

Achieve and Avoid



Good communication requires us to respect each other. A tip for respectful conversations is to consider:

- what we want to achieve.
- what we to avoid.

Achieve and Avoid

It is easy to focus too much on what we want to achieve in our conversations. For example, “I want to convince this person that I am right” or “I want to make this person realize that they are not considering all of the facts.” But, we should be putting the same focus on what we want to avoid during the conversation. We want to avoid insulting the other person, or even worse, ruining a relationship from a conversation gone wrong.

Before a conversation, if we think about what we want to achieve, we could want to:

- express our own opinion.
- give examples of our perspective.

We want to avoid:

- insulting the other person.
- making someone else feel insignificant or disrespected.

Approaching with Respect and Tolerance

It is important to remember that showing someone respect doesn't mean you are endorsing their beliefs. We don't have to agree with another person to give them respect and accept that their beliefs are valid to them.

Therefore, if we genuinely want to engage with someone who has different opinions, we need to approach them with respect and acceptance. A quick look at social media can show us that sometimes differences in opinion bring out criticism of people who think differently than we do. Criticism and judgment in those moments are precisely what we wanted to avoid. It will cause others to shut down communication and entrench them more deeply into their ideas and beliefs.

Your Next Conversation

Of course, we don't always prepare for each conversation and think through what we want to achieve and what we want to avoid. But, if we practice being aware of what we want to achieve and avoid, we'll get better at having respectful conversations that both people feel good about.