



Simply Put, Put it Simply

Newspaper writers across the country have an important rule that their writing must be at a fifth grade reading level. Why is this? The answer is simple: it is simple to understand. At a fifth grade reading level, readers will understand what is being communicated through the writing. The focus of the writing is not on complexity or flowery words, but rather on the story itself. Consumers of media are after information, often as quickly as possible. No stumbling blocks should be put in front of these readers.

Simplicity in communication can be a valuable tool in leadership. When leading a team, time is of the essence. Everyone has a job to do, and customers rely on accuracy, precision, and efficiency. Instead of giving your audience additional information or details, give them exactly what they care about. Speak to your team in a way they can understand and that shows empathy by focusing on their needs.

An exercise that can help with keeping communication simple is writing out your words before delivering them. Once you have written down all of your thoughts and instructions, take time to remove any words that could distract your audience from the message. This could include any technical jargon or confusing sentences that focus on yourself rather than those you are speaking with. The final result of this exercise will yield simple and more effective communication your team will appreciate.

-Josh

Higgins, Jessica. *10 Skills for Effective Business Communication: Practical Strategies from the World's Greatest Leaders*. Tycho Press, 2018.