

# How Americans Communicate

Conducted by Roper Starch

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## Talk is not Cheap

You ask a passerby for directions to the museum. You talk to your son about his grades or his new girlfriend. You persuade your wife to watch "Saving Private Ryan" instead of "Next Stop

Wonderland." You ask your boss for a raise. Maybe you even invite your in-laws to visit. The outcome of all these conversations has some impact on your life –perhaps an insignificant one, but possibly also one with major consequences. Who knows what the things you say today will come back and do to you tomorrow?

The **National Communication Association** (NCA) commissioned **Roper Starch Worldwide** to conduct a survey of how Americans communicate. NCA wanted to find out how comfortable and effective people feel communicating amongst themselves and with others, and in different situations and by different means. This report is a detailed look at the results from that survey, conducted in the Summer of 1998.

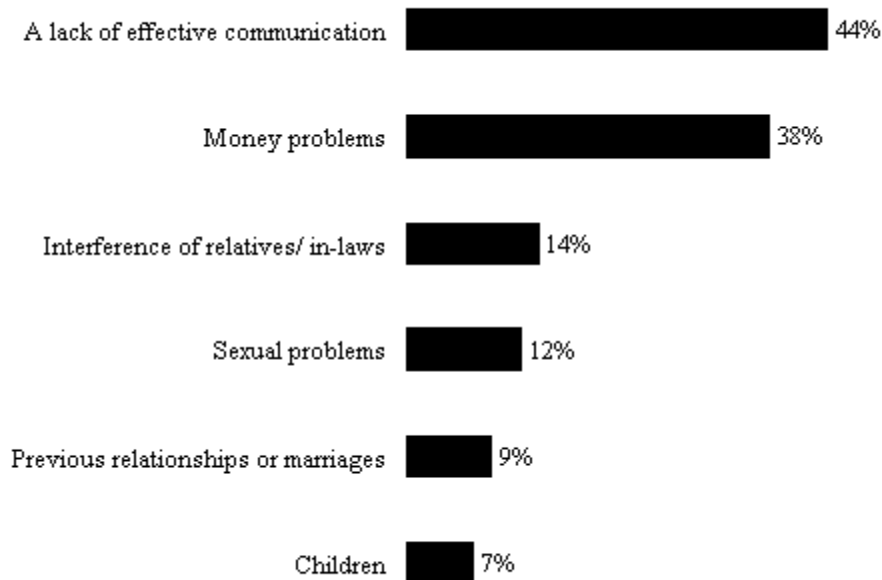
Most people realize that the lack of effective communication with others can lead to serious problems in a person's life: 44% of Americans believe that it "very frequently" causes a marriage or a relationship to end, fewer (38%) say that money problems "very frequently" get in the way of a relationship, some name interference of relatives or in-laws (14%), others blame sexual problems (12%), previous relationships (9%), and children (7%).

When asked to choose the most frequent cause among those they listed as "very frequent causes," only two stand out: a majority (53%) say a lack of effective communication between partners is the most frequent cause, while fewer than three in ten (29%) say money problems are the most frequent cause. All other causes are ranked first by fewer than one in ten people.

### **Americans Say a Lack of Effective Communication is the Leading Cause for a Marriage to End**

Q. 11

Base: 1001



### **How well do Americans communicate?**

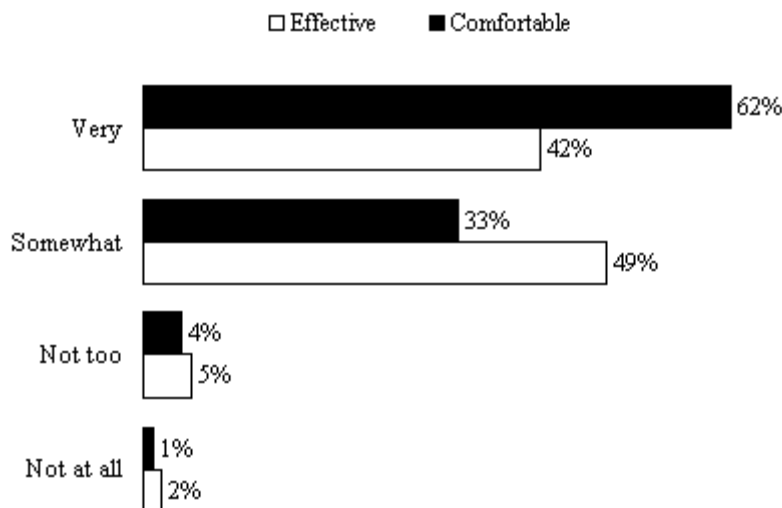
Based on their own assessments, a majority of Americans believe that they are fairly good communicators: only 5 percent of people admitted that they are not comfortable communicating with people in general whereas two thirds of the population (62%) feel very comfortable. More than nine out of every ten people (91%) report that they are also very or somewhat effective when communicating with others.

Americans continuously assess themselves to be more comfortable than effective communicators, with the gap between "very effective" and "very comfortable" typically ten percentage points or greater. They feel good saying what they say, but they are not sure their message is getting across. Thus, while 62% say they are very comfortable communicating in general, one third fewer people (42%) say that they are very effective when communicating.

### Americans' Comfort and Effectiveness at Communicating in General

Q. 2 and Q. 3

Base: 1001



Women are more likely to report being "very comfortable" communicating with others than men (65% vs. 58%), but the assessment of effectiveness of their communication is approximately the same for both men and women (43% of men and 41% of women think they communicate with others "very effectively"). Mature Americans are more confident about their interpersonal skills than younger ones (78% of 55-64 years old report being "very comfortable" and 50% "very effective" vs. 53% and 37% of the youngest group). Education is an important factor too: while 71% of people who graduated from college are "very comfortable" and 57% are "very effective," only 54% and 34% of high school drop-outs respectively feel the same way.

White Americans are slightly more likely to report being "very comfortable" (63%) in their communications with others than Non-White people (53% of Hispanics, 59% of Blacks, and 56% of Others), but the evaluation of effectiveness of communication is comparable for all ethnic groups (37% of Hispanics, 45% of Blacks and Others, 41% of Whites report being "very effective").

In general, there is a correlation between the perceived effectiveness of communication and the level of comfort: those people who feel that their communication efforts are effective also feel most comfortable.

