

Feb/Mar 2008

THE Paraclete

A monthly leadership newsletter

**“Opportunity dances
with those already on
the dance floor.”**

—H. Jackson Brown

Ask Your People...

From groupublishing.com

- ...How well were you oriented and trained for the role you've been filling?
- ...Do you have access to all the resources you need to do your job well?
- ...How easy has it been for you to develop friendships among the other people who serve on the team with you?
- ...How clearly do you see your work as being connected with the mission and vision of the organization?
- ...How much has your job contributed to your professional development?
- ...How much success and fulfillment have you experienced in your job?
- ...How much of a difference do you believe you're making?

Cutting to the Chase Phrases

By Helen Wilkie

- “*What can I do to help you?*” It forces them to explain their purpose in talking to you.
- “*If I am understanding you correctly, you want _____. Is this accurate?*” Summarize what you think the person is saying; then check it.
- “*What do you believe I can do to resolve this matter?*” It gets to the matter of whether or not what he is asking is within your power to give.

The Fine Art of Positive Confrontation

By Simon Presland

1. Face your fear of confrontation. Shining a positive light on a delicate issue will help keep peace.
2. Discuss the conflict as soon as possible. An irritating issue that goes unresolved can easily build emotional distance between two people.
3. State what is bothering you. Put feelings in words.
4. Stick to the subject at hand. Don't drag up past offenses. Deal with one issue at a time.
5. If someone says you do, then it may be true. Be willing to hear him out without rebuttal-forming.
6. Avoid generalizing. Be specific. No extreme words.
7. Avoid personal insults and character assassination. See the issue as the problem, not the person.
8. Confront with truth; affirm with love. Start positive
9. Confront to heal, not to win. Goal = to restore.

Solomon's Effective Communication Tips

By Steven Scott

1. **Context.**
 - A. **Listen before speaking.** Earn the right to be heard. Seek to understand a situation before making judgments about it.
 - B. **Understand human nature:** people are insecure (so demonstrate trust), want to feel special (so be generous with compliments and acts of appreciation), are looking for a better future (so inspire with an optimistic outlook and words of hope), and are selfish (so motivate by speaking to the needs of your people).
 - C. **Be emotionally aware.** Communicating within context involves taking the emotional temperature of others. Pay attention to facial expressions, voice inflection, and posture.
2. **Delivery.**
 - A. **Adopt an appropriate tone.** It's not what you say, but how you say it.
 - B. **Speak persuasively:** with enthusiasm (express joy and vitality), with animation (use lively facial expressions and gestures), with audience participation (ask listeners to do something), and with spontaneity (tell the story without notes).
 - C. **Be honest.**

Enhance Trust

By Ken Blanchard Companies

1. **Demonstrating trust.** Establishing rules/policies, and procedures to protect against a few bad apples sends the wrong message to the vast majority.
2. **Sharing information.** Sometimes this means disclosing information that is considered privileged, including sensitive and important topics.
3. **Telling it straight.** The number one quality that people want in a leader is integrity. Be open and honest even about bad news.
4. **Providing feedback.** Make sure leaders schedule and hold regular progress-check meetings with their direct reports, to catch problems before they are major.
5. **Providing opportunities for everyone to win.** When people within an organization are forced to compete against one another, you lose everyone's trust.
6. **Resolving concerns head-on.** Put challenges on the table and give people an opportunity to influence the process. Expand people's involvement/influence
7. **Admitting mistakes.** An apology can be an effective way to correct a mistake and restore the trust needed for a good relationship. Don't hide mistakes.
8. **Walking the talk.** A leader, above all, has to be a walking example of the vision and values of the organization. If leaders say one thing and do another, people will question their trustworthiness.

Cynthia Olmstead: *"We must all treat trust as a precious gem that must be highly valued and treasured. It needs to be viewed as if it were a delicate egg; when treated roughly, it will fall and shatter."*

The Tests of Vision

By Chris Widener

"Vision is the spectacular that causes us to carry out the mundane."

1. Is it clear?
2. Is it concise?
3. Is it inspiring?
4. Is it achievable?
5. Is it easy to memorize?

Do's and Don'ts When You Disagree with Your Boss

By Kevin Daley

1. Don't come out and say you disagree with the boss's plan. Avoid use of the dreaded word "but".
2. Don't let your emotions come into play. Wait a while before presenting an alternate plan.
3. Do start the meeting by asking what the boss wants to achieve and the reasons for these goals. Ask open-ended questions to probe further.
4. Do make sure your plan links to the boss's critical needs.
5. Do visualize yourself in the boss's shoes. Appreciate what's good about the boss's roadmap.
6. Do open the meeting by giving the boss the floor, until he invites you to speak. Present your plan then.

7 Habits for Managers by Stephen Covey

1. **Be proactive.** Use your resourcefulness and initiative (R & D) to break the barriers to results. See alternatives not roadblocks.
2. **Begin with the end in mind.** Make the great contribution you are capable of making. Define the contribution you want to make in a contribution statement. Let this statement drive all you do.
3. **Put first things first.** Focus on a few "wildly important" goals and track your progress. Organize and execute around your highest priorities.
4. **Think win-win.** Make win-win performance agreements to motivate superb performance. Don't manage your people. Set expectations together and let them manage themselves.
5. **Seek first to understand, then be understood.** Practice empathic listening and give honest, accurate feedback. Take the time to understand the real issues and to give people candid feedback.
6. **Synergize.** Always seek the Third Alternative: the truly creative solution or decision. Constantly seek for something better: it's not your way or my way, it's a higher way.
7. **Sharpen the saw.** Unleash the potential of your team members by tapping the "whole person." Treat people as human beings, not just as human resources.