

Communications Exercise

Ask for 3 or 4 volunteers. Escort them out of the room so they cannot hear the exercise. One by one bring them into the room for the exercise. You may want to hand out copies of the 3 tasks to the audience so they can see how the communications are changed as each person takes their turn.

Start off by saying something to the effect of:

I am the owner/president of a company. I only hire the best and the brightest people. We are conserving paper so I have all instructions you need; basically around here we communicate verbally and everyone understands. Typically I go home and prepare a list of about ten things that need to be done the next day however you are in luck today I only have 3 things for you to do...

Note: Participants cannot repeat, ask questions or take notes.

“I have 3 jobs that I would like for you to complete by Friday:”

- 1) I want you to grease the 20A pump motor with the new 80 weight grease. The new grease has already been stored in the grease cabinet. The old Mobil Red grease is there too, so be sure you look at it and don't get it by mistake. John wants to start the test on Friday using the new grease.
- 2) Do your OSHA training on the computer in the maintenance office. It has to be completed by Friday and signed off by our OSHA training coordinator in his records. Be sure to give him your computer printout when you are done. He has to have that before he'll sign you off.
- 3) Oh, by the way, the emergency response team has been activated. You've been selected to disarm a bomb that was found in the elevator. The experts tell us that it'll be a piece of cake if you cut the wires in the correct order: White first, red second and green last. So good luck - Here's your wire cutters.

After the exercise, discuss the importance of the three tasks.

What would be the consequences if the tasks were not carried out properly?

Using the script did the owner/president clearly communicate the importance of the tasks? “I would like for you to complete by Friday”

How important is it to have clear concise instructions and procedures?

Was there extra information in the 3 tasks that were not important and may have caused confusion?