

Teamwork Training, 5/14/11

Application Review

— Pastor Paine

Law 13 was the law of identity. If your values and the team's values don't match, you have a problem. Who has an item from the application that you'd like to dwell on?

- Integrity: be a person of your word.
- Harmony: you accomplish a lot more when you're in agreement.

We've all got personal agendas at one time or another, but we've got to make sure that the personal agenda doesn't interfere with the team agenda. If it does, we've got to remind them of the team agenda.

- Reliability: being someone people can count on.

What law was "countability"? Law 9.

I'm going to jump to the end of the application: Answer the following five questions:

1. How do these values serve as a glue for my organization?
2. How do these values serve as a . . .
3. How do these values serve as a type of measurement?
4. How do these values give direction and guidance to my team?
5. Is our organization known by these values?

Finally, place this question in a place where you can see it every day. Are my values and the team values the same?

Exercise

— Rod Williams

We've got a great lesson planned. Right now, Todd will be a team captain, and Jeff will be another team captain.

— Todd Morgan and Jeff Linger

(Todd passes out bags of colored plastic toy soldiers and makes motions with his hands in the shape of a square. Nobody seems to understand. Finally, Jeff speaks:)

Stand all your soldiers up in a square. We've got to use all the men. It can be any size square. Large or compact, it doesn't matter. And if you have a man who is missing a leg, just lay him down in the square. It doesn't matter how they're standing, as long as they're in a square.

(First team calls out, "Okay, we're done!" Todd just stands back and watches, while Jeff continues to call out directions.)

Jeff: Great. Now switch colors.

Todd: Great job, you guys. You're done. You did good.

Jeff: You've got about a minute left in this exercise.

— Rod Williams

All right. What were the feelings when Todd came around pointing? Did any have an understanding of what was going on?

- He was trying to communicate without words.

Was it confusing?

- Actually, I thought it was fun.
- It was different.
- It was a little frustrating, because he was trying to give us direction, and we were trying to understand, but it wasn't working.

Okay, for the team that did have direction, how did it go?

- It went good.

This exercise was designed to show what would happen when you have good communication and when you didn't have good communication. It wasn't a win-lose scenario. Give yourselves a hand.

Now, I'd like to invite Debbie Paine to teach the Law of Communication.

The Law of Communication

— Debbie Paine

We're going to talk about how communication affects your team and how it moves forward. I think they chose me to teach because I talk a lot, but communication is more than just words. If you want to create positive change within your team, it is critical that you have good communication. Your team could be your family, your job, your ball team, your ministry, or any other group of people. Your team needs communication all the time, not just at monthly meetings.

The two words Information and Communication are often used
Information is giving out; Communication is getting through.

You can be giving out all kinds of information, but if the words you speak aren't getting through to people, then communication isn't happening. Have you ever had someone talk to you, and after a few minutes your attention was entirely elsewhere? That person wasn't communicating to you.

Follow the puzzle principle: Less time for less pieces.

If you have three thoughts and three ideas, don't take an hour to tell about them. Use the amount of time for the amount of information you have.

Repeat the message.

If you have a fifteen minute lesson, you should repeat your main point at least eight times. An old preacher said, "When I have a message for the congregation, I start out by saying 'This is what I'm going to tell you.'"

Use the "2x4" rule.

The first two minutes determine the success of the next four. If you have been talking to your team for two minutes, and their eyes are open but nobody's there, then it's time to shift focus.

Avoid the hammock speech.

Avoid being strong at the ends and soft in the middle. If you have a strong beginning and a strong ending, but a weak middle, then cut out the middle. Start with a strong beginning, and then end it.

Ask the writer's question.

When they get to the end of the page, will they turn the page? If you're boring your audience, it's time to stop talking.

Place a "10" on your teammate's heads.

You will communicate with people based on your belief in them. If you view someone as a "2" and not a "10", then you can come off as being arrogant or condescending. You'll treat them like you don't value them. If you see them as a "10", you'll treat them not as they are, but as they can become.

Live the message

People do what they see. Don't try to export information and values that you don't believe and do yourself.

Keep it simple

Have you ever listened to someone and their talk was just so in-depth that you felt like you were stone-stupid? If you're communicating with your team, you need to keep it simple, so it's easy for everyone to understand.

Create a communication environment.

