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The Corporate Communicator

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Consider This ...

"No choice is a
choice too."

- unknown



Are You Too Nice?

Do you hesitate to complain, blame or critique others even when you know you are right? Is it easier to do it yourself than to ask for help? Do you hesitate to buck the system lest you be thought of as a trouble maker? If so, you may be too nice ... or a High S on the DiSC® profile. If you are holding criticism inside, you may be needlessly suffering or struggling with correctable situations. I know, you think that time will cure all ills, but that's not always the case. And I know, if you get to the "end of your

rope," there is no going back. You are done! You are not a pushover!

To help yourself and your organization, it is important to speak up even if it's a difficult subject. As an "S," you've earned the right to say "No." You have a lot to contribute and don't have to please everyone. Saying no or questioning a situation can lead to positive change. So gather your resources, plan your approach and share your thoughts and/or make your requests. Your strength is that you are typically friendly, calm and controlled so you will probably be able to deliver the message with tact and diplomacy. In fact, as a High S, you probably can tell someone to go to H___ in a way they look forward to the trip!

(Call us to find out if you are an "S!")

Why Making a Resolution Is NOT Enough!

As we begin 2013, it's time to reflect on last year's achievements and flops and set new goals. I know, you tried this before: You make a resolution, stick to it for a while and then break it! You get bored and discouraged as the excitement wears off. Keeping yourself motivated, committed and moving is often difficult.

Whether your goal for the New Year is a promotion at work or weight loss, the goal must be yours! You must believe there is something in it for you. As you enter the New Year, set personal and professional goals that motivate you and allow you to track your progress. Keep in mind that all goals should be S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and

Timely and add these simple steps:

1. Understand yourself.
2. Determine what you (really!) want.
3. Set your goal *with a measurable first step*. A goal without an action item is a dream!
4. Prepare a plan with lots of little steps that will help you feel like you're progressing.
5. Implement your plan and monitor/reward your progress ... and this is the most important part of your Goal Setting Plan:

6. **Decide in advance what you'll do if you get derailed.** In other words, if and when you get off track, write down what you will do to get back on track! Planning for the failure creates success.

Remember, failure isn't failure when you learn something and don't give up!
(From Dr. Mimi's Strategic Planning)

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How Do You Like to Work?

Knowing yourself and sharing this information can help you and your team.

When do you do your best work? It has been said that early risers get more done. However, if you can't function before 10, you can still use your time wisely. Once you know when you function best, create a schedule that works for you and stick to it. Schedule hard tasks when you have the most energy. Do things that give you energy during your "slow times."

Are you a visual or an auditory person?

Lists and spreadsheets help visual people stay organized. Auditory people tend to glaze over when there are too many charts and graphs. If you are auditory, ask people to give you a brief oral summary. If you are visual, ask for the summary in writing.

Do you prefer electronic communication or in-person

conversations? Email is a great tool but you lose tone of voice and body language so often messages get misinterpreted. Consider holding a meeting periodically to share complex information. You'll avoid writing numerous emails answering the same questions for each person.

If you tend to visit an employee's workspace rather than sending email or texts, you reap the benefits of one-on-one communication. However, that can lead to extraneous conversations that can waste your time and the time of others. Stay on track! Keep visits short and develop ways to excuse yourself, without insulting the other person.

If you know your style, both you and the people you work with can be more productive and happy!

(From Building Better Teams by Dr. Mimi Hull)



Male vs. Female Leadership Styles

While both men and women are equally capable of leadership, they are inherently different in their leadership styles. Understanding gender differences improves communication and productivity.

Men:

- Men often prefer "male-oriented" settings (math, science and law enforcement)
- Men are more direct, critical and speak with authority
- Men work more independently
- Men trust their logic when making decisions
- Men are more confident with their work
- Men use less positive reinforcement

- Men like to create competition
- Men are often the formal leaders
- Men are more accepting of women leaders

Women:

- Women prefer "female-oriented" settings (health and education)
- Women enjoy mentoring and training others
- Women trust their instincts when making decisions
- Women discuss and review work with colleagues
- Women are more nurturing
- Women are more critical of other women
- Women use positive reinforcement and rewards more than men
- Women lead democratically, share information and promote cooperation and collaboration

Often men are seen as more powerful leaders than women. However, underutilization of resources are wasteful, irrational and damaging to an organization's profitability and competitiveness. When leaders of an organization include both men and women, the organization benefits.



