Effectively Communicating Within

A Multi-Generational Workplace

Presented by:

Shirley J. Burks

Instructor Information

Shirley J. Burks

Shirley J. Burks holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in organizational management. Her educational background includes numerous professional development programs such as: Business Coaching, Project Management, Essentials of Management Development Certificate, Faculty College (UWM), Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) certification, Train the Trainer Certificate and various continuing education topics related to capacity building issues.

Burks currently serves as the unit leader of the Community and Professional Development Unit within UWM's School of Continuing Education. The unit is comprised of four departments and nearly 20 staff members. Burks directs the programming activities within the Governmental Affairs department in addition to leading several workshops on organizational development, change management, stress and time management, multi-generational workplace, and critical thinking skills development. She is responsible for the planning, development and marketing of new and existing public administration and nonprofit management workshops for both the public and customized contract trainings within the department.

Burks has extensive knowledge and more than 20 years of experience working in the nonprofit sector. She has worked in various capacities as a director, employment recruiter, workshop facilitator, admissions and training specialist, and instructor. Her background includes program and curriculum development, as well as overall project implementation and evaluation.

Burks' training experience spans various educational levels; from primary school through adult continuing education. Burks has presented trainings for numerous organizations locally and internationally including the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Solutions Inc. (Cairo, Egypt), The Neighborhood House of Milwaukee, Girl Scouts of Milwaukee Area, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin, Employee Solutions Inc., YMCA Community Learning Centers, Milwaukee Business Technical College, Milwaukee Public School System and The New Opportunities Program (teen pregnancy services).

Contact Information

Shirley J. Burks
UWM School of Continuing Education
161 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 6000
Milwaukee, WI 53203
Phone: 414-227-3157
Fax: 414-227-3330
sbufford@uwm.edu

Learning Objectives

- Identify what motivates each generational group currently in the work environment

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- Explore best approaches to communicate with each generational group

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- Discuss how each generation best gives and receives information

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Workshop Description

Effectively Communicating Within A Multi-Generational Workplace

Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation Jones, Gen Xers and Millennial oh my! Put them all in one workplace and what do you do? How do you effectively communicate across the board to each group? Within this session we will explore engagement tools for each group. We are currently in a very unique position in time where we could very well have as many as four generations actively working in the same workplace at the same time.

This webinar will assist you in identifying the unique factors of each generation to help build successful teams.

Four in One!

"For the first time in history of the traditional workplace we have four generations attempting to work together to function as one organization."

Rene' Johnston-Gingrich
"Four Generations, One Workplace"

What makes a workplace multi-generational?

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When Generations Collide at Work Quiz

Different Generations at Work

From [Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman](#)

Which of the following is important for a Baby Boomer (Born 1946-1964)?

A. Build parallel careers.
B. Build a stellar career.
C. Build a legacy.
D. Build a portable career.

Your response? _____

Which of the following is important to Generation Xers (Born 1965-1980)?

A. Give me balance now, not when I'm sixty-five.
B. Support me in shifting the balance.
C. Help me balance everyone else and find meaning myself.
D. Work isn't everything; flexibility to balance my activities is.

Your response? _____

Which of the following feedback do Millennials (Born 1981-1999) prefer?

A. Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?
B. Once a year, with lots of documentation.
C. No news is good news.
D. Feedback whenever I want it, at the push of a button.

Your response? _____

How Do We Define the Generations?

	Generations				
Born Between	**1909-1945** (~ 75 million)	**1946-1964** (~ 80 million)	**1965-1980** (~ 46 million)	**1981-2000** (~ 75 million)	**2001-TD**
Known as:	Veterans Silent Traditionalists Matures	Baby Boomers Vietnam Gen. Me Generation	Generation X Gen X Xers Baby Busters	Generation Y Gen Y Millennial Echo Boomers	Generation Z Gen 9/11 Homelanders Gen 2020
General age in 2015	~ 70 years and older	~ 51 – 69 years old	~ 35 – 50 years old	~ 15– 34 years old	~ 0 – 14 years old

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What is Unique About Each Generation?

Generational Characteristics				
	Veterans	**Boomers**	**Gen X**	**Gen Y**
Core Values	Respect for authority Conformers Discipline	Optimism Involvement	Skepticism Fun Informality	Realism Confidence Extreme fun Social
Family	Traditional Nuclear	Disintegrating	Latch-key kids	Merged families
Education	A dream	A birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
Communication Media	One-on-one Write a memo Letters Personal notes	Call me anytime Phone calls Personal interaction	Cell phones Call me only at work Voice mail, email	Internet Picture phones Emails Instant messages, blogs, Text messages
Dealing with Money	Put it away Pay cash	Buy now, pay later	Cautious Conservative Save, save, save	Earn to spend

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How Does Each Generation Operate Within the Workplace?

