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The Corporate Communicator

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Table of Contents

Discrimination affects Business	Pg. 1
The Art of Forgiveness	Pg. 1
What is Compassion .	Pg. 2
What Does Dr. Mimi Really do?	Pg. 2
Do Better Recognition	3
Dear Dr. Mimi: High Strung!	Pg. 4
Dear Dr. Mimi: Quitting!	Pg. 4

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"Old Age: the period in life when arteries and opinions harden."

-Unknown



How Discrimination and Inequity Affect Business

Workplace discrimination costs organizations millions of dollars in legal settlement fees each year. However, discrimination can have a much larger impact beyond money. Discriminatory practices negatively impact employee productivity. It also affects an organization's ability to retain and recruit the best employees, as well as it leads to negative customer perceptions.

Job satisfaction and motivation affects all employees. Promotions and rewards should be based on performance. If an employee sees that these promotions are being given based on discriminatory factors, their desire to work hard for the organization

decreases. With this reduced desire, comes reduced productivity.

Employees who experience inequity leave these organizations, increasing turnover rates. Recruiting and retraining replacements is costly. An organization that is fair and caring attracts and retains the best employees.

People talk and write! Potential clients and customers will learn about what is happening. Job seekers will also research the company, making it more difficult to recruit quality candidates. A company's reputation will be tarnished when fairness and equity are not practiced.

AND REMEMBER...**Discrimination is not only wrong, it is illegal.** Federal and state regulations are in place to prevent discrimination.

The Art of Forgiveness

In organizational and personal relationships alike, there are moments where the only way to move forward is to forgive. While it is the right thing to do, it isn't always easy.

Why is it hard to forgive? Our human consciousness has difficulty living in the present moment. We don't let go! We have evolved to protect ourselves, trying to prevent repeated exposures and being hurt again.

Why should we forgive? It clears us from the burden of living with grudges. When we forgive, we can deepen our relationships and create our own happiness and have peace of mind.

Why not seek revenge? Retaliation further deteriorates the relationship. As Confucius said, "Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves,"

explaining how nothing positive ever comes from holding onto anger. And in the workplace, grudges create a hostile environment makes everyone unhappy. It's like being stuck in quicksand and the only way out is to grab ahold of your opponent. Also, this forces other people to "take sides."

How do I start the process of forgiveness? Accept the initially uncomfortable feelings and make an active decision to forgive the individual and possibly even let them know that you forgive them.

Feel compassion for the offender. This will then allow you to reflect on the situation, release the negative feelings and move past it.

Remember forgiveness doesn't always mean resolution but it can facilitate understanding and empathy between two people.

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What Is Compassion?

More compassion is needed. Where?? In everyday life, with family, friends, coworkers, managers, and strangers. Compassion is more than just noticing someone's suffering and trying to alleviate their pain. It includes:

- 1) **Sensitivity** - Responding to someone's emotions and perceiving what help is needed. Trust your intuition and notice the signs of suffering and distress.
- 2) **Sympathy** - Showing concern for another's suffering by lending a helping hand and/or a shoulder to cry on or just being there to really listen.
- 3) **Empathy** - Putting yourself in their shoes. When showing empathy, it is best to remain calm, relaxed, and not cut them off. Be attentive so you can better understand what they are going through.
- 4) **Motivation/Caring** - Encouraging. When someone confides in you, let them

speak. Do not interrupt or give advice too quickly. Have open body language. Lean toward them. Make eye contact and don't cross your arms and.... make sure your phone is away.

5) **Distress tolerance** - Tolerate difficult emotions when dealing with someone else's emotions. Avoid making a pity face, crying with them, or letting your emotions get the best of you. If you feel yourself displaying distress, take a deep breath and stay focused.

6) **Stay relaxed** - Stay focused even if they respond aggressively. If they become angry, maintain your composure and don't escalate the situation. The other person will unconsciously mirror your emotions causing them to relax and allows the conversation to continue.

The best way to become a compassionate person is to practice it!

What Does Dr. Mimi Really Do???

