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The Corporate Communicator

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Hull & Associates

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Happiness is a
conscious
choice...
not an
automatic
response.



Mimi Hull

Receiving Negative Feedback

Receiving negative feedback is uncomfortable but it can also be helpful. Here's how to handle it.

Do not get discouraged. Yes, we all hate it but look at the facts presented based on the work you've done. See it as an opportunity to improve.

Keep open communication. Once you get the feedback, say thank you and ask follow up questions for the parts of the feedback that concern you or you don't understand. Remember, the goal is for improvement, so don't rush to conclusions or rash reactions.

Ask for clarification. If the feedback you receive is vague, request more details and ask specific questions about what was expected. For example, "Thank you for the feedback. What

steps should I have taken and/or what can I do to fix it? This helps you with unanswered questions by their providing more details and can give you guidance for the future.

Separate the feedback from the person giving it. Just because they gave you negative feedback doesn't mean that they hate you. Also, if they tend to be negative, realize it is not about you.

Reflect and respond. Self-control is essential. Respond without being defensive. Respond with a solution-based mindset and hold yourself accountable.

Do these things. Make the needed adjustments and hopefully the next feedback you get will be positive!

Are You a Traditional Boss or a Servant Leader

There are many types of leaders and bosses. A truly effective leader realizes that by serving their people they are also serving their organization. This is what Robert Greenleaf calls a Servant Leader. **So, what is the difference between a traditional boss and a servant leader and what are you?**

A **traditional boss** sees leadership as an opportunity to grow themselves. A **servant leader** sees leadership as an opportunity to grow others.

A **traditional boss's** main goal is the prospering of their organization. A **servant leader's** main goal is serving their members.

A **traditional boss** focuses on their own needs. A **servant leader** focuses on their followers' needs.

A **traditional boss** uses their power to drive performance. A **servant leader** uses their power to drive engagement.

A **traditional boss** often talks more than they listen. A **servant leader** often listens more than they talk.

A **traditional boss** relies on facts, logic, and proof. A **servant leader** uses intuition along with the facts and logic.

A **traditional boss** controls information. A **servant leader** shares information.

A **traditional boss** uses power and intimidation to gain control. A **servant leader** uses trust and respect to build relationships.

A **traditional boss** looks for whom to blame for mistakes. A **servant leader** looks for who can learn from mistakes.

So what are you? To learn more about Servant Leadership, call Dr. Mimi today!

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Adaptability: The Key to Success

As humans, it is our nature to prefer habits and routines, but as much as we are comfortable with our structured routines, as we have seen, there are external forces, like the COVID-19 virus, that are outside of our control and will cause necessary changes. Adaptability is the key to accomplishing our goals, even when things don't go as planned. Here are some tips to improve your workplace flexibility and reduce workplace stress.

Start with an open mind: The first step in improving adaptability is to adjust your mindset. If you try to stay in the same routine, you will be swimming against the waves and wind up behind the curve. Allow yourself to see situations through a different lens. If you need help doing this, speak to your colleagues about how they would approach situations or perhaps create a mental map to visualize your

different strategies.

Ask for new projects: Sometimes, we need a push and the current situation is ripe for us giving and getting a push. If you find yourself stuck in a routine, ask if you can shadow a project, even remotely, or pick up a new one yourself. You'll give yourself an opportunity to develop flexibility and adaptability while also showing determination and willingness to take initiative!

Have a conversation: If you feel particularly inspired by the work ethic and problem-solving skills of a colleague or supervisor, have a conversation with them. Think of your coworkers as coaches! You can learn a lot from people regardless of their title. Ask for honest feedback often. Listen to both the praise and the critiques. This part will strengthen your ability to learn from your mistakes, which is a trait that all good leaders need!

Stop Stereotyping!!!

We are encouraged to become ever more open-minded and accepting of people. Whether a workplace leader, or a coworker, it is important not to stereotype as it can lead to unfair or inaccurate conclusions which may cause you to treat people inappropriately. Get an honest understanding of your people as individuals before you draw conclusions that may affect them, yourself, and/or your workplace unfairly.

