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[Correspondence and articles related to ombudsmanship]

1990-2001

EVALUATING OMBUDSPEOPLE

I. WHAT IS THE JOB?

A. Mission:

To provide an avenue for all employees to confidentially voice and/or resolve concerns, issues and barriers. To proactively watch for trends and generic issues and report them to management.

B. Contents

1. Principles:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| a) Confidentiality | b) Neutrality | c) Availability |
| d) Impartiality | e) Timeliness | f) No decision making |

2. Practices:

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Provide a personal hearing | b) Receive and give information |
| c) Coach people on how to help themselves | d) Provide a two-way channel |
| e) Mediate | f) Facilitate organizational change |
| g) Investigate | h) Hold focus groups |
| i) Provide group facilitation | j) Provide options |
| k) Advocate for a fair process | l) Provide direct access (no red tape) |

C. Intended Outcomes:

1. People feel better
2. People are more productive
3. Incorrect situations are set right
4. Ethical situations faced and cleaned up
5. People improve skills in:
 - a) Communication
 - b) Leadership
 - c) Problem solving
 - d) Conflict resolution
6. Clients would recommend the Ombuds office to colleagues
7. Management gets unfiltered feedback
8. Reports generated--notable benefits, statistical profile, trends, key learnings
9. Office is used by a cross-section of employees
10. Office is used by a large number of employees (avg. 78%, range very wide)

II. HOW TO EVALUATE THE OMBUDSPERSON?

A. Decide what to measure:

1. Adherence to the principles
2. Performance on the practices
3. What are the results/outcomes?

- B. **Decide how to measure:**
 - 1. **What are the right questions to ask?**
 - 2. **What rating scale should be used?**
- C. **Decide who measures the Ombudsperson on principles, practices, outcomes:**
 - 1. **All who contact the office** 2. **Bosses** 3. **Peers** 4. **Self**
- D. **Decide how to sample the client base:**
 - 1. **All** 2. **Random sample** 3. **Some select group**
- E. **How often?**
 - 1. **Semiannually** 2. **Yearly**
- F. **Who sees what part of the responses?**
 - 1. **Private data (Data which describes the performance of a particular Ombudsperson.)**
 - 2. **Publishable data (ex: The Ombudsperson needs to be more visible.)**
- G. **Who requests data?**
 - 1. **The Ombudsperson** 2. **The boss** 3. **A neutral party**

III. WHAT ELSE?

- A. **What unsolicited feedback has the boss or Ombudsperson gotten over the past year? (Customer satisfaction - red, yellow and green flags)**
- B. **Is the Ombudsperson active in an internal Ombuds organization, The Ombudsman Association (TOA), or another Ombuds association?**
- C. **Contributions to the profession - papers or talks given.**
- D. **Education - courses or seminars attended.**

July 9, 1993

To: Mary Rowe, Carole Trocchio, Mary Simon

From: Marsha Wagner *mw*

Subj: Role-playing in Ombuds 101

*This resulted
in a teaching
video for
Ombuds 101* 2

I am writing to ask all three of you if you would please be willing to help enliven the Ombuds 101 curriculum by demonstrating experienced ombuds professionals in action. When I took a mediation training seminar, I found the expert demonstrations one of the most valuable and memorable parts, and I think the Ombuds 101 participants would benefit immensely from watching the three of you at work. (We don't plan to videotape the role-playing this time, but if it proves successful, many possibilities will be opened up!)

I am asking you to "perform" for the Tuesday afternoon session, July 20. As I understand it, I will have 2 hours to work with the participants on active listening skills. I will emphasize how to listen well as a designated neutral. During that 2-hour period, they will each have a chance to role play twice -- once as a "visitor" presenting a concern, and once as a neutral listener. There will also be various discussions, ranging from the basics of what makes a good listener to touching on some of the thorny questions of assessing emergencies, making referrals for professional help, dealing with "counter-transference," etc.

