



**The Blake Group**  
Organizational Consulting LLC

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## July 2013 Newsletter

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Thanks for reading.

## 12 Steps to Improve Communication & Quality

“The biggest problem with leadership communication is the illusion that it has occurred.”  
Boyd Clarke & Ron Crossland, *The Leaders Voice*™

**Summer** -- what better time to reflect on what's working and what needs work, for example; *communication*. Every year and managers rank it as one of the top 10 issues. In many cases, we know we need help with communication because problems have already crop up:

- Profits are down because information and resources weren't shared;
- Coworkers are resisting the path of change;
- Supervisors don't know how to interact with employees or tap into strengths; or
- Opportunities for real improvement are missed because of ineffective or non-existent performance management and evaluation meetings.

For example, The Blake Group's work with a client clearly showed that due to miscommunication and conflict they were losing \$16,320 per week. Taking a proactive approach helps to eliminate communication problems before they happen -- and eliminate the hidden costs of fixing problems.

The following is adapted from: *Leading the Total Quality Mission: aligning principles, practices and management*, by Orlando Blake, Ph.D. CPT. Available from **Get To The Point Books** for \$12.95.

1. **Define policies and objectives.** Ensure they are understood and accepted. You can work on the clarity of your organizational vision and purpose by asking a few basic questions:
  - Does the way we define the business pull us together in a way that makes sense?
  - Does the way we define the business concentrate on real opportunities for the years ahead?
  - Do our strategies make sense for our company and our times?
  - Do our strategies provide us the right direction?
  - Do our objectives clearly state our key targets?
  - Do our objectives specify success measures?
2. **Specify roles and responsibilities.** Each employee must take responsibility for the work he or she performs. It is management's obligation to ensure employees understand what is being asked of them.
3. **Specify and communicate expectations.** Before taking responsibility for their work, employees must possess 1) knowledge of management's expectations, 2) knowledge of why the task is being performed, and 3) empowerment to carry out assigned tasks.
4. **Strive to improve.** Management creates an environment that encourages employees to improve the quality of the work and work processes. Employees must consistently seek new, more innovative ways to increase quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
5. **Invest in your people.** Employees should be afforded the appropriate education and training, including professional development and on-the-job training.
6. **Ensure the right people have the right information at the right time.** Make information needed to make decisions available to employees when they need it.
7. **Seek and use relevant experience.** Make use of information, such as lessons learned, which could potentially affect operations.
8. **Plan and control work.** This requires that needs be thought out, organizational goals be identified,

<p>Forward this to your friends and colleagues.</p>	<p>lines of communication be established, and required resources (human and other) are provided.</p> <p>9. <b>Use the right material, tools, and processes.</b> Management ensures that the right material, tools, and processes are in place.</p> <p>10. <b>Assess work to ensure it meets expectations.</b> The assessments, measured against defined standards, are performed by competent individuals who are performance-oriented and focused on improving product and service quality.</p> <p>11. <b>Identify and remedy errors and deficiencies.</b> Problems should be identified, documented, analyzed, and resolved. Foster a no-fault attitude with which problems are viewed as opportunities for improvement, <b>not punishment.</b></p> <p>12. <b>Management, at all levels, continually assesses its systems and processes.</b> These assessments address broad categories or management issues, such as the mission of the organization, employee understanding of management's objectives, and customer expectations.</p> <p>© 2013 Orlando E. Blake, PhD. CPT. All rights reserved.</p>
<p>Download our free Practical Interviewing (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) book.</p>	<p><b>Free Interviewing Book</b></p> <p>Could you use some help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment &amp; Selection Interviewing.</li> <li>• Performance Evaluation</li> <li>• Coaching Interview</li> <li>• Disciplinary Interview</li> <li>• Employee Complaint Interviews</li> <li>• Termination Interview</li> <li>• Problem Solving Interview</li> </ul> <p>If so, it's all here for free. <a href="#">Just click here</a> and download the PDF from the Free Resources section of The Blake Group website</p>

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