



WCD Connections

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Message from the Board:

To commit is to choose to pledge, to undertake and to act on that pledge. We commit to many things in our lives: family, work, health, education, spirituality among other areas. The act of commitment may take many forms such as a vow to others, a promise to oneself, selecting the apple over the cookie, the gym over Grey's Anatomy or the small coffee over the large latte. When we commit to something, whether a being, a thing or an act, we make a promise to ourselves that this is the path we will follow. We will stay on this path and face and overcome any obstacles we may encounter. When our commitment wavers and grows thin, this is when obstacles seem to appear in front of us. When this occurs, a renewal of the initial commitment is required of us. We need to remind ourselves of the importance of the pledge to ourselves. If we undertook to obtain a certification, we must rededicate ourselves to the task. Nothing we set for ourselves is impossible. If we can dream it, we can do it. It is normal to step off the path occasionally - to have a chocolate chip cookie, to skip the gym, to not make the time to study. It is sometimes necessary to sit on a bench at the side of the path and take time to refocus and to rejuvenate ourselves. By turning our focus again to the reason(s) why we made the commitment initially, we usually discover additional reasons which serve to strengthen our resolve.

Commitment is the second Point of Excellence on the Pathways to Excellence. This program is based on ten points, or principles, with each one a fundamental part of what it means to be *excellent* at what we do.

As a Member of Excellence, once you sign the Member of Excellence Commitment Form, you commit to gaining the full potential of the value of your IAAP membership through networking, professional development and leadership; you commit to professionalism and to fulfilling your potential for excellence. Members of Excellence, through their commitment, will turn a chapter into a Chapter of Excellence.

As a Chapter of Excellence, once you sign the Chapter of Excellence Commitment Form, you commit to maximizing the value of membership in IAAP by promoting IAAP's mission and core values. A Chapter of Excellence demonstrates their commitment, communication and adaptability skills and their integrity.

Make the commitment. Become a Member of Excellence. Become a Chapter of Excellence.

Dawn Becker CAP
President-Elect
Division Certification Committee Chair
Division Pathways to Excellence Committee Chair

Keep Your Cool: A lesson from Serena Williams - keep your cool

Serena Williams lost it at the US Open recently. Her temper got the best of her and she reacted emotionally, inappropriately and unprofessionally.

What gets lost in the story is the calmness with which the line judge held herself. Had the line judge yelled and threatened back to Williams, then we would have all jumped to Williams' defense.

How people feel about foot faults being called during high-level matches would be irrelevant if the line judge had fought back. She didn't, which was the perfect response. And that response put all the fault on Williams who, alone, will pay for her outburst. (Williams was fined \$10,000, the maximum penalty allowed for unsportsmanlike conduct in tennis, not to mention the loss of an important match and the untold damage to her reputation.) After being called on a foot fault during her serve, Williams walked over to the line judge, making a threatening gesture with her racquet and reportedly told her, "If I could, I would take this **** ball and shove it down your **** throat." It is also alleged she threatened to kill the line judge, although Williams vehemently denies it.

Read more and watch a six-minute video of the confrontation at <http://tinyurl.com/m2p8kalf> if you were the line judge, could you have kept your cool in that situation? Could you have received those comments without fighting back? It is important to remember that when one person loses it, the other should do the complete opposite, and remain very calm. *Do not interrupt* the other person.

Imagine if the line judge had angrily responded, 'Are you threatening me?' Even though I know that type of retort would have been wrong, I can imagine myself responding that way. An angry response would have escalated the argument to much higher levels and Williams could have charged that she had been provoked. Let the other person have her tirade; let her finish. If appropriate, call a time-out by saying something along the lines of, 'This is not a good time to finish this conversation. Let's meet again this afternoon' – then walk away. Do not continue the conversation when tempers are flaring.

The line judge didn't respond to Williams, but instead quickly got the referee involved. The line judge kept her cool, even though she felt physically threatened, believing that Williams was threatening her life. That is the calm, cool exterior we want to achieve when we are in a confrontation.

A lot can be learned from this episode. Williams should have done things differently, and I'm certainly hoping she regrets her inability to control her temper.

Learn from the line judge, the referee and even Williams, so you can avoid being the front page news story at your office.

This article is an excerpt from the tips at <http://www.DealingWithDifficultPeople.org> It is written by Rhonda Scharf CSP, ON THE RIGHT TRACK Training and Consulting

What's All the Buzz About?