We will have half an hour (3:00 - 3:30) for two role-play demonstrations. Each one will last 15 minutes. I suggest 10 minutes maximum for the interaction (perhaps 5 minutes with the "visitor" initiating the communication, and then 3-5 minutes with the ombuds guiding the interaction). Thus, the demonstration will not be in "real time," but rather be abbreviated to capture the essentials or the flavor of a real meeting. Then in the final five minutes of each role-play the participants will break out of role and comment themselves (how did it feel?) or respond to comments from the participants. It is not necessary to move into the "problem solving" or "range of options" stage, but rather just to demonstrate the first phase of active listening, establishing rapport and trust, feeding back, reframing, checking for accuracy of what's been heard, etc.

These are the assigned roles I propose; please let me know whether or not you find them acceptable:

#1: Mary Rowe will play the visitor with a jumbled complaint. She will speak up, but she will present a rambling account with a complicated plot (and perhaps some -- irrelevant? -- subplots), not in chronological order, mixing fact with interpretation.

Carole Trocchio will play the experienced ombudsman whose active listening provides coherence, logic, structure, and focus to the concern.

#2: Mary Rowe will play the visitor who is very angry and who may have paranoid ideas.

Mary Simon will play a very formal ombudsperson who maintains distance yet encourages communication, who allows the anger to be ventilated and then channels that energy into more constructive action, who makes the visitor feel safe and respected without allowing herself to become manipulated or emotionally involved.

I am sure that you will be able to create ideal scenarios. But in case your imaginations are somehow sleepy that day, I will suggest a couple possible complainant roles. Please feel free to amend or embroider these, or to come up with unrelated alternatives.

The jumbled concern: ^{My boss doesn't like me} My supervisor wants me to be in charge of training in my unit, ~~but I'm bilingual~~ and we don't need a written training manual anyway plus every other boss allows people to count sick days for when your kids are sick and everyone likes me except him. People in my family celebrate many different holidays because we come from ~~different islands~~ and my performance evaluation was really unfair and he screams at me sometimes though I told him I can't write and he shouldn't ask me to and he says I should organize these training seminars but how can I "take initiative" when he wants to criticize me all the time, and I was late because ~~my son started going to a new school~~ and I couldn't just leave him there, I had to sit with him longer, so the new federal family leave policy should cover that and I want him to realize I'm a human being, not a machine.

health care benefits
married
differs
several
children

speak a lot of languages
move around a lot.

I wanted to see my grandson

The angry visitor with paranoid ideas: I've had it. This place really sucks. This guy who heads my shift, last night he was really in my face. I mean, I just went out to get some coffee -- we're allowed a 3-minute break if we tell the supervisor -- and he says I'm doing some "hanky-panky." I mean, I was going for coffee, so I stopped off in the bathroom to take a leak, and he says I didn't ask permission for the bathroom, and what was I doing in there for so long, anyway. He says I was gone 9 minutes total, but he's a damn liar. He always lies because he gets promotions for being "tough." Anyway, right in front of 3 other guys he says to me, "so 5 minutes in the john, I guess you must have had something special going on? who'd you meet in there?" I mean, I could kill the guy. Nobody talks to ME like that. And the other guys, they're all laughing their damn food heads off. Big joke. I'll show them who has the last laugh. So he writes me up, it goes into my file. I don't believe it. He'd never do that for his buddies. I'm gonna get him fired. Then two hours later, going home, I walked past these two other guys, and when they saw me coming, they started laughing, and I heard one of them say "homo" under his breath. It's spread all over the unit by now.

You don't seem to have a telephone here? Sit up straight
 Well -- Alice sent me
 I thought you knew about it? Alice is my boss
 Information Systems
 I won't let my files
 be copied at night - backup - my letters have been missing
 As you know my performances
 evaluations have been
 all outstanding.

Alice sent me.
 Of course the others have been telling her things - she ate lunch w/ my Sect'n hd

What do they do with those tapes -
 My code (not finished)

July 12

To: Mary Rowe
From: Marsha Wagner

4 pages

Mary: You are the key player here: what do you think? Is this plan feasible? possible? worth a try? Do you have improvements to recommend?

Carole Trocchio wanted me to provide structure and content - I tried to comply, though my own inclination was to allow spontaneity to reign. Please feel free to deviate, if you'd like!

My idea of the 1st (jumbled) scenario is she's a terrific, warm, charismatic person who is difficult to discipline. She doesn't wish to conform to the basics of punctuality or performing assigned duties. Her boss admires her strengths and tried to channel them constructively, but she continues to ~~be~~ make up her own rules. He's at his wits' end and is considering firing her; she doesn't get it, and thinks he's just being irritating. OR do a different interpretation. OR do a completely new situation. Ok? What do you think?

