

Simply Practical

February 2005

Volume 5 Issue 2

SYMPRAXIS, LLC
MAXIMIZING YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Take Action Before Hostility Festers

We've all heard of road rage and air rage, but the newest trend seems to be desk rage.

Hostility in the workplace must be dealt with immediately. If it's not, the results can be disastrous.

Hostility can arise when complaints are ignored. Managers stall, thinking a disagreement will blow over.

Meanwhile, employees grow resentful of management's perceived neglect. Even when a situation doesn't blow up, the damage to workplace morale and productivity can be harmful. Take these steps to defuse workplace hostility:

- **Interview those who are directly involved in a dispute, as well as any witnesses.** These interviews, which should be done within a day or so of the complaint, are critical in gathering information. It's important to ask open-ended questions, not assuming anything.

Continued on page two – Take Action



How are you addressing workplace hostility?

Formal Leadership

Part 1 of 5

This is part one of a five part series on Formal Leadership. Each concept works alone, however; fits nicely with the other articles.

A Concept of Leadership

Throughout the years, volumes have been written which list and elaborate upon the characteristics of leaders. You need only check the literature on the subject to discover that there are as many characteristics, and combinations of characteristics, as there are leaders. With all their differences however, leaders do have some fundamental similarities.

- ◆ Successful leaders have mastered the art of self-leadership and authenticity. Authenticity implies genuineness, reliability, and trustworthiness.
- ◆ Successful leaders have taken the time to crystallize a personal vision of the future, which will become the foundation or cornerstone for a shared vision. They are able to attract as well as inspire commitment among the people whose collective effort will make this vision a reality.
- ◆ Successful leaders understand how to align and maximize resources to realize the vision. The leader's role is to create alignment between vision, strategy, structure, processes, and people with focus on attracting and maintaining a loyal customer base.

Continued on page two - Leadership

Inside This Issue

1. *Take Action Before Hostility Festers*
1. *Formal Leadership – Part 1 of 5*
2. *The Impact of Excuse Making*
3. *One Minute Ideas*
3. *Web Site of the Month*
4. *Get More Done Between Flights*

All articles, quotes, and material in this newsletter are copyrighted. © 2005. No part can be reproduced in any form without specific written consent from copyright holder(s). All rights reserved worldwide.

Continued from page one – Take Action

Often what appears to be black-and-white can have many shades of gray.

- **Keep the focus on the facts.** An employee may use the interview as a chance to harm the reputation of another worker. If an employee starts offering opinions, ask, “Is there an incident that you personally witnessed?”
- **Bring up contradictions.** When stories conflict, ask the people involved what explanations they have for such different stories.
- **Keep detailed records.** Write down the names of the people you interviewed and what each person said, with as much specific information as possible. Ask employees to sign and date a written statement to ensure accuracy.
- **Take action.** If it is clear that misconduct did take place, then discipline the offending employee. You’ll only create cynicism and further hostility if you investigate a complaint and then fail to act on it.

Adapted from *Good Handling of Complaints Lessens Workplace Violence Risk*, Anita Bruzzese, Gannett News Service, www.gannett.com.

The Impact of Excuse Making

Explanation: When candidates make excuses they are blaming external sources for their lack of results - their boss, company, competitors, co-workers, etc.

Impact: Individuals that make excuses won't change (read as improve) until they take responsibility for their results. This means you won't be able to hold them accountable until they stop making excuses, a task that can be easy or difficult, depending more on your toughness than upon their compliance. It also helps if you've already stopped accepting excuses from your existing salespeople.

An individual with Excuse Making, when recommended for hiring, is someone that you can confidently hire if you are certain that the problem can be eliminated. This weakness is never responsible for a 'do not hire' recommendation.

Continued from page one - Leadership

As a leader, you must be many things to many people. First, you must have the capacity to create a compelling vision. If your vision is to excite people, it must take them to new levels of achievement. Then, you must be able to develop and implement the strategies that will guide people toward the vision, analyze the alternatives and possibilities, and set goals that will drive the organization to sustained success. To do this will require that you are able to function successfully in several areas:

- ♦ *A Visionary*
- ♦ *A Coach* (part two)
- ♦ *A Mentor* (part three)
- ♦ *A Director* (part four)

The Leader as Visionary

Leaders who are able to involve people in realizing a compelling vision provide a beacon for the future and a standard of excellence. Vision plays an important role in developing a winning organization. A compelling vision can motivate and empower everyone in an organization to seek higher levels of performance and achievement. People want to do a good job because realizing the vision is important to them. A compelling vision is inspiring. It is energizing. It provides an image of a better future that causes people to drive themselves to higher levels of achievement.

