

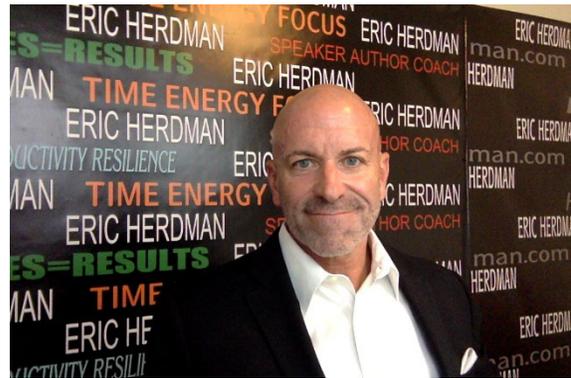
Building Better Projects Through Better Communication

Communication isn't just a "soft skill"—it's a critical part of keeping people safe, maintaining productivity, and building a strong team culture. Yet in the fast-paced, high-pressure environment of a jobsite, communication is often the first thing to break down. When messages aren't clear, expectations aren't aligned, or assumptions replace conversations, the results can be costly—both in time and in safety.

Common communication pitfalls on the jobsite include unclear instructions, last-minute changes that aren't communicated to the full crew, and relying too heavily on verbal directions without written follow-up. Leaders also frequently assume team members fully understand a task without checking for alignment. Even well-intentioned communication can create confusion when it's rushed, incomplete, or inconsistent from one supervisor to another. These breakdowns can lead to delays, rework, safety hazards, and unnecessary frustration among crew members.

Fortunately, improving communication doesn't require complicated systems—just simple, consistent habits practiced every day. Leaders can start by using brief, structured check-ins that clarify priorities and safety considerations before work begins. Asking team members to repeat back key steps ("What's your understanding of the plan?") helps ensure clarity while showing respect for their role.

Leaders can also make communication more effective by minimizing jargon, avoiding assumptions, and pairing verbal directions with written notes, visuals, or marked-up plans when possible.



Another powerful habit is following through. When leaders keep their word—whether it's providing equipment, adjusting a workflow, or checking in on a concern—it builds trust. Trust increases openness, and openness improves the quality of communication across the entire jobsite. Small behaviors like active listening, acknowledging good work, and inviting questions can transform how teams interact and collaborate.

Ultimately, stronger communication strengthens project outcomes. When everyone understands expectations, safety procedures, and the "why" behind decisions, they work more efficiently and with fewer mistakes. Teams that feel informed and respected are more engaged, morale stays higher, and the overall culture becomes one where people speak up, collaborate, and look out for one another. In construction, where every day carries risk and every delay has a cost, good communication habits can make the difference between a struggling project and a successful, safe, and motivated team.

Eric Herdman is a dynamic professional speaker with over 30 years of experience, known for his captivating presentations in both in-person and virtual settings. His journey in public speaking began at Ohio University, where he studied Exercise Physiology and Sports Nutrition, which laid the groundwork for his multifaceted career.