

“How’s Business?”

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“How’s Business?”

My Favorite Assignment because . . .

- Invented by EMBA student, Trent Carrier
- Helps students think intentionally and strategically about answer & audience
- Answers a practical, everyday leadership communication question
- Prepared, but for extemporaneous conversations
- Fun for audience too



Instructions

- Develop a message platform*
- Develop a framework for responding
- Identify approximately 7 potential listeners
- Prepare tailored responses for each
- Provide classmates with 7 listener profiles
- In-class, draw 3 listeners out of a hat

*Terry Pearce, *Leading Out Loud: Inspiring Change Through Authentic Communication* 2nd ed (Jossey-Bass, 2003).

Trent's Message Platform

Objectives:

- Be more results-oriented
- Connect results with business purpose
- Adapt to listener interests
- Prepared yet flexible
- Build relationships
- Increase leadership ethos



Trent's Potential Listeners



Laurie (peer)



Greg (CEO)



Kumar (client)



Chris (wife)

Martha (classmate)



Herb
(father-in-law)



Yunki
(new employee)

Trent's Framework

Intro	Initial summary of recent results <ul style="list-style-type: none">• financial or otherwise
Drivers	Results driven by . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none">• tailored to listener interests
Message Platform	Link recent results to longer-term goals <ul style="list-style-type: none">• put performance into perspective• connect to the “Big Why or How?”
Future / Ask	Transition to what's next and make request <ul style="list-style-type: none">• build on listener's interests or drivers• offer next action step• ask for support

Trent's Message

Intro	Thanks for asking. Business is going well. We finished at 80% of plan this quarter. For the year, I believe we are on track to exceed 40% growth over 2010.
Drivers	Our results were driven by [relate to listener's interests] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• company goals or new ideas• relevant product or market info• client profile• team efforts & commitment• work/life balance

Trent's Message

Message Platform

While near-term financial health is important, our business has a long-term charter to support small companies in their work to bring new therapeutics to the clinic.

This way we enable new life-saving medicines and grow the company bottom line at the same time.

Trent's Message

Future / Ask

I'm pleased with our progress. We want to do more though to build on [growth driver]. To fulfill this opportunity, it will be important to [action related to ask]. I'd appreciate it if you would [ask].

Asks might include:

- attend a deep-dive meeting
- give your approval
- pledge your commitment

Evaluation

- Clear & memorable message
- Useful framework that fits objectives
- Style-flexing – adapts to different listeners
- Extemporaneous delivery

