

Our lives depend on good communication. Good communication helps personal relationships, it helps bosses and employees get along better. We rely on it.

MY SUCCESS IS YOUR SUCCESS

WebTechPublishing.com

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MARS AND VENUS

Thirty years ago, the book « Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus » was published. This hugely popular book by author John Gray contains many suggestions for improving relationships between men and women by understanding the communication style and emotional needs of the opposite sex.

As the title suggests, the book affirms the idea that men and women are as different as beings from other planets, and that learning the code of conduct of the opposite sex is of essential value even if individuals do not necessarily conform to stereotypical behavior.

Communications and relationships are based on understanding each other. As much in your life as a couple, at work and in society, you have to be careful about how to understand the differences between men and women, because your success depends on it.

To help us understand the possible differences and similarities, it is worth reviewing some facts from Dr. Gray's research.

1. *Enjoy the difference*: it is important to remember that men and women have mutually different natures. Men and women need to appreciate these differences and stop expecting the other to act the same or feel the same.
2. *The differences*: men love to have their abilities recognized and appreciated and hate to have them looked down upon or ignored. Women love having their feelings acknowledged and appreciated, and hate having them looked down upon or ignored.



Men don't place much importance on feelings, as they believe they can lead to extremely passionate and extremely unstable behavior. Women do not place great importance on abilities, because in their opinion, they can lead to coldly impartial and aggressive behavior.

Men like to work alone and exercise their abilities by solving problems quickly and alone. Women like to cooperate and exercise their feelings through interactive communication with each other.

Men value solutions and find unsolicited help undermines their efforts to solve problems on their own. Women value assistance and view unsolicited solutions as undermining their efforts to proceed interactively.

Men want their solutions to be appreciated. Women want their assistance to be appreciated.

3. *Dealing with problems:* men like their abilities to be recognized and appreciated and hate to have them looked down upon or ignored. Women like to have their feelings.

When faced with difficult issues, men become non-communicative, so they can find the best way to help themselves, while women become communicative, so that others can find the best way to help them.

Men like to demonstrate their abilities by allowing them to solve problems without interference. Women like to show their feelings by being allowed to relate issues without interference.

When men communicate, they like to cut to the chase and generally only want to listen if they determine there is something in the conversation to discuss. Women like to talk for fun and are happy to listen unconditionally.

A man's instinct is to take care of himself, even if it means sacrificing others. A woman's instinct is to care for others, even if that means sacrificing herself.

In a relationship, a man must learn to take care of his partner rather than sacrificing his needs in favor of hers, and a woman must learn to be cared for by her partner rather than sacrificing her own needs in favor of hers, to so that everyone's needs are met.

If successful, both wins, unlike their instinctive behaviors where one person benefits from another's loss.

It takes work, because if either partner feels that their relationship efforts aren't succeeding in pleasing their partner, they may feel hurt and decide to revert to their instinctual behavior.

Unfortunately, this then causes the other partner to do the same and the relationship inevitably falls apart.

In a relationship, a man needs to feel that his attentions are needed and a woman needs to feel that her needs are taken care of.

To achieve this, a man must express his desire to have his needs met and his dignity to receive his care, and a woman must express her desire for his care and her dignity to have his needs met.



Both must remember to appreciate, accept, and forgive the other, and avoid blaming them when they fail.

4. *Information exchange:* men speak in very objective terms for the purpose of conveying information. The women use their artistic sense and a theatrical vocabulary to fully express and tell their feelings.

Men like to sort through their thoughts before communicating with them and tend to become aloof and uncommunicative when pondering their concerns. At this time, a woman needs reassurance that her partner still considers her worthy of care.

Women like to sort out their thoughts when communicating with them and tend to pour out a litany of general grievances when they relate their concerns.

Currently, a man needs reassurance that his partner still deems him worthy of taking care of things.

Both should try to avoid feeling personally blamed when their partner is facing problems.

5. *The elastic effect:* men periodically rush to safety when they suddenly fear their self-sufficiency is threatened. At such times, they can become totally unapproachable, demanding the right to be on their own and not express their feelings.

But, if they receive support by giving them space for a little while, they will soon feel better and return to their usual state of self-love.

It can be difficult for women to deal with the suddenness and speed with which men rush for cover and then bounce back.

When men withdraw into themselves, they can help their partners, not worry too much or take it personally by providing a brief assurance that they will return in due course.

Women should resist the temptation to try to bring their partner back prematurely or to criticize him for this natural behavior.

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When a man is troubled, he doesn't want his partner to worry about him, but likes to be told that the problem is easily within his abilities to be rectified due to an implied vote of confidence in his abilities.



When a woman is troubled, she likes her partner to express concern for her, but doesn't want to be told the problem is easy to solve because of the implied dismissal of her concerns about it.

A solution must be sought once his feelings have been fully listened to, a solution that is too quick justifies his abilities, but devalues his worries, a problem that is too persistent justifies his worries, but devalues his abilities.

Men feel validated and gratified when left on their own to sort things out and feel undermined by sympathy or unsolicited help.

