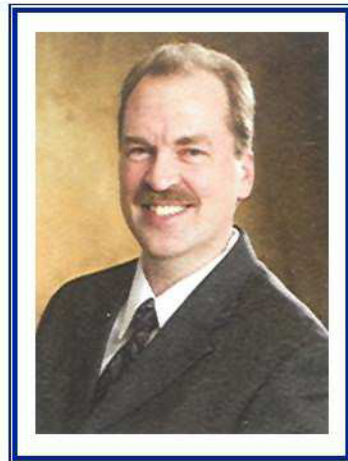


# 2012

## Real **Life** Management

with **Wes Friesen**



As featured in

**Mailing**  
systems technology

# Real Life Management

## Are You a Theory X or a Theory Y Leader?

*"In the past, a leader was a boss. Today's leaders must be partners with their people... they can no longer lead based solely on position power." – Ken Blanchard*

Want to be a more effective leader? Understanding and properly applying the Theory X/Y leadership model will help. Let's take a look at where Theory X/Y came from and how we can apply it to be better leaders.

### Roots and Explanation of Theory X & Y

The theory X and Y leadership model was developed 50 years ago – and has stood the test of time and been validated by modern research. The model was proposed by social psychologist Douglas McGregor in his classic book *The Human Side of Enterprise*. McGregor's model suggests that there are two fundamental approaches to managing people. Many managers tend towards Theory X, and generally get poor results – especially over the longer term. Enlightened managers mostly use Theory Y, which produces better performance and results and allows people to grow and develop.

Let's look at these two competing leadership philosophies:

**Theory X (authoritative and traditional style).** Theory X managers assume that people are lazy, don't want to work and it is the job of the manager to force or coerce them to work. People are viewed as a "cost" that must be monitored and controlled. It is based on three basic assumptions:

1. The average person inherently dislikes work and will avoid it if at all possible.
2. Most people have to be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened to get them to work towards organizational goals.
3. The average person prefers to be directed, avoids responsibility, isn't ambitious and simply seeks security.

In practice, Theory X managers tend to be autocratic and controlling, and feel it is up to them to ride people and make them do their work (i.e. managers are "policemen"). These managers tend to micro-manage, be extremely task oriented and not put much emphasis on building positive relationships. Little emphasis is shown towards developing a positive work environment, and recognition and appreciation would be rare. People working for these managers tend to be motivated by fear and feel unappreciated.

**Theory Y (dignified and enlightened style).** Theory Y managers assume people will perform well if treated positively and that higher order needs dominate most individuals. People are viewed as "assets" that should be valued and developed. It is based on six basic assumptions:

1. The physical and mental effort of work is as natural as play, so the average person does not inherently dislike work.
2. People will exercise self-direction and self-control in order to achieve objectives.
3. Rewards of satisfaction and self-actualization come from the effort to achieve objectives.
4. The average person learns not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
5. Most people have a capacity for imagination, ingenuity and creativity.
6. The intellectual potential of most people is only partially realized.

In practice, Theory Y managers tend to be participative when making decisions and value both Results and Relationships. These managers tend to delegate and empower their people because they trust them and feel they will do good work (i.e. managers are "coaches"). Priorities will be given to developing positive work environments and expressing regular recognition and appreciation. These managers will also feel that people are important and worth developing. People working for these managers tend to feel appreciated and dignified and will generally have good morale and feel motivated.

### Applying Theory Y

Modern research and your own life experiences validate that, generally speaking, the Theory Y leadership style will lead to better results – both for your people and you as a manager. It is important to determine which style of leadership you want to follow – then do it! It can be valuable to get regular feedback through direct questions, surveys and third parties to assess how effective your leadership style is. The bottom line is that most people will respond positively to a Theory Y leadership approach – and it's up to us to provide it!

With Wes Friesen



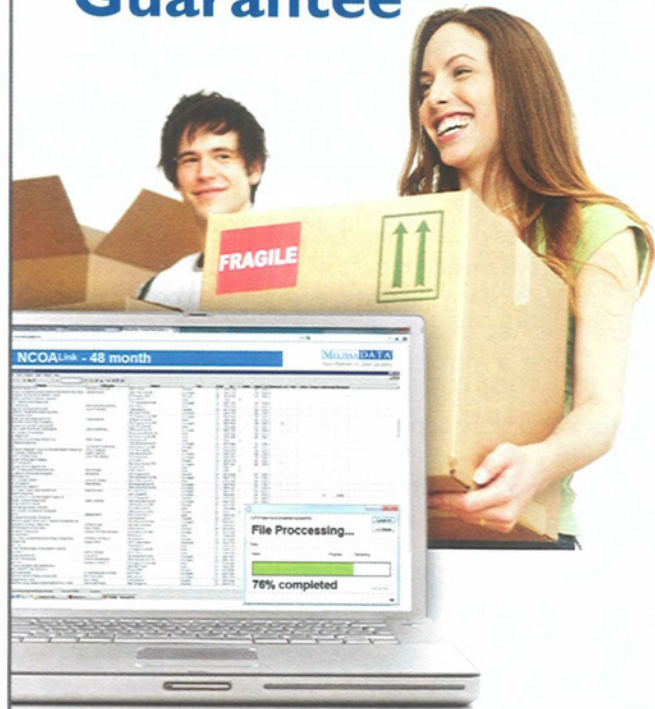
Let's get specific – how do we practice Theory Y management? Here are a few pointers:

