EARNING THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

PRESENTED BY:

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2 Fundamental Assumptions

1. Most unprepared people attempt to "sell" their ideas based on passion and emotion.
2. Most trained decision makers make their "buying" decisions based on logic and rationale.

2 Foundational Objectives

1. Primary Objective: Earn the right to be heard.
2. Secondary Objective: Get what you want.

Starting Strong: A Concise, 3-Sentence Opening Statement

Sentence #1: Clearly and specifically state what you want.

- Example: *"Thank you for your time today; I'm here to request (BLANK)."*

Sentence #2: Clearly and specifically state why you want it.

- Example: *"I'm convinced the time has come for us to carefully consider committing organizational resources (e.g., time, attention, effort, technology, materials, money, etc.) to address the critical issue of (BLANK)."*

Sentence #3: Clearly and specifically state your openness to questions.

- Example: *"I've come prepared today to answer your questions regarding this subject."*

Ideas to Implement

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Anticipate and Prepare for 5 Critical Questions

Question #1: How much will it cost?

- 3 Absolutely and consistently **WRONG** answers:
  1. I don't know.
  2. Not much.
  3. It doesn't matter, we need it.
- **IN WRITING,** present an accounting of anticipated direct and indirect costs.
- Anticipate and be prepared to discuss:
  1. Economic justifications (e.g., productivity improvements, material usage, time savings, inventory turns, etc.)
  2. Cost overruns (e.g., misplaced priorities, ill-defined objectives, scrap, etc.)
  3. Available funding options (e.g., creative utilization of undesignated or co-mingled funds, project deferrals, acceptable budgetary adjustments, etc.)
- **NEVER** pad these numbers.

Question #2: What benefits can be expected?

- **IN WRITING,** create and present a complete listing of all plausible project / initiative benefits.
- Distinguish between economic, environmental, competitive, safety and social benefits.
- Quantify these benefits, if possible.
  - Include the anticipated life (or term) of identified benefits.
- In the spirit of full disclosure, self-identify any known risks related to your recommended actions.

Question #3: How much time will it take?

- **IN WRITING,** create and present an estimated timeline.

Ideas to Implement

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- Example: *"With your approval of this request today, you can expect the timing of the project to progress as follows…"*
- Question the decision maker/s to determine if there are any unspoken needs or expectations regarding the timing of the project's completion.
- Be prepared to discuss – and accept -- alterations to your established time line.
- **ALWAYS** pad these numbers.

Question #4: How difficult will it be to implement?

- **IN WRITING,** create and present a customized implementation plan.
- In addition to COST, BENEFIT and TIME estimates, provide information regarding the scope of the project and the required specifications, to include:
  1. A proposed organization chart (e.g., who will be responsible for what and to whom; and
  2. A formalized communication plan (e.g., frequency, duration, scope).
- Consider (or limit) the scope / reach of your proposed actions and identify required specifications or policy modifications.
- **DON'T** overreact if you don't receive public credit for the final implementation plan.

Question #5: What are the consequences of inaction?

- **DON'T** fear initial rejection of your idea / proposal.
- **DON'T** overreact to negative comments or questions you may receive.
- **DO** anticipate some measure of pushback.
- **DO** craft your response carefully.
  - Example / Part 1: *"Let me assure you that regardless your decision here today, my commitment to the organization will remain solid."*

Ideas to Implement

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- Example / Part 2: *"However, if you choose NOT to approve this proposal, let me remind you of the benefits which will not be realized as a direct result of your decision here today."*

Ideas to Implement

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About Phillip Van Hooser

A former FORTUNE 500 Human Resources executive, Phillip Van Hooser's depth of practical leadership experience in manufacturing, banking and the boardroom equips high potentials, emerging leaders and managers to:

+ Motivate a multi-generational workforce
+ Manage conflict and change
+ Improve communication skills between employees and superiors
+ Build high-performance work teams and
+ Create a culture of continuous leadership growth.

Phil is a Hall of Fame speaker, author and leadership development expert for top U.S. companies. His subject matter expertise includes personal leadership, employee motivation, team building and communication skills.

His latest book, *Leaders Ought To Know: 11 Ground Rules for Common Sense Leadership*, is a must-read handbook for leaders feeling the pressure to perform.

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