

YOUR GUIDE TO
BETTER
COMMUNICATING

FROM "THE EFFECTIVENESS GUIDE"

*DISCOVER THE SECRETS TO
BECOMING MORE EFFECTIVE
TOMORROW THAN YOU
ARE TODAY.*

EDWARD J. MURPHY

FOUNDER OF THE EFFECTIVENESS GUIDE

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BETTER
COMMUNICATING



*Discover the SECRETS to Becoming
More Effective Tomorrow
Than You Are Today*

BY

EDWARD J. MURPHY

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YOUR GUIDE TO BETTER COMMUNICATING: Discover the SECRETS to Becoming More Effective Tomorrow Than You Are Today: Volume 6, 4th Edition, to *THE EFFECTIVENESS GUIDE*; BY EDWARD J. MURPHY, with LEE O. LACY & JASON BOWNE

Career Maker Publishing

10240 E. Tillman Avenue, Mesa, AZ 85212

ISBN-13: 978-1511823999; ISBN-10: 1511823992

BISAC: Business & Economics / Leadership / LU: 112318; For special orders, please [email](#).



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WHAT OTHER SAY ABOUT

The Effectiveness Guide



"I highly recommend [The Effectiveness Guide](#) as a text for new leaders and a review for seasoned leaders - as a reminder of what they should be doing. This book is unique because it's replete with valuable information that you can learn today and use tomorrow. If you want to be absolutely essential to any organization and become a better leader tomorrow than you are today, then this is for you."

- Dennis D. Cavin

Lieutenant General, US Army (Retired)
Vice President Army and Missile Defense Programs
Lockheed Martin, Corporate Business Development



"I wish to recommend [The Effectiveness Guide](#) because Ed Murphy just doesn't theorize; he draws on extensive organizational experience from many years of service in the military and from working in the private-sector. His keen insights and practical advice make this book required reading for anyone trying to negotiate the maze of organizational chaos."

- Lee Lacy

Assistant Professor
US Army Warfighter Course
Command and General Staff College



"The [Effectiveness Guide](#) will help you discover the qualities of effectiveness. It will also help you unlock your potential to direct and lead your team to success. Leadership is an art as well as a science. This book will help you master both the art and science of leadership. I highly recommend this guide."

- Lance Revo

Principal Engineering Design Specialist

Cyber Security at AREVA NP

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PREFACE



I'm often asked, "What does the picture mean on the cover of your book?"

This picture is a metaphor of the dilemma young people face coming from high school or college into the world-of-work.

They're unprepared, do not have the right tools, the right motivation, nor any clue of what's most important to every employer on the planet.

The cover image shows a young man rowing a boat in the fog. If you look closer, you'll notice that the boat is too small for the person in it. You can tell because one side of the boat is dipping so low in the water that it's almost taking on water. You can also tell that he has little experience in a boat because the other side of the boat is way out of the water because his weight is not evenly distributed.



He is also rowing in dense fog. He cannot see where he's going. The further he gets from shore, he cannot turn around and head back because he has no idea from which direction he came. Finally, since he's not wearing a flotation device, he's assuming he won't have to swim. You know where assumptions take you, right? He is totally unprepared. He didn't plan his trip, nor is he prepared to deal with the consequences of what lies ahead. He is, or will soon be, lost and at the mercy of nature.

Such is the fate of young workers today in the new economy.

In today's job market there's a huge skills gap between graduation and the first day on the job. As a result, young people lack the job skills needed to "hit-the-ground-running" and find themselves in dead-end, menial, minimum-wage jobs, trading time for money just to put food on the table.

How do I know that? I know it because I've spent 20+ years of my life as an executive coach, working with hundreds of business executives and small business owners, seeking the answer to this simple question:

Why are some people more effective than others?

What do they think, say, and do that made them more effective?

During that time, I was privileged to work with some of the most exceptional men and women in America. Through their example, I learned the true definition of effectiveness by documenting what they did, how they did it, and most importantly, how they made people feel. What you'll find here is the result of my years of research.

Today, my purpose in life is to help you navigate the world-of-work, maximize their true career potential, and become more effective and successful at work and in life.

ENJOY!

INTRODUCTION



“Intelligence, knowledge or experience are important and might get you a job, but strong communication skills are what will get you promoted.”

- Mireille Guiliano

How effective are you at work? Would your employer agree? What are you doing every day to become more effective? These are the questions we'll be addressing as we explore how you can become more effective tomorrow than you are today.

This book is about ***Communicating***, your ability to convey, impart, and share exchange information, thoughts, feelings, and ideas that result in a clear understanding in others through your skillful use of oral, written, and non-verbal communication.

Communicating is one of the *10 Core Competencies of Effectiveness*:

Followership, Delegating, Planning, Organizing, Communicating, Problem-Solving, Awareness, Training, Motivating, and Character.

Your Guide to Better Communicating is one in a series of 11 books that comprise *The Effectiveness Guide*, which was created to provide you with the best-in-class knowledge, wisdom, and advice on how you can become more effective at work and in life. It contains over 1000 actionable *Tactics, Techniques, and Tools* (or best practices) used every day by the most effective people in their field and have proven reliable in helping others to maximize their true career potential.

In a 21st-century world of business, the best companies, the ones who make it to the top in their industry, are thriving because they're breaking all the traditional rules and stereotypes of conventional leadership. Positions, titles, and organizational charts are meaningless.

I know this to be true because I've spent 20 years of my life as an executive coach working with hundreds of business executives and small business owners, seeking the answer to this simple question,

Why are some people more effective than others?

What do they think, say, and do that made them more effective?

Here, I was privileged to work with some of the most exceptional men and women in America, learning the true meaning of effectiveness by documenting what they did, how they did it, and most importantly, how they made others feel. I found that effective people had one thing in common.

They were able to influence the actions of others by how well they applied the 10 Core Competencies of Effectiveness.

I also learned why most businesses today are struggling.

First, employers today are still relying on traditional development practices, which are stunting the growth of many young leaders. They're still asking the wrong questions and using the same old lame metrics to measure success, which isn't working as expected. Traditional assessments like 360 surveys or outdated performance criteria give false positives, lulling people into thinking they're more prepared than they are.

Second, there's a huge skills gap between graduation and the first day on the job. As a result, new employees lack the job skills needed to "hit the ground running" and find themselves in dead-end, menial, minimum-wage jobs, trading time for money just to put food on the table.

Third, most employees have no program for professional development and become complacent hoping that their past accomplishments are good enough, and no longer strive to improve their skills. They wait for their employer to tell them that they have a weakness before they do anything to improve themselves. There's no motivation to empower them to "Be All They Can Be."

And, finally, employers, especially small business owners, lack the time or resources to train their employees. Worse yet, large corporations today aren't willing to invest in training their employees until they have a proven track-record.

It's clear to me that the leadership and management wisdom used for years doesn't work anymore and is failing us in several critical areas. There's got to be a better way. Well, there is, and it's called effectiveness.

Effectiveness is your ability to consistently produce excellent results.

When assessing effectiveness, no one cares how much experience you have, how hard or how long you work, where you went to college, or what companies you worked for; all that's meaningless. Effectiveness focuses instead on what you did (got done, completed, finished, created, or resolved), how you did it (character, attitude, and behavior), and how you can do it better (efficiency and consistency)? Effective people are able to measure and increase their value-added to their employer; enhance their personal and professional development, and do so quicker and easier than they ever could on their own

So, how can you become more effective, when it's not taught anywhere in academia or your company? Here's the good news! That's where we come in. The beauty of *The Effectiveness Guide* is that you can learn *Tactics, Techniques, and Tools* (or best practices) needed to become more effective and successful regardless of your title, position, function, or level of authority, right from your home.

I know from experience that by learning, using, and training others on the *10 Core Competencies of Effectiveness*, you'll become more effective with each passing day. Without your direct intervention in your career, you're leaving your career to chance. You have too much to lose by not taking a more active role in learning the critical skills needed for successful job performance. I know that doing nothing and waiting for someone else to make you more effective, is the definition of complacency, which will kill your career.

If you're ready to elevate-your-game to the next level and become absolutely essential and irreplaceable to any employer lucky enough to have you on his team, *The Effectiveness Guide* will be the best investment you'll ever make in your career.

Also, if you feel this information could help someone else, please take a few moments to let them know. If it turns out to make a difference in their life, they'll be forever grateful to you – as will I.

Let's make a difference together - one person at a time!

All the best!

Ed

Connect with Me @

Founder of *TheEffectivenessGuide.com*

Email

What are you doing to improve yourself?

Stop wishing you were better and do something about it TODAY!

Note: Marked in *BLUE Italics* throughout this book, you'll find *Takeaways* or *Key Points* which summarize the main message we wish to convey.

BY FINDING OUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON



*"Leaders can afford to be uncertain, but we cannot afford to be unclear.
People will not follow fuzzy leadership." - John Maxwell*

Have you ever struggled to get a simple decision from your leader? Have you ever felt certain that your communications with your team members were effective, only to find out later that this was untrue? If so, maybe it's time to learn how to communicate better.

Communication is the glue that holds it all together. Good communication is a continuous process intended to produce clearer focus, assist collaboration, build consensus, build trust, relieve stress, reduce rumors, reduce confusion, ensure shared understanding, reduce misunderstandings, and most of all - to get things done! Interpretations, like assumptions, create miscommunication which can stop or delay the successful completion of your projects.

It's painfully true that you could have the best planned and organized project on the planet, but without good communication, you're bound to have problems. You could also have a weak, non-existent plan and still be successful, as long as the communication is good.

How Good are your Company's Communications?

The most important components of any Good Communication System are:

Clear: Easily understandable and free from ambiguity

Cyclic: Sent periodically telling what's going on

Focused: Delivered to the right members at the right time

On-Demand: On shared drive - [FAQ](#), 24/7

Timely: Information is provided in sufficient time to take action

Two-way: Provides ability to receive input/feedback from all

Redundant: Delivered via several different means

Does your current communication system include all these? If not, why?

How can you find out What's Really Going On?

Create ways to find out what's really going on in your unit. The two best sources of information on how your unit is doing are your members and your customers. Listen to them and act accordingly. It's amazing the number of high-priced consultants that just come in for a few days, talk to a few team members and customers, submit a report, and management thinks they're brilliant.

If only the leader or a member of the Leadership Team would have done the same thing and listened with an open mind, without being defensive or passing judgment, the same results could have been achieved – for free. Keep your members informed. Listen and respond to their concerns!

The most effective ways to find out *What's Really Going On*:

Blog: Post questions you would like members to answer. Ask for feedback.

