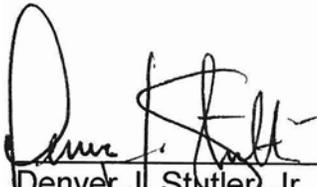


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Secretary

## LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

### PURPOSE:

To establish the responsibilities of the Department's leaders, managers, and supervisors related to effective communication. To define methods and means for communicating Department policies and information to all members of the organization. To ensure an environment that encourages opportunities for all members to communicate concerns and ideas through the appropriate means back to leadership.

### AUTHORITY:

Section 20.23, Florida Statutes (F.S.)

### SCOPE:

The principal users of this procedure are the Department's leaders, managers, and supervisors.

### BACKGROUND:

Everything we do within the Department is dependent on excellent communication. Communication (interpersonal skills, oral and written communication) is one of the core competencies for senior leaders, and is expected of managers and supervisors. All are encouraged to exhibit excellent communication skills. Effective communication with our internal and external customers is key to achieving excellence.

Communication is as much about listening and providing feedback channels as it is about talking and writing. It is about discussions and debates as much as it is about passing along information. Employee morale can improve when employees are getting clear communication about the issues important to them. Many internal documents and studies have addressed this relationship and need. See **Attachment A**. (The documents listed in **Attachment A** are available on the DOT Business Model site on the Infonet.)

These guidelines contain a communication toolbox of techniques, suggestions, best practices, and training for use by all leaders throughout the organization. It is recognized that

needs vary from central office to the districts, from district to district, as well as from person to person in developing and using communication skills. The key to effective communication is the commitment to implementation from ALL leaders throughout the organization regardless of the number of employees each personally supervises.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

**Effective Communication:** Effective communication is the delivery, reception and understanding of an intended message. It is essential to get feedback verifying the message was received and understood as intended.

**Executive Board:** The highest-level deliberative and decision-making body in the Department. Composed of the Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, District Secretaries and the Executive Director of the Turnpike Enterprise.

**Leadership Meetings:** Those meetings within the Department designed to cascade information to all employees. Leadership meetings include but are not limited to Assistant Secretary/District Secretary with Directors, Directors with Department Heads/Office Heads, etc.

**Managers:** Department Heads/Office Heads, Assistant Department Heads/Office Heads, Operations Center Managers, Construction Resident Engineers, and Maintenance Engineers.

**Senior Leaders:** Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, District Secretaries, and Directors

**Supervisors:** Any person in the Department responsible for supervising one (1) or more people

## **1. COMMUNICATION METHODS FOR FORMAL LEADERSHIP MEETINGS**

The sharing of information from Department and/or district leadership meetings (face-to-face) should occur, at a minimum, monthly with direct reports whether it is the Executive Board, Assistant Secretaries, District Secretaries, Directors, Department Heads/Office Heads, Section Heads, Crew Leaders, or any others who have supervisory responsibilities. These meetings should occur immediately following (within a few days of) Executive Board Meetings and follow-up leadership meetings (some call the meeting other names). These meetings can be used to share information from the previous meeting (Executive Board, Directors, Department Heads/Office Heads, etc.), share other area-specific information, note what should be celebrated in the area, discuss new issues, follow up old issues, clarify misinformation that is circulating, etc.