In The Workplace				
	Veterans	**Boomers**	**Gen X**	**Gen Y**
Ethic & Values	Hard work Respect authority	Workaholics Work efficiently	Self-reliance Skeptical	Multitasking Goal oriented
Interactive Style	Individual	Team player	Entrepreneur	Participative
Feedback & Rewards	Satisfaction in a job well done	Money Title recognition	Freedom is the best reward	Meaningful work
What Motivates?	When experience is respected, Authority	Feeling valued Feeling needed, Prestige, Networking	Do it your way Forgetting the rules, Flexibility	Knowing You will work with other talented people
Work & Family Life	Clear separation of the two	No balance Work to live	Balance	Balance
Work is …	An obligation "Company loyalty" One company entire career	An exciting adventure "Live to work" Long hours at the office	A difficult challenge "Work to live" Work is not everything	A means to an end "Living and Working their way" Want stimulation & change
Work style	Hard work expected	Get it done – no matter what it takes	Find fastest route to results; protocol secondary	Work to deadlines not schedules
Views of Authority/ leadership	Respect for power	Respect for accomplishments	Rules are flexible; collaboration is important	Value autonomy; less inclined to pursue formal leadership positions
Leadership Style	Directive	Consensual	Everyone is the same	TBD
Communication	Formal	In person and through structured network	Casual and direct; sometimes skeptical	Informal; email voice mail, text

	Assets	Liabilities
Veterans	Experience, enhanced knowledge, dedication, focus, stability, loyalty, emotional maturity, and perseverance	Reluctant to buck the system, uncomfortable with conflict, reticent when they disagree
Boomers	Service orientation, dedication, team perspective, experience, and knowledge	Not necessarily "budget minded," uncomfortable with conflict, reluctant to go against peers, may put process ahead of result
Gen X	Adaptability, techno-literacy, independence, creativity, willingness to buck the system	Skeptical, distrustful of authority
Gen Y	Collective action, optimism, ability to multi-task, and technological savvy	Need for supervision and structure; inexperience—particularly with handling difficult people issues

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Discussion

Let's take a closer look at each generation and their attributes.

Veterans:

- Came of age in 30s – 50s
- Company loyalty
- Believe in sacrifice
- Duty before fun
- Adherence to rules
- Leader has command & control
- Communicate via memo
- _____

Messages from their formative years…

- Make do or do without.
- Stay in line.
- Sacrifice.
- Be heroic.
- Consider the common good.
- _____

What drives Veterans?

- Show them respect
- Clear direction from leadership
- Person one on one contact
- No news is good news – not a lot of need for feedback
- _____

Motivating Messages…

- "Your experience is respected here."
- "It's valuable to the rest of us to hear what has and hasn't worked in the past."
- "Your perseverance is valued and will be rewarded."
- _____

What was the technology that shaped the era for the Veterans?

_____

Discussion

Let's take a closer look at each generation and their attributes.

Baby Boomers:

- Came of age in the 60s-70s
- Boomers grew up at a time of dramatic social change
- Experimental, individualism, free spirited, social cause oriented
- Value personal fulfillment
- Question authority
- Loves to have meetings
- _____

Messages from their formative years…

- Be anything you want to be.
- Change the world.
- Work well with others.
- Live up to expectation.
- Duck and cover.
- _____
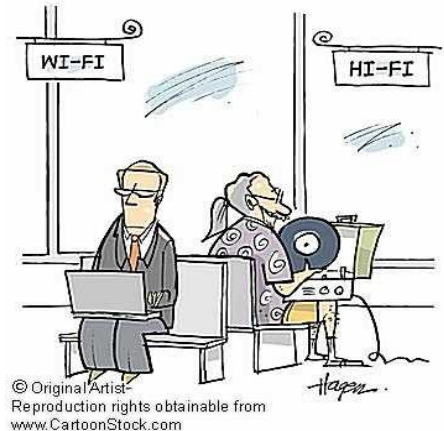
What drive Boomers?