Break bread together: Have a meal with the members you work with

Sensing sessions: Meeting with members selected at random

MBWA: Management By Walking Around

Visits: Spend one day a week, visiting a different location unannounced to talk to your members

Open Door Policy: Provide a time when members can see you privately

Skip-level: Randomly select members, several levels below, non-attribution, ask for problems/solutions

Suggestion box: Receive anonymous suggestions for improvement

Surveys: Send out a survey and assess the results

BY REDUCING MISCOMMUNICATIONS



“Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.” - Paul J. Meyer

Have you ever received a message from someone that was vague, unclear, or confusing? How did that make you feel? Put yourself in the position of the listener. How often have you assumed that the person you’re speaking with understood what you were saying only to find out later that they were thinking something different?

Here’s an example:

One day one of Bob's Direct Reports (John) walked up and asked, “Bob, did you get my email?” Bob responded, “Huh? What are you talking about?” John then realized that he wasn’t on the same frequency. So, he said, “The email I sent you about travel costs. Was it okay?” Bob then responded, “Oh, now I know what you’re talking about. But please wait for my response, because I’ll probably forget this conversation.”

There are two important lessons here about better communication.

First, whenever you start a conversation, ensure the listener is on the same frequency. To do this, you might have to preface your initial remarks with, “Concerning the email I sent you about (Topic of conversation like the email you sent about travel costs), I have a question.” Now, pause and wait for some form of confirmation that the listener recalls the email (past communication). Then ask your question.

Second, if you sent the email to your leader, don’t stop him in the hallway and ask him if he got your email. He will probably not remember it, and he won’t be able to answer your question fully.

He will most likely need to go to that specific email, among the 547 emails he's received in the past 24-hours, before responding. If you have questions, pick up the phone, or see him in his office. If the question isn't time-sensitive, ask your question in an email. This way you'll get the correct answer, and his response will be documented.

Use an "FAQ SITE"

Have you ever found yourself answering the same question over and over? If so, post these *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) with answers on a shared drive so everyone can benefit. Delegate this to a team member.

Get Consensus on the meaning of Commonly Used Terms:

Some words and phrases are open to interpretation. Clearly define commonly used terms. One of the biggest problems I noticed as I spoke to executives from different offices in the same organization was that they lacked a common language. They all had different definitions for the same term, which could lead to serious miscommunication.

The solution was simple; collaborate to create a list of commonly used terms with one mutually agreed upon meaning. When the list was *Staffed* to all *Key Players* for review, this created a few new terms. Further clarification was added to the definitions, and the list was *Staffed* again until consensus was achieved. Problem solved!

Avoid leaving Unclear or Incomplete Voice Mail or Email Messages:

<i>Unclear</i>	<i>Clearer</i>	<i>Clearest</i>
Please call me back I have a question for you.	I have a question about our meeting tomorrow.	I need to know where and when the meeting is tomorrow.
I need to tell you something.	I need to tell you about the meeting tomorrow.	Meeting is @ 7 AM on Feb 28 in our conference room.

Did you get my email or message?	Did you get my message about the Staff meeting?	Wednesday, I sent you an email asking if you're coming to Friday's Staff Meeting at 11 AM.
----------------------------------	---	--

Avoid using Unclear Words and Phrases:

<i>Unclear</i>	<i>Clearer</i>	<i>Notes</i>
It	Bring it, send it, do it, etc.	Avoid using the word it. Instead, identify what "it" means.
They, Them, Their, He, She	Mary, Bob's, John	State the name of who you're talking about?
...with the other one.	With my red coat on my bed.	What's the other one mean?
Next week, next month	Thursday, April 12 at 11 A.M.	Be specific!
I need it ASAP	I need your report delivered to my home no later than 5 P.M. on Friday, October 22	When do you want the task completed? Be specific!
That, this	Make sure Project Alfa gets done!	What is "this" or "that"?
Tomorrow	Friday	Best: 14 November
AM	Morning	Best: 10 AM
Meeting is moved up 1 hour	The meeting is at 11 A.M.	What does "move up" mean?
Let me know what you think	I need your comments of what gets added, deleted, or changed no later than Feb. 22	Be Specific!
This one is hot or high priority	I need your comments/response no-later-than Feb. 22	When is the deadline?
Always	Usually, normally	9 out of 10 times
Never	Seldom, rarely	Less than 10%

BY USING CRITICAL REASONING & CREATIVE THINKING



“Men are rather reasoning than reasonable animals, for the most part governed by the impulse of passion.” - Alexander Hamilton

Critical reasoning and creative thinking are nothing new. They’re things you’ve practiced many times. It's just that you’ve probably not given any thought to how you went about it, nor how the process can enhance your communication skills.

Effective people have standards which they use to evaluate their critical reasoning and creative thinking process.

Critical Reasoning requires that you analyze the task, identify your goals, and clarify the problem you need to resolve. This includes considering the many perspectives influencing the task. Recognize that the data (information, evidence, facts, observations, or experiences) may be incomplete. Examine assumptions, along with inferences, conclusions, implications, and consequences of these assumptions. For example, is abortion always wrong? Are there times when abortion may make sense (like incest or rape)?

Creative Thinking challenges you to stretch your mind to see new possibilities or different ways of doing things. It asks you to identify those inhibitors that focus your thinking along predetermined paths. Inhibitors include perceptions, culture, environment, emotions, intellect, and idea killers, which are usually expressed by, "We already tried that, it would take too long, the leader would never support it," or "I have enough information." Creative thinking doesn't take place in a vacuum - it builds on critical reasoning skills.

The critical reasoning and creative thinking standards help you evaluate your reasoning and thinking for relevance, consistency, accuracy, fairness, and completeness. When you apply critical reasoning and creative thinking principles to your writing process, you'll enhance your communicative skills.

BY WRITING TO CONVINCe



“The skill of writing is to create a context in which other people can think.” -

Edwin Schlossberg

We write and speak for three main reasons: to convince (decide), to entertain (have fun), and to inform (teach/train). Have you ever been asked to write something for your leader or his leader? If not, you will.

Someday you’ll be writing to convince someone to make a decision. You’ll be writing to convince your leader’s leader to approve the funding to solve a problem for your leader. This is common, by the way. This is one way your leader is training you for the next level.

*The Secret to becoming a Better Writer is to practice writing every day
and get feedback from someone who writes better than you.*

Without feedback, you won’t know if you’re improving. Successful projects require that you can communicate well in writing. Your reputation and credibility, as viewed by your subordinates, peers, and superiors, will depend on your writing skills and your ability to accomplish your projects. Train your Direct Reports by frequently giving them writing assignments and providing valuable feedback.

However, a more critical skill is your ability to think critically and communicate your intention and decision clearly, so others understand your message and act on it.

For the remainder of this chapter on writing, you'll learn how to write to convince. This is sometimes called an Argumentative Essay, Written Argument, Decision Paper, Opinion Paper, Position Paper, or White Paper. Here you'll learn how to write your opinion and convince the reader that your point of view is valid. This is not your standard book report, sorry. This will require you to really think. Here are some suggestions to help you become a more convincing writer.

What Standard do you use for your Writing?

Effective people have both writing and speaking standards. Here's one that will help you stand above the rest!

“Is my writing (or speaking) easily understood in a single rapid reading (listening), compelling and convincing, generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage, and clear, concise, organized and to the point?”

Note: This standard also holds true for verbal communications. It means that by the time you finish presenting, your subordinates, peers, and superiors know your intent and understand your decision.

Create your Purpose:

Failure to clarify your purpose may result in goals that are contradictory, confusing, or unrealistic. It will also limit their understanding of what you're doing. Reasoning helps you to clearly state your purpose, ensure your purpose is realistic and significant, and distinguish your purpose from related purposes.

Identify your Problems:

Whenever you attempt to understand something, there is at least one question or one problem needing a solution, begging for your attention. The only way to understand the problem is to take the time to identify the underlying problems. You can only understand the problem when you identify and ask the right questions. Reasoning is an attempt to identify the true problem and the right questions to ask. Take time to clearly identify the problems. Identify if it's a personal, organizational, or a leadership problem. Divide the problem into subcategories. Identify the questions behind the problems. Express the questions in several different ways to clarify meaning and scope.

Determine your Point of View:

Whenever you reason, it's from some point of view. A point of view is your perspective on the problem and reflects your personality, educational development, experiences, intuition, and position. Your continuing education and ongoing experiences help you to reason through problems to reach solutions.

Draw on your experiences and education (and that of others) to look at problems from multiple perspectives. Soliciting others' points of view will help you analyze and identify the hidden ideas underlying your assumptions. Because reasoning begins with a point of view, identify your point of view, seek the points of view of others and their rationale, identify the strengths and weaknesses of each point of view, and strive for objectivity in evaluating all points of view.

Create your Compelling Thesis:

New writers have the greatest difficulty creating their thesis. To simplify things, think of your thesis as your argument and state your argument in one sentence that requires proof. For example, if you just read an article about abortion, do you believe abortion is right or wrong? Whichever side you choose, now support it with three good reasons why you feel that way.

If you use unbiased facts to support your position, you'll have greater credibility and a far better chance of convincing others of your position. After you read the article or assessed the situation, did you agree or disagree, find fault, have an opinion? If the author is pro-abortion, do you agree, disagree, and why? You can say things like, "In my view," or "I believe abortion is wrong." That's your point of view. Now support it with three good reasons why you feel that way.

Your thesis might read, “In my view, abortion is wrong.”

Don't be afraid to use “I”:

Using the personal pronoun, I, tells the reader that this is your thesis and not the author's thesis. The reader wants to know how you feel. If he wanted to know the author position, he would have either read the article himself or asked you to write a book report or a summary. The reader wants to know what (and how) you think; how you feel. What's your opinion of the article or problem? You don't have to agree with the author. Starting to see the difference? This is your credibility you're building. If you tell me how the author feels or thinks, you're writing a book report, not an argumentative essay or a position/decision paper.

You're trying to convince (or persuade) your reader that your point of view is best. So, where are the facts? What do other prominent people say about your point of view?

Now, Prove It!

Now, support your argument. Following your thesis, give the reader three good reasons why you believe, feel, or think this way. Also, can you support your view from a moral, religious, scientific, or ethical perspective?

Are there others that have similar views and how do they support their view? And, don't forget to footnote or give them credit, as needed. If you can bolster your argument with facts (legal precedents, statistics, surveys, decisions, or opinions of others), you'll have a greater probability of convincing others to your point of view. Your support (convincing reasons), to be fair and credible, needs to consider the opposite point of view and your honest and candid assessment of each point.

