

HULL &  
ASSOCIATES

# The Corporate Communicator

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## Hull & Associates

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## Table of Contents

Be a Team Player .... Pg. 1

Take the Credit ..... Pg. 1

Make a Decision ..... Pg. 2

Neg. Feedback ..... Pg. 2

Take a Vacation ..... Pg. 3

Call Dr. Mimi ..... Pg. 3

Follow Us Online! ..... Pg. 3

Corporate Couch .... Pg. 4

DISC Preview ..... Pg. 4

## Consider This ...

Cooperation is  
doing with a  
smile,  
what you have  
to do anyway.



## Team Salute

### Why Team Players Are as Important as High Achievers

High achievers are important to an organization. Team players are even more important! Every boss should build teams and team players and here's why:

#### Team players work well with others.

No matter how great the team looks on paper, poor attitudes and clashing personalities can reduce productivity. An assessment like the DISC® helps to resolve "personality conflicts."

### They're Taking the Credit!

It's hard to sit back and accept someone else getting the credit for your work ... and you shouldn't have to. So how do you handle it?

Go to that individual and tactfully work to resolve the problem. Consider that this may be an oversight so allow them the opportunity to explain their actions. You might learn that they told the boss of your contribution and the boss failed to mention it.

If you find that they did not give you the credit, ask them to rectify and clarify what each of you did for the project or event. Obtain an agreement from the individual that this will not happen again. Suggest that in the future, the two of you determine how you will present the project and share the credit.

### Team players care about the

**organization.** They typically believe in the company and see themselves as a piece of a puzzle helping to move the company forward. If the company succeeds, so do they.

**Team players are enthusiastic.** They are willing to take on a task willingly even if it is not their typical job duties. High achievers who lack teamwork skills are less likely to do so.

**Team players solicit input from others.** High achievers often rely on themselves and discount other people's ideas. An effective team member understands that with collaboration comes creativity, problem solving and innovation.

**Build your team and you will build your organization!**

So what if it happens again and/or the person does not want to cooperate in clarifying who did what? Have a confidential discussion with your boss regarding the situation. Explain to your boss what happened and how you attempted to handle this matter with your coworker. Don't whine! State the course of events and make sure you have evidence to prove that the idea was yours or that you were the one who did the work.

You deserve credit, so don't be afraid to claim it. In the end, it benefits everyone!



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## How to Make a Tough Decision!

Sometimes we have to make decisions that involve hard choices. With the realization that not making a decision is, in fact, making a decision, here are some hints to help you decide.

- **Defer don't procrastinate.** Making an immediate decision may not be the best idea. Neither is simply procrastinating. Set a deadline for your decision and use that time to research and prepare.
- **Analyze the options.** Review the costs, benefits, and assumptions involved. The results of your analysis will help you to make an informed decision, backed up with hard data.
- **Consult or brainstorm with someone else.** They may have ideas that you had not considered.



## Are You Open to Negative Feedback?

People often fear and resist feedback, especially negative feedback. However, it is important to think of feedback as important data or even a gift that can help you improve. It often takes the giver of the feedback a lot of nerve and strength to let you know what they are or have been thinking. So, how can you better receive and use feedback?

- **Look for the truth in the feedback.**

Sometimes we have a tendency to shut down, reject or zone out when we hear negative feedback. What the person is saying may be the truth and this could be your blind spot. In other words, even if you are not be aware of what is happening, others may be.

- **Use your instinct.** Listen to your inner voice as another resource.
- **Choose what not to lose.** Sometimes there is no clear winner between the choices so don't compare what you stand to gain but consider what you might stand to lose with a particular choice.
- **Share your tentative decision** with someone you trust and is not affected by your decision and ask them to give you honest feedback. This will help you to remain objective and give your approach a sanity check.
- **Picture yourself** after the decision is made. How do you feel? Are there regrets? Does it feel "right?"
- After all this....**make a decision** and hope for the best!

(From Dr. Mimi Hull's program on the "Art of Leadership")

- **Consider the intent of the person giving the feedback.** Is their intent to help you or hurt you? Don't confuse the message with the messenger. If they are giving you a chance to improve then their purpose is to help you. Having said that, if the feedback is malicious, and they are not your supervisor, you can always ignore that person's comments.
- **Try not to take it personally.** Think about the behaviors that are being mentioned and how you can work to change and improve them.
- **Ask for the positives.** If you are receiving feedback from a person who is only focusing on the negatives, ask them what they see as your strengths and how you can build on your strengths to correct the things that need changing.

