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The Corporate Communicator

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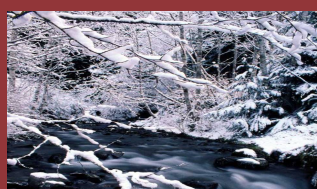
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Consider This ...



"Snowflakes are fragile,
but become powerful when they stick together."

Be a Better Leader

1. Learn quickly. If you don't grow, you will fall behind.

2. Walk the talk. Model the integrity you expect from others and admit when you miss the mark. The more accountability you display, the less people will blame others.

3. Soft skills matter. Leadership is more than hard facts. If you feel uneasy dealing with people remember, that if your employees can't relate to each other, they will be less effective.

4. Feedback pays you back. If soft skills are hard for you, you may skimp on giving direction and feedback. The more guidance you give, the more you treat employees as individuals with unique talents, the more empowered and productive they will be.

5. Value conflict. If you view conflict simply as a gap between one point of view and another, you can find opportunity exists in the difference.

6. Ambiguity breeds creativity. We want answers now. Give permission to ponder and wonder. Some of the most creative, effective solutions come after living with ambiguity.

7. Be confident, not arrogant. Always being "right" can seem arrogant and discourage others from sharing fresh ideas. Look for the positives in other's view and the negatives in your own.

8. Become the change. You can only control you! Gandhi said that to see change in an organization, you must first be that change.



Overcoming Motivational Mistakes

A motivator must have:

PERCEIVED VALUE. Many managers mistakenly assume that anything they give out will be valuable to an employee. Not true!!! For example, promising expanded role responsibilities for exceptional performance may motivate some employees, but not others. Get to know your employees and personalize rewards based on your employee needs.

PERCEIVED EQUITY. People compare rewards. If one perceives that, compared to others, they are doing more yet receiving less, they will lose

motivation. Ensure that rewards are perceived as fair by ALL your employees.

MOTIVATING and not HYGIENE QUALITIES. Fredrick Herzberg refers to "Hygiene" factors as things that are expected in a job. For example, rewarding an employee with a new functional computer would be an ineffective motivator, as the employee EXPECTS adequate supplies to perform their job. Hygiene rewards decrease dissatisfaction, but don't increase satisfaction.

SINCERITY. Giving praise or rewards just for the sake of doing it is not motivating. Engage with employees completely so that they sense the genuineness of your rewards. How you say something is as important as what you say!

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How to Work With Boomers

To work successfully with Boomers, you have to understand them.

Boomers are good at building relationships and are uncomfortable with conflict. They are team players and expect you to be. Because they want to please, they are sensitive to feedback not only about themselves but also are reluctant to go against their peers. If you criticize a Boomer, be sure that you sandwich the criticism between two "positives" and back your criticisms with facts because Boomers can be judgmental of those who see things

differently and will dismiss unsubstantiated criticisms.

Boomers are not naturally budget minded. In fact, they have a love/hate relationship with money and often avoid talking about money. They remember when things were less expensive and are aghast that Xers and Millennial want now, what it has taken a Boomer 30 years to accumulate. Seniority still has meaning to Boomers, as do such things as the corner office.

Boomers tend to put process ahead of results. The "means" are as important as the "ends." Therefore, they are willing to spend more time getting the results, especially if it means the process is more service-oriented and user-friendly. If you do not spend the time, you may be seen as a slacker by a Boomer. Boomers go the "extra mile" and expect you to do so as well.



Dealing With the Rumor Mill

What should you do when you hear rumors ... especially scary ones or, worst of all, rumors about you?

Don't indulge in gossip. While it is natural to huddle and discuss problems, the more you listen the more stressed you will get. There is always someone who is pessimistic about the company. Also, management sometimes leaks information just to see employees' reaction before implementing initiatives.

Get the real picture. Research how your company is performing now and in the near future. Its position in the market can help determine where your job stands.

Check out your company's history of hiring and firing. Has your company let go of people before, or does it try to accommodate employees when possible? No company likes to sack

employees without a reason as it demoralizes those remaining and encourages gossip-mongering.