Be more effective with your Packaging

Put the Bottom Line - Up Front (BLOF)

What's your *Bottom Line* (your position, thesis, or recommendation)? Put it *up front* in the first paragraph. Your first paragraph should include your purpose, your thesis, and a brief introduction to your supporting paragraphs. Arrange your writing so the reader can quickly and easily understand your intent. Make sure you don't mislead the reader.

Structure your Argument Logically:

For example, your outline for a Position Paper on abortion might read:

Opening paragraph: The purpose of this paper is to express my views concerning abortion. In my view, abortion is wrong! (Thesis) I support my view by assessing abortion from a moral, medical, and legal perspective

Supporting paragraphs: Morally, abortion is wrong because... Medically, abortion is wrong because... Legally, abortion is wrong because... Any opposing views?

Closing paragraph: I've attempted to present my views concerning abortion from a moral, medical, and legal perspective. In my view, abortion is wrong! (restated Thesis) I believe this because (Summarize).

Guard against Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's original work, without crediting the author.

If in doubt, just give credit to the author. It shows that you've done your research and it adds credibility to your argument because you've found others who feel the same way. Give credit where credit is due! It actually enhances your credibility.

BY ENHANCING YOUR EMAIL



“I do love email. Wherever possible I try to communicate asynchronously. I’m really good at email.” - Elon Musk

Here are a few suggestions to help you enhance the effectiveness of your email communications:

Put the PURPOSE UP-FRONT: Most email is mindless rambling with no apparent purpose. Why are you sending this email? What do you want the reader to do? State these answers in the first two sentences.

Use Flags: Flags are helpful when tracking what’s important and what’s not.

Request a “Read Receipt”: This lets you know that your email has been displayed.

Add the Deadline to your Subject Line: Add the Deadline in your subject line, so the recipient knows you need a response and by when.

Track your Deadlines: This method works great if you have several members to contact, all at distant locations. Within your email, create a new folder called DEADLINES. Every time you send an email to a Direct Report or *Key Player*, with a Deadline in the subject line, go to your SENT folder and transfer that same email to your DEADLINES folder.

Now, when you go to your DEADLINE folder, you can manage all your Deadlines together. Ask your Direct Reports and *Key Players* to email you when they have completed what you asked them to do. Then, when you receive their email, just go to your DEADLINES folder, and delete that email.

Use the "Reply All" feature more frequently: “Reply All” is one email feature that’s underutilized. When answering incoming email, this feature will help you the same as if you were physically in a room with all the addressees.

Always ask, “Who Else Needs to Read This?” This differs from “Reply All.” Before sending outgoing email, always ask, who else needs to read this information and act on your answer. Also, should this new 'question and answer' go into your FAQ site for the future?

Get better use from your Subject Line: People get lots of email every day. Most of these emails get deleted. Because of the sheer volume, folks don’t know which emails are important and/or urgent.

To help the reader, consider using these additions to your subject line:

<i>In Subject Window</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Color</i>	<i>Meaning to Receiver</i>
Immediate Action Required!	1	Red	Act on this NOW!
Important	2	Green	Read ASAP! Acknowledgment required
Routine	3	Black	Read when you get a chance

Use Abbreviations:

PSM	Please come see me now	SMC	See my comment
LT	Let’s talk, when you get a moment	COB	Close of Business (normally 5 PM)
NLT	No-Later-Than	NST	No-Sooner-than

Use the 2-Person Rule: Are you Ready to "Send" what you've written? How many times have you sent an important email, only to read it later and find sentences left out and spelling errors? Did you receive dozens of questions from members because you left things out of your original email? If you use the *2-Person Rule*, it will save you from major embarrassment later.

The 2-Person Rule states that anything you write, must be reviewed by a second person before the document goes out.

The purpose of this rule is to make sure the communication makes sense (clear and understandable), didn't leave anything out, is appropriate for the audience, is correct and error-free, and includes and/or excludes the right members. Who's your Second Person?

Here's a great story:

One day Bob met with his leader for some feedback. His leader, Mary, told him that she had noticed several errors in documents produced by his Team and asked Bob to fix it. Bob returned to his team and relayed the errors to his team and asked what could be done to fix it.

His team members recommended that the 2-Person Rule be used. For every document leaving the team, that a second-person should review the document for errors and initial the document. That way if a document did leave with errors, the team would know both the originator/creator of the document (who should have caught the errors in the first place) and the 2-Person Checker who reviewed the document before it was released. Bob agreed and followed through with Mary to explain the new system of correcting errors. Problem solved.

Self-Test: How well do you Write?

Answering these questions can provide insight as to how well you Write.

After you've written something:

Is the purpose or *Bottom-line* stated clearly in the first two sentences?

Is it easily understood in a single rapid reading?

Is it compelling and convincing?

Is it generally free of errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage?

Is it clear, concise, organized, and to the point?

Did you check for unclear words and phrases? (*Chapter 2*)

Are you certain that you didn't leave anything out?

Is it appropriate for the intended audience?

Does it include and/or excludes the right members?

Are you certain that no one else needs to receive a copy?

Are you certain that if this is on the news, you won't be in trouble?

Did you use the *2-Person Rule* before sending it?

Note: If you answered *NO* to two or more of these questions, you have difficulty writing and should consider making some needed changes.

Effective people take this assessment annually and change what needs to be changed.

BY SPEAKING TO INFORM



“You know what you said, but, you have no idea what they heard.”

- Anonymous

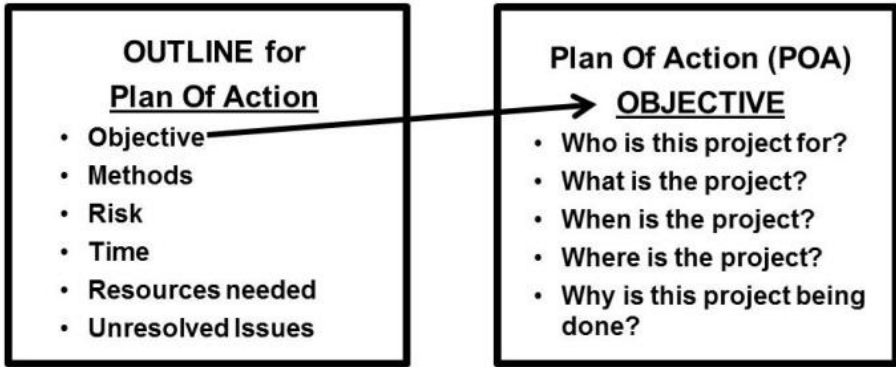
Effective people know that speaking to *Inform* or to *Present* is a powerful communication skill. You use this skill every day as you interact with others. Is your message clear, concise, and easy to understand? Do you change your presentation depending on your listener/audience? Here are a few suggestions to enhance your ability to *Speak to Inform*.

Layout: The basic layout of any good presentation should do three things: tell the listener what you’re going to talk about (introduction, purpose, outline), tell it to them (the body of your presentation), and review what you just told them (conclusion/summary).

Outline: Create a draft of your presentation outline. Your outline should be a logical flow of what you’re presenting. Next, create a draft of every slide to match your outline.

Your slides are for you, not your audience, to remind you what to say during the presentation. Don’t print every word of your presentation on the slide. Just use bulletized words or phrases to prompt you to talk about the word or phrase.

Here’s an example of an outline slide for a presentation on how to create a *Plan Of Action* (POA).



The slide on the right (Slide 2) flows logically from the outline slide on the left (Slide 1) and tells you what to say when the slide comes up. Again, slides are for you, not your audience.

Your slides and the bullets (black dot to the left of the phrase) are there to guide you in what to say during your presentation. After you glance at your slide, before you speak, face your audience.

Do not speak with your back towards your audience.

BY SPEAKING TO CONVINCING



“I figured that if I said it enough, I would convince the world that I really was the greatest.” - Muhammad Ali

Speaking to Convince is another powerful communication skill. You use this skill every day as you interact with others. Is your message clear, concise, and easy to understand? What facts or evidence do you use to convince the listener to your point of view/opinion?

Decision-making presentations (or Decision Briefing) are designed to obtain a decision from a Decision Maker (senior person). This decision normally involves a document (POA) that is either being created or is being revised.

Visuals: Ensure your visuals are created after your document has been *Staffed* to all *Key Players*. This is done so you capture all the *Unresolved Issues*. Spend 80% of your time on the collaborative "Staffing a Document" process and 20% on your visuals. Save the day before your presentation to rehearse.

Sequence: Your briefing sequence should consider these subjects:

Title:

Purpose: "My purpose is to obtain your decision (or approval) on..."

Outline:

Objective/Problem:

Recommendation: *Bottom-line, Up-front!* **See Note 1**

Facts and Assumptions:

Methods/Concept:

Risk: **See Note 2**

Time table:

Resources needed:

Unresolved Issues: See Note 3

Changes:

Restrictions (can't do) and Imperatives (must do):

**Unintended Consequences*

***2d and 3d Order Effects*

Conclusion/Recommendation/Decision:

Questions?

**Unintended Consequences*: Outcomes that aren't the outcomes expected

***Effects, 2d and 3d Order*: Determines how the decision affects others

Note 1: If you expect the Decision-Maker to give you his approval at the end of the briefing, tell him what you recommend up-front, right after you state the problem.

Note 2: The Decision Maker will want to know if this project is "at Risk"? And, if so, what can be done to mitigate the risk?

Note 3: The Decision Maker will want to know, from each *Key Player* (both *Line and Staff Leaders*), if they can support what's being recommended. Do they concur or non-concur? If they non-concur, why? Create a slide/table that lists who non-concurred and why (their reasons/comments). Also, what do you need to know, but don't know? What do you know for sure that's unacceptable or unsatisfactory to you? If you have none, then state, "None" on the *Unresolved Issues* slide.

Here are a few suggestions to enhance your ability to *Speak to Convince*.

Create a draft of your presentation outline: Your outline shows a logical flow of what you're presenting. Create a draft of every slide to match your outline. The purpose of each slide is to remind you what to say during the presentation.

Invite all Key Players: Make sure you invite all *Key Players* to the briefing. Also, ensure each *Key Player* has a copy of the document that generated the briefing, at least a week before your presentation. The reason to invite all *Key Players* is so they can directly answer questions from the Decision Maker. If the Decision Maker has a question, redirect the question to the most appropriate *Key Player* for their response. Don't attempt to speak for a *Key Player*.

Prepare Handouts: A handout could be copies of three things: your briefing slides (four slides per page), a slide that's too complicated or too difficult to see on the screen, or a document that's the subject of the briefing (like a POA).

Careful: if you distribute your handouts too soon, the audience will be reading your handouts and not listening to you.

