Questions & Answers | Communications webinar.
Webinar December 11, 2019

Q. What are the key takeaways from this webinar?
A: Communication is a sensitive process. It has a huge potential to make you successful in your job; at the same time there are pitfalls by which communication can harm your success. The main takeaways are:

- Characteristics of successful communication are:
  - Use clear and short messages (if needed you can explain more later)
  - Choose the type of communication that fits (verbal, non-verbal, written, visual)
  - Choose the best channel (face to face, writing, social media)
  - Know your audience to gear your message towards them
  - Repeat, repeat, repeat in order to make your messages stick

- Take into consideration:
  - If you think you have sent your message far too many times, you might get close to what is needed
  - If people do not respond, it does not mean they agree
  - If people do not raise questions, they might not have understood you
  - If people say yes to your proposal or request, it does not mean that they will actually do it

- Non-verbal communication is extremely important. In face to face communication, the way your message is received, will be dominated by your non-verbal communication. 55% of the message is being determined by non-verbal communication

- Your words mean nothing when your actions are the complete opposite

Q: Some people would want a big explanation, I always have problems with short messages mostly when I communicate to a French manager!? 
A: You have to prepare yourself to give the big explanation. Still, start with the short and clear message. After that you can give the big explanation and end with your short and clear message again. You know your audience, so you know what is needed. And if you have given the short and clear message, you see the feedback of the manager (verbal and non-verbal). Based on that, you can give the explanation needed. If you know, you will always have to give it, you can do it right away. Like in the example we used in the webinar, you can say: “We can save $100.000,- annually if we replace 6 vehicles and dispose 2 vehicles. Let me explain how I came to that conclusion”. Then the manager can listen to your explanation with the main message in mind. She or he is then able to assess your conclusion (the message).
Q: In a scenario where we have to give new vehicles to some of the officers and not to everyone of same cadre (due to fund shortage), how to communicate with the officers and their drivers who are not getting the new vehicles?
A: Explain over and over again to everyone involved. The people who do not get a new vehicle now, have to understand why they do not get it. They will not be happy, but they understand it. You have to ensure that you take a decision based on clear criteria. That makes it easier to explain. And these criteria should be objective. For example: the oldest vehicles (or the vehicles with the highest mileage) will be replaced because their costs are very high and can be reduced by replacing them. Besides, you can picture the way forward. For example: we expect to have funding for replacing the next batch of vehicles at the end of next year. Then the vehicles of the other officers will be replaced.

This is how you can explain the current situation. You can also review whether you can use pooled vehicles. So, 3 vehicles for 6 officers, The vehicles utilisation will not be high if every officer has her/his own vehicles. So, pooling might work. In that case, everyone can drive in a new vehicle.

Q: On the issue of over speeding, how do you explain to a driver that he needs to obey policy on speed limit when the instructions to over speed comes from the Country Director on several occasion?
A: That is a tough situation. If the country director shows the wrong example, it is hard to commit drivers to stick to the safety rules. In this case you can go to the country director and ask him for support. Your message is that the number of crashes will go down if everyone will obey to the safety rules. And that you hear from drivers that some of the managers ask to speed up. That creates a risky situation for both manager and driver. So, you ask for the support of the country director to convince the managers that their life will be safer if they do not ask the driver to speed up. It is better to inform people that you will be late for an appointment, then to risk your life. Better safe than sorry. It is hard for the country director to tell you that she/he does not want to do that. Road Safety cannot be ignored.

Q: Some Drivers who have worked in organizations for so long have a tendency of under looking the new fleet supervisor and the end they don’t take instruction seriously. How do I change their attitude?
A: It is important to understand why they do not take the new fleet supervisor seriously. The supervisor needs to have open and interested conversations to engage with them and understand what is important for them. You can make them important by telling them that they can be an example for the other drivers. Tell them that they know that it is safe for everyone to wear the seatbelts and if they show that, the others will follow. And you can recognise them for their good behavior in briefing meetings.
Q: When a Senior Manager is not willing to listen to my debriefing or presentation and gives me appointment because he is very busy. How do I convince him that it is very urgent and must listen to my presentation?
A: It is important to understand why the senior managers does not want to listen. Is it not important or is she/he really busy? And you have to ask yourself why you want the senior manager to listen. What you can do is ask the senior manager for support. You can tell that you will have a presentation about road safety because you want everyone to come home safely every day. And you can tell you understand that the senior manager is very busy, but it would be great if she/he can be at your presentation for the first 10 minutes to tell everyone how important it is to improve road safety.

Q. Which communication channel do you recommend more today?
A: The channel should be chosen based on the message that you want to send out. Face to face communication is the most effective for smaller groups, because you can use both verbal and non-verbal communication and you get direct feedback. In case you write, you have no direct control over the feedback. If you want to reach out to larger groups via social media, then facebook would be the best in the aid and development sector. That is the most used social media

Q. How to deal with people that wear their seat belts during working times, and after work they just drop seatbelts?
A: It is important to understand why they do not use seatbelts in their private life. If they use it during working hours because they are being forced to do and not because they want to themselves, they do not see the benefit and will not wear them in their private life. So it is important that they wear them because they realise that it can save their life. In that case there is a higher chance that they will wear them in their private life and want their family to wear them as well. In some cultures it is very uncommon to wear them and you are being perceived as strange if you do so. Then you can support them by giving them stories about people that died in a car crash because they did not wear seatbelts. That might help them in their private life to convince others.

Q: Where can I find the link to the Knowledge Platform?
A. https://knowledge.fleetforum.org

Q: Where can I find the link to the other webinars?
A. https://knowledge.fleetforum.org/knowledge-base/articles/training

Q. Where can I find the agenda for the upcoming webinars?
A. https://www.fleetforum.org/webinars (updated with 2020 dates)