



July 2015 Volume 6, Issue 7

Number 62

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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

What WISE Bosses Say

Throughout the traditional part of my career I only had one boss who I now consider to be wise. What set her apart from the others was this: She challenged me to become the best version of myself.

I remember sitting in her office on a summer afternoon, deliberating about whether I should contact a key community leader to pose a politically risky but potentially beneficial idea that, if implemented, could serve a lot of folks. I knew I'd be sticking my neck out, and my call might be met with significant resistance. On a deeper level I feared rejection from a public figure who I needed to interact with on a regular basis. Just the thought of it made me squirm.

My supervisor listened intently, her eyes locked on mine while I talked. When I finally finished, she said: "Sylvia, it's clear you are wrestling with this issue and are finding it difficult to make a decision for all the



reasons both of us understand. While I empathize with your angst, I urge you to pay attention to what your intuition is telling you to do in this situation. That may require you to step out of your comfort zone. Making that phone call will give you some practice in doing that.” Smiling gently, she concluded by saying: “As your boss, it’s my job to encourage and support your personal and professional growth. I’m here to stretch you, not to enable you to stay as you are.” Wow!

Over the years that particular job provided me with many other invitations to move beyond what I defined as comfortable. Thankfully, I had a supervisor who cared enough about the higher purpose of the work and about ME as an individual to push me to do some very hard things, initiate countless delicate conversations, and inspire others to do the same. From her example I learned that **a wise boss dares to do what it takes to develop people.**

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FEATURE ARTICLE

5 Messages Wise Bosses Build into Conversations

What people in supervisory positions say to their direct reports matters. Short and long term, it impacts morale, productivity, job satisfaction, and results. Michael Kerr, international business speaker and author, says that “communication is never an afterthought for the best bosses.” This article provides five specific messages to convey to each and every staffer—as often as needed. Insert these into your conversations and see how brewing or chronic problems tend to disappear.

1. I want to be a resource for you.

As a boss, your job is to serve the folks on your team. Proactively ask how you can help them to meet their goals and deadlines with less frustration and greater ease. See if they need more information or an introduction to another person.

2. If you were me, what would you do?

Phrasing the question this way usually catches people by surprise. They don’t expect you, someone with formal authority, to go out of your way to seek their input about problems, dilemmas, and upcoming change. When you say these words, you are really saying you value their opinions.

3. I may be wrong.

Telling someone you may not be viewing a certain situation accurately or comprehensively demonstrates humility. Suggesting that you may be drawing the wrong conclusion about something shows that you don't think you're always right.

4. I know you can do it.

This statement, delivered with sincerity and confidence, can make all the difference in the world when somebody doubts her ability to succeed. Communicate your faith in her. A boss saying this to an employee has a stronger impact than peer to peer.

5. What is getting in the way of you doing your best work?

Most supervisors don't pose this critical question. Either they don't think to ask it in the first place, or they don't really care about the answer. Start plugging it into your individual staff meetings this month—even with folks who excel. Lay your ego aside, and be open to what you hear.

Wise bosses train themselves to say wise things to the people who depend on them for guidance, direction, and support. Remember: It is up to YOU to set the stage for optimal performance.

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What Clients Say

I hired Sylvia because a number of my direct reports weren't performing their job duties in alignment with organizational requirements. This had become a big problem, and I was afraid that over time my own job would be in jeopardy. I needed to get better results from my staff. Over the course of six months Sylvia helped me to identify the root cause of this issue. In full transparency I have to say that I was creating the problem. I was doing a lot of talking to my employees, but often I wasn't saying the "right things". Sylvia then taught me how to speak to my people in a way that inspired them to meet and exceed my expectations and those of the CEO. We are at a much better place now!

- Allison B., Nonprofit Agency Senior Manager, Central PA

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Offers and Opportunities

Showcase Your Brilliance

All ezine readers are invited to send Sylvia a private email to share your BEST ideas for messages that wise bosses might consider communicating to their employees. Words and phrases presented must be different from the ones that are identified in the feature article above. The person with the most unique idea(s) according to Sylvia will receive a FREE 20 minute phone coaching session (during the month of July) to learn more about how to appropriately interject these wise messages throughout a typical work week. Your email to sylvia@launchinglives.biz must appear in the Launching Lives inbox no later than July 10th at midnight EDT.

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RESOURCES

You Really Ought to See This!

Meryl Runion's book, *Perfect Phrases for Managers and Supervisors*, gives readers all the right phrases for every situation at work—every time. Through this 2010 resource you can learn appropriate language for building trust, empowering staff, dealing with difficult people, tackling problems, and even conducting job interviews. There is no other book quite like this one. Available in paper back on Amazon and electronically on Kindle for just \$10 and \$7 respectively.

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TIP

Identify the various categories of conversations you have with your employees over the course of a year. Examples include (but are not limited to): directions/instruction, pep talks, brainstorming, course correction/discipline, information sharing, coaching/mentoring, and change roll-out. Think about phrases and sentences that you typically use in these kinds of situations. In other words, connect with your well worn “default language”. Then, referring

back to suggestions highlighted in the feature article above, consider new and different ways to express your key talking points, concerns, and ideas. To start, experiment in two areas. Observe staff responses for thirty days and assess the quality of changes.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On July 7, 2015 Sylvia joined the client-centered “Going Places Network” affiliated with South Central PA’s Dress for Success to present a ninety minute workshop that provided a seven step process for handling rejection from prospective employers after job interviews.

On June 16, 2015 Sylvia participated in a thirty-minute radio interview about her book, *Learning Leadership Through Loss*, with show host Donna Seebo based in Washington state. Afterwards, Donna told Sylvia that her book was the finest leadership book she’d read in years! This was significant, as this woman interviews 200 authors each year.

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Join Sylvia on these social networks!

About This Ezine

The purpose of this Ezine is to: 1) Provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to personal and professional growth as well as overall career development; and 2) Invite readers to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

Back issues are [available here](#). Send an email by [clicking here](#) to manage your free subscription. Sharing content with attribution is encouraged as is forwarding the Ezine email. Include launchinglives.biz in your list of safe senders or friends, depending upon your email software, to be sure you receive the monthly emailed issues.

Launching Lives Ezine is dedicated to “building people ... building businesses.” ©2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

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About SYLVIA

Sylvia Hepler, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Golden, Colorado and Quantum Endeavors in Chicago, Illinois (plus a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several coaches of national notoriety), Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She also has created tangible and downloadable products that augment her coaching and speaking services.

For more information and to connect with Sylvia try:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

[Click to contact Sylvia by Email](#)

Reach Sylvia by phone at **717-761-5457**

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Launching Lives SERVICES

Launching Lives, LLC is a full service career development company for managers and executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my

own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching may be the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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