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## I. Huddle Up -- COMMUNICATION THEORY 101



It has been said that words hold the power of life and death. The more I coach leaders I am convinced this to be true-emotionally, culturally, mentally.

You may be like most leaders, who do not know how to use their words to build others up, address conflict proactively and to communicate what is in their heart for the people they supervise. What is the result? A great many thoughts of gratitude, admiration, and appreciation get locked up in your head and never leave your mouth!

What blocks the communication? Maybe you're too busy and on to the next thing. Maybe you feel unable to formulate the right words and don't want to look foolish. Perhaps you have a deep sense of inadequacy. Whatever it is, we must identify the block. Why? Because, what happens on the other end of your silence is not what you might think or want.

You see, people fill in silence with their own story. Lack of information communicates more than you could ever imagine. Believe me, *more than you could ever imagine*.

### HIDING BEHIND THE PODIUM

For example, consider the lack of having a performance review. Have you thought about what it communicates to the employee who has to wait for feedback on their job, or never receives? Or, how about not acknowledging a wedding, anniversary, birthday? I know of a CEO who knew one of his top executives was celebrating a big anniversary. Not only did he not send a card or attend the event, he never even verbally acknowledged it. What do you think was or was not communicated to this valued teammate? If you can't answer...ask them?

You may be a wonderful communicator at the podium, with PowerPoint, on conference calls, or in front of your board of directors. Yet those closest to you don't feel valued or needed. Instead of showing your sincere appreciation and respect, you hide in your next safe task. Why aren't you more effective with your individual staff and team members? (And spouse and children?) Why do successful people so often fail at their closest relationships?

### WORDS OF LIFE

I'm not trying to be your shrink. But I want to suggest to you that communication failure has to do with your unwillingness, and perhaps unawareness, to be honest and real with yourself. I think it's okay for us to be honest that leaders who are not good communicators usually had a parent (often a dad) who either was abusive with their words, or more commonly did not speak the words every child needs to hear.

So what does this have to do in the workplace? Sorry to say, *everything*. I'm not trying to send you all to therapy, I'm just offering some truth and awareness so you can do something different after you've read this. What? Use your words to breathe life into those working and living next to you.

Let's be realistic. For some people, words come readily and flow off their tongue. For others it is unnatural and awkward and hard. The problem is not lack of skill. (That is forgivable.) It is lack of willingness to venture into a place of potential exposure and weakness. Leaders of organizations are given training on financial reports, and experience teaches them their unique tactical advantage. But the art of influence and caring for people-that is not something you can learn in isolation by reading a book or Googling leadership. You learn it by self-discovery, courage and authenticity.

### **L.O.V.E. PROJECT**

As we continue with the theme of BE G.R.E.A.T in 2008, find a way to express your gratitude to someone. I am calling it the 2008 L.O.V.E. Project: Lead Others, Value Excellence.

Speak your words, write your words, use your words or one of the other love languages to communicate your care, your value, and your delight in those around you.

**Right now**, look up and write down the first two names that come to your head... Now act on that and communicate to them how much you appreciate and respect them. It will only take a minute! The ROI is priceless. You may not need the words yourself, but do others around you?

Remember: It is way easier to manage with tasks, theory, and tactics than successfully lead in the art of influence. When a leader has trust and relationship with their team through good communication, their role becomes the coach of the team who communicates guidance, feedback and encouragement while offering gifts of vision, strategy and experience. Doesn't that sound like what you want?

**Your Coach,**

*Shandel*

P.S. If you've been a reader for a while, you may recall my newsletter on the five "love languages." According to Dr. Gary Chapman, people hear love and care in five distinct ways. A good leader will figure out which language their people best hear, and speak and adapt their behavior to meet that need. I did a [newsletter article](#) on it a few years ago, and I teach to it teams in development. Check it out on my blog at [www.shandel.com](http://www.shandel.com).

## **II. Pep Talk -- Monthly Quotes**

*It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently.* -- Warren Buffett

*Language does have the power to change reality. Therefore, treat your words as the mighty instruments they are--to heal, to bring into being, to remove, as if by magic, the terrible violations of childhood, to nurture, to cherish, to bless, to forgive--to create from the whole cloth of your soul, true love.* -- Daphne Rose Kingma

*Words can destroy. What we call each other ultimately becomes what we think of each other, and it matters.* - Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

*Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them.* -- Lady Bird Johnson

*The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.* -- William James

## **III. MVP Award -- Teams Taking It To The Next Level: Point to Point Transportation**



*Last year, I worked with such a fun dedicated team and as we met each quarter I saw not only the entire team shift, but each individual raise the bar in their own personal lives. At the annual retreat last month, I was in tears as the group shared their growth stories of 2007. They must be celebrated I screamed! So it is with great joy and pride I introduce to you this*