Perhaps we know people around us who manage to always maintain friendly conversations with their opponents, who solve problems with a smile and bring up controversial subjects without insulting anyone. Indeed, some people are better communicators than others. Findings show that it pays to master interpersonal skills: people who rate themselves as "very comfortable" communicating with people are also very effective in maintaining close relationships with other people (58% are "very effective" as opposed to only 35% of those who think they are "somewhat comfortable"). Similarly, people who feel that they communicate with others very effectively, also manage to maintain close relationships: 64% of people who feel that they are very effective in communicating with others effectively maintain close ties with people (vs. 38% of "somewhat effective" communicators).

Not surprisingly, people's professional life also benefits from their good communication skills: people who say that they are very comfortable and effective communicating with others report being very successful in their careers (59% and 65% respectively vs. 47% and 47% of "somewhat comfortable" communicators).

## **The Methods for Communicating that Americans Prefer**

Face-to-face conversations and the telephone are Americans' preferred ways of communicating with others: two-thirds (65%) say they are very comfortable when facing the person they are talking to, while six out of ten Americans (60%) are very comfortable on the phone. The gender differences found in this survey confirm popular stereotypes: while women feel more relaxed chatting on the phone (65% report being "very comfortable" vs. only 54% of men), men prefer face-to-face interactions (69% say they are "very comfortable" vs. 60% of women).

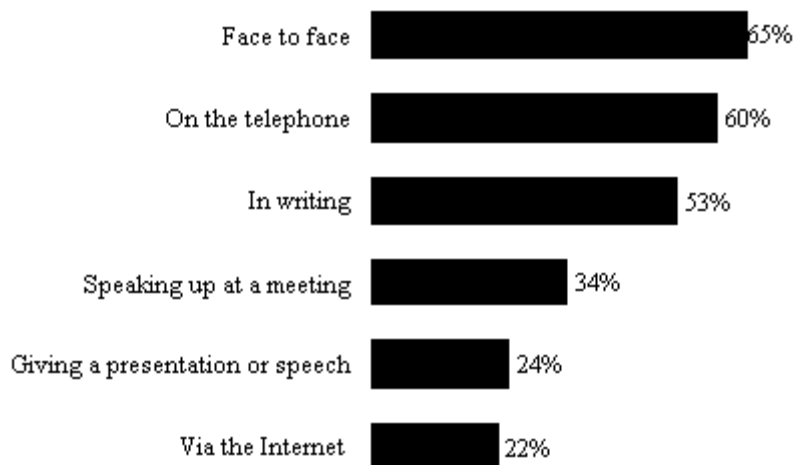
Most people also feel at ease putting their thoughts on the paper: slightly more than half of Americans are very comfortable writing what they need to get across (53%); and another third (32%) report being "somewhat comfortable" doing so. Women are more enthusiastic about writing (58% are "very comfortable" vs. 48% of men). More highly educated people, not surprisingly, also are more comfortable writing—70% of college graduates are "very comfortable" as opposed to only 47% of those who did not graduate from high school: those years of writing papers in English or History classes were not spent in vain.

### **How comfortable do people feel using different types of communication?**

Q. 6

#### **Percent who say "Very comfortable"**

*Base: 1001*



However, less traditional forms of letter-writing have yet to become a widely-accepted way to communicate: more than four in ten (42%) do not use the Internet or email to communicate yet. Among those who do use it, 38% say they are "very comfortable" with the Internet and email as a method of communication, 29% are "somewhat comfortable".

Education and income strongly correlate both to the level of respondents' usage of the Internet and their satisfaction with it as a form of communications. Both increase significantly with the level of education. Thus, while 75% of people with college degrees use the Internet to communicate, more than half of them are very comfortable with it in that role. On the other end of the spectrum, only 46% of people who did not graduate from high school use the Internet to communicate, and only 21% of them are very comfortable with it as such..

Internet usage and the level of comfort associated with it also correlate strongly with age. Young people are far more at ease with different kinds of on-line back-and-forth than their elders: while more than two thirds of people aged 18-24 who use the net are comfortable with this way to communicate (42% very, 30% somewhat comfortable), only half of people older than 65 are (26% very, 23% somewhat comfortable). The image of youngsters knowing how and why they use computers, while older people are more or less bewildered by the technology, appears to be confirmed in these findings.

What really makes people nervous is having to express an opinion in a formal setting where the consequences could be real. Even though one third of Americans(34%) feel very comfortable speaking up at a meeting, 26% feel that they are either not too comfortable or not at all comfortable. Even more intimidating to Americans is giving a presentation or a speech: almost 40% of Americans do not feel comfortable doing so. However, higher income individuals, and older, more educated people are more confident when it comes to public speaking. Almost half (48%) of college graduates are very comfortable speaking up at a meeting and 38% are very comfortable giving a presentation or speech, as opposed to 22% and 10% of those who did not finish high school. Similarly, only 13% of young people aged 18-24 feel "very comfortable" presenting in public versus more than a third (31%) of Americans 55-64 years old.

## **With whom do Americans communicate well?**

## **A Home for the Heart: Family Members Are Comfortable Communicating With Each Other ...Unless it's the In-laws.**

Most people believe that they are able to communicate comfortably within their immediate family, more so than with outsiders. Whether it be with their children, their parents, siblings or others, people are generally much more comfortable talking to the people they know most intimately. However, the old saw about in-laws being a source of conflict is confirmed – fewer people feel comfortable talking to their in-laws than they do talking with many people outside the family.

A very sizable majority of people are comfortable communicating with their "significant other": 87% of those who have one say they are "very comfortable" when it comes to their spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or partner. Most people also believe their communication with that person to be effective: 73% say they are "very effective," and 24% are "somewhat effective."

Three-fourths of Americans feel very comfortable when interacting with their parents (77%). People also rate their effectiveness in such conversations as high: 69% say they are "very effective" communicating with their parents. Similarly, 78% are "very comfortable" communicating with their siblings, 65% believe that they are "very effective" when doing so.

It seems that practically no one feels uncomfortable when interacting with their children: 93% of respondents are "very comfortable" communicating with them. In terms of the effectiveness of their communication with the kids, people are slightly less glowing: 75% think they are "very effective" while 22% admit being "somewhat effective" when communicating with their children. The parents might be talking, but the kids may just not be listening.