- Show them that you care.
- Fairness is important.
- Know their names.
- Give them a chance to talk-they want to show you what they know.
- Dialogue and participation is key.
- _____

Motivating Messages…

- "Your opinion is valued."
- "You can work as long as you want to."
- "Your contribution will be recognized."
- "We need you."
- _____

What was the technology that shaped the era for the Boomers?

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Discussion

Let's take a closer look at each generation and their attributes.

Gen Xers:

- Came of age in the 80s-90s
- Believe in eliminating the task
- Value structure and direction
- Leaders should challenge others
- Ask why
- Communication should be direct and immediate
- _____

Messages from their formative years…

- Don't count on it.
- Heroes don't exist.
- Get real.
- Take care of yourself.
- Always ask "why**?"**
- _____

What drive Xers?

- Humor is important
- Give it to them straight; want information, not hype
- Talk with them, not at them, develop a dialogue
- Never confuse having a career with having a life
- Be visual and dynamic
- Be on top of your game; know your stuff and demonstrate it clearly
- _____

Motivating Messages…

- "Do it your way."
- "We've got the newest hardware and software."
- "There aren't a lot of rules around here."
- _____

What was the technology that shaped the era for the Xers?

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Discussion

Let's take a closer look at each generation and their attributes.

Gen Yers:

- Are coming of age now
- "Trophy Generation", or "Trophy Kids,"
  - Everyone gets something for participating
- Value what's next
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Want feedback/rewards whenever they want it at the push of a button
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Messages from their formative years…

- You are special.
- Leave no one behind.
- Connect 24/7.
- Achieve now!
- Serve your community.
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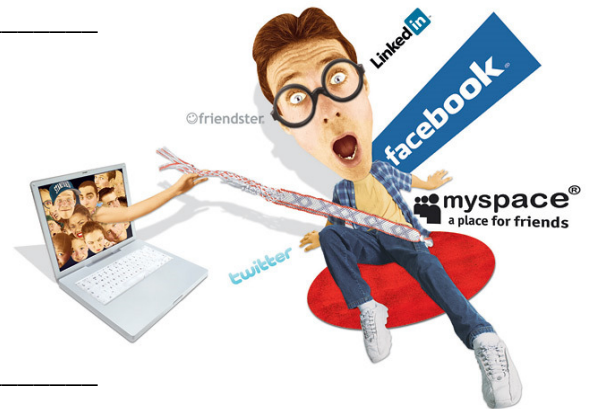
What drive Yers?

- Technology is expected
- Expect leaders to know more than they do
- They want more attention from authority figures
- Active and interactive: let them move
- Visually similar to Xers
- Provide supervision and structure
- Yers ARE readers so provide more back up information
- _____

Motivating Messages…

- "You will be working with other bright, creative people."
- "You and your co-workers can help turn this company around."
- "You can be a hero here."
- _____

What was the technology that shaped the era for the Yers?

_____

Yers Expect…

- Frequent and instantaneous feedback

- Skills and information that will help make their working lives less stressful and increase their marketability

- Training in people skills

- To make money

Three elements drive the ambitions of Generation Y in the workplace

1. **Impact--**Making a difference is a strong motivational force behind Gen Y's efforts.

2. **Communication--**The instant communication framework Gen Y developed through extensive computer usage has led to a need for more professional feedback than that of past generations

3. **Flexibility--**The divide between work and life is continually growing narrower as more people shift from the bricks-and-mortar to a remote workplace.

Gen Yers, the newest generation to enter the workforce were indulged and scheduled by their Baby Boomer parents, have taken the workplace by storm. They bring benefits and challenges to your workplace. Employers are dealing with helping up to four generations of workers happily co-exist to serve customers as a team. The economic downturn has made the four generation situation even more challenging with Boomers who planned retirement, but are unable to retire - and not happy about it. Gen Yers and Xers are supervising Boomers and Boomers are mentoring those who wish to learn from the leaving generation.

Managers need to develop the skill of managing Gen Ys. The Millennials have a quest for work-life balance.

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11 Tips for Millennial Management

1. **Provide structure.**
    - Reports have monthly due dates. Jobs have fairly regular hours. Certain activities are scheduled every day. Meetings have agendas and minutes. Goals are clearly stated and progress is assessed. Define assignments and success factors.

2. **Provide leadership and guidance.**
    - Millennials want to look up to you, learn from you, and receive daily feedback from you. They want "in" on the whole picture and to know the scoop. Plan to spend a lot of time teaching and coaching and be aware of this commitment to millennials when you hire them. They deserve and want your very best investment of time in their success.

