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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

Do You Know What Messages You Are Really Sending at Work?

In this month of Thanksgiving I am truly grateful for ALL of my life experiences. Even the ones that taught me important lessons or showed me what NOT to do to others...Some of you know that several decades ago I worked in a hospital business office with thirty women. These women, all from the same town, ranged in age from twenty to sixty. They shared many of the same values and held a similar world view. They lived in a little box with minimal vision. No question about it: I was the odd duck—and not just because I'd gone to college.

During those years most days were predictable. If you had dropped in and stayed a while, you would have seen quite a few folks hanging over somebody else's cubicle, telling gossipy



stories. You might have heard freely flowing strings of four letter words interspersed with sardonic laughter. Likely you would have detected the back biting, the subtle ridicule of fellow employees and systems, the obvious aimlessness of most of these women. I didn't want to participate in these behaviors.

But there was a price for not fitting in with the rest. While nobody ever took me aside and verbally advised me to become more like everyone else, I felt those unspoken words being delivered hour by hour. They were painful, and they left an indelible though invisible mark in my mind, heart, and soul. I've never forgotten that crystal clear message I received long ago: "You'd better change who you are if you want to be accepted." The day I walked out the door I had no idea what my career would look like going forward. I just knew that ostracizing people because they are different was wrong.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

10 Silent Messages and Their Negative Impact

Whether or not we are consciously aware, all of us are communicating information, ideas, directives, advice, values, and opinions from morning to night. It's part of being human. But we need to pay closer attention to what we're passing on. Our silent messages affect folks. Sometimes they cut deep. Depending on the amount of damage done, job performance suffers. Review the ten messages below and identify the one(s) that YOU may be sending.

1. I'm watching you.

This type of implied behavioral or performance micromanagement (whether you are the boss or not) deflates others' self confidence. It makes people nervous and insecure. What exactly are you watching for? Mistakes? Extended lunches? Too many breaks?

2. I don't like you.

You don't have to like everybody on your team. What do you want to accomplish by conveying this silent message? How does it get the work done better and faster? Respect is a requirement; like is a preference.

3. You'd better not fail.

This message fosters fear. It also kills or reduces creativity. Where

there is no failure there is no individual and organizational growth. As a boss, part of your job is to stretch folks.

4. I'm a workaholic.

When you send this message to colleagues and subordinates, you're really telling them that they must follow your example. That in order to be valued and respected they have no choice but to burn the candle at both ends like you do.

5. I don't have your back.

When staff sense that you as the boss will walk away, say nothing, or hide out when they need you most, their morale and loyalty diminishes or evaporates.

6. I don't trust you.

This particular silent message is deadly. If you are a decision maker and you have hard evidence that supports your mistrust of someone, then fire them. If you have personal issues with trust, you may benefit from hiring a therapist.

7. Don't even think about taking off.

You may not be saying this aloud, but your implication is taken as a threat. If there is a valid reason why people can't take paid leave time on a certain day, tell them directly and provide the reason in a way that makes sense to them.

8. You aren't good enough.

This message pokes holes in folks' self esteem. The reality is that everybody is good enough for something. Find out what each of your staffers is good enough for and give them plenty of opportunities to do it.

9. I disagree with your approach but I'm not going to say so.

You are playing a mind game if you send this message. Further, it is passive aggressive by nature. What is to be gained by refusing to tell a person you don't agree with her approach to a project or customer complaint? What is the benefit to keeping your ideas to yourself?

10. I can live with your sub par job performance.

This silent message allows people to continue swimming in the sea of mediocrity. If you are the boss, you aren't doing anybody any favors by turning a blind eye to a problem situation. You're also not doing your job, and this impacts company bottom line.

Where did you see yourself in the above list of messages? I realize it may be difficult to face. Looking in a mirror is rarely fun. However, there's a lot at stake: Team morale, productivity, staff retention. Not to mention YOUR professional reputation!

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What Clients Say

A couple of years ago I hired Sylvia for several reasons. One of those reasons was because I was fed up with a controlling, "I'm always right" colleague in my clinic who constantly implied that I was deficient in my role as a manager. After enduring months of these silent accusations I went home and cried about it. That's when I knew this had to stop. Sylvia helped me to sort through the situation, develop some compassion for the other person, and create language for confronting her without losing my cool. The biggest benefit to that coaching experience was learning how to stand up for myself in a professional, patient manner without demeaning the person who was making me feel so bad about myself.

- Sarah W., Pittsburgh, PA

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Offers and Opportunities

Sylvia's Once a Year Special Offer

Once a year Sylvia commits to working with someone for 30 days at no charge. This laser engagement consists of two 30 minute telephone coaching sessions and several "as needed" emails between those calls. If you are having difficulty with key relationships at work because of what you may be saying or implying, this special offer is for YOU. Simply send an email to sylvia@launchinglives.biz and describe your unique circumstances. Be sure to convince her that YOU need this service more than any other respondents. The 30 day period can begin in November or December.

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RESOURCES

For People Who Want to Avoid Mistakes

Check out Maxine Wilborn's new paper back entitled: *Human Resources Guide in Cultivating Your Personal Garden: Proven Methods of Communicating With Your Employees*. This is a reference book for everybody in a supervisory role at work, regardless of industry. Don't miss it. Available on Amazon.com for only \$16.00.

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TIP

Both individually and in group settings ask your staff what they need more of from YOU. Framing the request this way makes it safer for people to be honest about what they perceive to be their practical, psychological, and emotional needs. Let them know that you really care about their responses. Do not ask employees to enlighten you about any unspoken negative messages you may be sending. Most human beings can't deal with that—and will refuse to cooperate. Such bluntness only backfires, causing folks to clam up and reveal nothing. If you put your emotional intelligence to work in these conversations, you stand to gain some very important information.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On October 13, 2015 Sylvia presented a forty-minute seminar entitled "Your Professional Image: The Foundation for Workplace Success" to members of the Central PA SKAL organization during their monthly meeting held at the Radisson Hotel, Camp Hill. SKAL consists of tourism leaders, promoting global tourism and friendship.

On October 27, 2015 Sylvia attended the Human Resources Professionals of Central PA Fall Conference at the Radisson Hotel, Camp Hill. This year she supported the organization by sponsoring a vendor table on which she displayed a one-sheet about Launching Lives services, her recently published book, and

tool box give-aways.

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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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