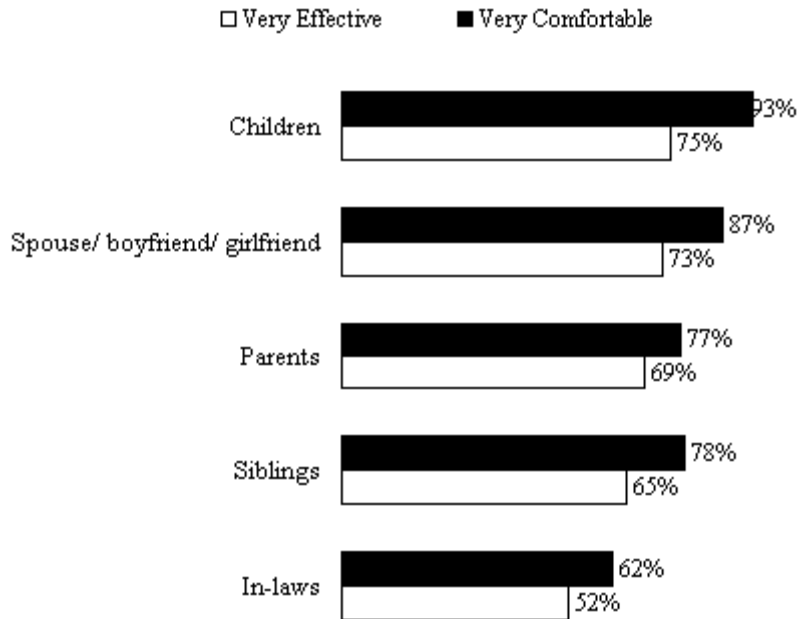
Within their families, people are least comfortable talking to their in-laws. The old cliché seems to hold true – Americans are more comfortable talking to a wide variety of different social groups and strangers than they are talking to their spouse's family. Older people (71% very comfortable), colleagues (69% very comfortable), even the hairdresser (68% very comfortable) generate more of a sense of comfort for Americans than their in-laws. Still, nearly two-thirds of Americans who have in-laws (62%) do say that they are "very comfortable" communicating with them, and about half the married public rates their communication with their in-laws as "very effective."

### **How comfortable and effective do Americans feel communicating with different people in their lives?**

#### **A. Intimates**

*Q. 4 and Q. 5*

*Base: those saying they ever communicate with each category of person*



### When Talking with the Kids, Sex Is the Hardest Subject for Parents

When people who have children were asked about specific topics they discuss with their kids, the majority of parents demonstrate that they are "very comfortable" bringing up even unpleasant or controversial topics: school (83%), their children's future (81%), drugs (79%), racial issues (76%), religion (74%), sports (74%), their friends (74%), their personal problems (70%), or tobacco (79%).

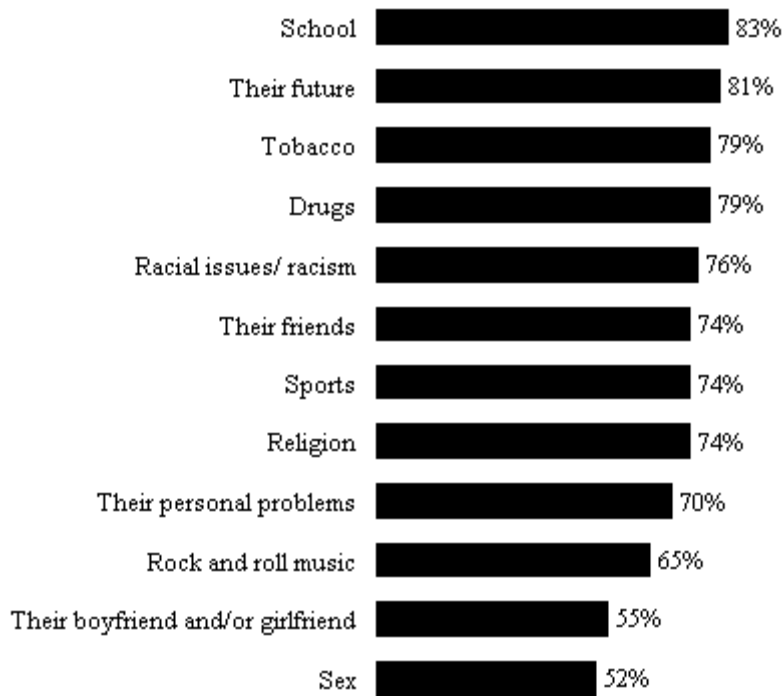
Parents feel least comfortable communicating with their kids about sex or intimate relationships outside the family. While a larger majority of parents say they feel very comfortable discussing issues like school (83%) or their children's future (81%), only slightly more than half of parents (52%) feel very comfortable discussing sex with their children, and it follows that they are not especially comfortable talking about the boyfriend or girlfriend involved (55% very comfortable).

### Talking with the kids: how comfortable do Americans feel discussing different topics with their children?

Q. 13

#### Percent who say "Very comfortable"

Base: 1001



## Communication in the Workplace: People Report That They Are Comfortable With Both Their Coworkers and Bosses.

A majority of Americans is satisfied with the comfort level of communication in the workplace, though they feel far more at ease talking to their coworkers than their boss. Almost two-thirds of people who work are very comfortable communicating with their coworkers (69%) while only 3% feel uncomfortable. Fewer people (no surprises here) feel very comfortable communicating with their boss (57%). People feel they are less effective than comfortable communicating at work: more than half think they are "very effective" communicating with their colleagues (58%), and somewhat fewer (51%) feel very effective communicating with their supervisor.

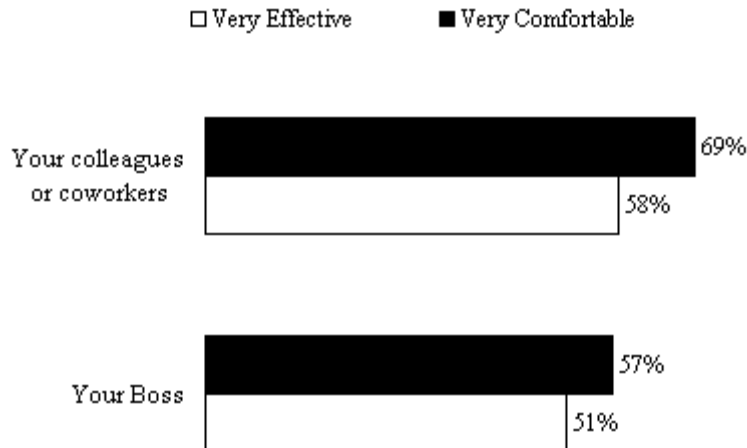
Older, more experienced people consider themselves more effective communicators than younger people who are just starting their careers and establishing their relationships in the workplace: half of those aged 45-54 (51%) consider themselves to be "very effective" in their communication with the boss, versus four in ten 18 to 24 year olds (39%). Clearly, people become more comfortable and effective dealing with the boss as they get more experience.

