

HULL &  
ASSOCIATES

# The Corporate Communicator

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## Hull & Associates

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## Consider This ...

"You may be upset  
if you fail,  
but you are  
doomed if you  
don't try."



## They've Grown Up?!?!

Remember elementary school and the many different types of kids in your class? The troublemaker, the rule-follower, the slacker, the "above average kid who always bragged about getting better grades than you," the list goes on. Now, these "kids" have grown up and some have let their grade school habits follow them. Here are a few basic tips on how to deal with difficult employees.

**Listen-** Time after time, listening to your people will benefit you. Not only will it show you care, but listening can reveal other problems they're having.

**Give clear behavioral feedback-** Everyone has some "blind" spots. Give your difficult person specific information about what they have done and then

outline easy improvements, or if it's major, seek professional help.

**If things don't change, enforce consequences-** Just like in grade school (and life), there are consequences to actions. Adults should take responsibility for their actions which are inhibiting a smooth flow of the day-to-day operations. Be strong, consistent and firm, but not overbearing.

**Be prepared-** Having "problem-people" is never something you expect, but having thought-out solutions can help you when you are suddenly faced with them.

**Get help!** If there are people issues within the office, and they are not getting resolved, give Dr. Mimi a call at 407-628-0669 or check out our website, [www.hullonline.com](http://www.hullonline.com)! We can help!

## Humor at Work

Humor at work can be your best friend or worst enemy. Inappropriate humor turns people off, offends them and creates conflict. Cross that line and your attempt to bring people together will backfire. It is taboo to joke about age, sex, gender or race. If you are going to point fun at someone, be sure it is at yourself, because other people will take it personally ... even if they say they won't.

Laughter can be great medicine. It can increase productivity, improve creativity, neutralize tension, lower stress, and prevent burnout. Here are some reasons to use humor in the workplace:

**It makes you seem approachable.** The more approachable you are, the more willing others will be to trust you

and share things with you that they might not otherwise.

**It can bring more business.** Not only do teammates and co-workers like a good laugh, but so do customers and clients. Laughter can make a positive impression on customers, which could bring your organization more business.

**It increases work ethic.** A humorous atmosphere can bring joy and passion to employees. Employees who feel like they can have a good time at work often work harder and are less tired at the end of the day!

**It boosts creativity.** Humor encourages openness between teammates, which leads to creative thinking. Having humor between co-workers makes them feel like they can step outside their comfort zone and think outside the box when brainstorming or solving a problem.

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## Vulnerability Trust – The Foundation for a Cohesive Team

Often when I work with teams, I find that the members don't really trust each other. Team members might agree that their boss or co-workers have the skills to do their jobs, but that's about it. As a result, there is often a lot of blaming, turf guarding, defensiveness and even sabotage where teamwork and leadership could be.

What is vulnerability trust? Lencioni defines it as a place where both leaders and team members, "comfortably and quickly acknowledge, without provocation, their mistakes, weaknesses, failures, and need for help. They also recognize the strengths of others, even when those strengths exceed their own."

Vulnerability is the driving force of connection. It's courageous. It's gentle. It's the basis for building a cohesive team.

## Stop Saying "Sorry" and Start Apologizing!

Saying "I'm sorry" is an expression we've become **too good** at, and it is often said with little soul searching or meaning. As a result, it has become a common response to the slightest offenses and even worse, a space filler that has virtually no meaning. Good apologies are hard to come by. They involve both parties having a conversation. A sincere apology is hardly ever second nature or impulsive. Here are a few tips on how to reduce the word 'sorry' from your vocabulary:

1) "Sorry" is not a word to fill the silence; be creative with the words you use.

**Instead of:** "I'm sorry, do you have a second?"

**Try:** "Excuse me..."

2) Empathy can be displayed through understanding someone's feelings without apologizing for them. Use "feeling words" to better relate to others.

**Instead of:** "I'm sorry you were stuck in traffic."

**Try:** "How frustrating it must have been being caught in traffic."

3) Apologizing to a co-worker for

But we've turned it into a weakness. We've made ourselves 'strong.' We've toughened up, hardened up and protect ourselves from being hurt. Vulnerability does not mean offering every detail of your life. It's about intention and taking the risk so that issues can be revealed and worked with.

One of the first things that we do when we work with a team is to establish vulnerability trust. One tool that we use is the DISC® assessment. When presented effectively, the team starts to grow and become cohesive. Team members start to share their varying perspectives on issues. This results in greater commitment and accountability to the team's shared vision. In other words, they become a cohesive team and get positive results!



asking a question and/or task of them is not necessary. It is important to speak to them in an appropriate way, without saying the word "sorry."