- ▶ **Vision and Expectations:** Paint a positive vision of a better future, and be clear about expectations. Express your confidence in your team to be great. I like this quote from John Steinbeck: "It is the nature of man to rise to greatness if greatness is expected of him."
- ▶ **Leadership approach:** Be a servant leader, not a "serve me" leader. Minimize differences between the management-staff relationship.
- ▶ **Planning & Decision Making:** Be participative, not autocratic. Seek and listen to input from your team members.
- ▶ **Communication:** Err on the side of over communication versus under communication. Be honest, realistic and positive – and be a good listener too.
- ▶ **Control:** It is important to have policies, procedures and work standards in place so people know how to do their work. But avoid being over-controlling and micro-managing the work. Showing trust in your people will lead to higher morale and motivation. Also, encourage your people to share their ideas and use their ingenuity and creativity to do the work smarter and better serve your team's stakeholders.
- ▶ **Recognition:** Work on providing regular informal and formal recognition and appreciation. One recent study found that the ratio of positive (appreciative) statements to constructive statements should be at least 5:1 to maximize relationships and motivation.

Let me close with a quote from Sam Walton. "Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish." Good luck as you apply the Theory Y approach and help your people and teams achieve their potential! ■

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, EMCM, MQC, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Revenue Collection & Community Offices for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 820,000 customers. Wes teaches university classes and is a featured speaker at national Conferences like National Postal Forum, MailCom, FUSION and others. Wes can be contacted at [Wes.Friesen@pgn.com](mailto:Wes.Friesen@pgn.com). Check out his personal web-site for free information ([wesfriesen.com](http://wesfriesen.com)).

# Automated NCOALink® with Low-Price Guarantee



Updating your customers' addresses with the latest change-of-address information is now faster and easier than ever! Melissa Data offers fully-automated 48-month USPS® NCOALink via an FTP server. Our service is for everyone – from 100,000 to 1 billion records a year, and no software is required.

Request a quote at  
[MelissaData.com/mst-auto](http://MelissaData.com/mst-auto)  
or call 1-800-MELISSA

**MELISSA DATA**  
Your Partner in Data Quality

Melissa Data is a nonexclusive NCOALink Full Service Provider Licensee of the USPS. Prices for Melissa Data products and services are not established, controlled, or approved by the USPS or the United States Government. The following trademarks are owned by the USPS®: NCOALink and USPS. AD#2.11. The following trademark is owned by Canada Post Corporation®: NCOA.

# Real Life Management

## What Kind of Leader Are You?

How do we transform diverse individuals into powerful, high-performing teams? One useful tool is to learn and put into practice the Leadership (aka Managerial) Grid model.

### What is the Leadership (Managerial) Grid Model?

The Leadership Grid model is a behavioral leadership model developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton years ago and validated by researchers and leaders today. This model identifies five different leadership styles based on the concern for people (relationships) and the concern for production (results). The optimal leadership style in this model is based on Theory Y, which I wrote about in my last column.

The Leadership Grid is a practical and useful framework that helps you think about your leadership style. By plotting 'concern for production' against 'concern for people,' the grid highlights how placing too much emphasis in one area at the expense of the other leads to low overall productivity.

The model proposes that when both people and production concerns are high, employee engagement and productivity increases accordingly. This is often true, and it follows the ideas of Theory Y and other participative management theories.

The Leadership Grid is based on two behavioral dimensions:

- ▶ **Concern for People (Relationships)** — This is the degree to which a leader considers the needs of team members, their interests, and areas of personal development when deciding how best to accomplish a task.
- ▶ **Concern for Production (Results)** — This is the degree to which a leader emphasizes concrete objectives, organizational efficiency and high productivity when deciding how best to accomplish a task. Using the axis to plot leadership 'concerns for production' versus 'concerns for people,' Blake and Mouton defined the following five leadership styles:

### The Leadership Styles of the Model

The model is represented as a grid with concern for production as the x-axis and concern for people as the y-axis; each axis ranges from 1 (Low) to 9 (High). The resulting leadership styles are as follows:

#### Country Club Leadership — High People/Low Production (1,9)

This style of leader is most concerned about the needs and feelings of members of his/her team. These leaders operate under the assumption that as long as team members are happy and secure then they will work hard. What tends to result is a work environment that is very relaxed and fun but where production suffers due to lack of direction and control.