Marsha

1994

Recommendation: That the president of *The Ombudsman Association* establish an immediate adhoc committee within *TOA* for peer aid to ombuds and that when *TOA* is re-incorporated, this committee be made a standing committee of *TOA*.

The Proposed Committee: Professional Review for Essential Support to Ombuds, "PRESTO"

As currently envisioned this committee would consist of multiple experience ombuds drawn from the *TOA* membership. Any member of *TOA* could contact this committee for help in thinking through a difficult problem. A *TOA* member wishing to use this committee could select any member of the committee to be the gatekeeper for her or his concern. The gatekeeper would then facilitate a discussion with the committee of the concern in a way that provides confidentiality to the member raising the it.

Times that members might want to contact PRESTO -

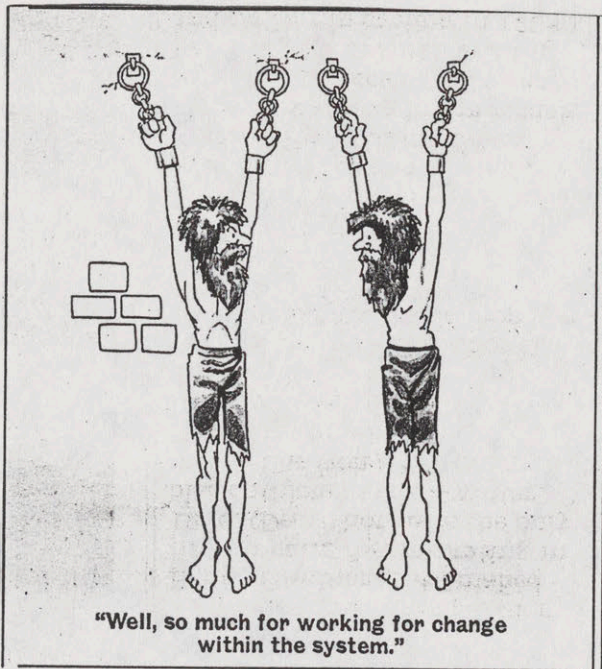
He or she is:

- dealing with death threats
- experiencing burnout
- mistrusting the ethics of their company's management
- harboring rescue fantasies
- being harassed

He or she has questions about:

- salary
- an impaired colleague

from Simon
Rose
& Conington



RADCLIFFE COLLEGE

RCS
Radcliffe Career Services

....Open to the Public....
Tuesday Four O'Clock
Forums
MARCH 1993

Informed speakers discuss career issues and answer questions...

- * Tuesdays 4:00 to 5:30pm
- * \$5 fee paid at the door
- * No charge to Harvard/Radcliffe Students with I.D.
- * Phone registration appreciated: 617-495-8631 or 617-496-1855

In Buckingham House, 77 Brattle Street, Cambridge

Mar. 2: **INTRODUCTION TO RADCLIFFE CAREER SERVICES** FREE
Phyllis Stein, Director, Radcliffe Career Services
Optional Video-viewing of "Not Just a Job:
Career Planning for Women", follows from 5:30-6:00pm

In Agassiz House, Radcliffe Yard, Cambridge

Mar. 9: **The Pros and Cons of an MBA for Women** \$5
Phyllis Dohanian, Executive Director, French Library in Boston
Susan Munter, Dean Scholar,
Simmons Graduate School of Management
Ellen Ober, Director, Graduate School of Business Administration
Northeastern University

Mar. 16: **Working at Home by Telecommuting:** \$5
Is it Right for You?
Don Jaekle, P.M.D. Technology

Mar. 23: **Careers as an Ombudsperson:** \$5
Professional Advocates for the Consumer
Mary Rowe, Special Assistant to the President, MIT
Linda Wilcox, Ombudsperson, Medical School, Dental School
and School of Public Health, Harvard

Mar. 30: **Careers in Negotiation and Mediation** \$5
Melisa Broderick, Massachusetts Association of Mediation Programs
Doneen Williams, President, HUCTW

....Career Counseling, Resource Library, and Career Programs

77 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA 02138 495-8631

Julie Seder 497-6465
Monica Morois 493-9628
Lina Fakhouri 493-9018

Omsbudding -- Mary Rowe and Linda Wilcox

1. Internal: Fed., State, College, Corp
2. Client: Nursing home, Newspapers

Canada
Articles at the Radcliffe Career ct.

