

5 States of Communication

In communication, speed isn't the bottleneck. Quality is.

Good communicators think about what state of communication they're in and recognize the role they play in helping the communication move through states.



Transmitted



Received



Understood



Agreed



**Converted to
useful action**



Most people assume they've communicated when they **TRANSMIT**, but there are 4 other states!

You said something. ➡ Doesn't mean they heard it!

He opened your doc. ➡ Doesn't mean he understood it!

She responded to your email. ➡ Doesn't mean she agreed with you!

You all agreed. ➡ Doesn't mean anyone knows what the next steps are!



If you're noticing communication breakdown, it can be useful to check your assumptions and identify where the breakdown may be happening.

Remember that in back-and-forth conversations, you're likely moving through these states quite quickly!

States of communication by Scott Berkun in *The Art of Project Management* (2005).



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