- (A) Meeting Times:** Leadership meetings should be scheduled at appropriate times depending on the availability of attendees. Time scheduled should take into consideration travel time of attendees. The Leadership Academy module on time management is recommended as a guide for successful time management improvements. (Graduates of the Academy have these materials; or outlines/guidance can be given by training managers or the Performance Management Office.)
- (B) Meeting Facilities:** Leadership meeting facilities should be appropriate to the type of meeting scheduled and the needs of the meeting attendees. Room size should accommodate comfortable seating for all attendees. Teleconference equipment should be available for meetings with participants in multiple locations. Appropriate media equipment should be available for presenters and could include an overhead projector, computer equipment and screens for power point presentations, television and VCR. A microphone should be used if the meeting has a large number of attendees. **Attachment B** provides suggested guidelines for teleconference etiquette.
- (C) Meeting Agendas:** Leadership meetings should have timed agendas that outline the topic, provide background (when appropriate), define the desired outcome (when known), and indicate who is responsible for each agenda item. There may have to be some flexibility in the time for agenda items depending on discussion. It may be useful to provide materials to attendees before the meeting so they can be prepared. All presentations and presentation material should be provided to the attendees at the meeting, with the agenda, or at the beginning of the presentation. Also provide presentation and presentation material to the leader of the meeting on disk or via e-mail for further distribution with the minutes. **Attachment C** provides suggested topics for leadership meetings.
- (D) Timeframe for Distribution:** Minutes from leadership meetings with copies of all handouts and presentation materials should then be distributed to all attendees and other appropriate staff within a specified and agreed upon timeframe.
- (E) Distribution Channels:** Information from leadership meetings should be distributed to meeting attendees, at a minimum, within three (3) working days of the meeting. Distribution also should include any others who will be impacted by the decisions reached and those responsible for providing follow-up on any issue.
- (F) Information from Leadership Meetings should be quickly and broadly distributed.**
- The Executive Board meeting and the District Secretaries workshops information should be distributed on the Infonet and by e-mail to attendees, central office and District Directors, and Department Heads/Office Heads.

- Information from Directors meetings (District Secretaries with their Directors) should be distributed by e-mail to the attendees, Department Heads/Office Heads, Assistant Department Heads/Office Heads, and Section Heads.
- Information from Department Heads/Office Heads meetings (Directors with Department Heads/Office Heads) should be distributed by e-mail to the attendees, Assistant Department Heads/Office Heads, Section Heads, Crew Leaders, and all other supervisors within their department.

**(G) Meeting Leader/Facilitator:** The leader/facilitator of the meeting should expand the agenda they are working from to include space to note (1) key decisions made, (2) key assignments (to whom and when due), and (3) the key message to go out to employees or the specific action taken.

**(H) Action Items:** Specific Action Items (assignment to whom with due dates and electronic copies of handouts pertinent to the issue) from the District Secretaries workshop and other leadership meetings should be distributed electronically within 24 hours of the meeting.

**(I) Talking Points:** An alternative way to share information from all Executive Board meetings is with “talking points.” The “talking points” include the issue(s) discussed and bullet the important facts. As the information is passed on, Directors, Department Heads/Office Heads, and Supervisors can add additional information pertinent to their unit (about how it relates to the mission of the Department and specifically to the employees’ jobs in carrying out that mission). They should also clarify what has been provided and answer any questions with the core, or critical, information quickly and consistently going to all employees.

**(J) Minutes:** Full minutes of any leadership meetings, inclusive of action items with due dates and electronic copies of all handouts from the meeting, should be distributed within three working days of the meeting (by close of business on Friday for the Executive Board meeting minutes).

## 2. SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

There are many effective communication techniques and **Attachment D** is a compilation of some of them. Pick and choose what works for you and your employees and share the results.

## 3. SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION TRAINING

**Attachment E** is a list of courses and workshops, both internal and external, relating to communication and the DOT Business Model. The Performance Management Office and the

District Performance Management Coordinators will maintain a complete list of available training that will be posted on the Business Model web site.

Many of these courses and workshops have similar content and objectives. Selection of the best choice for any given individual should be based on skill need, course availability and appropriateness for responsibilities.

Most of the courses are available through the Department. In cases where the course is provided by an outside vendor, notes have been made to indicate where the course is available and who provides it.

It is suggested that senior leaders, managers, and supervisors make recommendations about the value of the training attended. Each should develop an action plan for implementation of the training just received. Review of the plan and follow-up to training is suggested with immediate supervisors within two weeks of the training and ongoing through performance reviews and discussions about performance. It is recommended each plan be developed with input from the employees they are supervising concerning what should be included and then follow-up with the employees to see how they are doing with implementation.

#### **4. TRAINING**

There is no mandatory training associated with these guidelines.

