

The Chicken or the Egg?

By Maureen Tazzioli

Just imagine. It is 4:50 on a Friday afternoon, and with only ten minutes remaining before your anticipated weekend, your boss calls you into his office and asks you this question, "*What comes first the chicken or the egg?*" Surprised by this sudden and unusual question you quickly try to think of a logical answer but instead you become distracted by the time of day so you just blurt out, "*Who cares?*" With that your boss looks at you, smiles and says, "*Have a nice weekend.*" Puzzled by all of this, you turn to walk away, shaking your head in disbelief of what appeared to be a complete waste of time.

Now even though the above scenario is fictitious in nature, a few lessons can be learned. First, let's look at it from the boss' perspective. Is it possible that the boss was merely curious as to how the employee handles untimely and unrelated questions asked by others, say their customers for example? Is it possible that the boss was watching the reaction from the employee, assuming that a similar reaction may occur in front of a customer, especially if the employee feels they were inappropriately interrupted?

What about the employee's perspective. Is it possible that the employee may begin to question the hiring practices of the organization especially in the area of staffing managers? Is it possible that the employee could feel as though their boss was being completely disrespectful calling on them so late in the day to answer a question that appeared to be of no great importance or benefit?

Whether you are an employee or the boss, there may be times when you are interrupted by those eager to have their situation resolved or their questions answered. Being aware that your response and body language will be noticed here are a few suggestions to help you stay professional and effective.

- **Be honest** - Honesty is truly the best policy. By applying honesty in all of your daily interactions you will find that people are drawn more to you for that same reason. At times people may confuse honesty with pleasing others. To me, being truthfully honest about a situation or answer to a question carries more merit than trying to please someone by telling them what you think they want to hear. Remember, everyone carries a different perspective, so the best anyone can do, I believe, is to work through every interaction with complete honesty.
- **Respect the use of time** - If a customer or co-worker requires you to call them back in five minutes with a possible solution to their situation, then you should be on the telephone in exactly 5 minutes...no longer. If after 5 minutes you notice that a suitable solution has not been reached, still contact them as previously agreed upon, then offer a more realistic time frame. I know for myself the biggest challenge I face is when I require the expertise from a third party that may place my inquiry on a different priority list. Therefore, it is better to work with time on your side, be respectful of time and use it wisely.
- **Enjoy life as it comes** - When difficulties arise and your patience is being pushed to the limits, remember that life continues to happen whether we are ready for it or not. So give yourself a breather, do what you can to enjoy your life right now. Take 10 - 15 minutes to go for a brisk walk outside. Change your focus by reading the latest business magazine or a chapter from your favorite book. If those are not options available to you, then let your imagination wonder...picture yourself winning the next big lottery or taking a great vacation with all of your friends or family members. Either way, it is important to stop dwelling on a situation that has the potential of draining your personal energies and effectiveness, instead spend some time on yourself, rejuvenating your personal energies and revisit the situation when you are refreshed. Chances are with a refreshed attitude about yourself; your perspective on the situation may also change.

(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).