

Five Basic Elements of a Promise

Speaker (performer) – This is you. Be clear that you are making the commitment, not someone else.

Listener (customer) – This is the customer or someone depending on your performance. He or she already made a request.

Mutually understood Conditions of Satisfaction – Many breakdowns occur due to a misunderstanding of what is being requested. What is obvious to one is not obvious to the other, particularly when people may have just met each other.

Future action – When we make a promise we are saying that sometime in the future (before the due date) we will perform some action to bring about the desired outcome or conditions of satisfaction.

Due date – This is the second source of miscoordination. One person is thinking “now” while the other person is thinking “when I get around to it”. Always err on the side of explicitly specifying the required date.

Five Elements of a Reliable Promise

I am **competent** (able) to perform the task and have the wherewithal or I have access to both with the help of others.

I understand or **have estimated how much time** it will take me to perform this task.

I have (already) **blocked out time in my calendar** that I need to perform the task.

I am **freely making this promise**. I am not having a private unspoken conversation to the contrary.

I know that when I make a promise I may not be able to fulfill it. I **will be responsible for any upset that occurs should I not be able to perform the task**, including any negative consequences that may come my way.

