

Communication Is the Most Important Asset On the Balance Sheet

Renowned Business Communication Expert And Bestselling Author, Dianna Booher, Offers Strategies Every Leader Needs To Know In New Book

August 15, 2007 (FPRC) -- Why is the lament, "There's just no communication around here," heard, whether it's a start-up business or a multinational corporation? Businesses believe they are communicating well with their customers. Bosses insist they are giving explicit instructions to their employees. Coworkers think they are sharing all the information they have with their colleagues.

"Not so," says bestselling author Dianna Booher, a pioneer in increasing productivity through effective communication. The lack of straightforward, clear conversation is to blame. In her new book, *THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY: 10 Communication Strategies Every Leader Needs to Know* (McGraw-Hill/June 2007), Booher tackles the issues of when to communicate, how to do it, and what to say to coworkers, employees, managers, and the more public. She argues that businesses delude themselves by thinking that the dissemination of information – whether on the Internet, through teleconferences, or in meetings – is the same as substantive communication. Booher emphasizes, "Information is not communication."

Based on her own work with, and observations of, hundreds of businesses, Dianna Booher analyzes what is effective – stressing that honesty, clarity, consistency, and transparency are the keys to effective communication. The ten strategies she reveals in *THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY* include:

Is It Correct? – Booher counsels to tell it like it is. No clichés, no lies, and no exaggerations. From the C-suite to the mailroom, truth-telling is key to productivity.

Is It Complete? – People often give incomplete information because they're too busy to take the time to do it right and don't anticipate the ramifications. Whether addressing employees in the midst of a takeover or consumers during a product recall, Booher advises providing complete details in crisis and everyday situations. And the worse the news, the quicker it needs to be shared.

Is It Clear? – Booher says be specific. Speak and write in simple, plain English. Muddling information creates a sense of phoniness and insincerity, and in some cases foreboding or intimidation.

Is It Purposefully Unclear? – Booher reveals the five communications styles that limit leaders' effectiveness, at best, and create a climate of paranoia at worst.

Is It Consistent? – Checking details, enforcing company rules and policies, and following through with rewards or disciplinary action are essential for communication in the workplace. Consistent, clearly stated guidelines create a level playing field for all employees.

Are You Credible? – Booher identifies the five things that contribute or detract from a person's credibility: the look, the language, the likeability factor, character, and competence. From dress and grooming to humor and humility to correctly tendering an apology – all aspects of credibility are addressed.

Are You Concerned And Connected? – Leaders who show they care about people make a connection. Whether dealing with employees, suppliers, or customers, Booher advises, “Never underestimate the power of engagement.”

Is It Current? – Speed is the new measure of quality. With one-hour dry-cleaning, thirty-minute pizza delivery, two-minute Lasik surgery, and bloggers protesting air strikes before the planes land, no one wants to wait until tomorrow to find out who the new boss is. Speed of communication is essential in bringing scattered work groups up-to-date on new projects, diffusing rumors, and helping to maintain morale company-wide.

Does Your Communication Make YOU Look Competent? – Leaders need to know what impression the people who represent them – receptionists, salespeople, and the company spokesperson – are creating. An added bonus of this section is Booher’s list of topics to never put in an email.

Is It Circular? – Booher reveals why circular communication – going up and down the management chain, across departmental lines, from the day shift to the night shift – should happen routinely, but doesn’t. She offers recommendations on the best ways to institute cross-functional communication in all areas of business.

“Communication is the most vital skill in job-interviewing success. The most frequent complaint employees cite as their reason for leaving an organization. The biggest challenge leaders experience in times of change and upheaval. The most critical component of great customer service,” says Booher. “It’s all about communication. And success in business is all about how well you communicate – to your coworkers and customers.” THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY will help all leaders and businesspeople get their message across more effectively.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dianna Booher is the founder of Booher Consultants (www.booher.com), a leading communication training firm. Her clients include IBM, Lyondell Chemical, PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, Lockheed Martin, and JP Morgan Chase. The author of more than forty books and a frequent guest on television and radio programs around the country, she is an award-winning professional speaker and has been inducted into the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame. Booher Consultants is based in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex.

Contact Information

For more information contact Glen Sheppard of Booher Consultants, Inc. (<http://www.booher.com>)
817-318-6000

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