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The Tax Administrator as Communicator

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_experience the commitment™

Phil Brand, Vice President CGI

I have been around tax agencies for 41 years as a tax agency administrator, tax advisor and consultant

The difference between most of you and me is that by virtue of my age and longevity, I have had more opportunities to screw-up than you and have done so frequently with some amazing results

Every major screw up at some point could have been avoided, mitigated or lessened if someone (usually me) had communicated better

So far I have been saved by the "bank account" I try to build and maintain for rainy days

About this Presentation

- Fact vs. Opinion
- Poor Communication: Is it The Root Cause of Operational and Personal Issues?
- The Only Mistake I Ever Made!
- The Classic vs. Practical Approach to Communications

The Real Techniques of Communications

Results and Relationships

Accessibility (approachability and allocating time)

Antecedents, Behavior and Consequences

The Importance of Language

The Truth When It Really Matters

Empowering
our People

The “Real” Techniques of Communications

Results and Relationships

Communicating About Yourself

Giving and Receiving Contributions

Communicating a Sense of Value to Those Around Us

Communications as a Discipline

Empowering
People

Accessibility and Approachability

Accessibility

- One of the most underrated and simple communications techniques...accessibility to you and to the information you have
- Allocating your time based on “who really loves you”
- Listening with interest
- The routine sharing of information and organization systems (Barry Oshry)

Approachability

- The power of informality
- Deposits into your “work savings” account
- Calmness in the eye of the storm
- Celebrating the milestones
- Three Distinct levels of communications upwards, downward and sideways

Antecedents, Behavior and Consequences

- The ABCs of Communication (BF Skinner)
 - Antecedent: What proceeds or governs i.e. rules, manuals, regulations and parental direction
 - Behavior: Activity, action or approach we want/need
 - Consequence: What follows the desirable or undesirable behavior

Skinner believed that you are more likely to get behavior from consequences both positive or negative than from antecedents

Antecedents, Behavior and Consequences

- Bureaucracies tend to be long on antecedents consequences and short on consequences
- The Consequences: Positive and Negative
 - Positive consequences are used to get more of the type of behavior you want
 - Negative consequences are used to help extinguish the behavior you don't want
- How people perceive consequences:
 - Positive, Immediate and Certain
 - Future, Uncertain and Negative

The PICS beat the FUNs in affecting behavior

The Importance of Language

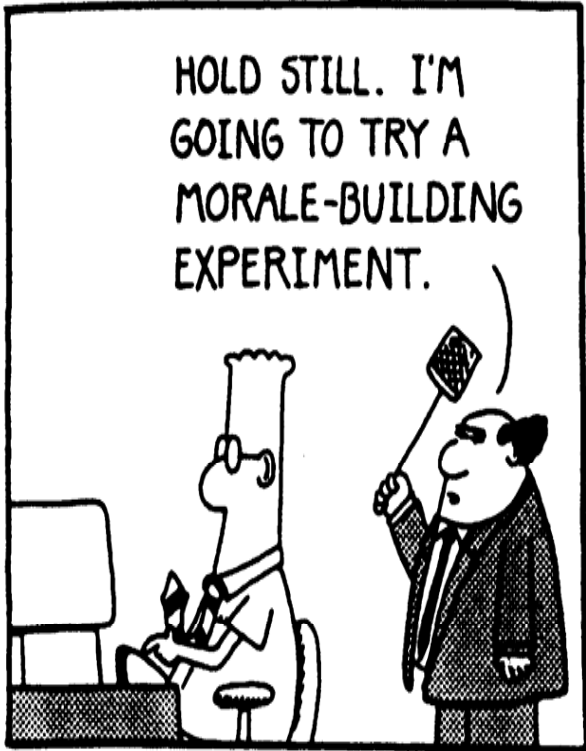
- The world is constantly changing and our language in the workplace should reflect those changes
- Cultural, religious and gender sensitive language is important if not to you personally to the people we lead
 - Inclusion
 - Empowerment
 - Phrases that work
 - Economy in setting strategic goals

The Truth When It Really Matters

- Managing from the Heart (Bracey, Rosenblum et al)
 - H.E.A.R.T as an acronym for a communication's style
 - (H)ear and Understand me
 - (E)ven when you disagree, don't make me wrong
 - (A)cknowledge the greatness within me
 - (R)emember to look for my loving intentions
 - (T)ell me the truth with compassion
 - The two prevalent counseling techniques used by management

Communicating About Yourself

- Developing Your Dream and who contributes
 - Give up and Go up Goals
 - Impact of Incompletes
- Establishing and Writing Down Goals-Why?
- Planning
 - Vacation vs. the Rest of Your Life
 - Wedding vs. the Marriage
- The Best Predictor of Future Success
- Do not Qualify or “Should on Yourself”



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Giving and Receiving Contributions

- Contributions vs. Criticisms?
 - Focus on the situation or issue not the behavior or the individual
- Conveying Bad News Upwards
 - Be the bearer of your own bad news
 - Bad news doesn't get better with age
 - Have a plan or a date for having a plan
- Communicating About Mistakes
 - OSO Defence Theory
 - Framework for listening, responding or reporting
- The Value of Your Opinion to Your Organization
 - Dog vs. Cat Loyalty

Communicating a Sense of Value to Those Around

Us

- Managers set the climate in the workplace
- Power of prediction, setting expectations and acknowledgements
- Celebrating improvement vs. only achievement
- Broken clocks are right twice a day
- Evaluating on patterns vs. incidents
- Mentoring others after you have arrived

Communications as a Discipline

- Doesn't happen unless planned
- It is a never ending project plan with action items and deadlines
- Develop consistent channels
 - Voice mail
 - Email
 - Bi-weekly notes
 - One on one sessions
 - Outside communications
 - Upward communications
 - Staff Meetings

The Results of Communications

- Operational Achievements
 - A personal story
- Contributions to the Personal and Professional Lives of the People we are Privileged to Lead
 - What will we be remembered for?