The workplace is overwrought with clichés, buzzwords and industry jargon. Although business terms that are familiar to everyone can sometimes make communication more effective, the overuse of these phrases may actually hinder it.

In a recent survey, we asked executives to cite the most annoying or overused phrase or buzzword in the workplace today. Their top responses included:

- *Leverage*, as in, "We intend to leverage our investment in IT infrastructure across multiple business units to drive profits."
- *Game changer*, as in, "Transitioning from products to solutions was a game changer for our company."
- *Value-add*, as in, "We have to evaluate the value-add of this activity before we spend more on it."
- *Circle back*, as in, "I'm heading out of the office now, but I will circle back with you later."
- *Interface*, as in, "My job requires me to interface with all levels of the organization."

Following are some suggestions to help you avoid the clichés and voice your thoughts more effectively.

- **Know your audience.** Buzzwords are often exclusionary because at least some people are unfamiliar with even the most seemingly ubiquitous terms. Tailor your message to the knowledge level of the audience and avoid buzzwords or acronyms unless you're confident everyone understands them.
- **Keep it simple.** One of the best ways to avoid buzzwords is by speaking plainly. Don't try to roll a handful of thoughts into one breath. Break up your ideas so they will be easier to comprehend.
- **Show instead of tell.** If you find it difficult to convey your thoughts without using a handful of buzzwords, consider eliminating words all together. Visual examples can often convey more information than words.

Peppering your speech with buzzwords is sometimes unavoidable, especially if you're talking to an audience that truly embraces them. But try to remember that direct, concrete statements typically are the most powerful and persuasive.

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Message from our Sponsor: Professional Grace - Attracting Excellence - Maureen Tazzioli

Today's business communities are starting to feel the impact of staff shortages, and working together to attract excellence in people has executive members meeting at great length, behind closed doors. However, as individuals do we have a role to play in attracting excellence from others, or is it better if we just sit and wait for complete chaos to happen?

Having enjoyed numerous conversations from those working in various professions, I would have to say that a great number of us do enjoy the work we do, however are growing increasingly frustrated by the lack of professional grace and direction when working through daily situations. As a result those who thought they were going to stay with their employer for years are now searching for a better environment in which to work.

Creating workplace environments supportive of individual ambitions is not always easy, but there are a few key factors that may help to improve one's professional grace while at the same time attracting excellence from others.

- **Words / Attitude**

The words we choose when communicating can signal the way we feel about ourselves and those we work with. By taking the time to actively listen the attitudes of others can be revealed to us. So if you want to raise your standard of professional grace in the area of communication be willing to choose your words carefully, and watch your positive attitude become contagious.

- **Behaviours / Actions**

Just like the words we use can signal the attitudes we carry so too can our behaviours and actions signal our level of authenticity and sincerity. Whether intentional or not our behaviours and actions can be misinterpreted by others. For example, if a person indicates that they love to plan social events yet does not actively participate in the social committee at work, one might think that they are not being sincere. However, the social committee may be meeting at a time when other commitments have to take precedence, thus leaving the wrong impression. Therefore, to help increase your individual authenticity be sure to express in words only those things to which your behaviours and actions will match. You know what they say...make your actions speak volumes...learn to walk the talk.

- **Self Care / Dressing for Success**

Even though our words and actions are extremely important the reality is that many of us, including myself, are being judged within seconds...that dreaded first impression. Now, if you are like me you may not care what others think about you but unfortunately their opinion of you can make the world of difference between what they expect from you and what role or job position they are willing to offer you. What's worse is that many of these premature opinions are based solely on split second appearances. So the best way I found to work within this reality is to take care of myself first so I can take

better care of others. To do this I chose to eat healthy meals, exercise and do my best to get enough sleep. Then I chose to purchase and wear suitable professional business attire that is in alignment with the direction I wish myself and my career to go. Remember, I am not changing for others, I am merely moving myself in the direction I wish to travel, and with this direction I have learned to raise my personal standard of excellence.

Maureen Tazzioli is a professional speaker, trainer, and owner of ReZultsMatter, a personal development and professional excellence business established in 2001. Maureen can be reached at 306-751-0009 or by visiting her web site at www.rezultsmatter.com. (This article is reprinted with the author's permission).