Women feel valued and gratified when they are offered unsolicited sympathy or help and feel undermined when they are left on their own to sort things out.

6. *A mutual understanding*: women periodically sink into depression when they feel it is time to cleanse and resolve themselves emotionally.

At that point, they may become completely negative in their outlook, dwelling on all the issues that are bothering them, including long-standing ones that will usually have been raised and dealt with before, and if they cannot find real issues to focus on, so they find something else to worry about.

They suspend their normal offering nature, demanding the right to express their feelings and not be left on their own, and if supported and given enough time to express and release their negative feelings, they will begin to feel happier again and regain their self-esteem.

The slowness with which they sink into depression and later recover can be difficult for men to deal with.

At times when women are sinking into themselves, they can help their partners, not worry too much or take it personally by providing a brief reassurance that it is not their partner's fault.

Men should resist the temptation to try to prematurely straighten their partner out or criticize her for this natural behavior.

Men claim the right to be free from time to time. Women ask for the right to be heard from time to time. When a man feels free, he finds it easier to support a woman's need to be heard. When a woman feels heard, she finds it easier to respond to a man's need to be free.

If a man's periodic need to be free coincides with a woman's periodic need to be heard, the best solution is for the woman to be content to be heard by her friends instead.

7. *Emotional needs*: men and women need to remember that the emotional needs of the opposite sex are not the same as their own. Providing our partners with the wrong kind of emotional need will not be very desired.

Deep inside every man is a knight in shining armor looking for a damsel in distress who will love and cover him, of trust, consent, appreciation, admiration, approval, and encouragement.

Deep within every woman is a damsel in distress looking for a knight in shining armor who will love her and shower her with kindness, understanding, respect, devotion, validation, and comfort.



Men should listen carefully to women to understand their needs, avoiding becoming angry or defensive.

Women should have faith in men's abilities and do their best to meet their needs, avoiding trying to change or control them.

8. *Arguments:* communication between partners should be loving and respectful. Verbal attacks, on the other hand, are very destructive. It's often not so much what is said that causes the damage, but the tone of voice and the body language that accompanies it.

Arguments thrive on the fact that men don't pay enough attention to women's feelings and that women critically disapprove of men.

Either can be the initial trigger, as a man's inattention can cause a woman to get upset and express disapproval, and a woman's disapproval can cause a man to become defensive and stop listening to her feelings.

When men make mistakes, they get frustrated and angry, and it's best to leave them alone until they calm down. For men, an apology is an admission of guilt.

Women see apologies as an expression of compassion. This difference in perception is why men are generally much less willing to apologize than women.

When engaged in an argument, men use strong, aggressive words to ensure they win the argument, and women are frequently forced to back down when faced with an utterly determined and implacable opponent.

The men then feel as if they've won the argument, but it's an empty victory, because their female partners haven't changed their minds, they just evade the arguments, in order to avoid that the conflict continues to worsen.

Sometimes people would rather avoid arguments than engage in them. Men tend to do this by withdrawing into themselves and refusing to talk.

Often women claim that the disagreement has been forgotten. The resulting peace is cold, as the problems continue to fester unresolved.

To prevent communication from degenerating into arguments, men should try to listen without becoming defensive, and women should try to express their feelings without criticizing their partners.

9. *Give and appreciate:* men feel loved if their efforts to give are appreciated. Women feel loved based on what they receive. For women, loving someone means knowing and meeting their needs without waiting to be asked, and therefore a loved one should never have to claim anything, because their needs must be anticipated.

Thus, women give unconditionally and proactively seek out ways to help others, while men only give when they feel their efforts will be fairly appreciated and rewarded, and often do not know, how or what to give without specifically asked.



Men often quickly suspend donations when they feel satisfied that they have done something. Women can only suspend donations when they feel unhappy that their partner is not doing anything.

Men value results. For women, it's the thought that counts. Therefore, men appreciate big things much more than women, who feel more appreciated by receiving lots of small gifts instead. A woman may consider a bouquet of flowers as much proof of love as an entire month of hard work paying the bills.

If men and women don't consider these different perspectives, they risk not giving their partners what they really want.

When this happens, the man will tend to withhold offerings, as he feels he is not getting enough reward for what he has given, but the woman will continue to give unconditionally even though she feels she is giving more and has started to feel unloved, unappreciated, and bitter.

Men should try to identify various small ways to give to their partner without expecting to be asked first and should avoid the mistake of assuming their partner is happy to give and not asking for anything in return.

Women need to be careful not to give their partners the wrong impression of being happy when they're not, and if they start feeling resentful, they need to gently reduce their giving, learn to ask for things in return, and make sure to continue to express a lot of appreciation for the efforts of their partners, in order to encourage them to give more.

If men give and women appreciate, both end up being happy.

10. *Communicate difficult emotions:* unresolved negative feelings can cause us to act in ways we really don't want to or manifest in all sorts of compulsive or addictive behaviors.

By acting as loving parents to our own inner child, we finally allow our pent-up feelings to fully express themselves and be released.

To ease pain and win love, men often seek success obsessively and women often seek perfection obsessively.