Talk to someone responsible. Speak to someone who can give you the real picture like your immediate boss, the chief financial officer or a human resource manager.

Don't act in haste. Don't start sending out your résumé just because you have heard your company isn't doing well. If the rumors are true, you can prepare by surveying your options or by talking informally with placement consultants about the situation. Remember, a job in hand is better than two offer letters.

Deal with rumors, especially if they are about you. With success comes jealousy, followed by nasty rumors. Find out the source of the rumors and confront them directly, calmly and in private. Tell that person that you have heard that he started a rumor about you, which is upsetting and untrue. Most people, when confronted in a dignified manner, feel guilty and apologize for what they claim is a misunderstanding. **Warning:** If this person is a gossip monger, choose your words carefully. They may be transmitted to the rest of the office!

Etiquette: Remember the Basics

Etiquette is about presenting yourself with the kind of polish that shows you can be taken seriously. These six rules will improve your business etiquette and help you to get ahead.

Be courteous and positive – and this is irrespective of the pressures on you or your organization. Address conflict as situation-related, rather than person-related. Apologize when you need to.

Be on time – Tardiness is on the rise. Punctuality shows that you honor your commitments and can be trusted. Schedule appointments sensibly. Respect other people's time and they will respect you.

Be trustworthy – Keep confidences. Be aware of the impact that information might have on others and/or the organization.

Show concern for others – Often a person's career has ended, stalled or reversed because the person lacked concern for others. Speak well of your coworkers and point out their

accomplishments to others. Appearing to take the credit in a superiors' or customers' eyes is the surest way to sabotage relationships.

If you must interrupt a conversation, a meeting, or someone's concentration, quickly state what you need, and show consideration for the fact that you are interrupting valuable work or progress.

Dress appropriately – If in doubt, always err on the side of conservative. Being wrinkled, unshaven, smelly or unkempt communicates (intentionally or not) that you don't care enough about the situation, the people or the company. First impressions are lasting impressions.

Use proper written and spoken language – Words have the power to give life and death. Ask questions and listen to the answers. Do a variety of writing. Writing helps clarify ideas, thoughts and feelings. People who can express themselves clearly and appropriately have a definite advantage.

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Contact her for a FREE consultation!

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by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



Dear Dr. Mimi:

Another employee and I have been discussing who makes a better leader—a person who communicates well with others or a person who gets the job done? My feeling is that you can't have followers unless you are a good communicator, and without followers, you are not a leader. What do you think?

—*Perplexed*

Dear Perplexed:

This is not a new question and one that is often debated. Why? Because you need to be able to do both to be an effective leader. Effective leaders are tuned in to the needs of their followers and the needs of the situation and are able to communicate efficiently so as to achieve positive results.

The goal of leadership is not to get more followers, but rather, to create more leaders and to get the job done. Communication is essential to develop the people AND to get the results. In our communications training, we always say that the communication goal is to be sure that the message that is meant and sent is the message that is perceived and received. Not an easy task! Good communication involves more than giving orders and making sure they are implemented. It is empowering people to use their strengths in order to get the necessary results.

—*Dr. Mimi*



Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



Dear Dr. Mimi:

I am working with a person who can't make a decision. She spends a lot of time thinking and thinking rather than deciding and acting. What she fails to realize is that her indecisiveness often prevents me from doing my job. I want to scream at her, "Make up your mind!" I know I can't. She's the boss's daughter.

—*Decide, Please!*

Dear Decide:

It doesn't matter who she is. Screaming wouldn't help. In fact, it would only further paralyze her decision-making ability. So what are you to do? Start by setting limits on her options. Try to give her only two choices. Tell her your recommendation and then give her a time limit on when you must have an answer. Let her know that if she does not meet the deadline, you will make the decision.

If she has to be the one to make the decision, ask her what is keeping her from deciding. Try to unblock the block. If all else fails, sit down with her to help her decide. Ask her to list the pros and cons of each alternative. Take notes on a sheet of paper (or a flip chart, if one is available) so that she can see her responses. If she still can't decide, have her rate each pro and con with how important it is and then total up the points. Good luck!

—*Dr. Mimi*



Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.