### How comfortable and effective do Americans feel communicating with different people in their lives?

#### B. At the workplace

Q. 4 and Q. 5

Base: those saying they ever communicate with each category of person



## Freedom of Communication in the Workplace

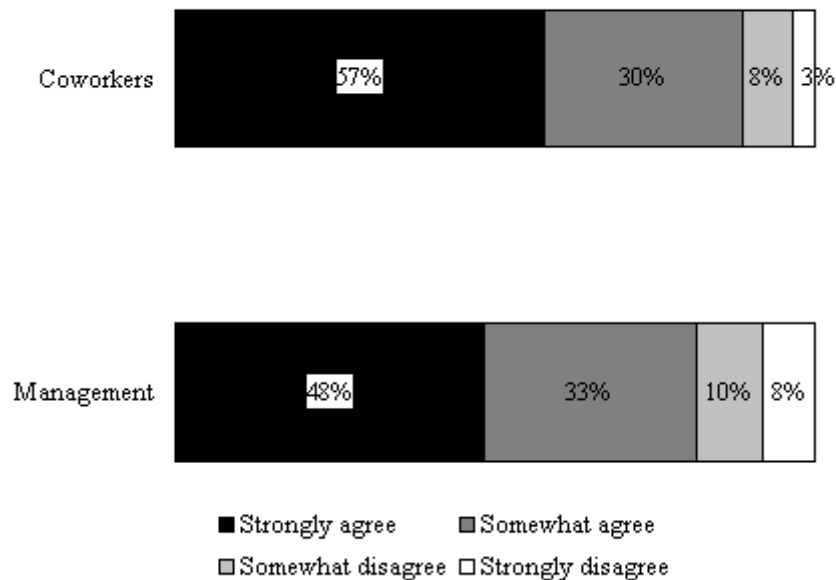
Americans seem to be pretty at ease in their relations at work, at least as far as communication is concerned. A significant majority of those who work say that their company encourages free communication between coworkers and management. More than half of those who work (57%) say they are strongly encouraged to communicate freely with their coworkers, while slightly fewer say this is the case with management (48%). Only one in ten people says that they are not encouraged to this end (11%) vis a vis their colleagues, while about twice as many say that freedom of communication with the boss does not apply at their workplace (18%).

This sense of freedom does not correlate strongly across any demographic variables: education, age or sex do not really impact the level of freedom people feel they have in workplace communications. A majority of all groups say they feel that the atmosphere is quite free.

### Americans consider themselves relatively free to communicate at work, but less so with management than with coworkers

Q. 9.

*Base: Those who say they work*



## How Comfortable Are Americans Communicating With People Outside Their Immediate Circle?

### Communicating with Strangers Who Come into Physical Contact with Us

People are generally satisfied in their communication with healthcare providers. Around two-thirds of people report being "very comfortable" (65%) and "very effective" (59%) communicating with their doctor. In addition, more than half say they are also "very comfortable" (58%) and "very effective" (54%) communicating with a pharmacist.

Women appear to have established more trusting relationships with their health care providers than men: 69% report being "very comfortable" communicating with their doctors versus 62% of men. Be it a factor of long-term relationships or just the necessity to interact with their doctors more often, people get more comfortable communicating with their physicians as they grow older: 78% of people over 65 report being "very comfortable" as opposed to only 51% of 18 to 24 year olds. Maybe developing understanding simply takes time and experience: 12% of the youngest group believe their communication with their doctor to be ineffective, vs. only 2% of seniors.

Americans are also comfortable communicating with the people responsible for their spiritual health: more than half of respondents (54%) say that they are "very comfortable" communicating with their minister, priest, rabbi, or other spiritual counselor. Perhaps due to the rebelliousness associated with late adolescence, 18-24 year olds are the age group least comfortable talking with religious leaders: 9% of people of 18-24 years of age report being uncomfortable overall with these people, and 18% think their communication with them is ineffective, as opposed to only 2% of people 55-64 years of age who say they are uncomfortable with religious leaders, and 6% who say their communication with them is ineffective.

The level of anxiety associated with the social functions of different people clearly dictates the level of comfort experienced when interacting with them. While a majority of people feel very

comfortable communicating with the person who cuts their hair (68% are "very comfortable" and only 5% are not too comfortable or not at all comfortable), only 44% report being "very comfortable" speaking to a law enforcement officer, while 16% admit being uncomfortable.

Younger people are much less at ease dealing with policemen than older people (27% of people ages 18-24 admit being uncomfortable vs. only 3% of people older than 65). One-third of the youngest group (32%) feel that their communicating with law enforcement officers is not effective. In contrast, only 6% of people 55-64 years of age are of the same opinion.

Attitudes about communicating with law enforcement officers change significantly across racial lines: racial minority groups say they are much less comfortable communicating with the police than do Caucasians (27% of Hispanics and 21% of African-Americans report being uncomfortable versus only 14% of Whites. Non-white Americans have serious reservations about the effectiveness of their communication with the police (29% of Hispanics and 21% of Blacks say that their communication with officers is ineffective, compared to only 11% of Whites who say so).

The people who really make Americans uncomfortable are those trying to sell them something – we all have had to deal with aggressive tele-marketers and slick salesmen, and they are Americans' least favorite group when it comes to communication.