*month's MVP. Point to Point Transportation is a Seattle based company with sales of \$7 million that specializes in diverse marketing shipments, such as trade shows, product launches, and sales seminars. I could go on and on about the integrity and vision this company has demonstrated and lived because they won my heart. I will now let them win yours with their story and a special thanks to [Anita Palmer](#) for helping us with her editing skills. Here is the [point-to-point](#) team story told to you from the inspiring leads Dan and Kristine!*

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From P2P president Dan Eales-Rogers: "I didn't like my job anymore. That's when I knew things had to change. I started the company in 2003 by purchasing a division of the company that our core team used to work for. Our team had been together since 1997 and some of the members since the early eighties. We started out with a lot of hope and passion and a track record for success. We had great growth the first couple of years. Then, as all humans will, we started to have some issues that we attributed to normal growing pains."

From Kristine Peterson, P2P general manager: "Through the organization's growth we realized we had a trust issue within our team. After meeting Shandel, Dan knew that we should start working with her to help take us to the next level of growth a bit more pain-free. Shandel started building the foundation of trust one piece at a time."

From Dan again: "We brought in Shandel, and discovered that there were things we should have done before we started the company. It was a little humbling to realize all the things we didn't do before we launched the company. We had spent a tremendous amount of time and effort on the financial piece, but because the team had been together and the business was already functional and experiencing great success I didn't even think about things like vision, mission and values. I assumed that our team already knew them, even though we had never articulated them. So Shandel helped us craft vision and mission statements, as well as our purpose and core values. We had the entire company take personality tests, and we spent three full one-day team-building sessions over the course of 14 months."

From Kristine: "I think of the process like being on a bus. The team was on a bus, and we needed to define what the bus looked like and the trip it was on. Over the last year some people moved seats on the bus (and took different jobs), and some people left the bus entirely. However, now we know where we're going - and we have better tools to keep the bus moving forward. We have refined our mission statement over the last year to be "Creating partnerships that own the marketing objectives while delivering profitable results". After living with that statement for a while the "working" mission statement is P.O.D - Partnering.Owning.Delivering. P.O.D. is a play on words in the transportation business because in the industry it means 'proof of delivery,' which is the signature received at delivery. For P2P it means partnering, owning and deliver ing everyday with our employees, customers and vendors."

From Dan: "From this process with Shandel we defined our corporate values to be: *Growth*: Improve what is; *Respect*: Honor the individual; *Integrity*: Words, thoughts and action ALL in alignment; *Partnerships*: Owning the relationship starting with oneself then expanding to the organization and client/vendor; and *Solution driven*: Focus on profitable outcomes.

"The results have been great. For example, our team always felt that their work was overwhelming and they couldn't get enough time in the day to handle everything on their plate - they felt they could never get ahead. Now, through the focus on Shandel's process, building a better foundation of trust, accountability and knowing the team is focused on the same results, the company has just worked through their biggest season and logged fewer hours than before. "

"We're so dedicated to our mission and values now that we have seen this affect not only internal relationships, but our partnerships with clients and vendors are improved and more focused. Through the process we have even walked away from external relationships that did not make sense for the organization anymore. "

"The bottom line is more efficiency. In January 2007 we had a staff of 18, and now we have a staff of 12. Also, our revenue has increased by 10 percent! The staff has grown closer to one another - we still have challenges, but the entire organization is healthier and better equipped to handle each day."

*Dan and Kristine*

## **IV. Game Schedule -- Time for Renewal??**

*Spring is almost here...time for a renewal??*

**Life 301 Noon Class - Wednesdays!**

*Define the steps to propel yourself forward to your next level.*

Do you have a charged life battery? The Life 301 workshop is for those who have successfully taken on the basics in life and now seek the next level in which to excel. If you've attained a measure of success, yet find yourself at a personal or professional plateau, Life 301 is for you. If you find that practically every minute of your life is filled, yet you lack fulfillment, this workshop is just in time for you. Discovering and working from your personal values you'll maximize your potential to succeed in all aspects of your life. Are you ready, willing, and able to do what is necessary to experience such a life?

*Email today for more information. or Check out our Workshops page on [www.truelifecoaching.com](http://www.truelifecoaching.com)*

[Descriptions here on workshops](#)

## **V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK**

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's edition of *The Coach's Time Out*. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. If you desire to subscribe, please visit the front page of our website or send an email to [ss@truelifecoaching.com](mailto:ss@truelifecoaching.com) with the word SUBSCRIBE.

If you would be so kind to forward this to a friend - see below for an easy click to help you pass it on.

Life's a blast - go for the 2 EXTRA points!

*Shandel Slaten*

Your Life Coach

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*Be You. Be Real. Be the Best You can Be...Today!*