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The Corporate Communicator

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Hull & Associates

225 S. Swoope Ave., 210
Maitland, Florida 32751
Phone: (407) 628-0669
Website

www.HullOnline.com

Email:

DrMimi@Hullonline.com

Twitter: [DrMimi](#)

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Our Staff...

Dr. Mimi Hull

President
drmimi@hullonline.com
Lead Intern

Andrea Vogeler

Interns

Giselle Chaviano

Heather Guy

"What seems like a ripple today... can become the wave of the future."

-Unknown

Stop Miserable Meetings!

When people are told they need to attend meetings, their reactions tend to be similar - they hate them! So, what can you, as a leader, do to improve meetings? Here are 8 ways!

1. Start all meetings on time and end early. Don't wait for people who are late. If you do, you are punishing those who were on time! If you end early, you are a hero! If you consistently end meetings after the intended time, people dread attending them. Everyone's time is valuable.

2. Give everyone readable name tags at every meeting. This makes it easier for people who have difficulty memorizing names.

3. Provide refreshments. Consider providing snacks or have people bring

something that represents their cultural heritage.

4. Have each person say something. Break people into groups to discuss topics and report out.

5. Send an agenda in advance and suggest that everyone come prepared with questions.

6. Encourage questions. Ask: What questions do you have? ..rather than, Do you have any questions?

7. Allow time in the allotted time for socialization! People like to have relaxed conversations. If you end early they will stay and connect.

8. Make sure everyone is comfortable both physically and mentally and your meetings will be both desirable and productive!

Delegation Ideas!

Take time to define the task before you assign it. (*This is the hardest part of delegation!*) What do you want done? How does it need to look? When do you want it finished? What resources are available? How does the person access those resources? What will you take as signs of success? What pitfalls may occur? What safety nets are in place?

Match the person to the task. Give people assignments that will capitalize on their talents and capabilities and/or will teach them new skills that they can use in future assignments.

Build a person's confidence by assigning low-risk projects at first. Be there to answer questions, not just in the beginning, but when they are about a third of the way into it, which when they now know what questions they should

have asked in the beginning!

When communicating the assignment, use vocabulary that is easily understood. Avoid jargon and slang that is unfamiliar. Put things in writing as well as saying them verbally.

Be more concerned with what needs to be done and when it is due, than how it gets done. Let your people try new ways of accomplishing the task. They may find an easier, faster way of getting the result you want.

Don't be tempted to take over the project. The person performing the task may not do it the way you would, but that is how they learn.

Give the person credit when the assignment is complete. Be sure to let them know that you are appreciative of their work and if appropriate, also let others know how well the person performed.

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Facing Your Fears

We all have fears. Some people may show them more than others but all of us have had doubts, qualms, and uncertainties that can cause us angst. To grow, leaders need to recognize their fears and do something about them. *How can you do that?*

Take time to learn. Try new things. Ask people to share their expertise with you. Take a class. If you don't invest in yourself, why should anyone else? Our world is constantly changing and you need to grow to thrive in it.

Trust yourself. Recognize your strengths and build on them. You got to where you are because of your talents. You didn't get here by being immobile. Don't be afraid to take your next step.

Build relationships. Have people give you honest feedback and take it. Often, we listen to the negative and disregard

the positive. *If they say you are doing a great job, believe them!*

Make decisions. It is better to go with a decision than to live in limbo. Often your first response is your most accurate one. Your gut will talk with you. Be sure to listen.

Remember that things are correctable. Even if you make a mistake, it can most likely be fixed.

Be creative. Try new things and encourage others to do the same. Reward honest mistakes!

Ask for help and accept it when it is offered. People want to help and by accepting it, people feel empowered and you can focus on other things.

Accept that there are situations that truly are ambiguous and uncertain. It is not that you don't have the answer, it is the realization that there is no easy answer. ***So just do the best you can with what you go!***

Sympathy, An Important Feeling

It is important to pay attention to others and focus on others' needs, and perceptions. Along with empathy and compassion, there is another important emotion for gaining an understanding of people and it is sympathy.