In the final analysis, you can't really force people to be motivated. You can only create an environment in which people are motivated. A vision will release creative energies to successfully attain the desired results. It provides a reason for change and exploring possibly uncharted waters with enthusiasm. It gives meaning to work. It encourages innovation. Individuals recognize the importance of their personal contribution to the overall whole. Vision helps everyone realize that their best interests are served by the success of the entire organization.



Continued on page three - Leadership

Continued from page two - Leadership

The key to realizing a vision is strategizing and planning. Your written strategic plan should be communicated throughout the organization to develop buy-in and ownership. You must clearly define your key business indicators, those few vital goals that you want your organization to achieve. These will provide the focus and direction.

What do you want to accomplish? Are key goals clear to everyone in the organization? Have they been translated into specific action steps that people can (and know how to) accomplish? Does Senior Management “walk the talk?” Are vision, values, goals, and actions consistent? It begins at the top. People must know by your actions, as well as your words, how committed you are to the values, vision, and goals of the organization. You must set the example and the standards, and communicate your vision to others. Walking the talk must be much more than a trite cliché. It must be one of your core values.

Our next issue will discuss the ‘Leader as Coach’ (part two)

The last article in this series will be the concept of Authority and Power of the Leader. If you have any questions about an article, or you have missed any of the articles in this series, contact us today.

Sympraxis, LLC 703-522-2795 or E-mail: wayneh@sympraxis.com

Adapted from *Leadership Development*, Resource Associates Corporation. All rights reserved worldwide. This material shall not be copied by any means without the express written consent of Resource Associates Corporation. 740.824.4842.



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Contribute In Meetings

Do some of your employees contribute more at staff meetings, while quieter members hold back?

To achieve more balance, inform staffers in advance that you’ll be directing specific questions to them.

Once you’ve given quieter employees fair warning, call on them.

Games People Play

You can crack down on computer game playing in your office and still maintain morale.

Set up “games-only” computers in the lounge or lunchroom for staff members to use on their own time.

Web Site Of The Month!



USAID is the U.S. government agency responsible for economic and humanitarian assistance around the world. Because it is a government agency, they do not accept donations. However, they work together with many organizations to provide assistance to the victims of the earthquake/tsunami. You may choose to contribute to any of the relief agencies listed on the web site, all of whom are working with contributions from the general public.

Check it out at: www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/tsunami/ngolist.html

Don't miss next month's issue. Subscribe now!

Simply Practical

5716 8th Road North
Arlington, VA 22205



Tel: 703-522-2795

Fax: 703-522-0530

E-mail:

wayneh@sympraxis.com

Visit Our Web Site at:

www.sympraxis.com

12 Issues For Only \$97

Get More Done Between Flights

Look for more Wi-Fi Internet access at airports. Nineteen of the top 50 U.S. airports either have it or are installing it and another six are now accepting bids to get it. Airline carriers such as American, Delta, United and US Airways are also offering it free in airport lounges.

For Chuck Blaisdell, a regional minister for the Christian Church of Northern California and Nevada, the proliferation of wireless access points means he can log on between frequent flights and stay on top of his correspondence. That way, "I don't have 100 or 200 e-mails waiting for me when I get back to a regular connection," he says.

Yet be aware of fees, because rates change based on where you log on and how long you use the service.

For example, software consultant Jeremy Coyle based in Hoboken, N.J., always logs on free when he is in a Continental Airlines' lounge. However, he refuses to pay a daily fee if he's in an airport not served by Continental. "Seven dollars and ninety-nine cents per session is difficult to justify if you're only going to use it for one hour," he says.



Maximizing Your Bottom Line

Sympraxis, LLC 703-522-2795 or E-mail: wayne@sympraxis.com

Simply Practical

*A publication of Sympraxis, LLC
5716 8th Road North
Arlington, VA 22205*

When Finished Route To:

*Enjoy your issue of 'Simply Practical'
Please send any comments to us! Sympraxis, LLC
Maximizing Your Bottom Line
Visit Our Web Site at: www.sympraxis.com*