#### **5. FORMS**

None

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **RESOURCE DOCUMENTS**

The following documents were used in the preparation of these guidelines and are recommended reading for further background and information.

The documents listed in this attachment are available on-line at the DOT Business Model site on the Infonet.

The book "Common Sense Leadership" by Roger Fulton is available in the Central Office Performance Management Office and in several of the District Performance Management libraries.

- "Improving Leadership Effectiveness Through Communication" - Task Team 12/35
- Power Point presentation supporting Task Team 12/35 recommendations
- "Management Credibility" – Task Team 24/44
- "HiQ – A Study of the Actions that Contribute to the Success of High Quartile Cost Centers" (November 2001 – March 2002)
- High Quartile Report, Spring 2002 for your own district
- Four (4) Power Point presentations from Fall, 2002, Graduate Leadership Academy – Secretary's Challenge
- Business Model - Core Competencies – Communications and Building Coalitions
- Business Model – Workshop materials
- "The Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence"
- "Common Sense Leadership" by Roger Fulton
- Management by Walking Around – tips on how to do (See Attachment D)
- Minutes from the Employee Satisfaction Champions dated 10/1/02

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **GUIDELINES FOR TELECONFERENCE ETIQUETTE**

- Distribute all paperwork (including agenda) in advance of the meeting
- Fax or email all pertinent information to members at remote locations
- State purpose of meeting and expected outcomes
- Identify all personnel in attendance
- State your name each time you speak
- Speak clearly towards the speakerphone and identify who or to what you are responding
- No distracting side conversations
- No rustling of paper
- Summarize teleconference, including action items, due dates, and persons responsible

## ATTACHMENT C

### TOPICS AND PRESENTATIONS AT MEETINGS

Employees should be encouraged to “bubble up” suggestions and improvements to the next level meetings (i.e., Directors to Executive Meetings; Department Heads/Office Heads to Directors Meetings; Section Heads to Department Heads/Office Heads Meetings; Crew Leaders to Section Heads Meetings; etc.). The intent of this item is to provide employees the opportunity to present issues and ideas to the next level for consideration. Plus, there needs to be feedback to the employee and the employee’s peers regarding the issue presented to management.

Items should be “bubbled up” through the various communication channels we have: e-mail, phone call, note, etc. The suggestion when “bubbled up” should include: what is proposed? Why needed? What is the benefit to the state? And what is the expected cost (if known or fairly easily determined)? The employee should give the same respect to their supervisor they expect in return. They should copy the supervisor on the correspondence or tell them personally about the communication.

Additionally, leadership meetings could include agenda items as noted below:

- Leadership Practices
- Communicating Key Decisions and Issues
- Best Practices – Sharing Good Ideas
  - Remember to empower employees to share ideas from district to district and between offices within the district/central office. Sharing of information is important for many reasons. It will build relationships and will further promote consistency around the state. We cannot afford to waste resources “reinventing the wheel”.
  - Coordination with others should be encouraged on many issues that are currently surfacing around the state. Others may not know the progress, positive or negative, of many pilot projects.
- Best Practices – Sharing Excellent Communication Efforts
- Reasons for Celebration
- Examples of new ways of doing things (hey, I tried this recently and what a success/bomb it was)
- Presentation of Issues that could affect other areas, departments, or decisions

- You may not have time for all of these items so think about what you should include. Most meetings should last no longer than two (2) hours. Another consideration when scheduling meetings is the time of day you schedule the meetings. You should schedule them at a time when the meeting can be most productive and at the same time not take away from the most productive time the employees involved could be spending elsewhere.

