Business Communication and Executive Effectiveness

Kermit Wallace

ILTA 2009

Session Flow

- Main objectives – the do’s and don'ts
- Participation and Interaction
- Your feedback on each objective
- Wrap-Up and final comments

Our Objectives

- Represent yourself, your position and your firm effectively when working with clients or vendors.
- Be perceived as a business person, not “just” an IT person.
- Communicate the case for IT investments within your firm - to the Partnership, CFO, Executive Director and others.
- Define your and your department's communications style and standards.
- Communicate appropriately whether on the phone, in person or via e-mail.

Look Out!

- What NOT to do when you're:

- In a meeting
- Sending an e-mail
- Writing on Facebook / Twitter or a blog
- Announcing new IT policies or initiatives
- Interacting with the broad range of people and personalities that make up your firm

Defining Terms

What’s Fun?

Representing…

- “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”

  -*Stephen Covey*
- Who are you?
- What’s your role in this interaction?

Perception is Everything…

- A seat at the table
- Face facts:
  - Appearance matters
  - Punctuality
  - Firm culture dictates what's acceptable
  - What do the 'upper echelon' do?

- "If you put a small value on yourself, rest assured that the world will not raise your price."

  -*Anonymous*

Communicating “up”…

- “You can’t build a reputation on what you’re going to do.”

  -*Henry Ford*

- Do you understand the value of this investment?
- How can you articulate this value as related to the Firm’s values and/or plan?

What's Your Style?

- Is there a Firm style / guide for internal communications?
  - Paper Memos
  - E-Mail Announcements
  - Voicemail / Phone 'Blasts'
  - Lobby Cards / Posters
- Project-specific
- "Everybody here knows what we want to accomplish."

  -*John Chambers (CEO, Cisco)*

What's Appropriate?

- Appropriate is "restricted" by who you are.
  Some things your Managing Partner can say, you can't.
- Professionalism is key.
- Impacts the "seat at the table" question.

- "Never tell anyone what you're thinking."
  -*Vito Corleone (The Godfather)*

Recap & Key Take-Aways

- Understanding the Firm business is key to your growth beyond being “the IT person”.
- Know your audience and learn the best way to reach them.
- Some things are better left unsaid.
- Use the experts to help you conform to – or develop – a style that works.
- Act the part – there are plenty of personalities you can use as a guide.