3. **Encourage the millennial's self-assuredness, "can-do" attitude, and positive personal self-image.**
    - Millennials are ready to take on the world. Their parents told them they can do it - they can. Encourage - don't squash them or contain them.

4. **Take advantage of the millennial's comfort level with teams. Encourage them to join.**
    - They are used to working in groups and teams. In contrast to the lone ranger attitude of earlier generations, millennials actually believe a team can accomplish more and better - they've experienced team success. Millennials gather in groups and play on teams; you can also mentor, coach, and train your millennials as a team.

5. **Listen to the millennial employee.**
    - Your millennial employees are used to loving parents who have scheduled their lives around the activities and events of their children. These young adults have ideas and opinions, and don't take kindly to having their thoughts ignored. After all, they had the best listening, most child-centric audience in history.

6. **Millennial employees are up for a challenge and change.**
    - Boring is bad. They seek ever-changing tasks within their work. What's happening next is their mantra. Don't bore them, ignore them, or trivialize their contribution.

7. **Millennial employees are multi-taskers on a scale you've never seen before.**
    - Multiple tasks don't phase them. Talk on the phone while doing email and answering multiple instant messages – yes! This is a way of life. In fact, without many different tasks and goals to pursue within the week, the millennials will likely experience boredom.

8. **Take advantage of your millennial employee's computer, cell phone, and electronic literacy**
    - Are you a Boomer or even an early Gen-Xer? The electronic capabilities of these employees are amazing.

9. **Capitalize on the millennial's affinity for networking.**
    - Not just comfortable with teams and group activities, your millennial employee likes to network around the world electronically.

10. **Provide a life-work balanced workplace.**
    - Your millennials are used to cramming their lives with multiple activities. They may play on sports teams, walk for multiple causes, spend time as fans at company sports leagues, and spend lots of time with family and friends. They work hard, but they are not into the sixty hour work weeks defined by the Baby Boomers. Home, family, spending time with the children and families, are priorities. Don't lose sight of this. Balance and multiple activities are important to these millennial employees. Ignore this to your peril.

11. **Provide a fun, employee-centered workplace.**
    o Millennials want to enjoy their work. They want to enjoy their workplace. They want to make friends in their workplace. Worry if your millennial employees aren't laughing, going out with workplace friends for lunch, and helping plan the next company event or committee.

    Help your long-term employees make room for the millennials. By Internet research counts, 75,000,000 millennials are preparing to join or joining the workforce. These are desirable employees. Make your millennial employees happy in a fun, yet structured setting, and you are building the foundation for the superior workforce you desire. You are developing the workforce of your future.

    "11 Tips for Managing Millennials" By Susan M. Heathfield, About.com Guide
    http://humanresources.about.com/od/managementtips/a/millenials.htm

Discussion

Addressing Your Own Generational Assumptions

- What do I believe are the most important attributes of an employee?

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- How loyal do I believe an employee should be to an organization?

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- What balance do I maintain between my work and personal life?

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- Do I feel most comfortable with people of a certain age group at work?

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<u>Discussion</u>

Tips for Working Together

- Personalize your style – be creative; find out about other's preferences
- Build on strengths – recognize the unique talents that others bring to the table
- Initiate conversations about generational differences – being more open
- Ask about people's needs and preferences instead of assuming
- Offer options for getting tasks done
- Respect differences
- Encourage intergenerational collaborations
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Be flexible

What is the #1 human need?

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Why is it important to acknowledge generational differences?

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Generational Job Satisfaction

