



Avoiding Communication “Ills”

Today, IT Managers need excellent communication skills. Being asked to do more with less, dealing with the stresses of downsizing and tighter budgets, managers need their communications up and down the corporate ladder to be effective—regardless the listener’s own communication type. Keying into the listeners type is what can make the difference between getting your message across and getting it across well.

The Four Styles

The first type is the “Aggressor-Asserter”. These are your CEOs in attitude. They are very competitive, goal-oriented, demanding, task-oriented and fast-paced. To these people, ‘time is money and money is time.’ You know where you stand since they are blunt and direct in their communication. Their biggest fear is losing control and they ask the “What” questions. To effectively communicate with the “Aggressor-Asserter”, you want to be brief, concise, provide options and pick up your pace. Do not provide details on problems or solutions.

The second type is the “Socializer”. These individuals are charismatic, enthusiastic, persuasive, lively, loud, talkative, friendly, people-oriented and very social. They are also visual and creative. Their biggest fear is social rejection and they ask the “Who” questions. To effectively communicate with the “Socializer”, you want to be friendly, allow time to socialize and pick up your pace. If you must provide details, make sure that the details are written and documented.

The third type is the “Mediator.” These individuals are calm, level-headed, great listeners, team-oriented, introverted and loyal. They make decisions in a consensus manner. “Mediators’ like to marinate on questions—you will not get an answer immediately. They dislike conflict so they will internalize and tolerate it. As a result, this internalization builds until they explode. Their biggest fear is loss of stability and they ask the “How” questions. To effectively communicate with the “Mediator”, you want to be patient and logical; discuss how the solution will benefit them and involve them in the planning process if possible.

The fourth type is the “Analyzer”. These individuals are meticulous, detail-oriented, introverted and task-oriented. These individuals can be considered perfectionists and they are suspicious of others. They may answer a question with a question. Their biggest fear is criticism of work and they ask the “Why” questions. To effectively communicate with the “Analyzer”, you must be organized, logical and support your position using facts. Make sure that each point is understood before moving to the next point.

Conclusion

Communicating effectively with the various types is an art. Understanding how styles can create harmony and understanding or conflict and confusion is a critical element in the success of IT leaders and managers. It is important for you to develop your ADAPTITUDE. When you are able to recognize the various styles and adjust your approach, it will make your IT management life much easier and help you avoid common communication “ills”.

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