



Oral Communication: General Tips

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TIP SHEET

Improve your **oral communication** skills with these general tips:

- ✓ Slow down your speech and pronounce words clearly and correctly.
- ✓ Vary your pitch, tone and volume to emphasize key words or sentences.
- ✓ Record yourself speaking and then listen to the recording to analyze your pitch, tone, speed and volume.
- ✓ Adjust the volume of your voice to your audience (e.g. speak softly when you are talking one-on-one; speak louder when you are talking to a larger group or across a room).
- ✓ Be conscious of your speech to avoid filler words (e.g. um, uh, ah, like, well, etc.).
- ✓ Organize your thoughts and ideas before speaking (e.g. write notes on what you want to say).
- ✓ Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking.
- ✓ Concentrate on the speaker's message and resist distractions in order to focus your attention on listening.
- ✓ Respond non-verbally to show understanding and interest when communicating (e.g. nodding your head, smiling, etc.).
- ✓ Make eye contact when listening or talking to people.
- ✓ Ask questions until you are sure you understand what is being said.
- ✓ Be specific when asking questions and giving answers.
- ✓ Take notes to help remember what is being communicated.