#### Produce or Perish Leadership — High Production/Low People (9,1)

Also known as Authoritarian or Compliance leaders, people in this category believe that employees are simply a means to an end. Employee needs are always secondary to the need for efficient and productive workplaces. This type of leader is very autocratic, has strict work rules, policies, and procedures, and views punishment as the most effective means to motivate employees. This dictatorial style lines up with McGregor's Theory X.

#### Impoverished Leadership — Low Production/Low People (1,1)

This leader is very ineffective. He/she has neither a high regard for creating systems for getting the job done, nor for creating a work environment that is satisfying and motivating. The result is a place of disorganization, dissatisfaction and disharmony.

Managers use this style to preserve job and job seniority, protecting themselves by avoiding getting into trouble. The main concern for the manager is not to be held responsible for any mistakes, which results in less innovative decisions.

#### Middle-of-the-Road Leadership — Medium Production/Medium People (5,5)

This style seems to be a balance of the two competing concerns. It may at first appear to be an ideal compromise. Therein lies the problem, though: when you compromise, you necessarily give away a bit of each concern so that neither production nor people needs are fully met. Leaders who use this style settle for average performance and often believe that this is the most anyone can expect.

#### Team Leadership — High Production/High People (9,9)

Also now known as "Transformational Leader." According to the model, this is the pinnacle of managerial style and lines up with the Theory Y approach. These leaders stress production needs and the needs of the people equally highly. The premise here is that employees are involved in understanding organizational purpose and determining production needs. When employees are committed to, and have a stake in the organization's success, their needs and production needs coincide. This creates a team environment based on trust and respect, which leads to high satisfaction and motivation and, as a result, high production.

The "Transformational Leader" according to leadership researcher Bernard Bass:

- ▶ Is a model of integrity and fairness.
- ▶ Sets clear goals; has high expectations.
- ▶ Encourages; provides support and recognition.
- ▶ Stirs people's positive emotions.

With Wes Friesen



- ▶ Gets people to look beyond their self-interest.
- ▶ Inspires people to reach for the improbable.

### Applying the Leadership Grid

Being aware of the various approaches is the first step in understanding and improving how well you perform as a manager. It is important to understand how you currently operate, so that you can then identify ways of becoming competent in both realms.

#### Step One: Identify your leadership style

- ▶ Think of some recent situations where you were the leader.
- ▶ For each of these situations, place yourself in the grid according to where you believe you fit. You can also solicit input from people who have worked with you.

#### Step Two: Identify areas of improvement and develop your leadership skills

- Look at your current leadership method and critically analyze its effectiveness.
- Look at ways you can improve. Are you settling for 'middle of the road' because it is easier than reaching for more?
- Identify ways to get the skills you need to reach the Team (Transformational) Leadership position. These may include involving others in problem solving or improving how you communicate with them, if you feel you are too task-oriented. Or it may mean becoming clearer about scheduling or monitoring project progress if you tend to focus too much on people.
- Continually monitor your performance and watch for situations when you slip back into bad old habits.

#### Step Three: Put the Grid in Context

It is important to recognize that although the Team Leadership style is generally the most effective leadership approach, there are times that call for more attention in one area than another. If your team is in the midst of a merger or some other significant change, it is often acceptable to place a higher emphasis on people than on production. Likewise, when faced with an economic hardship or physical risk, people concerns may be placed on the back burner, for the short-term at least, to achieve high productivity and efficiency.

I like this quote from Tony Dungy: "The secret to success is good leadership, and good leadership is about making the lives of your team members better." ■

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, EMCM, MQC, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Revenue Collection & Community Offices for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 820,000 customers. Check out his personal website for free information ([www.wesfriesen.com](http://www.wesfriesen.com)).

# FIRE UP YOUR MAILING SOFTWARE!



For a limited time, we are cutting prices and offering **FREE Amazon Kindles or Kindle Fires** with every new purchase of either **SmartAddresser 5** or **AccuMail frameworks Mailers Edition** bundles.

Priced from just **\$1995**, you'll not only get fully certified mailing software, you'll also get **unlimited NCOALink** processing, **powerful deduplication** tools, **free support** for the life of your subscription and so much more.

To find out more about this great offer, scan the QR code below or visit our website for more info.



For more details, visit  
[www.smartsoftusa.com/kindle.html](http://www.smartsoftusa.com/kindle.html)



To request a demo, call  
888-227-7221 or email  
[sales@smartsoftusa.com](mailto:sales@smartsoftusa.com)

# Real Life Management

## Happiness: The Fuel to Success and Performance

Want to provide the fuel to drive your team to higher levels of success and performance? The fuel is **happiness**. Ground breaking research in the fields of positive psychology and neuroscience has shown that happiness is the precursor to success — not merely the result. And happiness and optimism actually fuel performance and achievement.

