Get It “Right” the First Time

I always like to ask the question, “why is there never enough time to get “it” “right” the first time, however, there is always time to go back and do “it” again?”

The question is what is it? “it” in the context of this conversation is our outcome. This outcome could be professional or the outcome could be personal. We have a lot of do overs at work and at home because there is no clear understanding of “it”. Quite often we believe that everyone understands our “it”, we believe they get our “it” and then when the breakdown occurs the blame game starts and somebody has to fix “it”.

The next question is, what is “right”? “Right” in the context of this conversation represents our conditions of satisfaction. When we clearly communicate our conditions of satisfaction, we are making known our expectations of “it” when “it” is delivered or completed. If we never clearly communicate our conditions of satisfaction, there is a high probability there will be a breakdown and we will not have “it” done “right” the first time.

Even when we feel that we have communicated our “it”, quite often they still don’t get “it”, because they heard what they heard, very likely they did not hear what you said.

In those rare cases we take the time to be crystal clear about our “it”, I can promise you in most of those situations you have not communicated your “right”. The main reason we are fixing “it”, is because someone did not feel that “it” was done “right”.

This always comes at an expense to our ROI and/or our relationships at work and home when we do not Get “it” “right” the First Time.

Unless you realize that the lens that you are viewing your “it” and “right” through is different from the lens of the person you are communicating with, then you are destined to continue to repeat this process and have do overs.
So let’s stop for a minute and look at what is taking place during this communication process. You are viewing your “it” and “right” through your lens. You told them exactly what you wanted. You have a clear picture and expectation of what that looks like. As you explain, they are viewing your words through their lens and they are looking at their picture.

Your lens is the result of what you have been taught, the lens that you are viewing the world through was shaped due to your experiences in life. What you believe “right” looks like is the result of your lens and this is their truth as well.

If you have an expectation that they heard and saw what you said or showed them, the end result is likely going to be a do over, because what you receive will be what they perceived you were requesting.

Now, I have often heard people say to me they feel their request was “common sense”. Another question I like asking, “if common sense is SO common, why is it SO rare?”

What follows this event is frustration, anger, hurt feelings, lost revenue, pissed off customers, damaged relationships, turnover, and negativity.

Here is an example: I received a phone call from Mr. Pondicer at 7:00 am this morning and he said he will be by later today to pick up the products he ordered. I know it will take you awhile to put the package together, I need you to get it ready for pick up soon.

First question, what time is Mr. Pondexter coming by to pick up his products? Mr. Pondexter is coming by at 4:45 pm. How many hours did it take for him to put the products together? What you meant by “awhile” was 45 minutes.

When you accept 100% personal responsibility to get “it” “right” the first time, it does not matter if you are the communicator or the person being communicated to. The awareness in this moment is very important, I mean REALLY important, only ONE person in the relationship needs to accept 100% personal responsibility to get “it” “right” the first time.
You told your administrative assistant that before she leaves for the day you wanted her desk organized and clean. You are now frustrated because you have told her several times that before she leaves, you want her desk clean and organized. The picture you see through your lens of organized and clean is not the same picture she has. If you took the time to communicate what “it” is and what “it” looks like when “it” is “right” you would get a different result. If we were to turn this around and you are the administrative assistant this is being communicated to, you can Get “it” “right” the First Time, simply by accepting personal responsibility to understand before you execute on the request.

There are a number of reasons why these breakdowns occur and I submit that most of them are within our control.

Why is it important for us address this issue of do overs?

- It cost the business money to fix the problem
- It upsets our customers
- It creates frustration with our internal and external customer
- We lose repeat business
- We lose trust with our internal and external customer
- Feeling that we need to micromanage our team member’s
- Less confident team member’s
- People who feel they can never get it right

If we take the time to communicate effectively before we execute, we will have fewer do overs due to human error or the things we have control over. Here are 4 easy steps to Doing “it” “right” the First time.

1. Tell them what “it” and “right” are
2. Tell them while showing them what “it and “right” are
3. Have them tell you what “it” and “right” are
4. Have them show you what “it” and “right” are

If someone is communicating to you what they want done, make a request of them to follow this process with a focus on Doing “it” “right” the First Time. I have
heard people say this takes too long. My coaching to you is to take the time to slow down, so you can speed up.

If you continue executing on projects or assuming that people are seeing, hearing or feeling what you mean when you just tell them what you want, you will continue to be disappointed. The only consistent, predictable result you will receive from managing your expectations will be disappointment. Executing with a knowing that they understand what the outcome and conditions of satisfaction are will reduce stress and increase trust.

Take the time to answer these questions for yourself:

- How much time and money will I save by Doing “it” “right” the First Time?
- How much frustration will I avoid by Doing “it” “right” the First Time?
- How will I benefit from Doing “it” “right” the First Time?
- How will my team benefit from Doing “it” “right” the First Time?
- How will my customer benefit from me Doing “it” “right” the First Time?

If you are working on a team, it is important before execution that everyone on the team understand their “it” and their “right”. Again I say, it does not matter if you are the team lead or a support member. If you are committed to the team’s success, you can present this process to insure the team’s success, the benefits of stepping up in the situation, far exceed the risk.

Mike Jones, President
Discover Leadership Training
www.discoverleadership.com
713.807.9902