

What My Neighbour's Cat taught me About Communication

By Marie-Claire Ross

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Marie-Claire Ross
mc@digicast.com.au

Digicast Television Production <http://www.digicast.com.au>

Igor is a large, muscly Russian Blue cat that loves to sleep for most of the day, get scratched under his neck and play a short game of string (has to be short – or else he falls asleep).

When our neighbours are away at work, he likes to visit us and sleep in our front garden.

Occasionally, he likes to grace us with his presence inside our place. To ensure we look after him in the way he is accustomed to at home, he communicates clearly and consistently about what he requires.

Being the laidback cat that he is, he is not into wasting words (or meows). He always has one demand at a time and will keep at his request until we obey. We have learnt that a meow can signal any of the following: "cuddle me", "let's play with string", "feed me", "let me out now!" or "can I come in?"

He supplements his meows with appropriate body language that always make it clear which of these needs must be met. When he wants a cuddle he will climb up your leg meowing and when he wants to play with string he meows then lightly paws at the stationary yarn. He will also look you right into the eyes when he wants something.

His method of communication is very simple, yet extremely effective. He has managed to teach us very quickly what he wants and his approach is always the same. And when all else fails and we appear to be ignoring him, he tears down our hallway making so much noise that we always get up to see what he wants.

We can all learn from Igor's direct approach. His method can be used in any area of life where a message needs to be communicated: from telling your boss that you need a holiday to telling customers the benefits of your products.

In our field of creating successful promotional and training videos, Igor has reinforced to us why our videos are so good at getting a message across. This communication medium works because it:

1. Clearly conveys one message at a time
2. Uses visual cues to supplement the desired message
3. Repeats the message a few times
4. Adds interesting visual effects to grab attention.

So the next time you have an important message to convey, make sure you do the following:

1. Communicate one message at a time
2. Look people right into their eyes
3. Use appropriate body language
4. Do not give up/repeat your message
5. Go for shameless attention-grabbing techniques if needed (optional).

Of course, Igor's tactic only works when people take the time to find out what he wants. Which is why you should always try to get your message across to the right target audience.

But despite Igor's excellent communication skills, there's one thing that we just don't understand. He likes to put his right paw on our face and hold our head still, while he delicately sucks our nose! Think we better ask his parents about that one.

Marie-Claire Ross is from Digicast Television Production. Digicast Television Production has helped many businesses win big contracts and projects by increasing more awareness and knowledge of their products and services. To get the FREE Digicast Ezine with marketing tips and the latest information on technology to help busy business professionals visit <http://www.digicast.com.au> to subscribe or contact 0500 800 234 (Australia wide).

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