Rehearse, Rehearse, and Rehearse! This step is critical to your success. Rehearse in the location and with the equipment you'll have for the actual presentation. Have your team members ask you the questions you most anticipate receiving during the presentation. Ask your team members to candidly comment on your presentation. The goal here is to minimize surprises and mistakes. Rehearse your presentation in front of others so they can tell you what message you're really sending.

Delegate other tasks: As the presenter, your job is to present. Assign someone else to sit in the audience to record attendance and take notes as to what was said (questions and answers). This will help you later when preparing your *Memorandum for Record (or MFR)*. Do not answer questions for someone else. Either defer the question to the *Key Player* responsible or say that you're not certain. Then, find the answer and report back to the Decision Maker within 24 hours.

Prepare a Memorandum For Record (MFR): Ask the person you assigned to take notes to create your draft MFR recording who was present and who was absent, what happened, were there any changes, what new *Unresolved Issues* were raised, any comments, questions, or decisions by the Decision Maker, and what *Follow-through* action is required?

Distribute the MFR: It's important that everyone attending your presentation, and anyone who has an interest in the meeting who was absent, receive a copy of your MFR. This way you protect yourself from anyone later saying, "That's not what happened," or "That's not what I said or was told."

Conduct *Follow-through*: Your MFR should clearly state what *Follow-through* action is required. Keep track of it! Ensure everything the Decision Maker wanted, gets done.

Publish the final document: The final document, created after the presentation, should reflect all changes, *Unresolved Issues*, and anything the Decision Maker requested. The distribution is the same as the MFR. Don't forget the 2 Person Rule.

Consider *Read Ahead* materials: Would it be to your advantage to provide read-ahead material to all invitees to help shorten the meeting or help them prepare? A *Read Ahead Packet* is a collection of documents that invitees need to review prior to attending the meeting to help facilitate the meeting. It could be a copy of your slides and background materials. This is intended to save time, generate conversation, and identify concerns or questions. If so, get the *Read Ahead Packet* to all at least a week in advance.

When you speak, face your audience – not your visual aids. Most of all - have fun!

Body Language: See *Chapter 19*.

Maintain strong eye contact with your audience, or the senior person you're briefing. Know your material so well that all you have to do is glance at your slide to know what to say next.

BY SPEAKING TO ENTERTAIN



“I would rather entertain and hope that people learned something than educate people and hope they were entertained.” - Walt Disney

The power of personal conversation (or *Speaking to Entertain*) is the secret to making and keeping relationships, and relationships are the foundation of effectiveness. Many of us are losing the art of conversation because of email, texting, and social networking. These new systems have made us good at talking AT people, but not WITH people – and there is a big difference. If you intend to build lasting and meaningful relationships, take the time to really get to know others through open and honest face-to-face conversation. This will pay big dividends later.

What is Dialogue?

The dictionary defines dialogue as taking part in a conversation or discussion to resolve a problem. But true dialogue, if done right, means much more than that.

True dialogue means:

Having the courage to let go of fear and pride

Not reacting, being defensive or judging others for what they say

Engaging as a team without taking offense

Treating everyone as an equal, no matter what

Letting go of your desire to win, dominate, or monopolize the conversation

Listening actively to understand the real message

Caring enough to understand why they feel the way they do

Remaining open to learning new things

Checking your ego and your agenda at the door

Opening up, sharing, and staying humble

Trusting your team members enough to make things better

Putting all your devices away (*Chapter 9*) and focusing on trying to form a relationship with another

Self-Test: How well do you conduct a Conversation?

Answering these questions can provide insight as to how well you can conduct a meaningful conversation.

Do you:

Give 100% attention?

Silence/put away your devices?

Listen more than you speak?

Ask about family, likes, dislikes, hobbies, etc.?

Remember what you learned?

Linger longer? Don't be in a rush.

Maintain strong eye contact?

Ask open-ended "How" and "Why" questions (ones that can't be answered in one word)?

Not make judgment, admonish, or belittle?

Keep personal information private?

Offer to help where you can?

Note: If you answered *NO* to two or more of these questions, you have difficulty conducting a meaningful conversation and should consider making some needed changes.

Effective people take this assessment annually and change what needs to be changed.

Look up! Get in the game! Create relationships.

BY DEMONSTRATING “DEVICE ETIQUETTE”



“A man's character may be learned from the adjectives which he habitually uses in conversation.” - Mark Twain

I went to a family gathering recently and observed something strange. Everyone over 30-years of age was engaged in an actual conversation with another person. Everyone under 30 as sitting quietly on the floor with their nose in some sort of device. I was astonished. Could it be that thanks to cell phone technology, our future generations are losing the fine art of conversation by focusing instead on virtual conversations with their BFF? OMG! What a shame!

When you're with others, are you focused on your devices?

Whether we like it or not, devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) are part of our daily lives. However, they can be detrimental to your ability to build lasting relationships.

Here are some things to keep in mind about your devices.

If you're with others, and you're using any device, you're ignoring those around you, and that's how others feel. So, don't be rude, disrespectful, or annoying. Instead, get into them, build lasting relationships, and enjoy yourself. Focus on them and put your toys (devices) away.

If you're in a restaurant, turn your cell-phone to vibrate. But what about emergencies? Tell your spouse, kids, and boss, if it's a real emergency, call you twice, and then you'll answer. Now, put your phone on vibrate and view the number if it vibrates. Don't accept any calls unless these special people call twice. Problem solved! If you must take the call, get up and leave the group and talk using your *inside voice* and *Stop Yelling!*

If you're in a meeting, turn your cell phone to vibrate. Get involved in the meeting; give your 100% attention, and participation. Be a contributor, encourage, and help others. Do everything you can to support the Team.

If you're in your office, and someone comes to visit, put your cell phone in a drawer/close your laptop. This sends a clear message, "I respect you enough to give you my undivided attention. You are important." Do the same thing in your private life with your friends and especially your spouse and children.

BY EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION



“None are more unjust in their judgments of others than those who have a high opinion of themselves.” - Charles Spurgeon

Have you ever been asked for your opinion in the middle of a meeting or other gathering? Throughout your life, you’ll be challenged to step up and take a stand; to pick a side, to express your opinion. Once you’ve picked a side, your credibility will either be strengthened or weakened by the quality of factual support you use. You won’t win every argument, but you want to be remembered for the way in which you argued.

When asked for your opinion, you have several choices. You could ask for more time to think about it, be brutally honest, saying something non-committal, take the Fifth (Amendment), give the politically correct response, say that you don’t have a clue, or you could give a thoughtfully brilliant answer using the 3Bs. No one likes being unexpectedly asked for their opinion, with no time to prepare before answering. And, it usually happens when you least expect it.

For example, you bump into your leader’s leader in the hallway, and he asks, “What’s the effect of XYZ on our organization?” He’s asking for your opinion. Chances are that you don’t know for sure. But in your best judgment, what’s your opinion? First, ask if you can think about it overnight and respond first thing tomorrow. If this doesn’t work, and you want to be remembered for the right reasons, remember the 3-Bs.

Here's the Secret: To add value to your opinion, use the 3 B's; be Brief, be Bold, and be Believable!

Brief: *Bottom-line, up front.* Get to the point in 20 seconds or less.

Bold: Be compelling. Make it memorable for all the right reasons.

Believable: Be credible. If you expect to be believable, provide facts to support your opinion. If not, state that your opinion is a just a gut feeling, intuition, and can't be substantiated with facts.

BY PERSUADING OTHERS



“There are good leaders who actively guide and bad leaders who actively misguide. Hence, leadership is about persuasion, presentation and people skills.” - Shiv Khera

Effective people know that human communication is the foundation upon which they’re building their reputation and credibility. This is why your ability to communicate should be something you continuously striving to improve throughout your life. The power of persuasion can produce a tremendous amount of influence.

Persuasion is the art of guiding one’s mind through a field of ignorance, misinformation or misunderstanding to a destination where there is enough information and understanding to make a logical choice to do what is in their best interest (the person being persuaded).

Real persuasion enables the other person to understand what you’re saying, feel what you’re feeling, and consequently become motivated to do what’s in their best interest. Persuasion and openness are critical when you’re trying to work through controversy in a positive way to overcome resistance and build support.

By reducing misunderstanding, persuasion reduces the time wasted in resolving unimportant problems. It also ensures the involvement of others, opens communication with them, and places value on their opinions - all critical team-building actions. Openness to discussing one’s position and a positive attitude toward a dissenting view often defuses tension and saves time. By demonstrating these traits, you’re also providing an example to your team members.

Persuasion is a gift that finds its magic in passion, the truth, and a strong sense of purpose from doing what's right.

What's Manipulation?

Often people are misled by someone who mixes just enough truth with a lie, that others believe it's true. This is manipulation at its best. Some people confuse manipulation with persuasion.

Here's the difference. Manipulation is attempting to influence a person, normally through negative means, to do something that fulfills the manipulator's needs or desires, and not the other person's desires.

The key to understanding is Perspective, which can be achieved through imagining, empathy, metaphors, analogies, and story-telling.

Real persuasion enables another person to understand what you're saying, feel what you're feeling, and consequently become motivated to do what's in their best interest, for their reasons! When attempting to persuade your leader on your proposal, put the odds of winning in your favor.

For example, if he has five Direct Reports, and you're one, get the other four Direct Reports on your side. Then, when you bring the subject up at your next meeting, you'll have the support of your peers to help persuade your leader to accept your proposal.

Persuasion is a powerful combination of proximity, clarity, a rational argument, and a passionate delivery.

Proximity here means face-to-face, actively engaged, focused, and in the moment with no distractions

Clarity refers to the clarity of goals, purpose, direction, relationships (how they feel)

A rational argument means painting a compelling picture comparing the old against the new, making a strong case for change, by explaining what they can achieve if they work together

Passion releases four important things:

Excitement - the physical sensation that passion arouses

Enthusiasm - by your mind focusing your excitement on a specific target

Energy - the power generated by your passion

Effort - the outward manifestation of your passion in the form of action

TRAINING: To learn more about the *Power of Persuasion*, review, *The Great Debaters*, a powerful true story, starring **Denzel Washington**, about a college Debate Team where students learn a powerful affirmation by answering a series of questions to better prepare them to debate (persuade) and win.

<i>Coach's Question</i>	<i>Student's Response</i>
Who is the judge?	The judge is God.
Why is He God?	Because He decides who is right or wrong, not my opponent.
Who is your opponent?	He does not exist.
Why does he not exist?	Because he is a mere dissenting voice of the truth I speak!

Then, conduct a group discussion answering these questions: In the final debate, how did the black speaker tap into the judge's spiritual background? What examples did the black speaker use to enhance his subject matter expertise? How can you use what you've learned here to become more effective?

