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Successful business people know the importance of effective communication in all forms.

FAIRFIELD, NJ -- In today's business world, you're likely to find a young professional who is totally comfortable streaming video, working chat rooms and tweeting information. What successful businesses realize is these valuable, tech-savvy employees also need great communication skills to succeed.

Bederson, LLP, an accounting firm with offices in West Orange and Fairfield, knows that having top communications skills in all forms is important.

Susan Wernick, PR Director of Bederson, said, "Today's professionals are so on top of technical skills and devices, but the 'soft' skills are equally important, such as speaking, presenting and networking effectively and they are very important to do the work and evolve as future business leaders."

Communications trainer Sharlene Vichness, president of Language Directions, agreed that learning how to speak appropriately in presentations, phone calls and just casual meetings is important for every employee who works with customers, whether high-level executives or retail customers. Usually, Vichness presents these tips in seminars for business, but she says everyone can learn to be a better communicator.

Vichness says sounding like a confident person immediately sets the tone for any conversation. "There are many factors that work into that, including the volume at which you speak, your word choice, tonality, regional accent and style....you need to know how to effectively use these," she said.

"Your voice should project everything you want your listener to know about you," she added. Things that fall into those factors include avoiding using contractions or filler words, like 'um;' avoiding jargon or slang others may not understand; and using the right words and inflections to effectively get your point across.

One humorous example of proper inflection is the comment, "Nice Tie Bob." It can come out as a compliment: "Nice tie Bob!" but with a change of inflection and pause, it can come out as sarcasm: "NICE tie, Bob."

Other things people who primarily use email or text to communicate need to learn are simple skills: looking at the person you're talking to when you're having a conversation and not speaking too quickly, which can be perceived as nervousness.

"These things all sound rudimentary, but for a generation that's been communicating through electronic devices most of their lives, learning how to speak and communicate effectively needs to be practiced," Vichness said.

Christine Filip, president of Business Development Partners, said taking that effective vocal communication leads to more trust and more confidence in the person speaking. "Why do people work with professionals?" she asked. "They trust that you will be dependable, do a good job and be there when you need them."

She added that influential people in business and in life negotiate with people all the time, from store sales people to the president of a company to family members....though she did advise that "negotiating with teenagers is likely not to be successful...it's just the way it is."

She said the most important thing for everyone to learn is to be prepared with the information you need in the situation you find yourself, whether it is researching plumbers before calling the one you want to hire or researching the competition of a business contact before talking about a plan to help their company.

Vichness also addressed a big fear for many people: being nervous or shy in networking events or even parties where you don't know the people in the room. She had advice that's easy to follow: "Arrive early, scope out someone who looks just as nervous or shy as you, say hello and start a conversation about them -- people love to talk about themselves -- and then the two of you can meet more new people together."

Wernick said her company feels improving skills such as these are highly important for everyone to be successful in many areas today, not only business. "It is important to know how to do it."

For more information on Bederson, LLP, go to: [www.bederson.com](http://www.bederson.com).