

FOXFIRE

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Message from the President

It's a pleasure to bring you the second issue of our quarterly newsletter, filled with quick tips to assist in your daily business life. Personality conflicts and office squabbles can cause stress and take a toll on team productivity. Need to address these issues in your work environment? Try the techniques below for simple yet powerful communication tools.

Joyce Perhac
President
Foxfire Management, Inc.

Our professional and innovative approach, as well as our proven cost-effective organizational techniques are the reasons Foxfire Management is the difference in association management.

Improving Office Communication

1. **Breathe.** When you feel challenged, take a breather before you react. With a little perspective, some problems melt away.
2. **Act.** If the issue represents a real stumbling block in the workplace, don't allow it to fester. Address it directly with the person or people involved as soon as you feel you can do so professionally.
3. **Be open.** Own your own part in any conflict and avoid excuses. Be willing to receive feedback without defensiveness.
4. **Clarify.** No two people perceive the same event exactly the same way, so strive to create a shared understanding: "I'd like to be sure I'm clear on your point of view. Here's what I think I heard you say..."
5. **Compromise.** Be prepared to give and ask others to do the same. "It's important to me that we find a middle ground on this. Will you help me do that?" Note: If the issue is between a supervisor and a supervisee, compromise may not be required, but almost always is appreciated.
6. **Own emotions.** If the issue brings up anger, hurt or another emotion, don't let that take over the situation or cause you to act in a way you'll regret. Instead, take ownership of the emotion by communicating with "I" statements. For example, "When _____ happens, I feel _____. I would appreciate _____."
7. **Stay on topic.** Resist the temptation to bring in past conflicts with the person or people involved, unless directly related to the current problem.
8. **Build a solid foundation.** Give what you'd like to receive. Don't talk negatively about others in your office. If you frequently find yourself at odds with someone, go out of your way to appreciate positive attributes of that person.

Don't wait another day to improve your office communication. When colleagues learn and practice these skills, everyone involved will reap the benefits of a happier, more productive work environment.

By: Susan Voigt-Reising, a life coach and communications consultant. For more information, visit www.svrcommunications.com.

Foxfire Management

PO Box 913 • Monroeville PA 15146 • 412-372-1899 • 412-372-8136 Fax
www.foxfiremanagement.com info@foxfiremanagement.com



Cool Ideas!

Post-It Notes

They've been around for 27 years and are available in eight standard sizes, 25 shapes and 62 colors. But most of us use them in our business and personal life to help organize our thoughts, draw attention to a critical thought or idea, or remind us of important dates or appointments. Now, *Post-it Notes* are available digitally to help you make and organize lists, plan projects, personalize messages with photos, even set alarms to remind you of appointments or key dates, right from your computer desktop.

Download a 30-day free trial from 3M at:
www.3m.com/us/office/postit/digital/digital_notes.html

Passwords Plus

It may be the information age, but the amount of it we need to get through the day can be overwhelming. *Passwords Plus* from DataViz is a simple to use program that enables you to record all of your vital information in one place, with one master password, so that you'll never worry again about forgetting vital information or compromising your personal security.

Passwords Plus offers 25 templates; a search tool; the ability to synchronize with a variety of handhelds/smartphones; multiple computer synchronization and user support and much more.

Download a 30-day free trial from DataViz at:
www.dataviz.com



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OUR HALLMARK IS THE PROFESSIONALISM AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL
WE PROVIDE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE SERVICES WE OFFER.

Technology Tip

When in doubt, Google! Most of us know Google as the most popular web search site, and you may even have a free Google Gmail account or Google Discussion Group of your own, but here are a few other free items you may not know about:

See the world with **Google Maps and Google Earth**. Satellite imagery and maps let you type in an address and see the area from a satellite photo. You can tilt and rotate the view and get maps and directions to and from your destination.

Google's language tools allow you to translate words, terms – even complete websites – to and from 69 different languages.

Need a spreadsheet and don't have a spreadsheet program? With a Gmail account, you can use **Google Spreadsheets** to open, create or view a spreadsheet online.

Learn about all of Google's offerings at www.google.com. Click on "more," then "even more," to see the complete list.