**Instead of:** "Sorry but can you..."

**Try:** "I appreciate you doing a great job on \_\_\_\_\_. I will also need your help on \_\_\_\_\_."

You are human. You will make mistakes. *So what do you say if you really do need to give an apology?*

**First and foremost, be proactive.** If you know you've made a mistake, admit it.

**Be sincere.** Make sure your body language and tone of voice also deliver the heartfelt apology.

**Be brief.** Don't drag it out. Get to the specific point as quickly as you can. You don't need to give a huge history.

Share solutions. How can it be fixed? What have you done to make amends? What would you do differently if you are given a second chance?

**Be quiet.** Let the other person talk and then listen without interrupting, especially if they are showing a lot of emotions.

And lastly, **learn from your mistakes.** Don't do it again!!!

## Landing a Job When They're Not Hiring!

If there's a company that seems like a perfect fit for you, but is not currently hiring, apply anyway! You have nothing to lose! Here are steps you can take.

### Know why you want to work for them:

Be able to communicate this clearly. Organizations hire people who want to work for **them**, not just people who want a job.

**Do your research:** Learn more than just the basics about the company that you want to work for. Any extra information you have about the company will look impressive to these employers! Research the areas in which the company is growing or projects they are involved with. Think how you can help them in these endeavors. If they are not growing, you might also research the areas in which the company is declining. Reversing the decline is something they can certainly use.

**Make yourself valuable:** Don't let selling yourself become repetitive and standard. Modify and customize what you

say to target the particular company's needs and positions. If you have certain ideas about contributions you could make, let them know when you apply and during your interview. Don't be afraid to go the extra mile if you think it could help you land the job. Just remember to be specific and honest. Make yourself sound so desirable that it would hard for the employers to refuse to hire you.

**Follow up:** Following up with your application is important because if a company isn't in desperate need to fill a position, you can become forgotten. Make calls and/or send emails to make sure they know you are dedicated to being able to work for their company.

**Get to know people:** You may want to speak with a couple different people to get your name out there. Let the word get out that you would love to work there.

**Don't Overdo:** Be careful not to persist so often that you become annoying. You could come off as desperate and turn them off. Too much of a good thing is still too much!

## HULL & ASSOCIATES

### FREE CONSULTATION

Have you ever said, "but I told them ..." You probably did, but the message you sent was not the message they received. Call Dr. Mimi to help improve communications!!!

Dr. Mimi Hull is a fully licensed psychologist who has helped many organizations improve communication, leadership and team building. She can help you, your organization, your board and/or your staff.

**Her most requested programs are in the areas of Communication, including Team Building, Leadership, Conflict Management and Board Development.**

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today about registering!

**Our Contact Information.**

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 by  
Dr. Mimi Hull

THE  
corporate couch



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).

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I have been working at my current job for three years now and recently I have found another job prospect that is more lucrative. I want to leave on good terms with my manager, but I'm anxious about how he will take the news. How do I tell my manager without upsetting him? It is strictly about the money.

—*Leaving*

**Dear Leaving:**

Once you have the offer, the best option is to be open and honest with your manager. Inform him directly before you tell anyone else in your current organization. Be positive and honest. Tell him how you found working for him to be a good experience and that you are being offered more money in this new position. Also, make sure you're not leaving your boss and co-workers holding the bag on a big assignment. Giving two weeks' notice is the norm. If you do this, you should feel free to go and have a good reference at the same time.

—*Dr. Mimi*

 by  
Dr. Mimi Hull

THE  
corporate couch



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).

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

Recently I've started to notice that I'm being passed over for promotions and assignments. I think it might be due to my age. I am in my early 60s and am in good health. I have always received stellar reviews, and I have no plans to retire any time soon. I keep seeing my managers give the bigger assignments to younger employees. How do I stop being overlooked?

—*Not Elderly*

**Dear Not Elderly:**

The best course of action would be to emphasize your desire and abilities. Request some bigger assignments and explain why you can handle them and thus deserve them. Let your managers know you are more experienced, how your skills are well-suited for the tasks at hand, and that you have a longer track record of consistent work ethic and good reviews. This may just be a minor oversight in your managers' perception of their employees, but if this age issue continues, it may be time to speak with the human resources department.

—*Dr. Mimi*