## **ATTACHMENT D**

### **SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES**

- Department Specific Newsletters – Try quarterly. Update on issues. Include more than just work related items. Include what is important to the employees. Update on new spouses, new kids, new homes, and special vacations taken. Try using pictures to add interest, to add humor, or to make a point.
- Produce a periodic video to update employees on issues that are important to them. This would be a great way for the Secretary of Transportation to continually communicate the vision for the Department. This would be a great communication tool for new or on-going issues.
- Develop a hard copy information book to assist computer users navigate around the Infonet. Have one person in each area responsible for updating the book(s) monthly.
- When the generic computers are installed so all employees have access to the new personnel system, have a hard copy information book with step-by-step instructions to assist employees unfamiliar with navigating the various sites.
- On Lotus Notes Welcome Page, add tips and suggestions of the week to help others find information and navigate around the infonet site more efficiently and effectively; make recommendations of specific sites to visit to learn more about specific areas. Include this information in monthly updates to a hard copy information book.
- Develop and maintain a statewide process calendar of when things are due, especially things that are due annually i.e. specific actions during the work program development cycle; not necessarily on a calendar or where it puts information on individual calendars but in a format that due dates can be added in or updated at any time. Office responsible should be specified first for easy recognition by anyone checking/updating it.
- “Secretary’s Message”, “Director’s Message”, Department Head’s/Office Head’s Message” in appropriate communications; maybe in newsletters, a special thought e-mail, etc.
- Expand Q&A site. Although chat rooms have been suggested, this is not how the Q&A website was intended to be used. Furthermore, chat rooms would not be an efficient use of our limited resources. Further review of Nelson Hill’s pilot website is recommended.

- Unit or department specific web pages (monitor Nelson Hill's Website Pilot – getting issues in and having contact person to talk to for clarification)
- Continue sharing the HiQ information with all leaders, managers, and supervisors throughout the organization. Training was done in central office and in each of the districts and should be continued to keep reinforcing the best practices of those in the high quartile of the survey results. Best practices should be on all leadership meeting agendas. The best practice report at the leadership meetings should be done by the employees working in the unit rather than by the supervisor.
- On the Business Model site, take the HiQ reports and sort examples of the various excellent communication practices by types of communication: verbal, e-mail, MBWA, etc.
- Encourage employees to submit examples of the best practices by their supervisors so others can learn from them. Have a specific section on the Business Model for this activity. (The HiQ supervisors generally cannot tell others why their cost center scored so well. Those supervisors (leaders) are doing business the way they live life; by their values...)
- Have and maintain all organizational charts for the Department on the Infonet with the option for them to be sorted by district, division, department, maintenance yards, construction residencies, operations centers, etc
- On each district site, have and maintain an updated organizational chart for each department/office. Both the current organizational chart and the proposed organizational chart should be there. They need to be specific and flexible to ensure we have the appropriate coverage in all areas. Plans may change due to unexpected vacancies. As vacancies occur, structure should be re-evaluated and adjusted as appropriate to meet the ever-changing needs of our customers. We should re-evaluate the responsibility of each position when it becomes vacant. Do we need to rewrite the description and do this job differently? Do we need to bring work in-house that is currently done by consultants and have consultants do some of the work the person in the position used to do? The review of our organizational structure is ongoing.
- Management by Walking Around (MBWA) - Personal visits to all locations on a regular basis (not necessarily a regular schedule) so when leadership is there everyone is not in a panic about the visit. Visits should be the norm, not just because there is a problem. MBWA is not about spying on people. It is about being available, personable, and looking for good things to recognize.

- Management by Walking Around Tips: It is important to get informal feedback on the various issues. When you casually stop by to visit with an employee, it is a good time to ask what they think about the latest issues or information shared through the various forums: leadership meetings, e-mail, hard copies, etc. The answers to these questions tell you how well our leaders throughout the organization are communicating. Do the employees understand the issue as intended? Do they have questions or concerns that could or should have been answered and/or addressed? Are the issues being raised back through the chain to confirm understanding or to get clarification?
- This informal method of communicating builds relationships and trust throughout the organization.
- As leaders of the organization, it is our job to be out talking with our employees in their job locations, not in our offices.
- Time should be specifically scheduled to meet with employees to discuss work and personal issues with them. Everything leaders do is about relationships.
- Continue conducting annual employee surveys. Get results out quickly. Send out via e-mail and by hardcopy. Do not make employees ask for the information!
- The action plans responding to the survey results should be developed by teams of people from within the cost center, not just by the leader. Employees know best what it takes to improve things in their area. Following development and acceptance, provide action plans via email and hardcopy to all employees within unit for which action plan developed. All need to know the direction the unit is going if they are going to get there as one unit.
- Publish district/office directories with photographs of the employees. Matching a name with a face can help communications.
- Openly addressing rumors, whether in meetings or informally when you are talking to people, is a good way to diffuse rumors before they get overwhelming to employees.

