

What is your CQ?

Take this quiz to measure your communication quotient.

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If your ideas sometimes fall upon deaf ears or your proposals are frequently met with indifference, you may not be communicating well. This quiz will measure your CQ—communication quotient. Answer true or false, then check the tips for improving your score.

- 1. When a colleague or staff member, speaks with me, I nod my head and smile because I know what she's going to say.
- 2. It's easier to speak with people I like or people who are similar to me.
- 3. People frequently ask me "What did you mean?"
- 4. I often think of what I'll say next when someone is talking with me.
- 5. On a hectic day, I can't always give my full attention to someone
- 6. I've been told many times, "Don't get defensive".
- 7. No one ever understands my point of view.
- 8. I sometimes feel challenged or threatened by others when they ask me about my work.
- 9. If I'm unsure of how to react in a situation, I'll take the lead from the other person.
- 10. I always evaluate my perceptions before acting on them.
- 11. If I run into staff members who seem upset, I'll ask what's wrong.
- 12. Before interpreting what a facial expression might mean, I always check my perceptions verbally.
- I make a conscious effort to get feedback on my own nonverbal cues.

How did you do? For question 1 to 8 give yourself points for every true answer. For questions 9 to 13, give yourself points for every "false" answer. Out of a total of 65 possible points, the lower you scored, the better you are at communicating with others.

How can you improve? Questions 1 to 5 address barriers in communication. If you scored poorly in this section, review the questions that caused your high score. Consider how your behaviors—however well-intentioned could be hampering your interactions with others.

Questions 6 to 8 address defensiveness. If you didn't fare well with these questions, you're not alone, but remember, the job is on you to make yourself clear. Most importantly, take some time out if you can't avoid that defensive feeling. Schedule time to reconvene, and in the meantime, cool down.

Nonverbal cues can be tricky, so if you score poorly on question 9 to 13, you may want to read up on interpreting body language. Consider also a tendency to make assumptions about others behaviors can create communication problems.