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Voice Mail

Say the Right Thing

The four-stage ethics-development process offered by authors H.B. Karp and Bob Abramms in "Doing the Right Thing" (August 1992) is a useful, practical model. But I profited less from the preceding conceptual framework, which the authors say is "simple, functional, and acceptable to anyone who wants to deal with the subject" of ethics.

I don't find the framework as simple and acceptable as do the authors. Their statement that the only ethics that are realistic and worth supporting are situational ethics is nothing more than philosophical dogmatism, despite their attempts to justify it. It's not clear in what way their examples lead to their conclusion. The authors admit that the statement is controversial, so how can it be part of a framework that is simple and acceptable to anyone?

Not everyone will accept the statement's implied ethical relativism or that "there is no such thing as a bad value." What about the value that some people are intrinsically inferior to others?

It's good that the authors took a philosophical rather than psychological approach. But it's doubtful that theirs is the best philosophical framework on which to base such a useful four-stage process for developing a code of ethics.

— **Bill Youngmark**

*Smith & Nephew
Elk Grove Village, Illinois*

Finishing Touches

The following fax message and letter are in response to our request for fashion dos and don'ts for trainers in

"Tell Us What You Think" (October 1992). Previous responses appeared in "Voice Mail" in the February 1993 issue.

Whether I'm presenting in southern California or in Chicago, I always wear a suit or straight-line dress. Styles that hide a disappearing waistline are essential.

Despite the proverbial no-no about putting one's hands in one's pockets, pocketless garments are my no-no. Where else will you keep your marker, pen, and paper clips? And, yes, I do put my hands in my pockets. The informal stance lets me be relaxed.

When at the home office, you shouldn't dress down—not when senior executives are properly clad. In nonmanufacturing settings, corporate trainers should maintain a professional look at all times. When on the road, dressing professionally keeps you from having to return to your hotel to change clothes when you're invited to dinner.

In interviews, the garment worn closest to the face is the one people remember. Choose colors that complement your skin tone. Make sure your blouse or shirt is scrupulously clean, especially at the collar line.

And check your shoe heels. A few dollars spent at the shoe repair store will help you leave a good impression as you're on your way out of the interviewer's office.

— **Helene E. Kaplan**

*"K" Line America Inc.
Murray Hill, New Jersey*

I was admonished 18 years ago by a personnel manager's assistant not to return for training while wearing slacks, but to come back "looking like a professional." I've never forgotten

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Voice Mail

that advice. It was pouring rain that morning, and I thought I'd look rather smart wearing slacks that matched the lining of my raincoat. I should have known better, having spent three years as a fashion editor.

To this day, I never wear slacks or even fashionable pantsuits for formal presentations, unless I'm working with college students. When I'm in doubt about what to wear, I remember the following advice of my haute couture friends: simplicity equals elegance. An understated look is always "in." Also, I recommend uncrushable fabric.

Your personality can show in the way you accessorize, but dangling bracelets and earrings are "out."

Male presenters should wear conservative ties and dress shirts that look fresh and crisp when they remove their jackets.

If you want to be considered a professional, you have to look like one.

—*Sybil Conrad*

Conrad Communications
Scarsdale, New York

Seams a Bit Vague

The following message to the "Voice Mail" phone line nicely combines two TUWYTs—one from October 1992, in which we asked about proper attire, and another from December 1992, about quirky office policies.

Our workplace recently instituted an informal policy about office wear that I think is kind of quirky. For example, employees can't wear city shorts, no matter how long they are and even if they're part of a suit. Also, we can't wear skirts that are too short or stirrup pants that are too tight.

The problem is that we don't know what's too short and what's too tight.

—*Name and affiliation withheld*

Customer Disservice

I was intrigued by the item "Substitute Teaching" in "New Training Tools" (October 1992). As a professional trainer, I'm always looking for new ideas.

I called Educational Technology Publications in Englewood, New

Jersey, for more information about its instructional planning book, *Thirty-Five Lesson Formats*, mentioned in NTT. The unhelpful and rude response I received prompted me to write this letter.

The man who answered my call gave no information other than to say, "It's what it says it is." I asked him to tell me about the different formats, to no avail. So I asked if I could return the book if I wasn't satisfied. He said, "You'll never be satisfied." Obviously, I didn't buy the book. And I have no idea what I didn't buy!

—*Gloria Grant*

Time Out
Olympia, Washington

Editor's note: We're very sorry you had an unpleasant experience. We've found that most companies of the products mentioned in NTT are willing and able to help readers with their questions. Thank you for letting us know about the exception.

S.O.S.

Tata Unisys—a joint venture between the house of Tatas in India and Unisys Inc. in the United States—has recently diversified into educational services. As part of that activity, we train people in computer languages, software programs, and software engineering.

We are trying to locate suitable organizations with which we can collaborate to obtain multimedia and video training aids.

Please telephone 644-4457 or fax (91)11-644-4469; or write to me at Tata Unisys, Creative 10, Masjid Moth Commercial Complex, Greater Kailash, New Delhi, India 110 048.

—*Sudipto Mukherjee*

Tata Unisys
New Delhi, India

"Voice Mail" is compiled and edited by **Haidee Allerton**. "Voice Mail" welcomes your views. Send your letters and comments to "Voice Mail," Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043; fax them to Allerton at 703/683-9203; or call them in on the "Voice Mail" line, 703/683-9590.