BY LISTENING ACTIVELY



“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.” - Bryant H. McGill

Have you ever had a conversation with your leader about solving a problem, only to find out later that what you thought your leader wanted or told you to do, was incorrect? You totally misunderstood what your leader told you. If not, you will.

Misunderstandings are part of human nature. Since listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken or nonverbal messages, misunderstandings will occur. Plan on it.

Here are some suggestions.

Prepare to Listen

The most important things you can do to PREPARE to listen are:

Schedule: Schedule your conversations for when you’re least likely to be tired, interrupted, or distracted.

Wait your turn: Don’t interrupt to correct the speaker, finish the speaker’s sentence, or change the subject. Do interrupt politely and briefly, to ask a question if something is unclear

Set the stage: Place chairs so the sun won’t glare in their eyes. Sit near the speaker-not behind your desk. Close doors to reduce noise. Turn off your cell phone and ask them to do the same!

Be Patient: Don’t form opinions or make judgments until the speaker is done. Give the speaker a chance to elaborate or correct a mistake. Wait a moment before speaking.

Note taking: If you take notes, do so sparingly. Don't get too involved in writing, look up frequently, and record only main points, new facts, and ideas.

Check your Ego and Agenda at the Door

Nothing blocks listening faster than ego; your pride. Being humble and receptive to the message is one way to solve this problem. Let go of your intention to win, to be right, or to dominate the discussion. Let your agenda go.

Try to understand where the other person is coming from. When you catch yourself saying, "You didn't let me finish," you're becoming defensive. So, what're you trying to defend? What're you resisting?

Without being open and receptive to new input, you'll only be half-listening. Active listening helps communicate reception of the intended message both verbally and non-verbally. To capture the message fully, listen carefully to what is said and observe their body language and facial expressions.

Use "Active" Listening

Active Listening is a communication technique which requires the listener to paraphrase what he heard, saw, and felt in his words, to confirm what the speaker intended to communicate.

Eye contact: Maintaining eye contact without staring helps show sincere interest. Occasional breaks of eye contact are normal and acceptable, while excessive breaks, paper shuffling, and clock-watching may be perceived as a lack of interest or concern.

Body posture: Sit up straight and lean forward slightly. Being relaxed and comfortable will help put them at ease. However, a too-relaxed position or slouching may be interpreted as a lack of interest.

Head nods: Occasional head nodding indicates paying attention and encourages them.

Facial expressions: Keep your facial expressions natural and relaxed to signal sincere interest.

Verbal expressions: Offer comments like “Go on”, “Okay” or “I see.” Don’t agree or disagree – initially. Refrain from talking too much and avoid interrupting. Let them do the talking, while keeping the discussion on the subject.

Ask questions: Rather than making judgments or stating your opinion, ask questions. Stay alert for common themes. Their opening/closing statements, as well as recurring references, may indicate their priorities. Inconsistencies and gaps may indicate an avoidance of the real problem and may suggest additional questions.

Acknowledge their Body Language

Pay attention to their body language and gestures to understand the complete message. By watching their actions, you can identify the emotions behind the words. Not all actions are proof of feelings, but they should be considered.

The most important things to look for when observing body language and gestures are:

Boredom: Is he drumming the table, doodling, clicking a pen, or resting the head in the palm of the hand

Self-confidence: Is he sitting tall, leaning back with hands behind the head, with steady eye contact

Defensiveness: Is he glaring at you, making sarcastic comments, or crossing his arms in front of the chest

Frustration: Is he rubbing eyes, pulling on an ear, wringing hands, or frequently changing body position

Interest, friendliness, and openness: Is he moving toward you while sitting

Anxiety: Is he sitting on the edge of the chair with arms uncrossed and hands open

Sorrow/depression: Is he looking down

What are you Sensing?

What message are you sensing, regardless of what he's saying? Assess the non-verbal message you're sensing and ask him what your sensing means. You might say, "I get the feeling that..., or I'm sensing that you... Is this correct?"

Note: *Empathic listening* means seeking first to understand the other person. You might say, "If I understand you correctly, you.... Is this correct?" "Now I understand you." But you don't have to agree. Heated discussion is okay if it doesn't lead to a personal attack, name calling, or swearing. If it does, take a break!

BY CONDUCTING MEETINGS

***Murphy's Law on Meetings:***

A meeting is an event at which the minutes are kept and the hours are lost.

Have you ever been in a meeting that was unproductive, and you just wanted to leave? Was it your meeting? Don't you just love going to meetings? Unfortunately, they're a necessary evil. Many face-to-face, sit down meetings are often unproductive. Especially when you consider all the advanced communications technology we have available today.

However, meetings can be more productive and meaningful and here are a few suggestions.

Simplify your Agenda:

Most meeting I've attended failed to get to the heart of the problems needing attention.

The most important components of any meeting agenda include:

Present: What are you currently working on and when do you expect to finish?

Future: What are you planning to accomplish prior to our next meeting?

Unresolved Issues: Do you have any questions, unknowns, concerns, shortfalls, obstacles, or problems that could slow or stop your progress?

Unresolved Issues include anything you don't know for certain; anything you need to know, but don't; and anything that you do know for certain, but is *unacceptable* to you?

After you start the meeting, go around the room, and ask everyone to comment on each of their three agenda items. You may even ask that everyone submit their three agenda items the day before via email to you or the meeting facilitator. This way a hard-copy of each person's response can be provided to all participants at the meeting.

Preside instead of Conduct:

Ask someone else to *Conduct* your meeting, so you can *Preside*. Conducting a meeting is good training for your #2 person, and it gives you the ability to observe the body language of all attendees, take note of who's not participating, and inject, clarify, question, reinforce, or redirect, as needed.

Hold Members Accountable:

Accountability, in a non-threatening way, means asking three questions; how are you progressing on your assignments, how do you intend to resolve your problems, and do you need more time or other resources? If someone needs more time to complete an assignment, consider renegotiating a new deadline. On your *Assignments Tracking Sheet*, record everything you've assigned via email, casual conversation, or written note. Don't forget to set a new deadline. Ask, "How much time do you need? Can we shoot for this time next week? Is that okay with you?"

Do Not get Distracted:

The reason for not dealing with new, non-emergency, *Unresolved Issues* is to avoid being distracted and losing focus during your meeting. If a new *Unresolved Issue* is brought up, that's a non-emergency, and can't be resolved quickly, you have several things you can do. You could assign someone to lead another meeting later to resolve the issue. Assign all others that you feel need to be at that second meeting.

You could assign the person who brought up the issue to write a Decision Paper, or to come to see you with a recommended solution before the next meeting. Most importantly, don't leave this issue without an assignment. Assign someone to capture it, report back, and add a deadline. At the end of the meeting, review all assignments.

Suggestions to Improve your Meetings:

Your meeting should come after your leader's meeting, so you can get the word out

Schedule meetings before lunch (11 AM) and not at the end of the day

Resist Monday or Friday because of three-day holidays; Tuesday - Thursday is best

Address the calendar, goals, progress, changes, and *Unresolved Issues*

Review Assignments with their deadlines

End by thanking everyone and telling them how much you appreciate their hard work

Expectations (Stated or Written) to conduct Better Meetings:

Meetings start and end on time and last no more than one hour

If you can't attend, send someone who can discuss your agenda items and assignments

Bad language is not permitted, and only one person speaks at a time

*No throwing anyone *under-the-bus*, especially if they're not present

Do everything you can to support each other (Teamwork is critical)

No distractions, no texting or communicating on any devices

I want your 100% attention, involvement, and participation

I expect you to treat everyone with dignity, respect, and kindness

Come with the mindset to participate, contribute, encourage, and help others

**Not throwing anyone under-the-bus* means no adverse or judgmental comments or personal attacks of another person. Those comments are only permitted privately in your leader's office.

Other Meetings:

Here are a few other meetings of importance:

Problem Resolution Meeting: Meeting designed to address serious problems that just surfaced (*Appendix A*).

After Action Review (AAR): A professional discussion, after a project, with all *Key Players* present, that does NOT judge pass/fail. Rather, AAR's ask: "What did we learn that can make us better next time?" (*Appendix A*).

Brainstorming Session: Group method of creating many solutions to resolve a problem (*Chapter 24*).

Mastermind: Group of individuals, away from work, designed as a forum to help solve problems (*Appendix A*).

Achieving Consensus Meeting: Team meeting to assess if all members can follow, execute, and support a Proposal. If not, they must provide a valid Reason (*Chapters 20-22*).

BY CONDUCTING A “PRODUCTIVITY BRIEFING”



“The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.”

- Peter Drucker

A *Quarterly Productivity Briefing* (QPB) is a meeting conducted with your Direct Reports, and their Direct Reports, to assess their productivity over the past quarter. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure they are “on-course” and progressing towards helping you achieve your goals.

Before the QPB, each Direct Report needs a copy of their leader's annual goals. Ideally, they should receive your annual goals for next year no later than 1 October of the current year, with their briefings being scheduled one week before the beginning of each quarter for next year.

Their goals should align with and contribute to your goals. By measuring desired vs. actual performance, each Direct Report gets the opportunity to explain how he and his unit plan to contribute to your goals.

This is your chance to assess their performance and potential as they make their presentations. This is also a good time to make any mid-course adjustments and to ask what you can do to help them achieve their goals.

Questions each Direct Report should answer during the QPB:

How successful were you at meeting your goals from last quarter (Past)?

What was your *Readiness* during the period? (Past)

What are your goals for next quarter and what's your POA? (Future)

What are your *Unresolved Issues*? (Present)

Your QPB can be as informal as a discussion from a notebook or as formal as a slide presentation. The reason all your Direct Reports (and their Direct Reports) should be present is to synergize, collaborate, and achieve consensus in the achievement of your goals.

BY CONDUCTING “IN-PROGRESS REVIEWS”



“Effective communication is 20% what you know and 80% how you feel about what you know.” - Jim Rohn

An *In-Progress Review (or IPR)* is a synchronization meeting conducted by the Project Leader with all *Key Players* present to collaborate and coordinate a project. Normally, each major project, will have at least two IPRs that are scheduled between phases of the project; one around the half-way point of the time remaining (IPR 1, between the Planning and Preparation Phases) and the last 7-10 days before (IPR 2, between the Preparation and the Execution Phases) the project starts.

IPRs essentially become *Milestones* (A tool used to mark specific points along a project timeline and focus on major progress points that must be reached).

Here's a *Gantt Chart* showing the four phases with 2-IPRs and an AAR.

<i>Phases of the Project Process</i>			
Phase	Start	to	Finish
1	Planning	IPR1	
2		Preparing	IPR2
3			Executing
4		Assessing	AAR

If this is your project, this is your opportunity to determine if everyone involved, especially the *Key Players* (or their designated representatives) are on-schedule, know about all changes, and have no *Unresolved Issues* that could delay or stop the completion of the project.

