

## Member's Quarterly

Fall 2017 Edition

### Feature

# Communicating for Results

*Apply the 4 C's to communicate effectively*

**W**e've all experienced the conversation that quickly fell off the tracks, become positional and personal, had far too much drama or resulted in a confrontation. In these conversations, there is very little understanding going on. Instead, the focus becomes more about proving someone wrong or exerting one's position to "win." Jeff Daly sums this communication challenge up when he says "two monologues do not make a dialogue."

How you manage yourself in these moments shapes where the conversation goes next and teaches others how to treat you. Jim Rohn states that "effective communication is 20% what you know and 80% how you feel about what you know."

Communication is a teachable skill and "one that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life." (Brian Tracy) Teaching employees and leaders how to communicate effectively and for results can transform workplaces and the way in which conflict is resolved.

As George Bernard Shaw says, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." In communication, there are many reasons that challenges arise and confrontation results including assumptions, workplace culture, unresolved issues, history, trust, values, personality and working styles just to name a few.

So how do you teach others to communicate effectively and for results?

Applying the 4 C's will help you keep communication on track, remove some of the drama and emotions, support trust and integrity in the business relationship and will reduce the stress associated with confrontational conversations.

### Clarity:

What you say matters and shapes everything. The more clearly you communicate, the better the chance that your message is understood the way you intended it. Practice your part of the conversation in advance in front of a mirror. This will help you work through emotions and discomfort before the "real" conversation. Select words that can not be misunderstood and do not contain "triggers" for people.

### Congruence:

Make sure the words and the emotion match what you say. Far too often there is incongruence between what is said and how the words are said. This incongruence leads to confusion, mistrust or apprehension.

### Compassion:

Kindness and compassion go a long way in creating an atmosphere of understanding. In difficult conversations, it is likely that the other person may be as uncomfortable as you. Compassion, kindness and understanding help maintain trust and integrity in business relationships.



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### **Collaboration:**

Build a connection with the other person. Use his/her name in the conversation. This is referred to as collaborative language, just like the use of "we", "us" or "together". Make it clear that your intention is to work through the communication together.

Developing strong and effective communication skills is absolutely essential for leaders and human resources practitioners. "The leader must be able to share knowledge and ideas to transmit a sense of urgency and enthusiasm to others. If a leader can't get a message across clearly and motivate others to act on it, then having a message doesn't even matter." Gilbert Amelio (President and CEO of National Semiconductor Corp).

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