

C y b e r B r e a k

April 6, 2007

Coming up next week. . .

Table Days!

April 9 – 11, 2007

(Monday – Wednesday)

Westmoreland Promenade

Criticisms and Feedback – Be Positive!

In the business world, criticisms and compliments are constantly given, and should be accepted with tact and grace. Compliments should be sincere, and criticisms should not lead to confrontation. Here are some helpful tips to express your thoughts:

Giving Feedback

Everyone can be a critic and have different opinions on how to conduct business. Remember that criticisms do not have to be negative. Many times they are simply an alternative perspective to a situation. Think about your position before giving feedback—do you have the authority and a solid reason to give criticism? This is important because criticisms can lead to a negative or angry response.

Be tactful, specific, and accurate. Choose the time and place appropriately. No one likes to be embarrassed, so be sure to choose a private location before offering your criticisms. Focus on the behavior you want to have changed, NOT on the person. Offer specific suggestions for improvement and mention the positive contributions as well.



Receiving Feedback

When you are receiving feedback and criticisms, understand that they are suggestions and alternative perspectives. Resist the urge to become defensive and view it as an opportunity to learn.

Keep an open mind by listening to what is being said. Understand that everyone makes mistakes and there is always room for improvements. Don't accept generalities; if you are not sure what is being criticized, don't hesitate to ask for examples. Keep in mind that the critic is offering an alternative perspective that you may not have thought of. Don't dwell on the embarrassment of being criticized; think of the information as useful information and a way to improve your professional development.

'If you are not criticized, you may not be doing much.'
Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense (1932 -)

FEEDBACK: Have ideas, suggestions, comments or contributions for future editions of CyberBreak? Please email them to Johanna Gan at jgan@swlaw.edu