

A career in
information
technology requires
strong
communication skills

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



In the following piece I will be looking at the statement “ a career in information technology requires strong communication skills” and why I believe it’s not just an important skill to have in information technology role but also for any career path one may take.

I will be using examples from research I have done into the topic as well as from Northwell Health where I have spent my last five months on as part of my third year placement program in New York City. I have been placed in an IT role so it’s been eye opening how integral it is to be able to communicate my requirements and problems to my fellow co-workers in a manner that we both can understand. However in this section of the essay I will be focusing on my research into the topic and why I feel communication is such a vital skill.

In my department at work articles are frequently sent around our office and one such was entitled “ Too much team harmony can kill creativity”, this article looks at and talks about how a successful and diverse workplace requires the workers to be able to express their individual, unique and conflicting viewpoints to their co-workers so they can bounce their ideas off each other in a way that promotes innovation in the workplace as opposed to the entire work force agreeing on everything and not voicing their own unique opinions and ideas that could benefit workflows, processes and overall collaborations between everyone in the office. This can be easily applied to any Information technology role as the technology landscape is evolving faster than ever and we need to communicate and work better together in order to stay ahead of the curve and our competition. As individuals we can

never have all the answers and it's up to us and the leaders of the workplace to put our co-workers in positions where they are forced to express their thoughts and talk about what they feel are good ideas and they can be confident in doing so. The article says " teams that are able to engage in productive task conflict — expressing disagreements, negotiating between different views, and working under a certain amount of tension — tend to be more innovative" (Lovric & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2018), I feel this highlights my point clearly that for everyone to be functioning at their highest level they need to be promoting everyone's collaboration and supporting new ideas using strong communication skills to keep up in any IT role.

A great example of my own personal experience is from my time at Northwell is when a new meeting called BITU(bi-weekly integrated team meeting) was set up to allow all the members of the marketing department to get together and discuss any issues they had the previous weeks with work or if they wanted to learn how the individual teams carry out their processes. The first meeting turned out to be a disaster as there was a lack of communication beforehand which meant there was no proper plan in place and it quickly fell apart with everyone having their own individual debates and we never got around to the core issues which were supposed to be discussed. These original failures allowed us to look at the bigger picture and learn from our mistakes so the next time the meeting took place the team as a whole was able to decide and discuss what we felt, as a whole, would be best moving forward in terms of what the BITU meeting should actually be about and how it would be conducted. This in turn meant every

BITU since has been better than the last and allowed everyone to express their new ideas and disagreements in an environment that supports innovation and not just everyone agreeing with each other but highlighting how communicating effectively is key to the betterment of the workplace.

My research into this topic led me to an article that discusses how it's important to make sure good ideas in the workplace don't get lost in a high paced environment such as a role in the IT sector. It revolved around how essential it is for all members of a workforce no matter what level they're at in the organization to have their ideas looked at and seriously considered whether it's coming from an executive or a regular worker. A company can never know where its' next great idea will come from so it's important for them to consider everyone across the organization is communicating their ideas. This is no different for an IT role as technology has so many aspects and there's so much information out there it's important to consider everyone's input. The article looks at barriers to creativity such as workers being afraid of their idea might fail or executives not considering anyone else's ideas, going onto say " even though many employees had good ideas, they were sometimes afraid to speak up because of their low status in the organization and because they believed that their ideas were not mature enough and therefore would not be implemented." (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). It's important that this stigma is eliminated in the IT workplace so all workers can feel confident in their ideas which will in turn lead improved and increased communication in their roles so they can stay ahead of

competition while ensuring any good ideas don't fall through the cracks or go unnoticed.

This idea of removing the barriers to creativity is evident in my current workplace as every Monday we have a big team meeting led by senior leaders. These meetings are designed to keep everyone updated on past, present and future projects. However, the meetings always end with a casual conversation as our supervisors ask how things are generally in life, in the office, etc. This gives the opportunity for employees of all hierarchy levels to chat about those topics. This conversation usually involves our supervisors asking us what processes and techniques are working and not working in terms of project moving along. There have been various times in which we have gotten rid of processes that were inefficient and have created a better one. For example we use a program called Confluence. Data and content are stored and pulled from here. This was our default method for all projects. However, one meeting revealed that Confluence may not always be the best approach in certain projects and situations but another program called Teamwork PM is more useful in situations where communication is needed between tasks as it has a section where workers need to discuss problems with on-going tasks in a comment section and anyone can see and include their own input. This would have never happened if our superiors hadn't given us an opportunity to discuss these ideas and be the listener, not the talker highlighting how important communication is in our roles.

The final bit of research I did brought me to another web article which looks at communication in the workplace and how it's so important that it's used

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effectively by workers within their first 1 to 3 months at a company so they can build strong inter-work relationships and network themselves efficiently. If implemented correctly it can mean new hires feel more welcome and more inclined and more confident to speak up about their ideas in meetings, to co-workers, and to hire ups which is important for IT roles and all roles alike. The article talks about how employees who had a face to face meet with their superiors just after being hired were able to grow and develop in a number of areas highlighted in the article. These are stated as “ they tended to have a 12% larger internal network and double network centrality within 90 days – they had higher quality meetings – , they spent nearly three times as much time collaborating with their team as those who did not have a one-on-one.”(Klinghoffer, Young & Liu, 2018). This highlights how important it’s for superiors to communicate with their workers in an effective manner as strong communication skills can lead to increases in productivity, focus and dedication from their workers whether it’s in IT or any other role.

In my time at Northwell I’ve come to understand they do a great job at making sure friendships are built among co-workers and throughout the team. We have monthly lunches, company events such as BBQs and picnics, as well as the occasional happy hour. While they may seem like activities unrelated to work, they play a key role in building bonds among the team. They provided a more relaxed environment to talk to hire-ups in my office, making them seem much more approachable and relatable. This feeling is also carried over into the office itself. Because of these outings and events, I felt more relaxed and confident approaching co-workers in the office and sharing

my own ideas and opinions about big projects or potential improvements. For example, although I don't work on the development team, I've been able to voice my opinion and suggestions to the development team because of the friendships I've made with members on the team, such as Nitin Menon and Don Grath. We have worked together to fix minor program functionalities vital to my teams efficiency, such as moving fields to a more proper place when building pages.

For these following reasons it should be clear to everyone a career in information technology requires strong communication skills in order to ensure employees are satisfied and providing the company with everything they have to offer whether it's ensuring they settle in properly, are being friendly with other members of their office or making their ideas and opinions aware to others without having to fear failing or being ignored by management.