What is sympathy? Sympathy is feeling sorry for another person's grief and troubles. Sympathy allows you to understand and connect to others, helps others understand their emotions, develops social skills, problem solve, and possibly helps you learn from someone else's experiences. Being empathetic (feeling what others feel) in the workplace sometimes may be perceived as being too "soft," as you are taking on their feelings. Caring and understanding do not have to be that complicated. Sympathy is simply feeling sorry for another person.

How does sympathy happen?

Spatial proximity - As humans, we tend to show more sympathy toward those to whom we are close. Close does not just mean just friendship. It also means geographically. We may not know the person but simply by being in proximity, we can experience sympathy whether it is

on the street, in a building, outdoors, or indoors. When we are close, we become aware of our surroundings and respond to them. When we are not geographically close, we may not notice that others are suffering and therefore not feel sympathetic to their situation.

Social proximity shows that we are more sympathetic to those we know personally or with whom we share likenesses and/or experiences. Knowing others allows us to have a baseline understanding of their emotions and how they react when they are upset, hurt, excited, or confused. We also show more sympathy to those who act similarly to the way that we do and/or if they share some particular attributes, experiences, or characteristics with us.

Compassion fatigue can be a negative effect of sympathy. When we take on others' emotions, we may start to feel physically and mentally exhausted. It is important to remember to separate your emotions from others when they are affecting you adversely. Remind yourself that what you are feeling are not your own emotions, nor are they your issues. They are someone else's. You can be sympathetic without taking on the pain!

Overcoming Imposter Syndrome

Have you ever received a job or an unexpected promotion? Were you scared that, in reality, you had no idea what you were doing, while your boss and coworkers assured you that you were doing great? If so, you may have been suffering from Imposter Syndrome.

Imposter Syndrome usually plagues high-achieving individuals and affects 8 of 10 individuals, primarily women, at some point in their life. If this is you and you hold on to these self-doubts, it can sabotage your work performance and productivity.

What can you do?

Accept praise and stop apologizing.

People who have imposter syndrome often struggle with accepting praise and tend to say they are sorry even when they haven't done anything wrong. Take the time to receive and appreciate the praise you often hear!

Be productive, not perfect. The root of Imposter Syndrome is often perfectionism. It is easy to get caught up in little details, constantly revise your work, lose sight of the bigger picture and even miss a

deadline. For this reason, it is much better to get something done and focus on productivity rather than perfection.

Accept yourself. It is easier to accept yourself when you practice self-compassion and get support from trusted individuals who will encourage you in times of insecurity. You don't have to be perfect to be great!

Empower yourself. Engage in activities that empower you and make you feel good about yourself. Recognize your achievements.

Celebrate successes. Acknowledge your successes and all the hard work you did to achieve them. Display the certificates, letters, trophies, and prizes that you have earned! This will help you to work through the distorted perceptions that you are unqualified.

Get help. If Imposter Syndrome is still affecting you, get help from a professional. Remember, feeling like a fraud often is just a thought, and with help, that thought can be changed and you can have a happier and even more successful life!

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 by
Dr. Mimi Hull

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**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I applied for a promotion in my company and made the mistake of telling my co-worker. I just learned that he has now applied. So far he has said nothing to me about it. Should I approach him and let him know that I don't appreciate his applying? I don't think that he would have applied, had I not said that I was.

—*Annoyed*

Dear Annoyed:

At this point, there is very little that you can do to change the situation. You are both candidates for the position and hopefully, the position will go to whoever is best suited. Rather than spending your time talking with him, use the time to prepare for your interview.

—*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.

 by
Dr. Mimi Hull

THE
corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

We are working remotely and one of my co-workers has had a new puppy for about two months. When we have our virtual meetings, the puppy is always on her lap and distracting her. I love dogs, but our meetings end up being so much longer now because of the puppy. Should I say something?

—*No Puppy Love*

Dear No Puppy:

Yes, if this has been going on for two months, it is time to say something. Let her know that because you like dogs, her having the puppy on the call is distracting to both of you. Let her know that you have noticed that the meetings are taking longer and that this has impacted your work. Ask that the puppy not be "in the picture" while you are meeting.

—*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.