

Registration questions and comments:

1. What do you think of the Parts & Material Management WG coming up with a few standardized formats to use when briefing leadership?

RESPONSE: I would love for the PMMWG to propose a few potential standards for briefing leadership. The key is to develop some options that get the point across, reduce the burden of briefers designing slide decks, while being flexible enough to accommodate the variety of information that needs to be presented.

2. How to use the principles of psychology to discern when people are not telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

RESPONSE: This is a great skill to have. Unfortunately, I don’t have it (and perhaps no one does). I’ve heard of various methods (e.g., lie detectors, observing eye movements, etc.) but their reliability seems questionable. If someone is untrustworthy, they generally develop a reputation as such. Don’t be afraid to ask around. And trust your instinct.

3. How to get others to speak up in meetings. So many times, we look for ideas and many stay quiet. Looking for ideas to get more engaged and encouraged to share what they know.

RESPONSE: This can be difficult as some people choose not to speak up in meetings for a variety of reasons (e.g., stage fright, genuinely have nothing to add, they’re zoning out, insecure, etc.). There are a few workarounds such as breaking the room into groups, giving a time limit and have each group submit an idea. Starting each meeting with icebreaker exercises can be effective. A favorite technique of mine is to announce that whoever’s first to raise their hand to answer a question gets to pick the person who must answer next.

4. How does one craft storytelling on presenting a technical issue? Addressed during event; please view recording.

5. What is the best format for business emails, including font size and color, paragraph spacing, subject line, greeting, closing, signature block, and any other pertinent aspects?

RESPONSE: I’m not sure there’s a “best” format per se, however, there are a few common faux pas. Things like backgrounds, animations, a variety of colors, etc. may be viewed as unprofessional. I’m a bit of a traditionalist and my font, size, colors, etc. are the default settings found in Outlook.

6. There has to be a more creative and impactful way to brief leadership with single-slide attention spans, than the age-old Quad(rant) Chart. We’re looking for new ideas for briefing complex information in a concise manner.

RESPONSE:

I agree that the quad chart can leave a lot to be desired but it's so entrenched that it may never go away. Perhaps a compromise is using the voice track to tell a relatable story that highlights a hero, stakes, obstacles, and goal while the quad chart provides additional details as needed.

7. Communicating to a diverse crowd in today's political climate

RESPONSE: I've found the best way to communicate (to a person or an audience) that may have a variety of viewpoints on the topic at hand is to find a point of common agreement. This could take the form of restating a shared goal or a common belief. Starting from a point of unity encourages people to listen to what you have to say.

8. Effectively communicating concerns with intentions of receiving feedback for resolution/understanding

RESPONSE: See answer to #3.

9. Targeting the message to the appropriate level in the Chain of Command - minutiae at the working level, action plans at the mid-level, and Executive Summary at the Leadership level
Subject matter itself piqued my interest: looking forward to your perspective.

RESPONSE: This brings up a great point – your presentation should be crafted differently depending on your audience and what you're asking of them. It's a good idea to summarize, in one sentence, what you want from the audience. Do you want them to walk away with a raised awareness of something? Do you want them to make a decision on the spot? Should they be able to summarize the situation for someone else? Once you understand this, the first and last slide can explicitly state this goal and all the slides in between are calibrated to support it.

10. How to communicate highly technical information without dependence on PowerPoint.
Addressed during event; please view recording.

11. What has been the most effective implementation of a DMSMS program so far.

RESPONSE: I heard of one instance where detailed analyses of the data elements lead to discovering a resolution that reduced spending over 3 years by a billion dollars (yes...Billion).

12. Techniques for creating a psychologically safe/vulnerable culture in support of "strategies to engage with opposing viewpoints and concerns in a productive manner."

RESPONSE:

A good technique to help people feel safe enough to engage in a potentially vulnerable discussion and/or engage in opposing viewpoints is for you to be honest

and vulnerable. People may feel hesitant to have difficult discussion because they fear being taken advantage of. If you lead by example through sharing a vulnerability, a fear, a concern, or ask for their help they are more likely to see you’re operating in good faith and respond in kind.

Chat questions:

1. Restate NO questions section. Is the goal to have a "no" response? (slide 59)

RESPONSE: Yes, the goal is to have a ‘no’ response. Example: “Is now a bad time to talk?” The desired answer is “No, now is a good time to talk.”

2. Often when telling a story, I get interrupted how do you handle that? Addressed in event; please view recording.

3. Great Presentation. Do you have a book or any written guides? Addressed in event; please view recording.

4. That last comment about the north star - seems like it makes the listener the hero - and that may be our best bet when preparing for a group. -especially if we want all in the room to take action or learn the info.

RESPONSE: Every situation is unique but, generally, making the listener the hero is a safe bet. If you really want to be in the best position, you can chart out a few different stories. Ask questions early in the meeting to gauge the priorities of the listener then utilize the story that best fits. This approach is heavy on preparation (crafting stories, memorizing them, practicing them with slides, etc.) but if you have a critical meeting you may find it necessary.

5. How do I keep on track? I tend to wander into giving examples off the cuff that get myself and others off track. Addressed in event; please view recording.