



Different Individuals Valuing Each other Regardless of Skin, Intellect, Talent or Years

DIVERSITY

Understanding Cultures and Diversities to build relationship
and respect when working with clients and co-workers



9 Ways to Improve Caregiver and Client Communication and the Relationship

Information taken from:

<https://www.homecarepulse.com/articles/8-ways-to-improve-communication-with-home-care-clients/>

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Information to help you develop cultural understanding and competence.

Communication is more than talking; it's *understanding*.

By communicating effectively, you're telling your clients that you care about them, and want to make them happy. You're telling them you appreciate their business, and ultimately that they are worth the effort. And by implementing these points company-wide, you will help improve communication, increasing satisfaction among both clients and employees.

The caregiver/client relationship can often be fragile and difficult. Home care is a stressful setting that typically involves great sickness or disability and within that, it is easy for tempers to flare and patience to run thin. This is unfortunate, however, because in addition to it being a difficult relationship, the caregiver/client relationship is also an extremely important one.

In order for quality care to take place, the caregiver and the client must foster a good relationship, no matter how difficult that may be at times.

The caregiver at no time should yell, speak disrespectfully, use offensive or foul language, use inappropriate gestures or looks or engage in any intimate or sexual relationship with the client or their family members.

Here are 12 steps caregivers and clients can take to improve their relationship and form a genuine bond and foster a relationship that will create an environment for quality of services and care.

1. Learn to Ask for Help. The caregiver/client relationship is very close, it often involves difficult, confusing or emotionally challenging scenarios. One of the first steps toward high-quality communication and a safe, healing relationship is transparency and the ability to ask for help. This is true for both the client and the caregiver.

In order to build trust, the client needs to be able to request help when it is needed and, in order to provide quality care, the caregiver needs to be able to ask the client for help in understanding something new or clarifying a preference or concern. Asking for help is central to communication and communication, in turn, is central to the rest of the caregiver/client relationship.

2. Be Patient. Clients who have suffered a traumatic brain injury and the elderly often have difficulty with skills like speech and memory. Additionally, since traumatic brain injuries often affect the part of the brain that deals with response to stimuli, risk-taking and adherence to rules, injured people may exhibit less concern for rules and an increased level of risky or downright dangerous behavior.



Patience is the most important virtue a caregiver can have in situations like these. Don't just react to the heat of the situation. **Remain Calm!**

It is important for a caregiver to understand that injured people and the elderly are not always in complete control of their actions and, with that in mind, to give the person extra time to calm down and make different decisions. This often requires reasoning, positivity and empathy.

3. Use Encouragement. Encouragement is an underrated soft skill. In addition to motivating clients to behave differently when needed, encouragement also goes a long way toward boosting a client's self-esteem and making him or her feel capable and in charge once more. Additionally, since being encouraging with clients benefits both the caregiver and the individual, it can rapidly increase the fullness of the relationship.

4. Be an Active Listener. Each client has a story to tell and learning to truly listen to that story will quickly foster a bond and encourage increased communication and understanding. Additionally, active listening with clients encourages increased rapport and allows the caregiver to better pick up on potential warning signs.

When having a conversation with a client, make eye contact and turn your body toward the person speaking. Be careful not to interrupt and ask plenty of good questions to ensure that the client feels heard and respected.

5. Do What the Client Loves. Do you have a client who loves to read but cannot anymore due to poor vision or impaired brain function? Maybe you have a client who loves puzzles, scrapbooking or board games. Whatever the case may be, make a concerted and honest effort to engage the client in these pastimes.

In addition to helping a client feel more involved, whole and capable, these activities can go a long way toward decreasing feelings of distress in a client and encouraging positive changes in behavior.



6. Always Be Honest. If you don't know the answer to something, let the client know. It is never acceptable to give false information just to put a bandage on a wound. Though in the short term the client may be upset with the truth, in the long term they will appreciate your honesty.

7. Practice Respect. Caregivers must have a deep respect for the client and his or her family. The client's home is a workplace and must be treated like one. When a caregiver is respectful of a client's home, belongings and preferences, the client feels respected in turn, which leads to less distress and an increased feeling of relaxation and comfort.

When practices like empathy, active listening, respect, transparency and patience are exercised, both caregiver and the client can find themselves in a deep, caring and safe relationship. In a home care setting, these types of relationships are integral in creating healing and comfort. Although home care relationships can be challenging, at times, both client and caregiver can take a variety of simple steps toward improving the relationship and creating a bond.

8. Maintain a professional appearance. Some clients like to joke around however keeping a professional attitude will be the key to maintaining a respectful relationship and keep professional boundaries. Clients expect businesses to behave professionally, even if you are buddies. Always wearing your uniform and speaking professionally, using "Mr. and Mrs." before their name will help set the tone. Don't be too casual.

9. Control Anger. There will be time when confrontation may happen. You can take steps to control your own angry feelings, as well as to defuse your client's anger. Anger is a natural feeling but don't allow it to overpower you at work.

10. Do not interrupt. If your client is angry at you, acknowledge the feeling in a non-hostile way, by saying something like, "I know you're angry. I want to help."

11. Take a deep breath. There's no reason to lose your temper. Showing anger or even raising your voice demonstrates a lack of self-control, which is something that could seriously damage client/caregiver relationship. So keep your cool – even when doing so seems difficult.

12. Walk Away. Let's face it: Some people have terrible tempers that are nearly impossible to quell. If your client is so angry that he or she can't be reasoned with, it's time to call it quits. Don't let angry clients abuse you – especially when they don't respond to your behaving reasonably and professionally. If things get out of hand, you're always in the right to walk away, but don't leave your client.