques like "matching and mirroring" people's posture and gestures (and certain words too) can increase their receptivity of your message.

*To communicate effectively on the physical level, it's helpful to physically align with others, connecting with them in form and movement. It also helps to be mindful of your posture, facial expressions, and hand gestures.*

#### Auditory Level of Communication

The sound of our voice, including the tone, range, volume, and speed affects how our messages are received and interpreted by others.

For example, fast talkers will find it beneficial to slow their speech when speaking to a thoughtful, introverted person or risk being unheard. Also, how we enunciate, inflect, and place emphasis on certain words affects how others interpret the meaning of what we say.

*To communicate effectively on the auditory level, become aware of various auditory cues, speaking to others in a manner more akin to their own ways (another form of “matching and mirroring”).*

## **Emotional Level of Communication**

Few people appreciate how our emotional states affect what we communicate and how the message is interpreted by the recipient.

In rhetoric, Aristotle’s *pathos* represents an appeal to the audience’s emotions.

Are you more receptive to someone who is positive and life-affirming or one who is negative and critical? Enthusiastic or boring?

The speaker’s emotions put the recipient in a particular state of mind and influence how the listener interprets what is said.

*To communicate effectively on the emotional level, become aware of your emotional state, learning to pause and release negative emotions before attempting to connect with others. Words delivered with pride, anger or fear are rarely well-received.*

## **Energetic Level of Communication**

Also called the psychic level, this level of communication encompasses a vast range of unseen factors including a person’s level of consciousness, the frequency or harmonics of the message, and other subtle energies.

Some people seem to have an “X-factor”—a unique *presence*—that naturally imparts their messages to others with greater receptivity and understanding.

*To communicate more effectively, hold the highest intention for the other person’s wellbeing. This requires a unique level of mindfulness generally cultivated through compassion practices. When we are centered in a state of mastery, we’re more likely to access this psychic dimension that holds great treasures of insights into others, helping us communicate with greater ease.*

## **Bringing all the Levels of Communication Together**

The verbal level is the content; it’s *what* we say. The physical, auditory, emotional, and energetic levels represent *how* we convey a message.

These levels of communication are interdependent, as each level affects the other.

For example, our emotional state affects our body language and our overall field influences our emotional state.

Simply becoming aware of these various levels can be beneficial.

When we see the complexities inherent in human communication, we can be made more patient in our speech and more compassionate towards others and ourselves