During the IPR, the current progress of the project is addressed, and *deliverables* designated in the POA are presented. A *deliverable* is something

tangible that proves that a *Key Player* has taken action designated in the POA (like a sales receipt, a purchase order, a list of attendees, a schedule, or diagram).

If all deliverables are present, the project moves to the next phase. If all expected deliverables are not presented, the project gets a *Red-Flag*, which means Senior Leadership is now directly involved for explanations.

BY CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR LEADER'S MEETINGS



“It is the responsibility of leadership to provide opportunity, and the responsibility of individuals to contribute. - William Pollard

Your leader 's meetings are important because they may be the only contact or observation your leader has of your performance. It will most likely be attended by your leader's other Direct Reports - your peers.

As such, here are a few things “TO DO” when attending your leader's meetings:

Arrive 15 minutes early to get to know your peers

Display dignity, respect, and kindness

Be more supportive to your leader

Do everything you can to support your peers (Teamwork is critical!)

Put your cell phone on vibrate or leave it in your office

Demonstrate that you're a Team Player by your 100% attention, involvement, and participation

Come with the attitude to contribute, encourage, and help others

And, here are a few things “NOT TO DO”:

Surprise your leader

Embarrass a peer

Find fault or complain

BY GIVING & RECEIVING FEEDBACK



“Feedback is the Breakfast of Champions” - Ken Blanchard

Have you ever worked for someone who seldom/never gave you feedback as to how you were doing? How did that make you feel? If you’re looking to improve your performance or the performance of your unit, feedback helps to make the adjustments and corrections needed.

The goal of feedback is to identify the gap between desired and actual performance (for results and behavior, of individuals, teams, units, and systems), and to close the gap ASAP.

If you don’t receive feedback, ask for it; not only from your leader but from others.

Feedback can occur anytime but normally comes during audits, performance-oriented training, performance appraisals and reviews, shareholders' meeting, marketing research, 360-degree feedback, peak performance coaching, visits and observations, on-site inspections, surveys, meetings, and After-Action Reviews (Appendix A).

The most important steps of the *Feedback Loop for Human Performance* are:

Step 1, Evidence: The performance must be measured, recorded, and assessed.

Step 2, Relevance: Feedback must be relayed to the member in a context that makes sense.

Step 3, Consequence: Feedback must clearly illuminate a path to improvement.

Step 4, Action: Member must decide to change their actual performance to come closer to the desired performance.

Then, that new performance can be re-measured, and the feedback loop can run once more, every action stimulating new performance that moves the member closer to the desired performance.

If you fail to provide periodic and specific feedback to your members, your silence will speak louder than words. It's your job to let them know how they're doing.

If corrective action is appropriate (like someone failed to meet a specific standard), do so in private. Take a moment to ensure the member knew the correct standard and didn't have a good reason for doing (or failing to do) what he did.

Sometimes positive and negative feedback is confused with *praise* and *criticism*. In contrast to feedback, telling someone your opinion does not constitute as feedback unless they act on your suggestion, and thus cause you to revise your opinion.

How do you receive Feedback?

When you receive feedback, you get to decide how you'll apply it, how you'll react or respond, and if you'll use it to become more effective, efficient, and consistent. Feedback is often perceived as a euphemism for criticism, as in "My Boss gave me feedback on...." Don't let this happen to you. If you just "blow it off," you'll never get any better. You don't have to agree. In fact, initially, you won't. However, arguing or being defensive sends the wrong message.

You need the feedback, no matter how painful, embarrassing, or ridiculous, because without it, you'll be the same next year as you are today. Also, the person giving the feedback, in many cases, could have a say in your future. Be *self-correcting*! Prove that you are listening and getting better every day.

Effective people thrive on feedback because their goal is to be “self-correcting.”

When you receive feedback from anyone, respond with gratitude and thank them for their honesty.

If you don't receive feedback, ask for it. It will make you more effective!

TRAINING: To learn more about assessing feedback and becoming better with each passing day, review the movie, *Ground Hog Day*, with **Bill Murray**. Then conduct a group discussion answering these questions: How did *Murray* modify his behavior? What was *Murray*'s motivation to change? What response did *Murray* see from his new behavior? What have you learned here to become more effective?

BY GIVING FEEDBACK TO YOUR LEADER



“Speak clearly, if you speak at all; carve every word before you let it fall.”

- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Should you provide feedback to your leader? ***Absolutely!*** In fact, you owe it to your leader. This is called moral courage and is the toughest part of being loyal to your leader; telling him things he doesn't want to hear.

It's your job to keep your leader informed. So, how do you do that? First, get your leader's approval to be honest with him behind closed doors. Second, make sure you're somewhere private.

Privately providing honest feedback to your leader is the stronger half of courage and loyalty.

You might suggest that you take a walk to somewhere private where you won't be interrupted. Start by saying, “I need to give you some feedback on...” or “I just wanted to tell you how I feel about...” or “I just thought you needed to know.” When was the last time you took your leader for a walk and discussed what's really going on?

CAUTION: There is a fine line between *tattling* on someone and reporting the facts. When you report something as being unsafe, you are doing it to stop someone from getting hurt. The goal of reporting is to keep someone *out of trouble* (which includes your leader).

When people *tattle*, it's about getting someone *in trouble*. Just report the facts without embellishing with your personal feelings and/or opinions. Do you have good communication with your leader? If not, why? If in doubt, ask!

BY ENHANCING YOUR BODY LANGUAGE



“It's never what you say, but how you make it sound sincere.” - Marya Mannes

Many people discount the effect body language has on communication. This is a mistake!

In a study conducted at UCLA, they concluded that, in face-to-face situations, 93% of daily verbal communications have nothing to do with the words we speak.

When we speak:

55% of our message is communicated via body language

38% of our message is voice (tonality, volume, quality, pitch, tempo, and pauses)

7% of our message is the content of our words (what you say)

Your body language includes your:

Appearance (posture, dress, hygiene, grooming, style, and color)

Movement (facial expressions, hand gestures, and eye contact)

You know what you said, but you have no idea what they heard, unless you ask them. Others get to receive your message and to decide what it means to them.

Also, note that all these components of body language are things that you directly control. In addition, you control the frequency, intensity, content, and target of your communication.

Since 55% of the message you communicate has nothing to do with what you say, you may want to work on your body language.

BY COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS



“Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.” - Mattie Stepanek

Effective people facilitate team collaborative problem-solving through consensus by:

Asking for their input, comments, problems, and concerns

Encouraging the open expression of ideas, input, questions, opinions, and disagreements

Listening and following up to their questions and concerns

Have you ever been in a situation where your leader made an important decision/change that surprised you because he never asked for your input? This happens more frequently than you might think.

And, since the team members had no say in the decision, they will be less committed to executing the decision/change. Since the leader did not ask for consensus from his team, his credibility was damaged. How can you avoid this?

Here are a few suggestions.

Collaboration is the process and consensus is the goal.

What is Collaboration?

Collaboration is the process of working together with others to achieve a shared goal.

The purpose of collaboration is to enhance:

The *quality of the result*, because of the wisdom of the group, will be far better than any one person could

The *morale of each member* because the leader valued them enough to include them

The *leader* because of the credibility gained by ensuring the process was inclusive and participatory

The *Team* because *Unit Cohesion* and *Teamwork* has been enriched

The *Unit* because it sets the stage for greater cooperation in implementing the result

BY ACHIEVING TEAM CONSENSUS



“A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.”

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Consensus is the desired end-result of collaboration and seeks agreement from each member that they can follow, execute, and support a Proposal.

The advantages of achieving consensus are:

The *Solution* benefits from the combined wisdom and intelligence of the entire team

The *Team* benefits because consensus generates a far better solution than previously identified

Each Member benefits because their opinion was valued and considered (They had their chance to be heard)

The *Result* benefits because the team is now committed

During the consensus process, there are two critical things to identify; the Proposal and the Reason.

The **Proposal** is what is being discussed (like an idea, problem, solution, plan, or recommendation)

The **Reason** is why a member cannot follow, execute, and support the Proposal

Achieving consensus permits every member of the team the freedom to voice their agreements or disagreements (objections, concerns, problems, or cautions) concerning the Proposal, before consensus is achieved.

Achieving consensus is also intended to be inclusive, participatory, cooperative, and solution-oriented, seeking the opinions, input, and feedback from all team members. All members don't have to agree with the Proposal. In fact, you hope they don't.

By using consensus, you're trying to improve the original Proposal and make it better by accommodating the wisdom and knowledge of others. It sounds easy, but it's not. However, it's worth it.

No Involvement - No Commitment! No Commitment – No Excellent Results!

Consensus:

Uses common agreement to resolve mutually exclusive positions

It's not a vote or majority rules, nor is it a popularity contest

Does not care whose Proposal is being considered or if any team member likes or dislikes the Proposal

Asks if each member can follow, execute, and support a Proposal. If not, a valid Reason must be offered.

Now that you know the difference between Collaboration and Consensus, how is consensus achieved?

How do you Achieve Consensus?

Here's a suggested technique for achieving consensus:

Step 1: Present problem/situation and the Proposal or ask the group for a Proposal to resolve a problem

Step 2: Discuss the Proposal's purpose, objectives, advantages, and disadvantages

Step 3: Ask,

"Can you all follow, execute, and support this Proposal? If not, Why?"

If Yes, from all team members - Plan and Prepare to Execute the Proposal.

If No, from one or more team members - continue to Step 4 (Next Chapter).

BY RESOLVING “REASONS FOR NON-SUPPORT”



“Consensus isn't just about agreement. It's about changing things around: You get a proposal, you work something out, people foresee problems, you do creative synthesis. At the end of it, you come up with something that everyone thinks is okay. Most people like it, and nobody hates it.” - David Graeber

What happens if one or more members disagree and cannot follow, execute, and support the Proposal? Normally it's straightforward as to what needs to be done; either modify the Proposal or create a new Proposal.

However, life doesn't work that way. Things get complicated when one member has a concern like, "I'm concerned that your schedule is too tight. I think it will take more than the six weeks." Or, "I'm concerned (his opinion) that your cost numbers are too conservative. I think it will cost much more."

In that case, here's a suggested technique to address each Reason.

Step 4: Fact or Opinion?

Discuss each Reason separately to determine if the Reason is a Fact or an Opinion.

Step 4.1: Is the Reason a Fact or an Opinion?