Board Retreat Don'ts:

Having facilitated literally dozens of retreats, I have learned some important "Don'ts" that make a huge difference.

1. Don't plan a retreat without a full commitment. It is important that as you plan it, everyone is committed to having the retreat.

2. Don't wait until the last minute to find a facilitator. Your facilitator can help you with so many aspects of the retreat. Engage her early! Pre-work is important!

3. Don't plan a retreat without objectives. One of the first questions that I ask is "What do you want to accomplish at the retreat?" Do you want to refocus on fundamentals like the mission, vision and values? Is this a time for strategic planning and/or to revisit strategic goals? Do you need the time to strengthen trust and relationships among members and/or

unite a divided executive team? These are but a few of the goals that can be accomplished with a well-run Board retreat.

4. Don't give excessive pre-retreat homework. If you give people too much to do before the retreat, they often won't do it. If the member does not do the homework, there is a greater chance they will find a last-minute excuse to not attend the retreat, so it is a double loss!

5. Don't have an inflexible schedule. Sometimes things come up at the retreat that are worth spending on ... then and there. I have found that it is important to build in some time flexibility so that the Board members can deal with worthwhile spontaneous issues.

6. Don't forget fun! Fun is important. Fun builds relationships. There is a difference between fun and silly activities. A good facilitator builds in fun opportunities that can also serve a purpose. And remember ... fun is why people will attend in the future!

(From the seminar "Creating Successful Board Retreats" by Dr. Mimi Hull)

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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.

Contact her for a FREE consultation!

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THE corporate couch



Dear Dr. Mimi:

I have had it with this younger generation. They are egotistical, coddled and entitled, and when 5 p.m. comes, they are out the door. It is "all about me" and, quite frankly, I am sick and tired of their ego. On one hand, they want to have entry jobs as the boss, and on the other, they want to be shown how to do every little thing. Please let me know what they bring to the table, because at this point, I am not seeing it!

— *Older and Wiser*

Dear O and W:

There is an old adage that says, "Before you can be older and wiser, you have to be young and stupid." We all wanted what the millennials want; the difference is that they ask for it, or should I say, demand it!

There really are advantages of having an age-diverse workforce. For most organizations, millennials are becoming an ever-growing part of your customer base. By having them on your staff, you get to learn what's important to that generation and become more customer savvy and earn a marketing advantage.

Millennials are not really into the 9 to 5. In fact, they are more of a 24/7 type of worker. They are attached to their phones, not their desks, and as their employer, you can reap the benefits. They do not mind working from home at all hours of the day and night and are not upset if you call before or after hours. With so many technological opportunities, working remotely can be a real advantage to both you and your employee.

Speaking of technology, millennials have a natural facility with technology. The advances in technology are coming at an ever-quicken pace, and today's organizations have no real choice about embracing it. The good news is that if you are willing to learn, they are willing to teach.

Last, but not least, they have a great deal of energy. If you let them know that what they are doing is meaningful and will help their careers, they will embrace the challenge with eagerness and excitement. Before long, you will start to not only put up with the millennials, but also will actually seek to have them as part of your team.

— *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.

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THE corporate couch



Dear Dr. Mimi:

When can I expect to get a raise or at least an acknowledgement that I am doing a good job? This is my first real job, and I have been here just over a year and no one has said anything about me, my work or my salary. I often stay late and go beyond what I was originally hired to do. The residents seem to really like me, but I am not sure my boss knows or even cares. Would it be improper to ask how I am doing? I really do like what I am doing but feel like I need to know if she does as well. Can I ask for a raise? Will that get her attention?

— *Losing Interest*

Dear Losing Interest:

Before you ask for a raise, ask for a performance review. In preparation for your review, you might want to compile a list of your accomplishments. Let your employer know that it is important for you to get feedback on what you do. Just like it is essential to check out how you look in a mirror, it is vital to check out how you are doing via a performance review. Raises should not necessarily be tied to length of service but should be linked to quality work. If you get a good performance review, then you can ask for a salary review. This is a nicer way of asking for a raise. If you truly feel you are overlooked and underpaid, there is always the possibility of your looking for employment elsewhere where you will get the recognition you need.

— *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.