How do scientists define “happiness?” Scientists boil down happiness to the experience of positive emotions — *pleasure* combined with deeper feelings of *meaning* and *purpose*. Happiness implies a positive mood now and a positive outlook for the future. Franklin Roosevelt had the basic idea when he said, “Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.”

### How Can We Increase Happiness and Create a More Positive Mindset?

Over 200 studies on over 275,000 people worldwide found that happiness leads to success in nearly every domain — including the mail industry! Research has found that our brains are hardwired to perform best when they are in a positive state, not negative or even neutral. How do we build more happiness into our lives and the lives of our team members? Here are some ideas that we can use ourselves and share with our team members (from Dr. Shawn Achor’s excellent book *The Happiness Advantage*):

**Meditate/Pray:** Research has shown that a few minutes per day of regular meditation can permanently rewire the brain to raise levels of happiness.

**Find Something to Look Forward To:** We know that often the most enjoyable part of any special activity is the anticipation. One study found that people who just thought about watching their favorite movie actually raised their endorphin levels by 27%. If you can’t take the time out right now for a vacation or a special night out with friends, put something on the calendar, even if it’s weeks out. Then whenever you need a boost of happiness, remind yourself about it (I know this works — I just thought ahead to my summer vacation with my family and I feel instantly happier!).

**Commit Conscious Acts of Kindness:** Research has shown that acts of *intentional* altruism (kindness) decrease stress and strongly contribute to enhanced mental health. You can try this for yourself by picking one day where you intentionally complete five acts of kindness. You may be surprised at your increased level of happiness — and the recipients of your kindness will feel happier too!

**Infuse Positivity into Your Surroundings:** Our physical environment can have a significant impact on our mindset and sense of well-being. We can intentionally infuse our work areas with images that spark positive emotions — pictures of family and friends and pets, and reminders of our favorite sports teams or special experiences in our lives. Making time to go outside on a nice day is also uplifting — and one study found that spending 20 minutes outside in good weather not only boosted positive mood, but also broadened thinking and improved memory.

We can also change our surroundings to minimize negative emotions. A good place to start is to watch less TV. Studies have shown that the less TV we watch (especially violent and negative programs), the happier we are.

**Exercise and Physical Activity:** Exercise releases pleasure-inducing chemicals called endorphins and has other benefits. Physical activity can boost mood, improve motivation and feelings of mastery, reduce stress and anxiety, and help us get into a flow of engagement and productivity. One landmark study on depressed people showed that exercise was just as effective as anti-depressants in the short run, and in the long run, exercise was significantly more effective.

**Spend Money (but not on Stuff):** Research has shown that money spent on activities (e.g. group dinners, concerts, sporting events) brought far more pleasure than material purchases like shoes, TVs, or expensive watches. Spending money on other people also boosts happiness.

**Exercise Signature Strength:** Studies have shown that the more we use our signature strengths, the happier we become. We all have multiple things that we are good at. Each time we use a skill we are good at, we experience a burst of positivity. If you need a happiness booster, try using a talent you have not used for awhile.

Researchers have found that exercising strength of character is even more fulfilling than using a skill. A team of psychologists have identified 24 character strengths that most contribute to human flourishing. They developed a 240-question survey that identifies a person’s top five “signature strengths” (you can take this survey for free; go to [www.viasurvey.org](http://www.viasurvey.org) or scan the QR code on the next page). In a study volunteers were asked to pick one of their signature strengths and use it in a new way each day for a week. These volunteers became significantly happier and less depressed than control groups. And these heightened levels of happiness remained six months later when re-examined.

With Wes Friesen



### Motivating Your Team

The best managers use the Happiness Advantage as a means to motivate their teams and maximize individual and team potential. Research has shown that even small moments of positivity in the workplace can enhance efficiency, creativity, motivation, and productivity. One way to do this simply is to provide frequent recognition and encouragement. One study found that teams with encouraging managers performed 31% better than teams with managers who were less positive and less open with praise! Recognition can take many forms — verbal thanks, complimentary emails, written notes, and can include meaningful tokens of appreciation like gift cards, certificates of appreciation, or food.

