

Communicating with **NANCY STERN**

COMMUNICATION PLUS

Jumbo Mumbo Jumbo

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Just Say what you mean and mean what you say and don't say it mean.

Nancy Stern

The 2008 Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English defines "mumbo jumbo" as follows:

mum·bo·jum·bo / məmbō jəmbō/ (also mum·bo· jum·bo) • n. inf. language or ritual causing or intended to cause confusion or bewilderment: *a maze of legal mumbo jumbo.*

I often wonder why people take so long to say nothing. You know, they string together a lot of buzz words to sound impressive but instead they sound like they just strung a lot of buzz words together. Here's an example:

My goal as a performance improvement expert is to impact an organization's ability to consistently achieve goals, on a sustained basis, by strategizing and ensuring the implementation of human performance interventions, especially training and development.

What is a Performance Improvement Expert? The acronym is PIE. Apple? Boston Cream? I bet we'll see a certification for that soon



so this person can put those initials after her name (the whole initial thing is for another time). So, is she going to teach people how to dance or act? Performance has many meanings. Why not just be clear and say something like

" My goal is to have an impact on the organization by making sure people are well trained and developed."

Here's another one:

(Company Name) announces another breakthrough in talent management and acquisition - Version 5.0! The latest update for our award-winning talent management suite includes inno-

vative new tools and features that mean a major leap forward in innovative talent management technology.

This is an example of the overuse of the buzz words "innovative" and "talent management." How about, "Version 5.0 takes employee management technology to new levels."

I also wonder who comes up with the buzz words we use in business.

"Performance Improvement" simply means getting better at your work. "Talent Management & Acquisition" simply means getting, developing and keeping employees. Why not just say so? Skip the mumbo jumbo.



Hot New Stuff for the Office & Home

I recently had the pleasure of speaking at the Advantage Business Conference hosted by SP Richards Co. Since I have always been an office product junkie, I couldn't wait to walk the show floor. I saw the usual office supplies like file folders, markers, printers and pens but I didn't get excited until I passed by the Unibind booth and saw a demonstration of their SteelBinding systems. In 90 seconds I could bind handout materials, presentation materials and even a hard back book. I started thinking about how much time I spend punching holes to comb-bind materials and how much more professional the Unibind materials look and I was hooked. I now have the small version in my office and I am ecstatic.



I love the New WD40 No Mess Pen. I don't have to carry that big can in my tripod case anymore.

Unibind SteelBinding systems are fast and easy to operate. They use a unique thermal binding process that produces great looking reports. Unibind offers a wide variety of spines and covers to choose from including hard back books. Easy to operate, simply place the pages into the SteelBack Spine or SteelBack Covers, then place the document onto the Unibind Binding Machine. A red light turns on automatically indicating that the unit is in the binding mode, and in approximately 90 seconds a green light indicates my document is bound and ready. It's that easy. There is no need for punching paper anymore. The Unibind SteelBinding system comes in several models allowing people to bind from one to fifty documents at the same time. Any system can even bind books up to 340 pages! Unibind is the only thermal system that can easily bind, edit, add or remove pages from the same cover. Just place the report back on the machine, wait for the light to turn green, make your changes and then start the binding process over. In three minutes, you have a new document!

Check it out: www.unibind.com

SteelBinding System

Email Your Questions to Nancy@nancystern.com

Q

I have a problem at work. My co-worker, who is also my friend, keeps avoiding a task that I need to have done in order for me to complete my job. I have asked him several times to please get the work done, but when nothing happens, I get frustrated. I went to my supervisor for help. After explaining the situation, I expected he would confront the problem employee and help me out. Instead, his only advice was, "Put it in an email." How is that going to help?

A

It won't help. Email is a great tool for following-up, scheduling meetings, disseminating information, staying in contact with people in faraway places, and just about anything that isn't highly complex or highly personal. The problem you describe is very complex and certainly personal. Email used here can leave too much room for error, guess-work, hurt feelings and misunderstandings. Your situation is best handled using a face-to-face meeting. Your boss is copping out by telling you to use email. He is avoiding the situation and

unless the three of you sit down together and work this out, the conflict will only get worse. I suggest you take a proactive approach and invite both of them to a short meeting.

Email is a fine method to use to set up the meeting. Tell them in the invitation you are frustrated and need both of them to help you. When the meeting starts, begin by expressing your frustration, then describe the outcome of this frustration and end by asking for what you need. You may even ask how you can help him help you.

Be careful not to use YOU-statements like "You are always late getting that work to me." Instead say, "I really need to have the work because my project is held back without it." YOU-statements tend to throw people on the defensive and often cause people to tune-out what is being said. Remember, email is not the best channel when conflict is involved.

*The music of life
is in danger of
getting lost in
the music of
the voice.*

Gandhi

Happy Musings

by Sally Huss

Silence contains more
than words can say.



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on the spot
media training & coaching

www.onthespotmediatraining.com



Because how you say what you say, matters.™

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Whether you're experiencing change, managing people, connecting with customers and co-workers, or making presentations, getting your message across effectively is vital to your success.

Nancy Stern custom designs keynotes, breakouts and educational programs to enhance communication effectiveness; to help increase productivity, profitability and peace of mind; and to impact the bottom line where it matters most—with results.

Programs & Topics Include:

- How You Say What You Say Matters™
- Leadership Dynamics™
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- Team Building for Creativity, Productivity and Peace of Mind

Why Nancy Stern?

Nancy Stern, MA is the president/owner and senior consultant of Communication Plus, a consulting firm in San Diego specializing in leadership and employee development. Since 1972, she has taught thousands the art and science of effective communication. She is a former columnist with the *San Diego Daily Transcript* and has taught at the University of California San Diego and San Diego State University Management Development Center.

She inspires managers, employees and individuals of all ages through the

simple, yet powerful, lesson that *how you say what you say, matters™*. Personal experiences form the foundation of her programs, creating presentations that are personal, professional and practical. The result: Improvement of the "whole person" and therefore, the "whole organization."

She is an EMMY award-winner, who produced and appeared in the national PBS television series *Communicating With Nancy Stern* (1990-95) and she is the coauthor of *101 Stupid Things Trainers Do To Sabotage Success*.

Nancy holds a Master of Arts degree in Communication Education from Michigan State University and is a member of the American Society for Training and Development and the National Speakers Association.



Nancy Stern