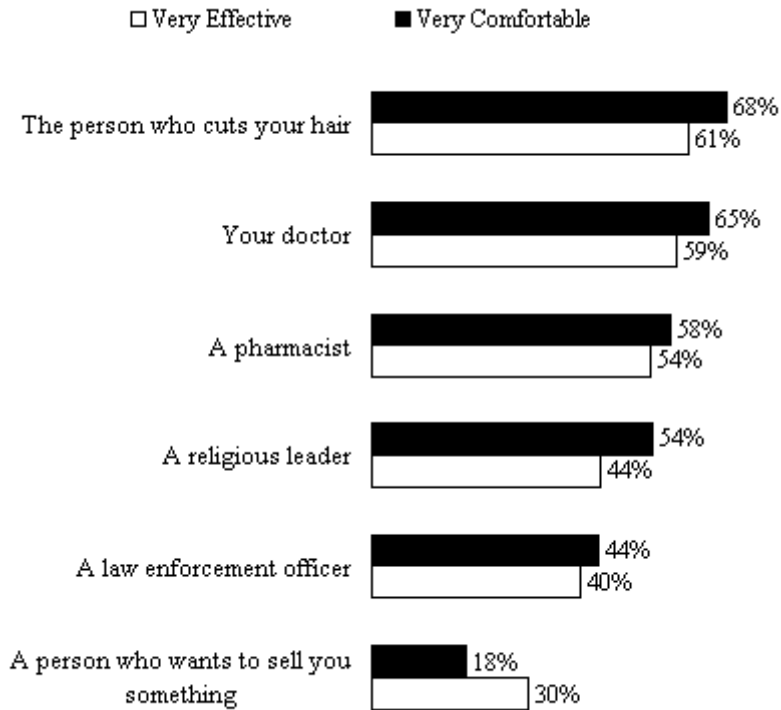
Half of the public (46%) feels uncomfortable communicating with these people (17% say that they are not at all comfortable)—regardless of age, gender, or race. These are the people Americans are least effective dealing with as well. More than a quarter of the public believe that they fail to achieve effective communication with such people (16% not too, 11% not at all effective).

## **How comfortable and effective do Americans feel communicating with different people in their lives?**

### **C. "Intimate Strangers"**

*Q. 4 and Q. 5*

*Base: those saying they ever communicate with each category of person*



-

Communicating with different social/demographic groups

Across the Ages

Is the "generation gap" still an issue for Americans? Well, according to the results found in this survey, it seems to be alive and kicking. Teenagers leave many Americans less than completely comfortable. The public is less likely to feel their communication with teens is "very comfortable" or "very effective" than it is with other groups or individuals. On the other hand, most people feel "very comfortable" and "very effective" when communicating with seniors.

Slightly more than half the public feels very comfortable talking to teens (55%), while nearly three-quarters feel this way when communicating with people over 65 (71%). And while more than half the public feels very effective when talking with seniors (57%), fewer than half (45%) do when talking with people under 21.

Not surprisingly, younger people are more comfortable with teenagers than are older people (46% of 18 to 24 year olds report being "very comfortable with people over 65, and 63% admit to being "very comfortable" with people under 21). On the other hand, a large majority of seniors (89%) reports being "very comfortable" with people of the same age, but less than half of them (48%) say the same about communicating with teenagers.

Across racial lines

How does the other person's race affect the way people feel when communicating? Most people feel very comfortable talking to someone of a different race (65%), although they number slightly

fewer than those who feel very comfortable talking to people of the same race (76%). Moreover, there are no significant differences in these levels across different racial groups: strong majorities of Blacks, Hispanics and Whites all feel comfortable communicating with other races. However, people are slightly more likely to feel very effective when communicating with someone from their own race (62%) than when speaking with someone of another race (52%).

#### Across Gender Lines

Are men or women more intimidating to talk to? People are somewhat more comfortable and effective when communicating with women than men, though the differences overall are not very large. Thus, 64% of the public say they are very comfortable communicating with women, and 58% are with men. Also, 52% feel very effective in their communication with women, and 47% do with men.

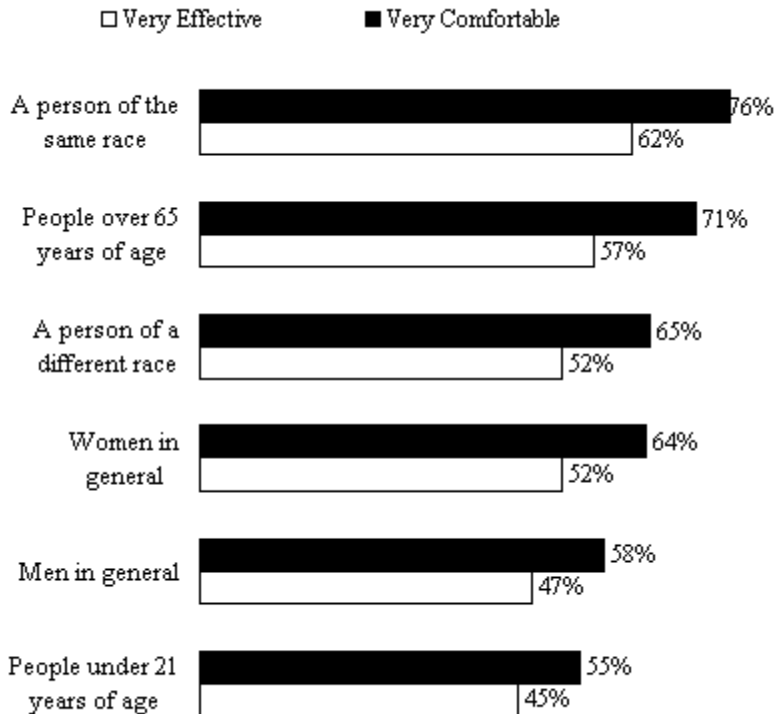
However, people are somewhat more comfortable and effective within their own gender group. So while two-thirds of men feel very comfortable talking to men (65%) only half of women do (52%). Also, while nearly seven out of ten women (69%) say they feel very comfortable talking with other women, 58% of men do. The same pattern holds true in terms of the effectiveness of communication: men feel more effective talking with men (53% very effective) than do women (42% effective); and women feel slightly more effective talking with other women (54% very effective, vs. 49% of men).

### **How comfortable and effective do Americans feel communicating with different people in their lives?**

#### **D. Social and Demographic Groups**

*Q. 4 and Q. 5*

*Base: those saying they ever communicate with each category of person*



## Most Americans Report Being At Ease Navigating Through Most Social Situations That Require Communication Skills

Most Americans report that they achieved a rather high level of comfort dealing with people and facts of their everyday life: mostly they are either very comfortable, or somewhat comfortable in most common situations. However, different tasks they perform and goals they pursue define their level of contentment in dealing with others: thus, saying nice things is the easiest thing for people to do: very few people have problems complimenting a friend about something they are wearing (76% are "very comfortable" doing so, and only 1% not at all comfortable). Being helpful also makes people feel at ease: 65% are "very comfortable" explaining a work procedure to a new employee, 60% of people are "very comfortable" giving directions to someone who stopped them on the street.

