

Health care communication essay sample

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Effective communications are those that adhere to the following five standard elements: complete, concise, concrete, clear, and accurate. Thus, all questions are answered, only relevant statements are included, the words used are specific and well-considered, short, familiar words are used, and the language avoids jargon or inappropriate expressions (Murray, Hidebrandt, and Thomas, 1997). By abiding by these standards, any exchange of information is more likely to result in a shared understanding of the situation and in some instances, a shared course of action.

One difference between these general effective communication rules and communication within health care is the result of the consistent high level of complexity of the subject matter in health and science communications (Zarcadoolas, 2011). On first glance it would seem that the simplest message would be the most clear and sometimes this is the case. However, when using traditional scoring systems like readability and text theory, it has been found for technical subject matter, sometimes too simple can be more difficult to understand than something just slightly more complex (Zaracadoolas, 2011). Thus, it is important in health care communication to strike the right balance between making the content clear and making the content more accurate or complete and therefore more understandable.

A second difference between general communications and health care communications is that the information being shared is often of a highly personal nature and not topics that people are usually comfortable discussing with a stranger. However, it is in the best interests of all parties to have the communication be full and effective. Some techniques a provider might use to get more candid communication include using collaborative

communication, conflict management, and recognizing divergent health beliefs (Ha and Longnecker, 2010).

Divergent health beliefs are just one example of where culture can impact healthcare communication. In particular, because of the high stakes involved, emotion is a common element in these situations. Therefore, an understanding of differences in cultural display rules, that is ways of showing emotions in different cultures, can aid a health care provider in being a more effective communicator (de Pre, 2005). In essence, effective communication means a health care provider recognizes and takes into account cultural and personal preferences that make individuals different from each other (de Pre, 2005) such as differing health beliefs or differing cultural display rules.

All effective communication shares common elements, no matter what the subject matter. But there are aspects of healthcare communication that can mean just following standard communication rules may not be sufficient. This essay described several examples of this issue. Specifically, there is a need to balance simplicity with accuracy and completeness when discussing complex topics such as science and health. There may also be a need for special communication techniques when discussing information of a personal nature. Finally, the impact of different health beliefs and different cultural display rules are specific examples that support the importance of cultural competency in healthcare communications. By taking into consideration some of these complications when drafting, speaking, or participating in professional communications, it increases the chance of reaching that goal of a shared understanding of the situation and a shared course of action, the common aim of healthcare communications.

References

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