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This installment of The Morale Fairy's newsletter features part four of the series, "Putting S.P.R.I.N.G. in Their Steps Puts a Spring in Yours." We've looked at SMILE, PRAISE and RESPECT. This month the focus is on INFORM.

INFORM

What is information? The dictionary definition is, "News, advice, or knowledge, communicated by others or obtained by personal study and investigation; intelligence; knowledge derived from reading, observation, or instruction." Information is **power**! Some people use it well.

There are companies (and families) that realize the importance of information for everyone involved. Respect for others includes keeping them informed. No one can make good decisions without the 'complete picture.' But you must trust them to use the information well.

It is also important that the information is communicated so that it is understandable. Using 'jargon' (industry specific language) or big words may seem to impress others but often leads to misunderstandings or things being taken out of context. It is best to use words everyone can understand, as former President Ronald Reagan was known to do. Modify your communication to fit your audience.

"To get employees to achieve the company goals, people must know and understand what the business is trying to accomplish. You'd be surprised how many companies don't tell their staff where the business is going, either in the short term, or in the longer term. Perhaps it has something to do with trade secrets, or more cynically, with not telling anyone, especially those who might face layoff, too much information."

(<http://blogbusinessworld.blogspot.com/2006/06/staff-motivation-keep-people-informed.html>)

It is especially important to communicate bad news before it's heard through the grapevine. Even young children can handle difficulties, when communicated

appropriately. Withholding information may lead to fear, dissention, and anger. Bad feelings created by secrecy will be extremely difficult to overcome.

No one likes to be the “last to know” or be “out of the loop.” With today’s workplaces staffed by several generations of workers, keeping everyone informed will go a long way toward getting communication flowing. Treating others with respect by giving them information they need encourages a feeling of *esprit de corps*.

Quotes

“To live effectively is to live with adequate information.”
Norbert Wiener

“Don't worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you'll have to ram them down people's throats.” Howard Aiken

“The better the information it has, the better democracy works. Silence and secrecy are never good for it.” Kate Adie

“In the new economy, information, education, and motivation are everything.”
William J. Clinton

“As a general rule, the most successful man in life is the man who has the best information.” Benjamin Disraeli

“Knowledge is power. Information is power. The secreting or hoarding of knowledge or information may be an act of tyranny camouflaged as humility.”
Robin Morgan

“Information can bring you choices and choices bring power - educate yourself about your options and choices. Never remain in the dark of ignorance.”
Joy Page

Book Recommendations

Workforce Crisis by Ken Dychtwald

Resources

<http://blogbusinessworld.blogspot.com/2006/06/staff-motivation-keep-people-informed.html>

<http://www.cnrc.navy.mil/DEP/espirit.htm>

Smiles

A famous Viking explorer returned home from a voyage and found his name missing from the town register. His wife insisted on complaining to the local civic official who apologized profusely saying, "I must have taken Leif off my census."

Did you hear about the dyslexic Rabbi?
He walks around saying, "Yo."

He who laughs last has not yet heard the bad news.--Bertolt Brecht

Smith goes to see his supervisor in the front office. "Boss," he says, "we're doing some heavy house-cleaning at home tomorrow, and my wife needs me to help with the attic and the garage, moving and hauling stuff."

"We're short-handed, Smith" the boss replies. "I can't give you the day off."
"Thanks, boss," says Smith "I knew I could count on you!"

An old blacksmith realized he was soon going to quit working so hard. He picked out a strong young man to become his apprentice. The old fellow was crabby and exacting. "Don't ask me a lot of questions," he told the boy. "Just do whatever I tell you to do." One day the old blacksmith took an iron out of the forge and laid it on the anvil. "Get the hammer over there," he said. "When I nod my head, hit it real good and hard." Now the town is looking for a new blacksmith.

Employer to applicant: "In this job we need someone who is responsible."
Applicant: "I'm the one you want. On my last job, every time anything went wrong, they said I was responsible."