Friends generally make us feel at ease -- 63% do not mind talking to their closest friend about the relationship they have with that person, and half the public feels very comfortable convincing a friend to see a movie they want to see (51%).

In general, making bold moves at work or in public makes more people nervous than friendly interactions with acquaintances. Slightly more than 40% of people say they feel at ease managing a group that needs to make a decision. When it comes to persuading a group of people to accept one's opinion, people are not exceptionally enthusiastic: only a third (34%) say they are very comfortable in this kind of situation. About the same number say they feel very comfortable raising a complaint at work (36%), or interviewing for a job (34%).

People are also stressed by their that social obligations For example, while somewhat fewer than half the public feels very comfortable telling a joke or humorous story (48%), or making small talk at a party (42%), nearly one in five (18% each) admit feeling uncomfortable in either situation.

## What are the factors impacting successful communication?

**Schooling is considered important in developing proper communication skills.**

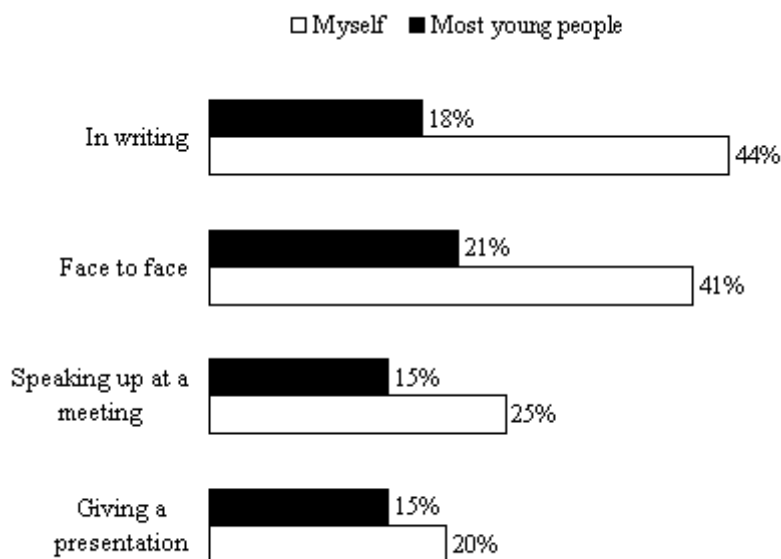
Proper schooling seems to be responsible for essential communication skills: 44% of Americans believe that their school helped them a lot in terms of developing the ability to communicate in writing. Four out of ten people (41%) feel that they were very well prepared for face-to-face communications, while only around one quarter (25%) of respondents approve of their training in public speaking. Not surprisingly, more educated people are more satisfied with their schooling: for example, 55% of college graduates think that they were well prepared for communicating in writing, as opposed to only 32% of high school drop-outs.

Considering the positive impact most people's education has had on their communication skills, Americans are not that optimistic about the younger generation learning the right way to communicate. Only one in five (21%) believes that most young people finishing school today are very well prepared for face-to-face communications, while twice as many say that they themselves were well-prepared (41%). In the same way, while only about one in 8 people believe that kids finishing school are very well trained to speak up at a meeting or to give a presentation (15% each), significantly more people feel that they themselves were very well-prepared in school to do either task (25% and 20% respectively).

## How well are Americans prepared in school to communicate by different means?

Q. 7 and Q. 8

Base: 1001



## Methodology

The findings in this report are based upon a survey conducted by telephone among a national probability sample of adults over 18 years of age. 1001 individuals were interviewed at home between August 19 and September 7, 1998. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

All samples are subject to some degree of sampling "error" – that is, statistical results obtained from a sample can be expected to differ somewhat from results that would be obtained if every member of the target population (in this case, all U.S. adults) were interviewed. In this report, the maximum margin of sampling error at a 95% confidence level is +/- 3.10 percentage points. The error increases among subgroups of the whole sample as their size decreases, so the maximum margin of error may be significantly higher on some questions.

For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Thus totals may be slightly higher or lower than 100%. In addition, some of the data have been re-based to exclude those who say a given situation or question does not apply to them – percentages in the report body will then differ from those found in the survey instrument.

## **The Survey Instrument**

# **NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION**

## **How Americans Communicate**

# 4461-04

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hello. My name is \_\_\_ from Roper Starch Worldwide, a national opinion research organization. We are conducting a survey with people all across America, and we would greatly appreciate your participation. This is an opinion survey – we are looking for people's views, and we're not going to try to sell anything.

May I please speak with the youngest adult male over the age of 18 in the household who is at home?

IF NO MALE IN HH AVAILABLE: May I please speak with the oldest adult female over the age of 18 who is at home?

**Sex of respondent:** Col 2/10

1. Male 48%

2. Female 52

We are interested in the ways people communicate with one another. First, how  
2/11

comfortable do you feel communicating with people in general? Would you say that, when communicating with people in general, you feel:

- 4. very comfortable 62%
- 3. somewhat comfortable 33
- 2. not too comfortable 4
- 1. or not at all comfortable? 1
- X. No answer/ don't know \*

And, how effective do you feel you are when communicating with people in general? 2/12

Would you say that when communicating with people in general, you are

- 4. very effective 42
- 3. somewhat effective 49
- 2. not too effective 5
- 1. or not at all effective? 2
- X. No answer/ don't know 2

People may feel more comfortable communicating with some people in their lives, and less comfortable with others. I am going to read you a list of different people, and I would like to know how comfortable you feel communicating with that person or persons – are you very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable. If there are any you never talk to, or that don't apply to you, just say so. First,

(READ LIST AND ROTATE)

	4	3	2	1	0	X
	Very Com- fortable	Somewhat Com- fortable	not too comfort- able	not at all comfort- able	NA	DK
220. Your children	71	5	*	*	24	*

221. Your spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or partner	78	10	2	1	10	*
222. Your boss	44	27	3	1	23	2
223. Your colleagues or coworkers	59	23	2	1	14	2
224. Your doctor	64	29	4	1	2	*
225. The person who cuts your hair	65	24	3	2	5	1
226. A religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	52	33	7	3	4	1
227. Your parents	61	15	1	1	21	*
228. Your siblings (EXPLAIN IF NEEDED: your brothers and sisters)	72	17	2	1	8	*
229. Your in-laws	47	22	3	24	1	
230. Men in general	58	38	3	1	*	*
231. Women in general	64	32	3	1	*	*
232. People over 65 (that is, older people)	71	26	2	1	*	*
233. People under 21 (that is, young people, teenagers)	54	38	7	1	1	*
234. A pharmacist	56	33	4	2	3	1
235. A person of a different race	64	31	2	1	1	1
236. A person of the same race	76	22	1	*	*	1
237. A person who wants to sell you something	18	34	29	17	1	1

238. A law enforcement officer	43	38	11	5	2	1
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Now, we would like to know how effective you feel you are when communicating with each of those people: very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not at all effective?