## **ATTACHMENT E**

### **SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION TRAINING**

#### **(A) COMMUNICATE VERBALLY AND IN WRITING**

Effective Listening Skills BT-20-0039  
Interpersonal Effectiveness BT-20-0057  
Positive Communication BT-20-0071  
Fundamental Skills of Communicating with People SU-20-0012  
Confrontation and Conflict Resolution BT-20-0003  
Business Grammar and Punctuation BT-20-0041  
Letter Writing WI-20-0032  
Proofmatics WI-20-0035  
Relationship Strategies (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Communicate Assertively: Another Look at Effective Communication (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Communication Confidence: Basics of Effective Communication (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Now Hear This: Listening, Comprehending, Communicating (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)

#### **(B) DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH CUSTOMERS**

Citizen Contact Skills BT-01-0043  
Customer Focus WI-02-00223  
Constructive Dialog BT-20-0078  
Media Relations / Dealing with an Angry Public BT-01-0004

#### **(C) PREPARE REPORTS, RECORDS, DOCUMENTS**

Business Grammar and Punctuation BT-20-0041  
Letter Writing WI-20-0032  
Proofmatics WI-20-0035

#### **(D) PREPARE/DELIVER PRESENTATIONS**

Presentation Skills Training SU-20-0028  
Basic Design/Instructor Training BT-20-0029  
Involvement in a local chapter of Toastmasters International  
Powerful Public Speaking (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)

#### **(E) COORDINATE WITH UPPER MANAGEMENT**

7 Habits of Highly Effective People BT-20-0064  
DOT Leadership Academy SU-20-0039  
Graduate Leadership Academy SU-20-0042  
Certified Public Manager Levels 1-6 MD-20-0001-MD-20-0006

#### **(F) TEAM SKILLS**

Team Building - Experiential BT-20-0042  
Team Problem Solving BT-20-0109

Productive Meetings MD-20-0029  
Introduction To Teamwork WI-02-0017  
Teamwork: Together Everyone Wins (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Making Meetings Work (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)

**(G) BASIC MANAGER/SUPERVISOR SKILLS THAT ADDRESS COMMUNICATION AND THE BUSINESS MODEL**

DOT Supervisors Academy SU-20-0041 – unless you have attended Leadership Academy  
Performance Planning SU-20-0010  
Maintaining & Improving Performance SU-20-0007  
Coaching & Counseling BT-20-0037  
Supervisory Decision Making SU-20-0027  
Dealing With Employee Conflicts and Complaints SU-20-0008  
The Basics of Performance Appraisal SU-18-0031 (UCF Institute of Government)  
Negotiations for Public Managers MD-20-0033  
Communicating Tasks SU-20-0015  
Fundamental Skills of Managing People SU-20-0012  
Positive, Proactive Employee Counseling: Coaching For Success (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
The Power of Feedback: Using Performance Appraisals to Develop Productive Employees (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Between You and Me: Managing Conflict at Work (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Discover The Leader In You (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
From Manager to Motivator (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)  
Leadership: Creating Possibilities (U of F T<sup>2</sup> Center)

**(H) UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE DOT BUSINESS MODEL**

What We Value WI-02-0033  
Introduction to Sterling WI-02-0031  
Process Management WI-02-0016  
Process Mapping Workshop WI-02-0016  
Strategic Planning WI-02-0020  
Structured Problem Solving WI-02-0015

**(I) OTHER**

Emotional Intelligence at Work BT-20-0108  
MBTI - Introduction to Type BT-20-0060  
What Matters Most BT-20-0038  
Family Notifier BT-18-0057  
Building Trust BT-20-0075 (St. Petersburg Community College)  
Creativity Camp (District 1 through vendor)