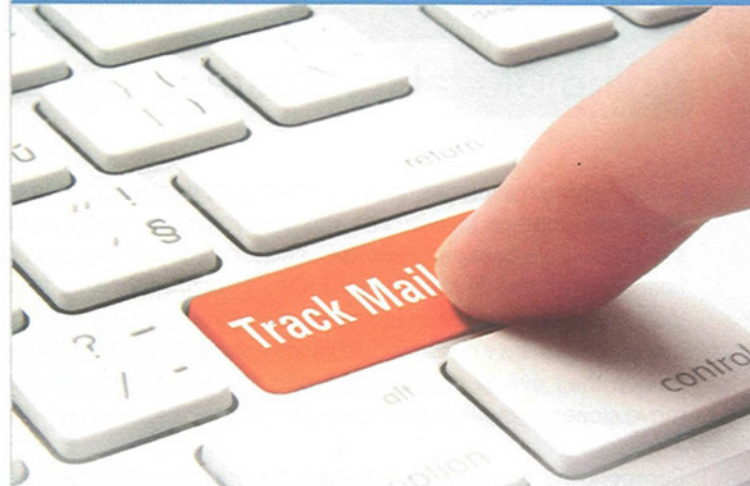
Let me close with this perspective from Eleanor Roosevelt: "Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give." One of the great privileges we have as managers is to help bring increased happiness into the lives of our team members. It will benefit them individually — and spark the team to new levels of performance.

Good luck to you as you use the fuel of happiness to drive yourself and your team to higher levels of success! ■



**TAKE THE SURVEY**  
[www.viasurvey.org](http://www.viasurvey.org)

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, EMCM, MQC, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Revenue Collection & Community Offices for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 820,000 customers. Wes teaches university classes and is a featured speaker at national Conferences like National Postal Forum, MailCom, FUSION and others. He manages the bill presentation and payment processing teams with the able assistance of supervisors Eric Houger, Tom Laszlo, Gil Rodriguez and Rick VanBeek. Wes can be contacted at [Wes.Friesen@pgn.com](mailto:Wes.Friesen@pgn.com). Check out his personal website for free information ([www.wesfriesen.com](http://www.wesfriesen.com)).



## Your Tracking Data. Transformed.

### Introducing EasyTrack

Use EasyTrack to gain valuable visibility of a mailing as it passes through the USPS® mail stream. Automatically collect raw scan data and assemble it into actionable information. Accurately predict delivery dates, pinpoint the location of a single mail piece and improve your business.

- Proactively identify and resolve potential delivery problems
- Coordinate direct mail programs with more accurate delivery dates
- Ensure vendors are performing as contracted
- Improve customer satisfaction — easily share charts and reports

### Improve your mailing operation

Call **1-800-553-6477** to learn more about the EasyTrack add-on service.



**Satori Software**

[www.satorissoftware.com](http://www.satorissoftware.com)

©2012 Satori Software Inc. All rights reserved. Satori Software, Bulk Mailer and MailRoom Toolkit are registered trademarks of Satori Software Inc. The following trademarks are owned by USPS: First-Class Mail, Standard Mail and USPS.

# Real Life Management

## Conferences: Your Secret Weapon for Management Success

As I write this, I am preparing to speak and attend the Fall MAILCOM conference ([www.mailcom-conference.com](http://www.mailcom-conference.com)). Previously this year, I have spoken at and attended the National Postal Forum, Spring MAILCOM, and a couple of conferences. I and others have found that the “secret weapon” to being a successful manager in our industry is to attend conferences and draw deeply from the potential value they bring.

Getting the approval to attend important conferences like MAILCOM and National Postal Forum has always been challenging — even more so under the current economic conditions. But actively participating in conferences is a key to success for you as a professional in the mail industry, and it is important to the success of your organization. So how can you obtain approval to attend conferences?

### Keys to Getting Approval to Attend Conferences

Approval often comes down to the ROI to your organization — are the benefits worth the costs? Before discussing benefits, let's start with the costs. There are ways to lower the cost to attend. First, if you are a Mail Systems Management Association (MSMA) member, you qualify for a MSMA discount for the MAILCOM conference. Both MAILCOM and National Postal Forum offer a discount for early registration.

Second, you can shop around for the least expensive transportation method. Attendees will often double up on rooms to cut that cost. I know of a number of attendees that will offer to pay some or all of the travel costs out of their pockets. People that do that look at it as an investment in their careers — and it shows your management chain how committed you are to developing yourself and adding value to your organization.

The biggest key to getting approval is to explain the return (benefits) to you and your organization. Here are some benefits that you can tailor to your own situation:

**1)** Learning ways to reduce costs and improve efficiency. You will learn updated information on how to minimize postage and shipping costs, and you will also learn ideas to improve the efficiency of your operations. I have seen my organization and others save thousands and even millions of dollars via learning and implementing work share postal discounts, shape-based pricing, targeted mailing, cleaner addressing and reduction of undeliverable mail, intelligent/selective inserting, full-service intelligent mail discounts, applying QR 2D barcodes, implementing six sigma and lean principles — the list goes on and on.

**2)** Learning best practices and Ideas for process improvements. You will learn the best practices of the country's leading high-

performance organizations from the industry's top experts, peers, and vendors in the exhibit hall. You will also hear ideas about process improvements that can drive improved efficiency, effectiveness, and quality. You will learn how to improve quality and have more sustainable operations and eliminate waste. Included can be practical tips related to billing, work flow, job design, process analysis, and ergonomics.