	4	3	2	1	0	X
	Very Effective	Somewhat effective	not too effective	not at all effective	NA	DK
241. Your children	57	17	1	1	24	*
242. Your spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or partner	65	21	2	1	11	1
243. Your boss	39	32	4	1	23	1
244. Your colleagues or coworkers	48	31	2	2	17	1
245. Your doctor	57	34	4	2	3	*
246. The person who cuts your hair	58	30	4	2	5	1
247. A religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	42	43	6	3	5	1
248. Your parents	54	20	2	1	22	1
249. Your siblings (EXPLAIN IF NEEDED: your brothers and sisters)	60	27	3	2	8	1
250. Your in-laws	39	29	3	3	25	1
251. Men in general	47	46	4	1	1	1

252. Women in general	52	43	3	1	*	1
253. People over 65 (that is, older people)	56	37	4	1	1	1
254. People under 21 (that is, young people, teenagers)	45	44	7	2	1	1
255. A pharmacist	51	37	3	3	5	1
256. A person of a different race	52	41	4	1	*	2
257. A person of the same race	62	34	1	1	*	1
258. A person who wants to sell you something	30	40	16	11	1	2
259. A law enforcement officer	39	42	9	5	3	2

I am going to read you a list of ways that people may use to communicate with one another. For each type of communication that I read to you, please tell me whether you feel very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable communicating in that way. First,

	4	3	2	1	0	X
(READ LIST AND ROTATE)	Very Comfortable	somewhat comfortable	not too comfortable	not at all comfortable	NA	DK
261. On the telephone	60	33	4	2	1	1
262. Via the Internet/ by email	22	17	8	9	42	2
263. Face-to-	65	32	3	1	*	*

face/in-person						
264. In writing	53	32	7	5	2	*
265. Speaking up at a meeting	34	36	17	9	2	*
266. Giving a presentation or speech	24	34	22	17	3	*

How well do you feel you were prepared in school to communicate effectively with others by each of the following means– very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not at all well?

(READ LIST AND ROTATE)

	4	3	2	1	X
	Very well	Somewhat well	Not too well	Not at all well	Don't know/Refused (vol.)
270. Face-to-face/in-person	41	39	12	6	1
271. In writing	44	38	11	5	1
272. Speaking up at a meeting	25	34	25	15	2
273. Giving a presentation or speech	20	38	25	15	2

In your opinion, how well prepared are most young people finishing school today to communicate effectively with others through each of those same means – very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not at all well?

	4	3	2	1	X
	Very well	Somewhat well	Not too well	Not at all well	Don't know/Refused (vol.)
310. Face-to-face/in-person	21	45	20	7	7
311. In writing	18	40	27	8	8
312. Speaking up at a meeting	15	41	25	9	9
313. Giving a presentation or speech	15	39	28	9	10

I am going to read you two statements. For each statement, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

(READ AND ROTATE. IF RESPONDENT DOES NOT WORK, SKIP TO NEXT QUESTION IN ROTATION)

(READ AND ROTATE)

	4	3	2	1	Y	X
	strongly agree	somewhat agree	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree	Does not work	Refused/ NA
315. I feel that employees at my company are encouraged to communicate freely with <u>coworkers</u>	51	27	7	3	10	2

316. I feel that employees at my company are encouraged to communicate freely with <u>management</u>	42	29	9	7	12	2
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I am going to read you a list of different situations, and I would like to know for each one how comfortable you generally feel in that situation – very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable. If any of these situations never applies to you, please tell me.

(READ LIST AND ROTATE)

	4	3	2	1	X
	Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Not too comfortable	Not at all comfortable	DK/ Does not apply
321 . Giving directions to someone who has stopped you on the street	60	28	7	4	1
322 . Talking with your closest friend about the relationship you have with that person	63	28	6	2	2
323 . Managing a group that needs to make a decision	41	39	10	4	5
324 . Interviewing for a job	34	37	11	4	13
325 . Raising a complaint at work	36	32	10	4	18
326 . Complimenting a friend about something they are wearing	76	19	3	1	1

327 . Convincing a friend to see a movie that you want to see	51	33	5	3	7
328 . Persuading a group of people to accept your opinion	34	47	12	5	2
329 . Telling a joke or humorous story	48	33	12	6	2
330 . Making small talk at a party	42	37	13	5	2
331 . Explaining a work procedure to a new employee	65	17	1	1	16

Based on your own experiences, or on what you have observed, which of the following do you think are very frequently causes, frequently causes, occasionally causes or rarely causes for a marriage or relationship to end?

(READ LIST AND ROTATE)

	4	3	2	1	X
	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	DK
334. Money problems	38	37	16	7	2
335. Sexual problems	12	29	34	16	8
336. A lack of effective communication	44	35	13	5	2
337. Interference of relatives or in-laws	14	26	40	16	4
338. Children	7	16	35	36	6
339. Previous relationships or prior marriages	9	23	37	21	9

**For all in Q11 rated "Very frequently causes" (If none rated "very frequently", go 3/60 to Q13):**

You said the following were "very frequently causes" for a marriage or relationship to end. According to you, which of them is the most frequent cause?

READ ALL FROM Q11 RATED BY RESPONDENT AS "VERY FREQUENTLY" CAUSES

READ THROUGH ALL RESPONSES BEFORE WRITING IN RESPONDENT'S ANSWER

BASE = ALL Who responded "very frequently" to more than one above.

1	Money problems	29
2	Sexual problems	5
3	A lack of effective communication	53
4	Interference of relatives or in-laws	7
5	Children	3
6	Previous relationships or prior marriages	3

How comfortable do you feel talking to your children about the following subjects – very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, not too comfortable, or not at all comfortable.

