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Your Credibility Picture is Worth A Thousand Words

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You may ask the question, "As long as people can communicate with one another, what difference does it make whether we use language correctly or not, precisely or imprecisely. Why would we care?"

One reason is our **credibility**. Whether we like it or not, listeners subliminally "judge" us and instantly decide whether they will follow us, support our ideas, and join us, all based on what they hear. This can be career making or demolishing if we are not understood.

The impact of the language makes a huge difference! Attorneys are masters at wiggling the language to suit their cases (not suitcases!). Precision gives us a standard upon which to stand. Standards permit us a common base to share ideas and pool knowledge. Precise language paints colors on the canvas of communication and translates emotions into words. It can avert war. It can soften hatred. It can move mountains and boundaries! Ask a pharmacist or surgeon how important precise communications are so they treat the correct problems and don't amputate the wrong limb!

On the other hand—

As many strive toward crisp communications, communications are often deliberately clouded with imprecise language to hedge an issue or create sensational headlines to "sell" the news.

Misunderstandings are created with incorrect usage while humor is founded on grammatical inconsistencies. Usage leads to impressions of ourselves and our status in life. They are colored by the words we choose—do we talk or speak?

Sayings like, "The power of the printed word," and, "The pen is mightier than the sword," demonstrate the impact of the printed word to the masses and the strong motivations they stir!

Communication achieves many expressions other than verbal and written language. Morse code and light signals are an example; S.O.S. is understood worldwide. Airline pilots use English and Zulu time universally as standards to maximize safety, comprehension and understanding.

When each company sets a standard of communications, my research shows that people are less frustrated and are more likely to be productive. Why—because they know what is expected of them. They know they can meet the challenge or where to seek answers.

Presently, I've observed from senior managers to hourly employees, an inability to express what they want so they "come up empty handed." When people are continually disappointed in outcomes, futility sets in and lowers productivity. The good news is that language enhancement is a learned skill. It can be easily attained within 90 days.

The Human Connection

All types of languages are part of the social human connection.

- Visually impaired people learn body language and use their other senses to "read" without sight.

- The hearing impaired have sign language.
- Immigrants stumble through broken sentences, yet they understand enough to succeed in business in their new culture, like the Gallo wine family.
- What about the language of the heart and eyes, of touch? Words defy the strong messages transmitted by feelings.

The international Olympic Games are testimony to the language of the heart and humankind's quest for the best. What could easily become a Tower of Babel results in an exchange of compassion and camaraderie, empathy and visualization of dedication to a burning desire to excel in a sport. An old song, "Words Get in the Way", expresses a search for this deeper level of communication.

As the world continues to shrink through the use of technology, cultures pour onto each other. We become more pictorial in expression and gravitate toward universal symbols, evidence of our need for a common focus and universal cooperation.

When understanding is our goal than the words have meaning. When understanding becomes meaningful action, then we can become profitable, purposeful and plentiful. We can strive for a universal exchange and bridge ideas to peaceful progress. Imagine how your command of language and communication enhances your personal credibility.

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