Below is a summary taken form a survey done by Sirota Survey Intelligence in 2006-2007 Sirota's findings were derived from employee attitude surveys conducted in 2007 and 2006, reflecting attitudes of more than 300,000 workers at more than 50 organizations. The study compared data from baby boomers (ages 43-62), Generation X (ages 28-42) and Generation Y (age 27 and younger).
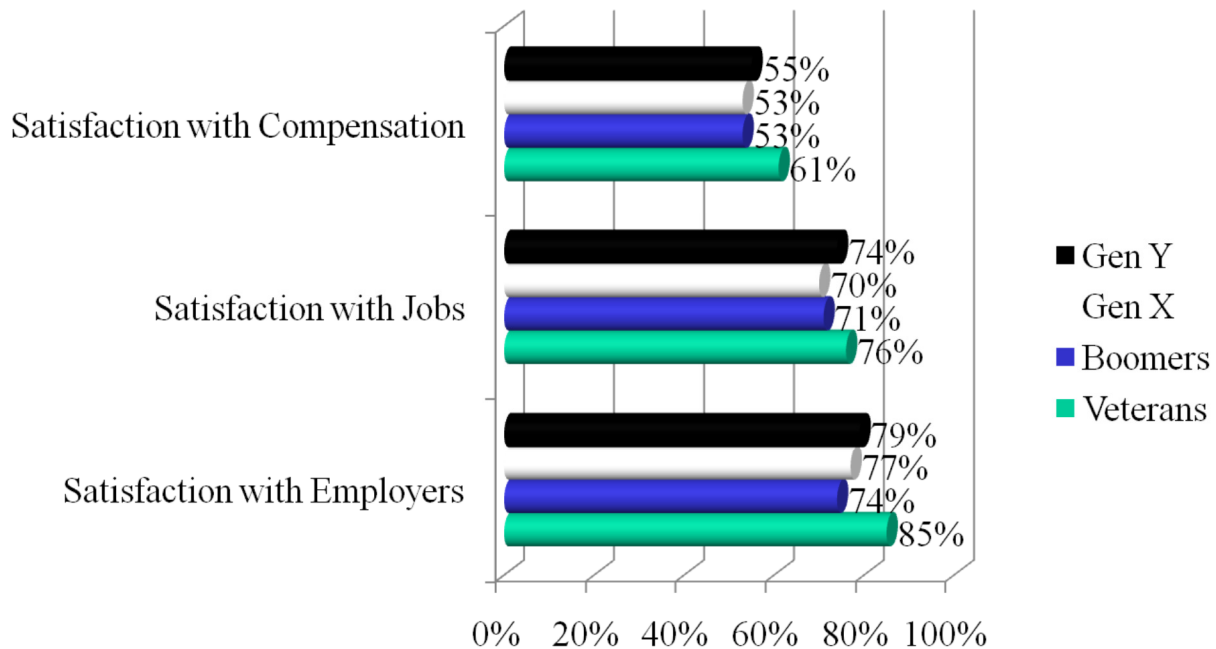
What can you tell from the survey?

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Who are the most satisfied with compensation? Jobs? Employers?

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Who are the least satisfied with compensation? Jobs? Employers?

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Why do you think that group is most satisfied? Or least satisfied?

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How Do We Bridge the Gap?

- **Create cross-generational teams** and encourage workers to share their ideas and expectations

- **Focus on outcomes** not superficial details.

- **Embrace differences** while looking for common ground.

- **Work together** and use multigenerational viewpoints as a strength for the workplace.

- **Be flexible**, relationships are more fluid for both employer and employee – younger employees may be more mobile and appear less loyal, but the same is true of most organizations.

- **Respect each other.** While there is a collectivity of "generations," it's important not to make assumptions of individuals based on age. Avoid sweeping generalizations. Not every Boomer is technophobic and not every Generation Yer is carefree.

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Working Successfully in the 21st Century: Integrating a Multi-Generational Diverse Workforce and Understanding the Role of New Technologies

From Bahira Trask, Ph.D. Presentation 2013

Checklist for managers and team leaders:

❑ Identify your own generational assumptions

- What do I believe are the most important attributes of an employee?
- How loyal do I believe an employee should be to an organization?
- What balance do I maintain between my work and personal life?
- Do I feel most comfortable with people of a certain age group?

❑ Personalize your style

❑ Be creative

❑ Find out about other's preferences

❑ Build on strengths

❑ Recognize the unique talents that others bring to the table

❑ Offer options for getting tasks done

❑ Keep open communication going

❑ Initiate conversations about generational differences

❑ Ask about people's needs and preferences instead of assuming

❑ Be respectful of differences and incorporate them

❑ Acknowledge the different values that may be held by various generations

❑ Remain flexible and open to other perspectives

❑ Encourage generational partnerships and collaborations

The Power of Feedback

Why do we hesitate?
- – Fear or dread
- – Lack of observation time
- – Lack of proximity
- – Lack of skilled feedback or positive coaching themselves
- – _____

Guidelines for Giving Productive Feedback

Feedback should be:
- – Specific
- – Well-timed
- – Owned by the giver
- – Based on observable behavior
- – Checked to ensure clear communication
- – _____

Reinforcing Feedback

- • Tell them what was right
- • Tell them "why" it was valuable

Redirecting Feedback

- • Tell them what's not effective
- • Make a suggestion and/or a question that will help them find the right path