If a Fact, continue to Step 5

If an Opinion, continue to Step 4.2

Step 4.2: Is the Opinion shared by other Team Members

If Yes, continue to Step 5

If No, *Hold, continue to the next Reason

Step 5: Probability

What's the Probability this Reason could happen?

If Low, *Hold and continue to next Reason

If Medium - High, continue to next step

Step 6: Impact

What's the Impact (effect on the Proposal) if this Reason happens?

If Minor, *Hold and continue to next Reason

If Moderate - Significant, continue to the next step

Step 7: Mitigation

Step 7.1: Can the Reason be mitigated?

If Yes, include it in the Proposal or create a *Contingency Plan*, continue to Step 9.

If No, continue to Step 7.2

Step 7.2: Does the Reason strengthen (make it better) the Proposal?

If Yes, include it in the Proposal or create a *Contingency Plan*, continue to Step 9.

If No, continue to Step 7.3

Step 7.3: Does the Reason invalidate (make unworkable) the Proposal?

If Yes, eliminate the Proposal, continue to Step 8.

If No, disregard the Reason, then continue to Step 9.

Step 8: Create a New Proposal

Brainstorm (Chapter 24) to identify a new Proposal that passes the *Common Sense Test*. Now, restart the consensus building process at Step 1.

Step 9: Plan and Prepare to Execute the Proposal

Continue this process until the team has a workable Proposal they all can follow, execute, and support.

**Hold* means that the Reason is "Noted" and set aside temporarily until it can be vetted as a fact and not an opinion. You are doing this to keep the momentum and to move the process along to a conclusion.

Note: During this process, you may need to make assumptions to move the work along. Effective people are always testing their assumptions and creating *Contingency Plans* to mitigate their risk. But what happens when you cannot get the entire group together to achieve consensus. Then, you'll need to *Staff the Proposal* (document) (*Chapter 23*)

What happens AFTER achieving Consensus?

It's decision time! All team members concur with the Proposal, but the leader has the final say before the Proposal is executed.

Direct Reports recommend, leaders decide!

It takes an effective person, one who is comfortable enough in his skin, to ask his team members whether they can all follow, execute, and support a Proposal. Effective people know that the goal is to attain positive win/win; collaborative results.

Effective people know the goodwill created by achieving consensus is immeasurable.

Effective team members understand that only their leader bears the ultimate responsibility and accountability for both the final decision and the result. Once their leader has made the final decision, effective members set aside their personal opinions and get to work following, executing, and supporting the Proposal - as the right thing to do.

TRAINING: A great movie to use to train members how to achieve consensus is the *Tom Clancy* inspired, *OP Center*, starring **Harry Hamlin**. See how his team achieves consensus as they respond with Special Operations Forces in a high pressure, terrorist thriller. Then, conduct a group discussion answering these questions: How did the group leader's mentor achieve consensus? What did the group leader do from there on to achieve consensus? How can you use what you've learned here to become more effective?

BY “STAFFING A DOCUMENT”



“I have always believed in evolving a consensus abefore taking any major decision.” - Narendra Modi

Staffing a Document is one method of collaborating to achieve consensus by circulating a document (problem, proposal, or decision paper) to a group of people to obtain their concurrence or non-concurrence with comments.

Staffing combines the best of collaboration and consensus building. Before any major action is taken on any Proposal (document), the Decision Maker will want to know if all *Key Players* can support and execute the Proposal (document).

This is why the document must be provided to each *Key Player* for their concurrence or non-concurrence with comments. If a *Key Player* cannot support and execute what is contained within the document, he must provide his reasons in writing.

When the document is returned to the originator, the comments are reviewed. If changes are made to the document, it may need to be re-circulated to *Key Players* for another review.

This is useful when trying to obtain your Decision Maker’s approval because effective senior leaders want to know if their *Key Players* can support the document before they approve it.

Achieving consensus through *Staffing a Document* is a multi-step process:

Step 1: Draft document to *Key Players* for their concurrence/non-concurrence with comment

Step 2: Resolve non-concur comments from *Key Players*

Step 3: Obtain approval from the Decision Maker

Step 4: Distribute final document to *Key Players* for execution and support

The goal of *Staffing* is to obtain the approval of a Decision Maker. However, to get his approval, you'll need the concurrence/non-concurrence with comments from all *Key Players*.

BY CONDUCTING “BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS”



“If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it.” - Albert Einstein

How many times have you just assumed you knew the best solution, only to find out later that you were wrong?

Brainstorming is the process of using a group to produce the most number of potential solutions to a problem. Effective people know that the purpose of *Brainstorming* is to create as many solutions as possible to solve a problem. Keep your group small (7 or less) or break them into smaller groups and compare the results.

Conduct *Mindstorming*: The night before the *Brainstorming* Session, ask each member to conduct a *Mindstorming* exercise at home where they privately record all potential solutions on a piece of paper. Ensure you tell each member not to discuss or share their solutions before the *Brainstorming* Session starts.

Prepare needed materials: Get some large sheets of Butcher Paper (large sheets of paper on a vertical easel) to write on during the session so everyone can see their suggestions up on the walls. You’ll also need masking tape, and wide-tipped, black markers to record the solutions.

Decide how you will participate: The main issue with *Brainstorming* is that members want to know that their input has value. If someone feels that their input is not taken seriously, they won’t fully participate. So, provide the encouragement, recognition, accountability, and the inclusiveness needed. But if you ever feel that your presence could diminish the effectiveness of the group, find something else to do.

Delegate tasks: If needed, select someone else to facilitate the *Brainstorming* Session. Many members may not feel completely comfortable if you conduct the session. This will also help ensure the session remains unbiased. Also, assign someone to act as the Scribe to record each idea.

Capture all possible solutions: Limit time to 15-20 minutes (just long enough to capture everyone's input). Allow just enough time for each person to present their solutions. Don't permit discussion of any solution. Clarification is okay, but don't evaluate the quality of the solutions. You're only looking for volume. Judgment or criticism are not allowed during the session.

Discuss possible solutions: After you've captured everyone's solutions, encourage discussion, and consolidate solutions. Now, you're ready to use the *Common-Sense Test* for each solution.

What's the "Common-Sense Test"?

Here's a list of five questions intended to qualify/disqualify potential solution to problems.

For each solution, ask, "Is it...

Suitable (Does it solve the problem and is it legal and ethical)?

Feasible (Does it fit within available or easily acquirable resources)?

Acceptable (Is it worth the cost or risk?),

Distinguishable (Does it differ significantly from other solutions)?

Complete (Does it solve the problem from start to finish)?

Any "NO" answer disqualifies the solution.

BY INSPIRING COMMITMENT



“From the depth of need and despair, people can work together, can organize themselves to solve their own problems and fill their own needs with dignity and strength.” - Cesar Chavez

This is an adaptation of the *Problem-Solving Process* designed to help the leader resolve problems and to determine the level of commitment from each team member.

Start by telling your team:

"I have a problem, and I need your help."

Tell them what *Objective* you're trying to accomplish

Tell them the *Obstacles* you feel are in your way

Then ask, "What do you think? What should we do?"

Now, wait for their response.

This technique works well because most people, even total strangers, will help you overcome your obstacle if you'll only ask for their help. Honor them by asking for help.

Assuming they come up with either a good course of action, have the courage to ask them to develop a POA to accomplish the objective and *Backbrief* you on their POA.

Remember, the greatest hunger of human heart is to be NEEDED.

This process is powerful and can tell you a lot about your team; who contributes and who doesn't. It also tells you how much they trust you. If members speak up and participate, they trust you. If members don't contribute, they probably don't trust you.

For members who don't speak up, ask for their opinion. If they're still unwilling to contribute, it may be time for a private conversation to find out what's really going on.

BY FOLLOWING UP & FOLLOWING THROUGH



“I can give you a six-word formula for success: Think things through - then follow through.” - Eddie Rickenbacker

One of the biggest problems new leaders experience is a failure to *Follow up* and *Follow through*.

What's Follow Up?

Follow up is a subsequent action taken if there is no response (or a negative response) to an initial action.

There are three types of *Follow up*:

Type 1: What you do when someone declines to buy from you (negative response)

Using a sales example, if a prospect declines to do business with you, you still have an obligation to following up. If you sent a letter, email, or voicemail and received no reply, *Follow up* means continuing to contact them, until they respond. Continue to add value to your relationship; to help the person you are trying to contact.

Type 2: What you do when you are trying to contact someone to correct a problem

If you are trying to contact someone to resolve a problem (like poor customer service, a faulty product, or a delayed order), record the date you called, whom you spoke with, and the response you received. Always leave a voicemail message giving your name, phone number, a description of the problem, and a request for a return call.

Always document your *Follow up* action. After you've called several times, sent several letters, with no response, show up and get your problem resolved.

Type 3: What you do when you ask someone, who does not work for you, to do something (commonly called checking)

The third type of *Follow up* comes when you ask someone not a Direct Report (like your leader, peer, vendor, supplier, or friend) to do something. *Follow up* by contacting them a few days before the deadline to ensure everything gets done.

For example, let's assume you're responsible for organizing a company luncheon for your leader. As you review your *Assignments List*, a few days before the luncheon, here's what you might say on the phone to a vendor:

“Hi, Mary. This is Joe from ABC Company. I’m calling (no email reminders) to confirm the luncheon for Tuesday, October 10th, at 11:30 AM? (Exactly what you asked her to do a month ago. Be specific!). Is everything still on track? Any problems or concerns? Did you get the change to the headcount? We’re now expecting 50 people, not 25. Okay - Great! I know you’ll do a great job! (Encouragement!) Please call me if there are any changes, questions, or problems. Here’s my cell number, 816.xxx.xxx. Thanks again Mary and I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday.”

Also, during the luncheon, ensure someone (hopefully, you) publicly thanks Mary and her whole team for a wonderful luncheon – that's real character!

What's Follow through?

Follow through is the process of returning to the asker, either face-to-face or on the phone, and reporting the status of their request.

There are two types of *Follow through*:

Type 1: What you do after your leader or customer asks you to do something.

Make sure you have a clear understanding of what they want done (the end-result) and when they need it completed (the deadline). If you have questions, ask! If you can't deliver, speak up! Then, *Follow through (Return and Report* via face-to-face or phone) after completing the assignment.

If you cannot complete the assignment as requested, *Follow through (Return and Report)*, explain the problem, and what you recommend be done to resolve it.

Always under-promise and over-deliver!

Without *Follow through*, your leader or customer has no idea what's happening. Let them know what you're doing. Be responsive – *Follow through* as soon as possible. If you *Follow through*, you'll stand out from the rest.

Return and Report is the most important part of Follow through!

Type 2: What you do after asking a Direct Report to do something.