**(If respondent says they have no children, go on to next question)**

(READ AND ROTATE LIST)

		4	3	2	1	0
		Very Comfortable	somewhat comfortable	not too comfortable	not at all comfortable	NA
410	Drugs	79	8	2	4	8
411	Racial issues/ racism	76	14	1	1	8
412	Religion	74	17	2	1	6

413	Rock and roll music	65	15	5	5	11
414	School	83	8	1	*	8
415	Sex	52	25	7	3	13
416	Sports	74	13	3	2	8
417	Their boyfriend and/or girlfriend	55	20	2	2	20
418	Their friends	74	18	2	1	5
419	Their future	81	12	1	1	5
420	Their personal problems	70	19	3	1	7
421	Tobacco	79	8	1	2	10

How effective do you feel you are in maintaining close relationships with other people? 4/30

- 4. Very effective 48
- 3. Somewhat effective 45
- 2. Not too effective 5
- 1. Not at all effective 1
- X. Don't know/Refused (vol.) 1

Are you regularly employed, either full-time or part-time? 4/31

- 1. Full-time (CONTINUE) 55
- 2. Part-time (CONTINUE) 15
- 3. Not employed (Go to Demographics) 29
- 4. Refused (vol.) (Go to Demographics) 1

How successful do you feel that you are in your job or career – very successful, 4/32  
somewhat successful, not too successful, or not successful at all?

- 4. Very successful 54
- 3. Somewhat successful 40
- 2. Not too successful 3
- 1. Not at all successful 1
- X. Don't know/Refused (vol.) 1

### **Demographics**

Finally, I have just a few questions for classification purposes only.

Please tell me the year in which you were born. \_\_\_\_\_ 4/33 (4 cols.)

IF REFUSED BUT RESPONDENT CLEARLY OVER 18, CODED AS 0.

Age groups

18-24 11

24-34 21

35-44 22

45-54 18

55-64 10

65+ 16

Mean age 45.5 years

Median age 42 years

What was the last level of education you have completed? [READ LIST] 4/40

- 1. Less than high school graduate 11

2. High school graduate 38
3. Technical or vocational school 6
4. Some college or 2 year college degree 23
5. 4 year college graduate 13
6. A Master's degree or the equivalent (MBA, Law degree) 7
7. A Ph.D. or the equivalent 1
8. DK/ refused 1

Do you have any children of your own at home who are (READ ALL/ MARK EACH THAT APPLIES)... 4/41

1. Under 6 years of age 21
2. Ages 6 to 12 20
3. Ages 13 to 18 14
4. None 59
5. Refused (vol.) \*

Are you married, single, divorced, or what? 4/42

1. Married 60
2. Single 21
3. Divorced/ Separated 12
4. Widowed 6
5. Don't know/Refused (vol.) 1

Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic or Latin American origin or not? 4/43

1. Yes 11
2. No 88
3. Don't know/Refused (vol.) 1

And what is your race? 4/44

1. White/Caucasian 77
2. Black/African American 12
3. Asian/ Pacific Islander 1
4. Other 9
5. DK / (do not read) 1
6. Refused (do not read) \*

How many telephone numbers are there in this household where you can be reached? 4/45

Please do not include lines that are used ONLY for a computer or modem, or those that are used ONLY by some other household member. (DO NOT READ LIST)

1. One line 90
2. Two lines 7
3. Three lines 1
4. Four lines 1
5. Five lines \*
6. More than 5 lines \*
7. Refused 1
8. Don't know (vol.) \*

Finally, I am going to read you a list of income categories. Please stop me when I reach 4/46

the category that best describes the combined annual income of all members of

this household, including wages or salary, pensions, interest or dividends, and all other sources.

1. Under \$20,000 13
2. Between \$20,000 and \$29,999 14
3. Between \$30,000 and \$39, 999 17
4. Between \$40,000 and \$49, 999 11
5. \$50,000 to \$74,999 15
6. \$75,000 to \$99,999 6
7. \$100,000 or over 7
8. DK (do not read) 18
9. Refused (do not read)

***Thank you very much. That completes our survey. We appreciate your help.***

REGION 1/21

1. Northeast 20
2. Midwest 23
3. South 35
4. West 21

**Rebased tables specific to questions 4 and 5**

<b>Q4 Comfortable communicating with the following... (rebased to exclude those for whom the person or category does not apply)</b>	<b>Applies</b>	<b>Very comfortable</b>	<b>Somewhat comfortable</b>	<b>Not too comfortable</b>
A person who wants to sell you something	99%	18%	34%	29%
A law enforcement officer	98%	44%	39%	11%
A religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	96%	54%	34%	7%
People under 21 (that is, young people, teenagers)	99%	55%	38%	7%
Your boss	77%	57%	35%	4%
A pharmacist	97%	58%	34%	4%
Men in general	100%	58%	38%	3%
Your in-laws	76%	62%	29%	4%
Women in general	100%	64%	32%	3%
A person of a different race	99%	65%	31%	2%
Your doctor	98%	65%	30%	4%
The person who cuts your hair	95%	68%	25%	3%
Your colleagues or coworkers	86%	69%	27%	2%
People over 65 (that is, older people)	100%	71%	26%	2%
A person of the same race	100%	76%	22%	1%
Your parents	79%	77%	19%	1%
Your siblings (EXPLAIN IF NEEDED: your brothers and sisters)	92%	78%	18%	2%
Your spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or partner	90%	87%	11%	2%
Your children	76%	93%	7%	*

<b>Q5 Effective communicating with the following... (rebased to exclude those for whom the person or category does not apply)</b>	<b>Applies</b>	<b>Very effective</b>	<b>Somewhat effective</b>	<b>Not too effective</b>
Your children	76%	75%	22%	1%
Your spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or partner	89%	73%	24%	2%
Your boss	77%	51%	42%	5%
Your colleagues or coworkers	83%	58%	37%	2%
Your doctor	97%	59%	35%	4%
The person who cuts your hair	95%	61%	32%	4%
A religious leader (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)	95%	44%	45%	6%
Your parents	78%	69%	26%	3%
Your siblings (EXPLAIN IF NEEDED: your brothers and sisters)	92%	65%	29%	3%
Your in-laws	75%	52%	39%	4%
Men in general	99%	47%	46%	4%
Women in general	100%	52%	43%	3%
People over 65 (that is, older people)	99%	57%	37%	4%
People under 21 (that is, young people, teenagers)	99%	45%	44%	7%
A pharmacist	95%	54%	39%	3%
A person of a different race	100%	52%	41%	4%
A person of the same race	100%	62%	34%	1%
A person who wants to sell you something	99%	30%	40%	16%
A law enforcement officer	97%	40%	43%	9%