Final Checkpoint

1. Which generation is entering the workforce today?

2. How many generations are currently working in the workplace today?

3. Boomers enjoy having meetings.   T   F

4. What is the age of the "homelander" generation now?

5. It is best to establish small talk with a Gen Xer before you present information.   T   F

6. Creating individual work teams for each generation to address issues is the best way to bridge the multi-generational gap.   T   F

7. We hesitate to give feedback because of fear or dread.   T   F

8. When giving feedback, it is important to be very general.   T   F

The 60-Second Opening

1. The issue is:

   o Be concise.
   o Is it a concern, challenge, opportunity, or recurring problem that is becoming more troublesome?

2. Select a specific example that illustrates the behavior or situation you want to change:

   o Keep it short – you only have 60 seconds.
   o What have I seen that I can describe? What's the "visual"

3. Describe your emotions about this issue:

   o Sharing "how you feel" is disarming.

4. Clarify what's at stake:

   o Why is this important?
   o What is at stake for the individual, for you, for the customers, the team, the organization?
   o Speak calmly and quietly – simply "clarify."

5. Identify your contribution to this problem:

   o Recognize any role you played in creating the problem.
   o Acknowledge your accountability as appropriate.

6. Indicate your wish to resolve the issue:

   o Use the word **resolve**.
   o "Resolve" communicates good intent on your part.

7. Invite the other person to respond:

   o Ask them to offer their perspective. Sit. Stay. Listen.

Case Study

"When Things Go Wrong – Redirection"

Scenario:

Shorty Long is the CEO of a mid-sized computer company, Cables and Wires, Inc., who has a problem to resolve. Shorty is a thoughtful leader and a really caring, concerned human being. His staff admires and respects him for his professional savvy, but they also genuinely like him.

Currently, he's very excited because he has just recruited and hired a new vice president, Jack Askew, for the software development unit. Jack Askew comes highly recommended with an outstanding reputation in the industry for getting results and meeting deadlines. Getting Jack on board is a real coup for Shorty, as Jack had many other options; but he chose Cable Wires, Inc. Shorty thinks this is a grand opportunity for the company for his senior staff in the unit to work with and learn from additional outstanding talent.

30 Days Later

Shorty has a huge headache, and he can't find his bottle of aspirin. His new hire Jack seems to have alienated his staff. Shorty pulled into the parking lot yesterday and was confronted by two senior staff people from the software development unit. They wanted to know "where" Shorty found Jack. It seems that Jack made some comments that did not set well with the team. One of the team members shared that he was in Jack's office earlier in the week asking some questions. Jack's response to the team member was, "I don't have time for private tutoring sessions. Work this out on your own time."

In addition, another team member shared that there seems to be a "glitch" in the new software, and at this point no one knows how to resolve the problem. Jack's response to the team at the morning meeting was, "I thought you guys were better than this. This team is not what I signed up for." The entire team left the meeting and updated their resumes.

Shorty had been getting some "vibes" about the inner-team conflicts for a couple of weeks, but he figured everyone was an adult, a professional; all of them would figure it out without his intervention. Now he has also been told by one of his top folks in that unit, Susie, that she is talking with a headhunter that recently called her. She hasn't set up a meeting yet, but she is entertaining the possibility and she wanted Shorty to know.

Now, assume you are Shorty. At this point you don't want to fire Jack; at least not yet. His "talent" is still there, and you would like to tap into it; and save the relationship as well. Remember the first 60 seconds of your feedback or confrontation is critical. So think about it.

Instructions:

Within your group, write the 60-second opening Shorty needs to have with jack using the 7 steps in the 60-second Opening handout as your guideline. Everyone will have an opportunity to share.

Activity

"*Recognition Report Card*"

Grade

1) An award, preferably given in front of your peers.   _____

2) A plaque to hang on the wall.   _____

3) A thank you, in writing, from your supervisor.   _____

4) A note to my supervisor's supervisor about my excellent performance.   _____

5) A chance to be on a really exciting, cutting-edge project.   _____

6) Opportunity to work with people from other parts of the company.   _____

7) Some flexibility in your schedule.   _____

8) A chance to lunch with senior management.   _____

9) A day off.   _____

10) A bonus of some sort.   _____

11) A promotion.   _____

12) A change in your title.   _____

13) *_____   _____

14) *_____   _____

15) *_____   _____

*Are there any that you would add?

OVERALL GPA   _____

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