Make feedback a cornerstone of your life. Remember no one is perfect. However, if we strive for excellence, seeking out feedback and applying the information can be both helpful and productive.

(From "Resolving Conflict," a workshop by Dr. Mimi Hull)



### Take a Vacation ... REALLY!

Are you so busy at work that you don't really take a vacation? Vacations are important and actually help you increase production, regain focus, and reduce stress. So what can you do to enjoy your vacation and not stress about work?

**Plan!** Consider when things are less busy and set a mutually agreeable time with your boss for you to go away. Once your vacation is planned, let your boss know what your dates are and mark them off on the calendar.

**Ask a colleague to be your backup.** This person can cover for you while you're gone--and you can do the same when he or she takes a vacation. They can take

notes for you at important meetings, handle urgent calls or e-mails, make routine decisions, or answer questions on your behalf.

**Tell people you'll be out.** Let customers, clients, coworkers and vendors know your vacation dates. You can also provide them with your backup's name. If you are working on a project, let people know how you meet expected deadlines.

**Give your boss a countdown and set parameters.** Periodically remind your boss about your vacation and how you are preparing. Let them know that you plan to check e-mails only sporadically so you won't be compelled or feel obligated to check your phone or e-mail all the time. Don't be too reachable.

**Get prepared.** Organize your desk, your e-mail and your voicemail. Set a time to go over last minute things with both your boss and your back up.

**Relax and enjoy.** Use your time off to do what you want to do. If you do, you actually come back more creative and productive than if you had stayed in the office for the same time period!

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## HULL & ASSOCIATES

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 by  
Dr. Mimi Hull

THE  
corporate couch



### Dear Dr. Mimi:

I am a new manager and don't know when I should give feedback and when I should let things go. Should I wait for the annual performance review? That can be months away, and meanwhile, the behavior is driving me crazy. Can you give me some suggestions?

—*Silent But Stewing*

### Dear S But S:

Here are some clues that constructive feedback is needed. The first is the one you already hinted at. If you are stewing and feeling uncomfortable about not saying something, your actions may already be sending a message of dissatisfaction, and when that is the case, your employees typically sense something is wrong, but don't know what to do to fix it. It's time to let them know.

In addition, one of the side effects of not giving feedback, when you feel there is a need, is that there is a greater tendency to later explode in anger. That can be devastating to all involved.

Another clue that it is time for feedback is when someone is making repeated errors or an employee's performance doesn't meet your expectations. Bad habits get formed and the longer you wait, the harder it will be to fix them. Be sure to let them know what they are also doing correctly so that good habits can develop as well.

As hinted about, feedback doesn't have to be negative. When someone does something well, even if it is not way above and beyond your expectations, let them know it.

One more clue is listening when your employees ask for your opinion. Employees often crave feedback but are subtle in their request for it. Listen for comments like, "How did you like when we ...?" or, "Did this project go the way you hoped?" When you hear these types of questions, that is a great opening to give the feedback that you want to give and they want to hear.

—*Dr. Mimi*

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at [www.HullOnline.com](http://www.HullOnline.com) or [DrMimi@HullOnline.com](mailto:DrMimi@HullOnline.com).

 by  
Dr. Mimi Hull

THE  
corporate couch



### Dear Dr. Mimi:

I know the economy is improving, and I have some really great employees. How do I make sure I keep them?

—*Concerned Manager*

### Dear Concerned Manager:

Many companies claim that their most valuable resources walk out of the building every evening, but they do very little to show employees how much they are valued. I suggest sitting down and talking with each of your employees and letting them know what you appreciate about them and letting them know you want them to stay. This may seem obvious, but if you don't tell them, how will they truly know? More than money, people want to feel appreciated.

In addition, asking their opinion, mutually setting goals and giving feedback on past projects can make employees feel more connected to you as a manager and to the company where you both work. Discussing career paths with employees individually can also build loyalty and renew their sense of appreciation for you and the company. Communication is vital to keeping your employees satisfied with their job and making sure they feel valued by the company.

—*Dr. Mimi*

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at [www.HullOnline.com](http://www.HullOnline.com) or [DrMimi@HullOnline.com](mailto:DrMimi@HullOnline.com).

