

Wroten & Associates

March 2015 Leadership Insight

Delivering Unwelcome News: Communicating Under Pressure

"Communicate unto the other person that which you would want him to communicate unto you if your positions were reversed." --- Aaron Goldman

No matter what your role may be, you've probably had to deliver some form of unwelcome news. The way in which you communicate during these tense situations can affect your career in many ways and therefore it is of the utmost importance to communicate the news in a professional and effective manner.

There are many reasons you may need to deliver unwelcome news for example, telling your team that they are going to be given more responsibility without a pay increase, telling employees they may not be getting the pay increase they thought they were getting, or telling employees about upcoming lay-offs. To effectively communicate under pressure it is important to know how to deliver the message honestly, respectfully and empathically. Be aware that the way you communicate unwelcome news may have a direct impact on how the receiver perceives and reacts to the situation. Research has shown, from the receiver's perspective, the most important factors in the effective communication of unwelcome news are: the news-giver's attitude, the clarity of the message and the news-giver's ability to answer questions to help clarify and assist the receiver's understanding.

If you are the news-giver there most likely will be tension and stress involved so it is important to take time to focus and think about what you want to say and how you will say it. By speaking in a calm and clear manner you will be demonstrating that you have thought out your message and this will help you not only contain your emotions, but help minimize the emotions of the receiver. Be prepared to answer questions and have several positive solutions that may be presented to remedy the situation, and if possible, ask for suggestions.

Pay special attention to the setting and the timing. If possible, always choose a private setting unless you need to deliver the message to a group. Privacy allows the other person the freedom to respond and cope in a way that sustains their dignity. Give yourself sufficient time, ideally earlier in the day, so that you have an opportunity to meet individually with those who may need additional support. When the time comes to deliver the message be sure to be sincere and compassionate. Take the time to validate the other person's feelings by showing or stating that you understand. This acknowledges that they have been heard. Always treat everyone involved with kindness and respect. Applying these beneficial methods of effectively communicating unwelcome news will set you apart as a leader!

Wishing you an insightful month!

Positively provided by: Wroten & Associates, Marilynn W. Allemann, LCSW, CPC

SAVE THE DATE

Wroten & Associates' 7th Annual LTC Conference
May 28, 2015 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Disney's Grand Californian Anaheim, CA
(Registration opens in April)