When you ask a Direct Report to do something, ensure you tell them WHAT you want done (the end-result) and WHEN you need it completed (the deadline). Also, ask them to *Follow through (Return and Report*, via face-to-face or call) when completed.

Avoid telling them HOW to do it-unless they're clueless.

Also, if they cannot complete the assignment, ask them to *Follow through (Return and Report)*, explain the problem, and what they recommend be done to resolve it.

In fact, the best people I know do something special, they Over-Communicate! They Follow through even if they have nothing new to report. This way, I knew I wasn't forgotten!

BY BECOMING A MASTER COMMUNICATOR



"The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug." - Mark Twain

By now you already know how to enhance your ability to speak and write. But what about other advanced communications skills. Here's a suggested list of the most important skills to learn on your way to becoming a Master Communicator.

The most important Oral and Written Communication Skills are:

*Coordinating, Problem Solving, Decision-Making, Use of Humor, Active Listening, Showing Compassion, Giving & Receiving Feedback, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Establishing Rapport, Holding people accountable, Collaborating, Achieving Consensus, Mentoring, Facilitating, Consulting, Persuading, Body language, Presenting, Encouraging, Reprimanding, Correcting, Conducting Meetings, Presiding at Meetings, Motivating, Inspiring, Supervising, Taking Immediate Action, Investigating, Advising, Negotiating, Arbitrating, Interviewing, *Socializing, Praising, Thanking, Counseling, Coaching, Training, Disagreeing, Inspiring, and Writing.*

**Socializing* includes how to meet, greet, introduce, establish rapport, make feel welcome, carry-on a conversation, remembering names, faces and personal details of others. No devices allowed!

What's a Transferable Skill?

All these skills are powerful *Transferable Skills* that you can use throughout your career. A *Transferable Skill* is an ability to perform a function well, usually gained through extensive training and/or experience that can be used in any occupation, industry, organization, or venue. *Transferable Skills* are your assets that help you transition into a new role.

This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list, but it's a good start. How well do you demonstrate these skills? Is there room for improvement? Some of these skills are very seldom needed, but they're all part of the human condition.

What else do you need to Best Support your Leader?

Know your leader's intent, purpose, direction, *REDCAPS*, and goals

Know your leader's values, focus, priorities, idiosyncrasies, strengths, and weaknesses

Have access to information sharing and processing

Have permission to voice your honest opinion, behind closed doors, without fear of negative consequences

Know your leader's expectations of tradition and culture

If in doubt, Ask! The only stupid question is the one you're afraid to ask because later, when you don't know the answer, it will make you look stupid. Get your fear and pride out of the way! If your question could embarrass your leader or others, ask privately.

THE END!

Congratulations! You've reached the end of this book. Thank you for reading! Please remember to share what you've learned here with others. If you help others succeed, they'll return the favor.

This book was about how to enhance your career potential by becoming a more effective tomorrow than you are today. My effective leaders made it clear how much they valued and trusted us.

They knew that they could never have achieved their level of effectiveness and success without our consistent drive for excellence. They knew the secret; they knew how to treat others with dignity, respect, and kindness. This is why I served them to the best of my ability.

If you use these small and simple things, in the service of others, you will become absolutely essential to any employer lucky enough to have you on his team.

I've told their story – my job's done. It's now your turn to teach what you've learned through your example of serving others. I have great faith in your potential. You can do this!

Get out of your Comfort Zone and let your struggles drive you to greatness!

I pray that you might have a greater desire to serve the people in your organization, community, church, and family.

If you found this book to be of value, you'll also find value in the other books from *The Effectiveness Guide* series (see Other Books). The subjects covered are designed to help you enhance your career by teaching you how to become absolutely essential to any organization and how to become more effective tomorrow than you are today.

Also, if you enjoyed this book, I would really appreciate it if you would leave me a *review on Amazon*. I love getting feedback from my readers and reviews on Amazon really do make a difference. I read them all and would love to hear your thoughts on how we can better serve you.

You can do this! I have faith in you. What's holding you back?

Self-Assessment:

After reading this book:

How can you use what you've learned to become more effective tomorrow than you are today?

How can you use it to become absolutely essential and irreplaceable to any employer?

How can you use it outside of work (in your community, church, or home) to become better?

Who else could use it to help them become better?

Do something meaningful with your life. Pay it forward. Help someone else rise.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



"Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart."- Eleanor Roosevelt

I'd like to recognize those with whom I've had the pleasure of serving, whose Leadership and Character I vividly recall, many of whom are not here today to tell their story.

For my military career, I thank Betty McInte, Edward J. Murphy (my Dad), Dale R. Nelson, Geoffrey "Jeff" Prosch, Craig "Randy" Rutler, Dave Wagner, John Andrews, John "The Bear" Warren, John "Jack" Costello, Dan Labin, and Ron Nicholl for their example of Effective Leadership.

To my fellow Brothers and Sisters-in-Arms, I thank you for your faithful service to our nation, especially those who have fallen in the line-of-duty.

Special thanks to my long-time mentor and friend, Joyce Kuntz, who encouraged me to write this book. After leaving the US Military, Joyce was my first and best employer when I joined her consulting firm in Seattle years ago. Joyce is gone now, but her legacy lives on in this book.

"I must be able to say with sincerity that to see things differently is a strength, not a weakness, in my relationship with others."- Joyce Kuntz

I thank Joyce's husband, Ed Kuntz, who turned out to be the man who brought me to Seattle from Kansas City, to start my incredible second career as an Executive Coach.

For my coaching career, I thank Tony Robbins, Bernard Haldane, Jack Bissell, Len Drew, Wayne McCullum, Bob Schrier, John Hurtig, and Bob Gerberg for their mentoring and coaching.

I thank my Nephew, Rob Chase, for creating the superb cover graphics and his sound advice along the way.

I thank my editors, Adriane Hesselbein, Terri Beard, Lance Revo, Dan Labin, Dennis Cavin, Bill O'Donnell, Andrew Potter, and Kevin Hughes, who did a great job helping me make this book more understandable and useful.

A special thanks to my two dear friends, partners, and co-authors, Lee Lacy and Jason Bowne, who continue to support me in this worthwhile effort.

For all those whose names are not found here, rest assured that you are not forgotten. Your legacy lives on in my heart and in this book because of your immeasurable contributions to my life. This book is for you.

And, finally, I thank my soul-mate and wife, *Diana*, for her love, encouragement, and understanding throughout this process.

When I count my blessings, I always count her twice.

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

My Brother "John"

WILLIAM JOHN MURPHY

My Brother "The Marine."

"John, you are such a great brother. You volunteered to go to Viet Nam so I did not have to go. By your example, you taught me the true meaning of 'Semper Fidelis'."

ABOUT THE FOUNDER



“I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.” - Stephan Grelle

Ed Murphy considers himself lucky. From age 7, he knew what he wanted to be when he grew up. He wanted to be a Soldier. In 1964, four days after graduating from High School, he joined the US Army and found himself in Basic Training and Advanced Infantry Training at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

A year later, Ed became a Cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point. In 1970, he graduated as a 2d Lieutenant headed to Airborne and Ranger School, then off to Viet Nam for a year.

In 1978, Ed returned to West Point to teach Military Science and earned a Master’s Degree from Long Island University in night school. His greatest achievement during his time in the military was helping 1400 soldiers begin their college education during his last two years in West Germany as a Battalion Commander. He wanted to give his soldiers something of real value - something that no one could ever take away. After 23 years as a US Army Officer, from Viet Nam to Desert Storm, he retired in 1993.

Ed then decided, with a little help from *Anthony Robbins*, that his second career would be as an Executive Coach. For the next 21 years, he worked for four of the largest consulting, outplacement and e-cruiting companies in America from Seattle, San Diego, to Kansas City.

In 2012, Ed retired a second time and decided to document everything he learned from those he admired and willingly followed over his 50+ years in both the US Military as an Army Officer and Corporate America as an Executive Coach.

Since many of them aren't alive today to tell their stories, he wanted to pay tribute to them before their lessons were lost forever. Thanks to them, he's collected thousands of small and simple things (tactics, techniques, and tools) that have helped and will continue to help future generations to maximize their true career potential by becoming more effective at work and in life.

In 2014, Ed created *TheCAREERMaker.com*, a site dedicated to providing the best-in-class wisdom, knowledge, and advice on how to maximize your true career potential by teaching three simple things; how to become absolutely essential and irreplaceable to any leader, how to become more effective tomorrow than you are today, and how to find and build the career you were meant to have. His greatest joy comes from helping others avoid or overcome the problems he's faced during his lifetime.

In 2016, with the help of two partners and co-authors *Lee O. Lacy and Jason Bowne*, he finally completed *The Effectiveness Guide*, which teaches how to become more effective tomorrow than you are today by consistently producing excellent results; treating others with dignity, respect, and kindness; and helping others to do the same.

Today, Ed considers himself fortunate to get to live in Phoenix, AZ, where he enjoys writing, eating sushi, genealogy, and watching movies with family, friends, and his best friend and wife, *Diana*.

A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



After Action Review (AAR): Meeting after a project to capture lessons learned so the next project can be even better.

Contingency Plan (or CONPLAN): POA only executed if something bad happens that was anticipated like bad weather.

Follow up: Subsequent action taken if there is no response (or a negative response) to an initial action (commonly called checking).

Follow through: Process of returning to the Delegator, either face-to-face or on the phone, and reporting the status of their request.

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ): Place or site where members can get answers to their questions.

Key Player: Anyone who must take action for a project to be a success. (could be Direct Report, peer, superior, or supplier)

Mastermind: Group of people, away from work, that meets to help individual members resolve their problems.

Milestone: tool used to mark specific points along a project timeline-going from on phase of a project to the next.

#2 Person: Person who make decisions in the leader's absence.

Problem Resolution Meeting: Meeting convened to resolve serious/emergency situations.

Readiness: The ability of a business unit to accomplish its purpose.

REDCAPS: Stands for responsibilities, expectations, duties, constraints, authority, projects, and standards.

Staff a Document: Process of collaborating and achieving consensus by circulating a document (your POA) through all *Key Players* for their concurrence or non-concurrence with comments. In the end ask everyone, “*Can you follow, execute, and support this ...? If not, why?*”

Unresolved Issues: Anything that could slow or stop your progress including all Questions, Unknowns, Issues, Concerns, Shortfalls, Obstacles, Problems (QUICSOP) that remain Unknown or the answer is Unacceptable to you.

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ONE LAST THING...



If you feel this information could help someone else, please take a few moments to let them know. If it turns out to make a difference in their life, they'll be forever grateful to you – as will I.

Let's make a difference together - one person at a time!

All the best!

Ed

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Founder of *TheEffectivenessGuide.com*

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