



Alan Hall, Contributor

Speaker, author, investor and catalyst for entrepreneurial growth.

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The Top Communication Traits of Great Leaders

As [Mike Myatt](#) noted in his [April article](#), it's impossible to become a great business leader without being a great communicator—not a big talker, but a great communicator—as well.

Famous entrepreneurs are known for their skilled communication with employees, vendors, investors and clients. It is one of the most vital traits they must have. Whether the news is positive or negative, they know it is best to be **forthright, honest and timely**. They know that people appreciate **transparency and truth**.



Strong leaders are great communicators - not "big talkers"

How do these leaders communicate?

- Thoughtful leaders communicate through meetings, speeches, emails, tweets and phone calls.
- They write blogs, articles and deliver information via the media. Their topics include financial information, corporate vision and strategy.
- They review values and culture.
- They note accomplishments and celebrate progress.
- They share their plans, goals and priorities and discuss challenges and barriers.
- They also teach, encourage, inspire and motivate.
- They express appreciation and gratitude.
- They reassure and calm those around them.
- They make requests and pleas.
- They exude confidence, enthusiasm and integrity.
- They are articulate and never condescending.

- They are engaged in such activities hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and yearly, and they instruct and teach fellow leaders in any position of responsibility to do likewise.

As they communicate effectively, these leaders are admired, trusted, followed. They are the epitome of servant leaders.

Consider the powerful example of President **Abraham Lincoln** as he delivered a historic two-minute speech in 1863 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. In the midst of the Civil War, he stood where many had died to consecrate their final resting places and to exhort all Americans to continue the fight for the survival of representative democracy, that the “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.” He also reminded his audience of the adopted principles established by the Founding Fathers of human equality and the overarching need to preserve the Union. In a few brief moments, with dignity and wisdom, he spoke clearly to the nation about its dark condition and its bright future. He invited all to stand together in the great cause of humanity. Fortunately, we are the beneficiaries of an inspired leader who knew how to communicate to his people.

When I think of other outstanding leaders with this great skill, coach **John Wooden** of UCLA fame comes to mind. Over an amazing career, he not only taught his team how to win multiple national basketball championships but to be great men as well. Soft spoken and humble, this great teacher led by example and precept. His books on leadership are a superior guide for everyone who leads people.

Not all leaders are born to speak with the golden tongue of **Winston Churchill**. Some of us stutter and fear to speak. We lack the skills and natural gifts of the great communicator **Ronald Reagan**. For those who need to develop our communication skills, there are wonderful resources at our disposal. There are classes to attend, books to read and professional coaches to increase our capabilities. The goal we should pursue is to maximize this important talent through knowledge, preparation, rehearsal and performance.

In conclusion, please remember that all top-notch entrepreneurs possess and exhibit the critical skills of communication. It is a key characteristic of successful business builders.

For more detailed information I have written an e-book on the Characteristics of a Successful Entrepreneur that is available from [Amazon](#) or from my personal website at www.AlanEHall.com.

This article is available online at:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/alanhall/2012/07/06/the-top-communication-traits-of-great-leaders/>