It's important for the team leader to keep an open-door policy, so that team members can feel like they can share their ideas. As team leaders, if we're not learning, then we can become stale. If we don't listen to the team members, we stifle their creativity. They become "yes-men", just doing what they're told and no more.

Have you ever been on a team where the communication was really poor?

- My boss rules by intimidation.
- I use to have a boss that would question me three or four times a day, but wouldn't pay attention to the answers.
- I had a boss once who never said anything but "Step it up a notch," and "Hurry up; I want to get out of here."

When communication is poor, people tend to shut down. Sometimes people don't even know what the agenda is; they don't know what they're working for. Have you ever worked on a project, and you found out in a meeting that

someone else was doing the same thing? That's happened to me before, and my reaction was, "My time is precious. How could this happen?" It's important for people to feel good about the time they're giving.

This was a memo that was sent throughout the ranks of a college.

(Halley's comet memo)

Did you ever play the "telephone" game as a kid? Communication is really important, and when you pass on communication, it's important to keep it all straight.

Do any of you have examples of anyone past or present of someone who was a great communicator? Martin Luther King was a great communicator.

- I enjoyed hearing President Obama's speech. It was so clear.
- I think Pastor Ulysse is an excellent speaker.

Did you pay Clarence to say that?

- He gets up there and brings a fresh perspective to his sermons.
- Obviously, I think Pastor Davis, our founding pastor, was a great communicator.
- I had a department head who regularly rounded up the troops and told us what was going on, and received input from everyone.

What are some of the communication techniques that you use with your team, and what makes them work?

- I listen. I let people use me as a sounding board.

Do you feel that makes your team stronger?

- I ask questions.
- Everybody has a voice in our meetings.
- We do vision casting so we don't lose our focus. We set up strategies and goals throughout the year, making sure that it's all doable while we're busy with other projects.

What's the best way to make an announcement to your team?

- For some, I do it by email; for others by phone.
- I like sending a text.

It's important as a leader to find out how your team communicates. If my mom is on a team, she doesn't do Internet; she barely does cellphone.

John Maxwell gives some guidelines for communication:

Leader to teammates

Be consistent. It's so frustrating when a leader is governed by emotions. Be consistent and make up your mind.

Be clear. Your team can't do what you want to do if you're not clear.

Be courteous.

Teammates to leader

Don't be a yes-man, but be respectful. That will make it easier for others to also provide input.

Teammates to teammates

Be supportive. If we all focus on what we can give rather than what we can take, it will help the whole team move forward.

Stay current. Don't re-hash old topics.

Teammates to public

Remember the three "r"s.

- Receptive
- Responsive
- Realistic

The most important quality that a team can have is unity. If there's not unity, you just make your team look bad.

It takes interaction to fuel action.

Teamwork connection

Are you supportive of everyone? To be a better team member, you need to support everyone, not just your friends.

Do you hold grudges against team members? That can grow roots that dig down deep, and even if you try to hide it, the other team members can feel it. If you have that situation, it's your responsibility to get it straightened out. Don't wait for the team leader to take control.

Becoming a better team leader

As a leader, your communication must be consistent, clear, and courteous. It's critical to be a good listener. When the leader doesn't listen, they stop gaining wisdom. When you shut that door as a leader, you block off creativity. They stop hearing what's not being said. Have you ever been in a room where nobody is saying anything, but there's a screaming communication going on?

If you don't listen when your teammates try to bring things to you, at some time they'll stop. They'll leave the team and go somewhere else. People need to be involved in things they feel a part of. Charlene talked a lot last week about having value. As a team leader, it's important to realize that your team members have value. If you recognize that value, then they'll make you look good.

Ultimately, poor listening leads to hostility and breakup of communication.

I'd like to finish with these points:

- Keep it simple.
- Repeat your message.
- Don't expect your team to do anything you're not doing.
- If you've lost them after two minutes, stop talking.

— Pastor Paine

How many of you have felt the dramatic difference between your point being heard and your point not being heard? It's not a slight difference. Everybody's point is valid, in the right context. But sometimes there is a time and a place for it. And sometimes you have to say, "That's a valid point, but let's talk about it later." And do that, because if people don't feel their point is being heard, they'll shut down. People have to know that their opinion is being received, even if it isn't being acted on. Sometimes they have the right idea at the wrong time, and if we shut them down, they won't be around to give us the right idea at the right time.