Men can use anger, ego, or forgetfulness, such as immersing themselves in their work, to avoid vulnerable feelings of pain or fear. Women may become depressed or confused to avoid aggressive feelings of anger.

Constructive communication is a learned skill, and many of us must first unlearn the paradigm of negative communication and repression of feelings that we experienced as children.

Communication works best if it presents the full picture, so that the root of the problem is revealed rather than just the symptoms.

Writing down our feelings is a great way to express our negative emotions such as anger, pain, fear, and regret in a controlled way, rather than letting them explode against our partners in the heat of the moment.

Once this is done, we can reconnect with our romantic feelings, and we are then in a much better shape to explain to our partners how we feel and what they can do to help us feel better.



It is important to communicate such feelings in a loving atmosphere because we may need to feel loved safely while communicating such intimate and revealing feelings.

For their part, our partners may need the same if some of these feelings are painful to hear or can be taken personally. Sometimes it's worth discussing it with friends or advisors first.

11. *How to request assistance:* men like to do things that are appreciated and hate to do things that are required. Criticizing him or giving him excessive instructions will make him feel more like a slave than a loved and trusted partner.

Men like to prove their worth through the things they do, but they usually wait to be asked. Generally, men take a long time to learn how to offer their services unsolicited.

Women should avoid asking a man for help in a way that doesn't sound like a clear request or carries an implied criticism that he should have done it already.

Questions that begin with the words « Could you » or « Can you » are often interpreted by men as questioning their abilities, and so they respond more positively to the same questions if they instead start with; « Would you like » or « Do you want. »

The difference may seem small, but it can seem as different as the man who says « No, I can't » or « No, I won't » in response to the request.

It's best to give a man the freedom to do things in a way and at a time that suits him.

If a man is busy doing something and a woman needs his help with something else, she should feel free to ask him for help, but be prepared for him to ask to defer her or even to refuse it.

If requests always call for positive responses, they are indeed requests and men will feel the difference.

If a man complains about a request, he's really thinking about it, and the best approach is to just wait for him to make a decision without saying anything more while aiming to accept the outcome gracefully.

12. *A question of maturity:* in relationships, unresolved negative feelings can arise without warning, and we suddenly become upset, sensitive, or distant. When this happens to our partners, we must encourage them to overcome this situation, accepting that it may take time and that they may need outside support as well as ourselves while doing our best to control any impatience or resentment we might feel toward them during these times.

Love necessarily changes over time. The pristine happiness we feel when we first fall in love doesn't last forever, and over time our personal flaws and negative baggage inevitably become exposed. But if we remain faithful through the ups and downs of each other's lives, then our initial happiness gradually transforms into a mature form of love that can become stronger and more complete over the years.

13. *Life Changing Factors:* be responsible for your actions, otherwise you are a victim. We react differently to external stress. Men detach themselves and analyze calmly. Women experience strong emotions when evaluating support. Men misinterpret women's emotions as needing resolution.



Most couples get stuck in a pattern where she gives more and he gives less, then she resents him, so he gives even less because he's not appreciated.

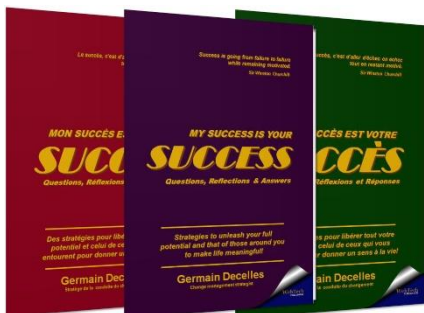
Remember that the world is constantly changing. It is also important to understand that you must take into account the society around you, not only from a gender point of view, but also from a racist, spiritual, political, economic, etc. side, in order to gauge your interactions.

There is also the genetic history that comes into account. Women these days are much more eager for career challenges and are looking more for a certain level of independence. Traditionally male occupations are now filled by energetic women who wish to be in control of their destiny.

However, man is a man and woman is a woman and the genetics of several thousand years quickly comes to the surface among other things under the emotions.

Today, what it means to be a man, or a woman is more nuanced and complex than ever. Men and women are moving beyond stereotypes and embracing their true selves, which has important implications for relationships today. As the roles of men and women evolve, the mastery of the relations of the two genders must also evolve.

Find out more about « communicating with others » with *My Success Is Your Success*. The book through questions, quotes and reflections provides the necessary elements to explore all about motivation so to shape your success and help those around you do the same. Remember that success is all about team efforts!



This 404-page book, available in French and English, is the fruit of forty years of experience acquired with local and international organizations and companies and during consultancy, change management, transition, and marketing services. For more information and to consult the flipbook, go to: www.webtechpublishing.com.

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In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.



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Information

Printing and Distribution: <http://www.lulu.com>

Available to Librarians through the Ingram Content Group: <https://www.ingramcontent.com>

- Paperback format: ISBN: 978-1-7388000-0-1 (\$32.20 us - \$45.16 ca - 29.18 Euro)
- E-book format: ISBN: 978-1-7388000-4-9 (\$12.92 us - \$17.58 ca - 12.16 Euro)

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