

The Value of Time

By Maureen Tazzioli

Let's imagine for a moment that we all work for the same organization and as a team we are required to communicate the amount of time required to complete our individual tasks. Would it be fair to say that once all time durations are known to us that an expected completion date could be established? If so, is it also fair to say that the individual actually doing the specific task would best understand the time required to successfully complete the task?

Now granted, if it was this easy, every organization would be extremely efficient. However, that is not the case. In fact as professional administrators we understand that unexpected situations will arise carrying with it an immediate urgency where prioritizing workloads becomes an incredible skill.

Have you noticed that organizations today work on a multitude of initiatives (projects) at the same time? As such, the order to which these projects become completed is critical to the organization's foundation. Just like building a house, the organizational process will both strengthen the foundation and allow for great growth to occur, or it will weaken the foundation forcing it to crumble. If change comes too quickly the foundation could shake...if change moves too slowly, frustration may force a decrease in motivation and a severe slowdown in productivity.

So how can we as professional administrators' continue to grow and prosper especially during times of uncertainty? By considering the following:

1. **Reply to all emails inquiries within 24-48 hours.** - For busy professionals email can be a wonderful resource for staying informed and connected. However it can also be deemed as an exhausting exercise that never ends. So to keep things flowing and you still in control, try making it a habit to reply to all emails within 24 - 48 hours. Granted this does not mean that you must fulfill all email requests immediately, but rather acknowledge to the sender that you did in fact receive their email and then provide them with a realistic duration of time you need in order to respond. By being courteous a healthier foundation can be built.
2. **Be specific when using a voice messaging system, and then return all phone calls within 24 - 48 hours** - One of the biggest challenges facing organizations today is that of customer loyalty. So let me ask you this, When a customer is greeted with a voice messaging system and is politely asked to leave a message, should they not expect to hear back from the individual they left a message with? If so, how long should the customer (co-worker) have to wait? For organizations that struggle with internal and external communications they may wish to review their policy on returning phone call inquiries. Why? Because most employees and customers want to feel heard, and if it takes too long to return a simple phone call, then one may begin to question whether or not the organization actually cares about them. Review current practices regarding voice messaging systems and return calls so to ensure your customer (co-workers) know you care.
3. **What is promised in word must be kept in action** - Have you ever noticed that some people are really good at saying just the right thing at exactly the right time, however, when it comes to action or implementation they appear to fall short? Now I am not suggesting that we have to be perfect as humans to be successful, because none of us will ever be perfect, what I am suggesting though is that we make ourselves aware of our surroundings and the difference

between good intentions and positive actions. I mean if we really think about it, customer loyalty is really created when good intentions turn into positive actions. So instead of merely saying what we can do for our customers and co-workers, let's start doing it, and let everyone else see that what we said became a reality.

4. **Stay in alignment with organization's vision** - Have you ever driven a vehicle that required a new alignment? What did it feel like when travelling on a paved road or dirt road? What about the speed the vehicle was travelling at, did it make you feel more or less comfortable? For those of us who may have experienced such an incident we know that when a vehicle is out of alignment, we can lose control very quickly and end up in a ditch somewhere. Keeping this in mind, if we lose sight of the organization's vision, and our role in its successful delivery, then working through our daily tasks at a faster rate does not guarantee a successful outcome but could in fact create a more dangerous path for us to follow. Therefore, in order to move forward together it is important to realize that we must take the time to slow ourselves down long enough to ensure that we are all travelling at the right pace and going in the right direction. By checking our alignment once in awhile with the organization's vision a lot of time and money can be saved.
5. **Use time wisely, and time may offer you great rewards** - For some organizations staying connected to each other involves a series of habitual practices, some which may not always offer great benefits For example, a number of businesses still prefer Monday morning meetings versus any other day of the week. Now for those of you who have worked with me and ReZultsMatter in the past, you know that I am not a big fan of Monday morning meetings but rather strongly support Tuesday morning updates where the purpose of the gathering is to inform, educate and update each other on the progress and the continued action plan. So if you want to reap great rewards consider reviewing all habitual business practices and see if some slight adjustments may be required. Sometimes it is not the idea that needs to change, but rather finding just the right time to implement it.

As we work together to build a strong foundation let's be mindful to the value of time.

(Maureen Tazzioli, President of ReZultsMatter, is committed to building organizational excellence. Regarded as an expert in overcoming obstacles, Maureen's keeping it real workshops and keynote presentations are helping to unify workplace environments so individuals and organizations can move forward together. Maureen can be reached at 306.545.2920 or 1.855.280.2920 or by visiting her website at www.rezultsmatter.com. This article is reprinted with the author's permission).

