

Canadians speak quickly and have accents which Pakistanis do not always understand. The reverse is also true. Many Pakistani counterparts report that Canadians do not listen carefully and often cut Pakistanis off short. Listening is one of the most effective communication skills. Not only does it allow people to learn, but it also conveys a sense of interest in what others have to say.

To facilitate communication, it is helpful to speak slowly and paraphrase frequently. Where appropriate, repeat incoming messages in your own words and ask the person receiving your messages to do the same. Using this technique will help ensure that messages are interpreted correctly. Paraphrasing is better than asking, "Do you understand?" This question always elicits an affirmative response. Never assume that the other person has understood what you have said.

Read the Pakistani English newspapers. Pakistanis love to discuss politics. Keeping up with Pakistani news will give you some talking points and help you gain rapport with your Pakistani colleagues. Pakistanis will ask you about Canadian politics.

Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is a complex subject of great importance when communicating across cultures. The best way to learn about non-verbal communication is by observing. For instance, you will soon notice that men and women rarely look each other in the eye when speaking. Subordinates and servant never look their bosses in the eye. Pakistanis rarely say "no" directly. Watch their body language; they can be telling you "no" while saying "yes."

As a general guideline for effective communication, listen, observe, and don't assume anything.