People often ask me, "What exactly do you do?" I say, "I'm a psychologist that specializes in the workplace." I still get curious looks! I realize that my background is different. I have a doctorate in Psychology, and a doctoral minor in Management from the Business School at UF. I have spent my career working with organizations and getting their people to be stronger leaders and team members.

So, what exactly is Workplace/Organizational Psychology?

The first Organizational Psychology textbook was inspired by Hugo Munsterberg due to his having conflict with his Harvard colleagues! Workplace psychology focuses on the people in the workplace and seeks to resolve organizational conflicts and promote employee wellbeing.

Why is this necessary? People spend more waking hours "at work" than anywhere else. Having a workplace psychologist and "soft skills" training as a part of your overall process is an investment. Human factors are huge predictors of success... even more than the financial factors! Organizations who

go beyond the "bottom line" and focus on leadership, healthy communication and team building, typically are the most successful. This is because good mental health, coupled with excellent leadership, results in less employee stress, reduced turnover and more productivity.

While personal factors also affect mental health, their impact can be reduced by the culture and leadership of an organization. A Workplace Psychologist, who has this very specialized training and experience, will mediate individual, group, and organizational conflicts that occurs in all organizations.

Resolving conflict isn't easy because of the different cultures, fears, attitudes, personalities and backgrounds that influence human behavior. A Workplace Psychologist turns these differences into opportunities and will provide your employees with the proper training and necessary motivation. **Differences are transformed from points of conflict to opportunities for collaboration.** Using a Workplace Psychologist results in both the individual and the organization's improvement in performance, productivity, efficiency, and internal wellbeing!

How to Be a Better Recognition Giver!

At this time of great resignations, employee recognition is more important than ever. It lets employees know that their contributions lead to organizational success and increases their motivation to be more productive. It also increases employee loyalty to the organization and, especially today, that is vital!

Here are some tips on how to become a better recognizer of your employees:

1. Let employees know your expectations. Be specific. When leaders emphasize their expectations from the start, employees feel empowered to fulfill the expectations.

2. Make the recognition personal. Be specific about what they did right. Consider sending handwritten "thank you" cards to their homes so that families can know and support what your employees do.

3. Showcase individual efforts and accomplishments in newsletters, memos and e-mails. Don't recognize the same people repeatedly.

4. Recognize the behaviors that drive

your values. This allows you to showcase behaviors that support your values and takes the values from being "words on a piece of paper" to real motivators. This also helps others see the importance of your values.

5. Make a commitment to use a variety of opportunities to recognize your people.

Express recognition during meetings, in the hallway, or even the parking lot and restroom! Recognize employees for their hard work and awesome efforts. Let them know that they did a good job and that you are aware of what they are doing.

6. Identify how your employees prefer to be recognized. Some employees prefer to be recognized privately, while others prefer public recognition. Identify which form of recognition would be most impactful for each person and do it that way. Remember, it is *not what you want or like*, but rather what **they** prefer.

7. Encourage employees to recognize each other. Sometimes, peer feedback and recognition can be extremely meaningful. Recognize those who recognize others!

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Dear Dr. Mimi:

I tend to be high-strung, especially at work, and am often told that I need to “calm down.” A friend said that doing meditation can improve my abilities as well as my mental health. Is that true?

—*High-Strung*

Dear High-Strung:

Meditation has been proven to help people calm down and get focused. In addition, three of the benefits include clarity, resilience and compassion. These are important workplace skills, and they are also great leadership skills. There are a variety of types of meditation. Try more than one and choose what works best for you. One simple technique to calm down is to breathe in slowly through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth.

—*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:

Is it wrong to quit my job by just not showing up? I have only worked here for 6 weeks.
 —*Quitting*

Dear Quitting:

Yes. It is very wrong! It is best to talk to management and explain the reason for leaving this job. Offer to give a two-week notice. Supplying a two-week notice and talking to management shows you are professional and you honor your commitments and the company. If you leave on good terms, they will respect you ... and you never know who else they know.

—*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.