**3)** Learn about the latest technology and automation and other tools. MAILCOM and National Postal Forum are great sources to hear about the latest relevant technology from the speakers, peers, and vendors. I and others have seen significant cost savings and improved operations from wise investments in equipment and software. Here is the chance to see what might be of value to your organization. You can visit the exhibit hall and expand your list of vendor and supplier contacts for current and future reference.

**4)** Build a strong network and support group. MAILCOM and National Postal Forum provide an opportunity to meet the industry's top leaders and experts first hand. One of the great features of these conferences is how approachable the speakers are. Also, there are many opportunities to network with peers from around the country — and then to build your own professional support group.

**5)** Become inspired to succeed. The keynote and seminar speakers will inspire you to push even harder to help your organization to be more successful. MAILCOM and National Postal Forum are noted for their wide selection of seminars, including those aimed at our personal and leadership development.

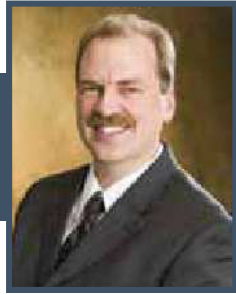
**6)** Add more value to your key stakeholders. The investors of your organization will benefit from the cost savings and efficiencies that you adopt. In addition, you can learn ways to add more value to your customers and improve customer satisfaction and favorability.

MAILCOM and National Postal Forum also offer a number of sessions geared to leadership and management best practices, as well as proven ways to provide more positive work environments for your employees that will drive improved morale, motivation, and performance.

**7)** Improve your credibility within the industry and your organization. You will learn important information that will benefit you personally — and your organization. As you go home and apply what you know, you will gain greater respect and recognition. In addition, you can earn one or two professional certificates while at MAILCOM and National Postal Forum. And, at MAILCOM you can take advan-



*With Wes Friesen*



7) Improve your credibility within the industry and your organization. You will learn important information that will benefit you personally — and your organization. As you go home and apply what you know, you will gain greater respect and recognition. In addition, you can earn one or two professional certificates while at MAILCOM and National Postal Forum. And, at MAILCOM you can take advantage of the opportunity to earn the professional certifications sponsored by MSMA, including the MDC: Mailpiece Design Consultant; CMDSM: Certified Mail Distribution System Manager; or CMDSS: Certified Mail Distribution Systems Suppliers. Note: for more information about these programs, visit [www.msmanational.org](http://www.msmanational.org).

8) Become a teacher, inspire others, and build a stronger team. With all the learning, networking, and inspiration you receive, you will be equipped to go back home and inspire and teach others. This will be rewarding to you — and your team!

One final tip: if you do attend MAILCOM and National Postal Forum, make sure you prepare a written report and share with your boss and team. Also do a verbal presentation of the key highlights from your report and let your excitement about what you gained at the conference show through.

Good luck as you pursue getting approval to join me at future conferences like MAILCOM and National Postal Forum! ■

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, EMCM, MDC, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Billing, Credit and Special Attention Operations for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 825,000 customers. Wes is also the Marketing Director for Mail Systems Management Association ([msmanational.org](http://msmanational.org)). He teaches university classes and is a featured speaker at national Conferences like National Postal Forum, MAILCOM, and others. Wes manages the Billing, Credit and Special Attention teams with the able assistance of supervisors Garret Saiki, Allison Rowden, Jessica Eberhardt, Heidi Fouts and Tom Laszlo. Wes can be contacted at [Wes.Friesen@pgn.com](mailto:Wes.Friesen@pgn.com). Check out his personal web-site for free information ([www.wesfriesen.com](http://www.wesfriesen.com)).

# Join us!

Join Mailing Systems Technology's LinkedIn group! You can connect with other professionals, comment on discussions, or even start your own. It's fast, convenient, and free. Join today; we look forward to connecting with you!

**Mailing**  
systems technology



**Linked in**

# Real Life Management

## Communication: An Overlooked Key to Management Success

Communication effectiveness is important to our success as managers. Unfortunately, our perception of our communication effectiveness often does not line up with reality.

One of the great management experts of our time has been Dr. Steven Covey, who tragically passed away recently as a result of a motorcycle accident. Dr. Covey illustrated our communication shortcomings in a poll he referenced in his book *The 8th Habit*. There was a poll of 23,000 employees drawn from a number of companies and industries — here are the disappointing findings:

- ▶ Only 37% said they have a clear understanding of what their organization is trying to achieve and why.
- ▶ Only one in five was enthusiastic about their team's and their organization's goals.
- ▶ Only one in five said they had a clear "line of sight" between their tasks and their team's and organization's goals.
- ▶ Only 15% felt that their organization fully enables them to execute key goals.
- ▶ Only 20% fully trusted the organization they work for.

