



Responses to ACECNY questions:

1. **When attending a business meeting or conferences, how do I pre-plan my strategic communications? (e.g. before event, coffee/snack breaks, dinner or receptions) I know I try to get ahold of a list of attendees and plan targeted discussions for the events.**

Preplanning strategic communications when attending business meetings/conferences is a wise proactive move. The best steps to accomplish this are:

- a. Review the list of attendees and identify the top 3 people with whom you'd like to interact.
- b. Research these 3 individuals (*and their respective company*) so you can learn key pieces of information that may prove helpful. Take notes so it's easier to remember details.
- c. Determine 2-3 open-ended, strategic questions to pose to these 3 individuals. When you ask these questions use active listening to ensure you fully understand what you've heard.
- d. Plan ways to follow-up with these 3 individuals so your interaction has more purpose.

2. **How do I approach upper management to express interest in shifting to more business development vs. technical?**

Determine your value proposition relative to shifting from technical to business development and ensure you have the necessary expertise to be beneficial to your firm in this capacity.

- a. Familiarize yourself with your company's business development strategy.
- b. Identify 2-3 ways you can make a difference in business development (consider your networking skills and your ability to build and extend relationships).
- c. Practice stating your approach and record your responses, so you can listen to the playback and modify as needed.
- d. Request an appointment with upper management to discuss this shift and be sure to highlight the added value you'll deliver in this role.

3. **Is social media advised as personal branding to expand your career? How should this be approached?**

Social media is clearly recognized as personal branding. According to Alison Doyle (recognized career expert), if used correctly, it's an integral part of your job search and career development.

- a. Keep your profile updated on the various social media sites (*e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook*).
- b. Build your network before you need it and then add to it, as appropriate.
- c. Work to establish your online presence by becoming active in various social media groups, offering your opinion, where suitable. Increase your social media visibility.



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4. How to incorporate stories into presentations?

Stories are an excellent way to keep listeners engaged in your message.

- a. Keep a bank or repository of stories to refer to, as needed.
- b. Stories you collect may either be yours or those you have permission to share.
- c. Stories may be a rich source to reference if they're relevant to your presentation.
- d. Any time you use a story, practice delivering it first and time your delivery, so you stay within the overall designated time allotment.

5. Where is an appropriate line for senior management to draw between courteous and openness/transparency to junior staff and middle management and "need to know only" basis when it comes to rolling out of changes that would impact junior staff and perhaps middle management as well. In particular, when middle management may be the personnel that ends up needing to explain the details of the coming change and whys/how's?

Senior management at any company must first establish their approach/policy regarding communication across different staff levels.

- a. Once that policy is agreed upon and developed, it should be shared with all employees.
- b. This policy should be revisited on a scheduled basis, so it can be reviewed and modified, as needed based on input received from staff.

6. When does remote working away from the office begin to fail due to lack of face-to-face communication and the effectiveness of being connected?

It is imperative to understand the distinction between remote vs. face-to-face interaction and to clearly state circumstances when each is beneficial and when it warrants a change.

- a. Ensure that remote interaction isn't a substitute for the purpose of convenience.
- b. In general, face-to-face communication is most suitable to deliver bad or sensitive news, have meaningful discussions, debate ideas or anything that includes a dialog or interaction.
- c. Ideally, face-to-face interaction should be the default unless extenuating circumstances justify remote communication.



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7. **With social media platforms such as LinkedIn becoming increasingly popular and saturated with content, how can we maintain our authentic professional voice? Will we be “left behind” if we don’t participate in professional social media?**

Maintaining your authentic professional voice is important not only in social media platforms but in any type of professional arena.

- a. First and foremost, determine what is unique about you and how you may add value.
- b. Seek out discussion groups on social media where you can learn what issues are being discussed and why they’re relevant.
- c. When you believe you have something pertinent to share in these groups, consider asking a thought-provoking question, offering a comment or starting a new discussion. By doing so, you’ll be adding value and therefore won’t be “left behind.”

8. **How can I better communicate with a senior manager who has very different communication styles than my own?**

Having different communication styles is not only natural but to be expected.

- a. Ensure you have a solid understanding of your senior manager’s communication style.
- b. Schedule a conversation with the senior manager asking how he or she prefers to receive and deliver information. Take notes and seek clarification, if warranted.
- c. Practice delivering your information if you believe this is a new or different communication style.

9. **My role has recently transitioned from team member to team leader. How do I modify my style, intensity and regularity of communication to best fit my new role as a leader, but still be engaged with team members who were recently my peers?**

Recommend this article from Forbes, which has many salient ideas for consideration:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2017/06/29/promoted-from-peer-to-leader-18-ways-to-make-a-smooth-transition/#723737f339fd>

10. **I find myself in situations with very senior leaders, C-Suite and company owners and board members in networking situations, which is great but often daunting. How do I succinctly develop my value statement, or elevator pitch for an audience in my industry that may feel they have heard it all before? We have no control over what others may or may not have heard previously.** Apply the suggestions in this business communication workshop (**How to Communicate C.O.N.F.I.D.E.N.C.E.**) for a good starting place. You may also want to visit my website and review my business communication products.