Generalizations differ from *Stereotyping* because generalizations are connections made to a specific group, rather than attributing the qualities of a group to an individual. For example, a part of Chinese culture is that they value music. That is a generalization. This becomes a stereotype if you assume a Chinese coworker plays piano. The difference between the two is subtle but if not handled correctly people can feel uncomfortable.

Acknowledge your Bias. The first step to avoid stereotyping is acknowledging that you have a bias. We all do! It's called unconscious bias. There are stories we are told, even as children, that become a part of our belief system and whether we

act on them or not, the prejudice is there.

Accept that you can make a mistake. When one uses stereotypes, there is always the chance that they are wrong. Don't jump to conclusions. For example, don't assume someone stole your wallet if you simply misplaced it. This step is key in having respect for your peers.

Get to know people better. Ask them questions, try to walk in their shoes and understand them better. Not only does this show respect, but it opens the door to friendships and a more welcoming workplace environment.

Don't generate labels. Labels make you think you know more about a person than you really do. Just because someone is an engineer, doesn't mean they are an introvert. And even though someone is an introvert, it doesn't mean that they won't enjoy going to lunch with you.

Look for commonalities. Focus on commonalities rather than differences so as to build relationships. Similar interests create comfort zones. This paves a path to understanding and new points of view that you may not have explored before but will find enchanting moving forward.

Don't Just Manage, Coach!

Typically we use words such as "boss" and "manager" to indicate some form of supervisory title. I would like to challenge those in these positions to strive to do more than manage and supervise. Try coaching and leading.

When we *manage*, it implies a more reactive response. Managers oversee projects, assign duties, monitor progress, and overall tend to be more concerned about the outcome of a situation and simply getting the job done.

When you *coach*, it implies a more proactive position. Coaches also get the job done and they also interact with employees and work to make them better. Coaches ask questions and listen to concerns and opinions. They offer guidance and advice when employees are faced with a challenge, and overall tend to be as concerned with the process as with the outcome.

So why should we coach and lead instead of just manage and supervise?

Stronger Employee Rapport - When you engage and interact with employees,

they feel more comfortable in the workplace and it creates a positive environment at all levels in the workplace. Establishing good rapport is crucial for workplace harmony and productivity. People want to come to work!

Increased Workplace Empowerment.

When you engage with employees as a coach, you empower them to make decisions on their own. You still offer feedback and guidance but overall, you allow them to make choices while supporting them along the way.

Increased Workplace Communication.

Coaching encourages a safe space for feedback to be exchanged in a productive manner. People are more willing to ask for instruction. They will admit mistakes and/or ask for help.

More collaboration and less back-biting. A coach encourages teamwork. People talk with, not about, each other. This fosters cooperation which benefits the workplace overall and improves production.

Learn to coach! Contact Dr. Mimi at drmimi@hullonline.com or 407-628.0669

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

Contact her for a FREE consultation!

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CC by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

There is a woman I work closely with who talks and talks. Don't get me wrong, she is a great employee and I thoroughly enjoy our conversations, but she is a very big distraction to me. Is there a nice way for me to say something? I have to stay late to finish my work because of the conversations.
—*Distacted*

Dear Distracted:

Sit down with this woman and explain to her that you have a hard time staying focused when she is talking because you so enjoy the conversations. Be polite but firm. Let her know that you enjoy her, but when you talk with her, you fall behind in your work. Suggest that you can catch up at times like lunch and breaks. If she starts to talk with you, remind her that you have work to do. It may take a few times for her to get the message, but don't give up! Remember, it takes two to have a conversation.

—*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 or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

CC by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I am a new manager promoted to supervise a different division of our organization. I would like to get to know my new employees better and learn what I can do to make their working hours more enjoyable and productive. How can I do that? Are there questions that I can ask?

—*Caring Newbie*

Dear Caring:

Start by asking them to tell you about their job. What do they do? What takes the most time? What do they enjoy most? What is their least favorite part of their job? What do they wish they did not have to do? Then move into questions about moving forward. What would help you to get more done in less time? How can I, as a manager, help you? What improvements would you like to see for the department? What changes would you like to see implemented? If they ask for something outlandish, ask, given the realistic constraints, how they would make it happen. Be sure to listen and take notes and get back to them on the progress of their suggestions. Hearing that something can't be implemented is better than not hearing back at all!

—*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 or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.