To put the numbers in context, Covey uses a simple metaphor of a soccer team. He says, "If a soccer team had these same scores, only four of the 11 players on the field would know which goal is theirs. Only two of the 11 would care. Only two of the 11 would know what position they play and know exactly what they are supposed to do. And all but two players would, in some way, be competing against their own team members rather than the opponent."

Clearly our communication effectiveness is often deficient. What can we do to get better? I'm glad you asked! Following are seven keys to help us communicate more effectively:

**1) Get Personal.** I resonate with the John Maxwell quote: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." To communicate effectively, we need to develop meaningful relationships with people and have candid two-way communications. And it's helpful to personalize our communication and explain our messages in terms that people can understand and relate to. This is especially important when trying to communicate vision, goals, and values.

**2) Get Specific.** Specificity is better than ambiguity whenever possible. Learn to communicate with clarity. Simple and concise is always better than complicated and confusing. We are all very busy — so learning to cut to the chase and hitting the high points is important. Let's weed out the superfluous and make our words count.

**3) Have an Open Mind.** One of Dr. Covey's important principles from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* was to "Seek to Understand, Then to Be Understood." To help us better understand, lead, and communicate better, it's valuable to listen and try to understand the opinions and ideas of others — even when at first they seem contrary to ours.

**4) Listen!** The philosopher Epictetus said, "We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." I have to confess that I still need lots of improvement in this area — what about you? Effective listening is essential if we are to be an effective communicator. One of the challenges is to really focus on what the other person is saying — not worrying about our next words. The quote by Rochefoucauld applies: "We never listen when we are eager to speak."

**5) Replace Ego with Empathy.** Nobody really cares about what arrogant leaders communicate. However, when candor is communicated with empathy and caring and not over-inflated ego, good things will often happen. As since we live in an often harsh world, kind words are well received. Mother Teresa said it well: "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

**6) Know What You Are Talking About.** Credibility is important in our communications. People know when we are blowing smoke. It's fine to admit we don't know something, but it's not fine to pretend to be an expert when we are not.

**7) Apply the 5 "Bs".** I ran across the following tips from Mari-Liza Backstrom that I think can help us be more effective communicators:

**Body Language:** Pay attention to a person's body language — one study claims that 55% of communication comes from body language, and only seven percent from the words themselves.

**Background:** It is important to understand the background and perspective of the other person (includes experiences, culture, education, origin, etc.).

**Backtrack:** To help ensure we understand what the other person means — just ask them! Keep asking and repeating back what you think you heard until you understand clearly.

**Beyond Words:** Pay attention to the context of the words, and check out facts and circumstances if there are any doubts about the validity of what you think you heard.

With Wes Friesen



*"The single biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place." George Bernard Shaw*

**Body Tools:** This emphasizes that God made us with TWO ears and only ONE mouth for a reason. The saying "the fish die by the mouth" reminds us that those who speak too much and too soon often end up trapped by their own speech.

**Use wisely your "listening machine" body tools:**

- ▶ Listen with your ears! Pay attention to words and tone and what is not being said.
- ▶ Listen with your eyes! Pay attention to body language and circumstances.
- ▶ Listen with your mind! Pay attention to a person's background and backtrack as needed.
- ▶ Listen with your heart! Compassion and kindness will enhance two-way communication.

Let me close with a quote from Nitin Nohria, who said, "Communication is the real work of leadership." Good luck to you as you intentionally work on being a more effective communicator — which in turn will help you be a more effective leader and manager! ■

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, EMCM, MDC, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Billing, Credit & Special Attention Operations for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 825,000 customers. Wes teaches university classes and is a featured speaker at national Conferences like National Postal Forum, MAILCOM, FUSION and others. Wes can be contacted at [Wes.Friesen@pgn.com](mailto:Wes.Friesen@pgn.com). Check out his website, [www.wesfriesen.com](http://www.wesfriesen.com).

## Look to the cloud for easy mail list processing

Saves You Time & Money

### A:Qua Mailer™

- Online interface
- USPS® certified processing services
- Replaces desktop mailing software

Contact us for 6 months free processing!

### A:Qua Command™

- Fully automated
- Fits seamlessly into your workflow
- Replaces enterprise mailing software

Contact us for a one month free trial!



[www.lortondata.com/AQMC](http://www.lortondata.com/AQMC) 651.203.8290

USPS is a registered trademark of the United States Postal Service® AD #3.11



Visit us at Graph Expo Booth #4719

# Real Life Management

## Are You A Trustworthy Manager?

*"To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved."*

George MacDonald

We face an ongoing challenge to building a trustworthy team that reliably serves our key stakeholders. The starting place to building a trustworthy team is to have it led by a trustworthy leader — you! How can we develop a higher level of trustworthiness for ourselves and our teams? Let me share some ideas, largely based on the work of Dr. Robert Hurley — a highly respected professor, consultant, and former manager.

### Six Keys to Building Trustworthiness

1) **Create similarities:** establish common values and a common identity. Research has shown that we tend to trust people we think are similar to us and share our values. High-trust leaders and high-trust organizations create bonds of trust by developing and gaining commitment to common values and beliefs.

My company (Portland General) years ago established a core set of values that we call "Guiding Behaviors." These shared values have served us well over the years and saw us through challenging times such as the collapse of our one-time parent company — Enron. Here are PGE's "Guiding Behaviors:"

Be Accountable  
Dignify People  
Earn Trust  
Team Behavior  
Positive Attitude  
Make the Right Thing Happen

Another tactic to build a common identity is to encourage people on your team to know each other as people — not just as professionals. Look for common experiences and interests that can help build a sense of camaraderie.

2) **Align interests** with those whose trust you want. It is much easier to trust people that we feel will serve our interests. When interests are well aligned, it is much easier to trust. To build trust, start by clarifying and aligning stakeholder interests and promote those interests in a fair manner.

3) Develop **benevolent concern**. People tend to trust those that care about their welfare — those that demonstrate a benevo-

lent character. If you want to earn trust, demonstrate that you will do the right things for others even if it puts you at risk. John Maxwell was right on when he said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Jim Collins in his classic book *Good to Great* refers to the most effective leaders as "Level 5." Level 5 leaders are driven and at the same time humble. Their motivation is not self-gratification but building an organization bigger than themselves. Being devoted to others and to a larger mission at one's own expense breeds trust and loyalty.

4) Develop and demonstrate **capability** to deliver on your promises. We need to deliver on our commitments to develop trustworthiness. Want to earn trust? Prove that you can reliably deliver on promises and don't make promises that you cannot keep. Remember the principle of "under promising and over delivering."

People are looking for leaders that know where they are going, and can instill confidence that the team can be successful if they stay focused. To build confidence and trust a leader must:

- ▶ Think strategically about the future and anticipate change.
- ▶ Break changes down into manageable initiatives that can be implemented over time.
- ▶ Stay focused and execute.
- ▶ Mobilize groups of people in a change process.
- ▶ Develop and maintain good relationships.

An important element of maintaining trust is to be self-aware and humble. When leaders are comfortable enough to acknowledge areas where they are not competent and then delegate and empower others to compensate they build trust.

5) Create a track record of **predictability** and **integrity**. To earn trust we must have a predictable pattern in how we act. An important part of predictability is integrity — honoring your word. High-trust managers always try to honor their word — and if they fail to do so they apologize and make sure it does not become a habit. Integrity also includes always doing the right thing — even if it costs you personally. As respected Senator Alan K. Simpson said, "If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters."

With Wes Friesen



6) **Communicate** — and do it clearly and openly. I appreciate the advice I received from Portland General's highly respected CEO Peggy Fowler several years ago. She said there were three keys to being a great leader and manager: 1) Communication, 2) Communication and 3) Guess what? Communication.

As a general principle it is better to over communicate versus to under communicate. If we fail to communicate adequately the gap is filled by the grapevine (i.e. rumor mill) — and the rumor mill is invariably negative and demoralizing. Here are Dr. Hurley's five keys to being a trustworthy communicator:

- ▶ Share information
- ▶ Tell the truth
- ▶ Admit mistakes
- ▶ Give and receive constructive feedback
- ▶ Maintain confidentiality

Our teams will better serve our stakeholders if operating in a culture of trustworthiness. The key to developing a culture of trust is for us as leaders to be trustworthy ourselves. The road to being trustworthy is not always an easy one, but it's the right one for us to be on. Good luck to you as you pursue building greater trustworthiness in your team and in you as the leader! ■

Wes Friesen, MBA, CMDSM, MDC, EMCM, ICP, CCM, CMA, CM, CFM, APP, PHR is the Manager of Billing, Credit and Special Attention Operations for Portland General Electric, a utility in Portland, Oregon that serves over 825,000 customers. Wes teaches university classes and is a featured speaker at national Conferences like MAILCOM, National Postal Forum, FUSION and others. Wes would love to hear your feedback and article ideas and can be contacted at [Wes.Friesen@pgn.com](mailto:Wes.Friesen@pgn.com). Check out his personal website for free information at [www.wesfriesen.com](http://www.wesfriesen.com).

## So Yesterday.



## So Today.

### A·Qua Mailer™

#### Cloud-based mail data processing

- Online interface
- USPS® certified processing services
- Replaces desktop mailing software

Contact us for special pricing!



[www.lortondata.com/AQMtoday](http://www.lortondata.com/AQMtoday) 651.203.8290

USPS is a registered trademark of the United States Postal Service® AD #3.11