Issues:

1. True neutrals and ethics (at core)

Growing Fields

Healthcare: Patient Rep/Advocate with a new position developing as a Patient Ombuds
Nursing Home: Elderly Affairs in MA; every state gets FED funding must have an ombuds structure for these homes
Nursing Home Training available
Corps 300-500 36 within
Prisons -- is where shield is the strongest (life or death)

Models

- European model where outside pay-chain Pure and classice
- US model where paid from within -- Surprisingly equitable as you are being pushed from all sides; keeping you neutral by default -- true to practice although theory doesnt seem likely to be acceptable.

OMSBUDS: AVOCATES FOR A FAIRER PROCESS/FUNDAMENTALLY ABOUT TRUST

decency
your audience:
visitors
other involved
employees
outside world

Assoc

- Corp: TOA Ombuds Assoc.
- The US OA

ADVISE: Build a practice around what you like to do.

Other issues:

Some things not appropriate

***Emphasis on VOLUNTARY -- either can walkout, this gives the under-powered person tremendous power.

Attributes:

- High tolerance of frustration
- Risktaking emotionally; i.e., "have you been thinking about hurting yourself?"
- high tolerance and effection for men, women, black, white, inbetween/ if irritable, no way

***Everyday Mary walks in and wonders, 'how neutral am I today?' and later, 'was I impartial?'

Most often people feel that the process doesn't work when its working at its best: The problem is in 'failed' advocacy rather than failing in being neutral. "you have come to me and you stated 'x'"

Hot topics

-- anon. vicious attacks

Other- racial discr./sexual harassmt/ job dissatisfaction/ stalking/eather threats/ gender *** Things I learned

Ombuds Survey Questions

Please return this survey in the envelope supplied to:

Mary Rowe
MIT, Rm. 10-213
77 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Please use a #2 pencil to mark your responses on the enclosed answer form.

Please do not bend or fold the machine scorable sheet.

This survey is confidential. It will be machine-scored and then destroyed. The data will be aggregated with all other data so no single survey could be reassembled.

For #1-#2 please answer to the nearest year (less than six months=one year.) For #1-#2 the answers have a range of 0-99 years.

- 1) *How long have you been an ombudsperson?*
- 2) *How long has your employer had an ombuds office?*

For #3-#7 please mark only one choice on the answer sheet. If the available choices do not fit your case please leave that question unanswered (i.e. blank)

- 3) *Are you:*

A client ombudsperson (for example: serving students, alumni/ae, franchisees, newspaper readers, prisoners, citizens, patients, vendors, or any other kind of "customers".)

An internal practitioner (serving managers and employees.)

Both a client ombudsperson and an internal practitioner.

Other.

- 4) *Are you:*

A lead ombudsman.

An assistant ombudsman.

A regional area ombudsman for your employer.

5) *Do you serve people outside your own country?*

Many countries.

One other country.

Just my own country.

6) *To whom do you report?*

A board member.

The CEO, COO, or equivalent senior general manager of your enterprise.

A top human resources manager.

Other senior manager.

A government entity.

I am self-employed as an outside ombudsperson.

7) *What is your sector?*

Government.

Academic.

Corporate.

Other.

For #8-#12 please answer all that apply. Approximate where necessary. For #8-#11 the answers have a range of 0-99,999. For #12 the answer has a range of 0-9,999,999.

8) *For client ombuds, how many total clients are in your constituency (including students, alumni/ae, citizens, franchisees, readers, prisoners, parents, patients, vendors or other "customers")?*

9) *For internal ombuds, how many non-union employees and managers?*

10) *For internal ombuds, how many unionized employees?*

11) *How many in any other potential constituency group?*

12) *What is the TOTAL number of people in your constituency that might call on you?*

For #13 please reply in THOUSANDS, to the nearest thousand (i.e. \$45,650=46.) For #13 the answer has a range of 0-999 thousand (i.e. a salary of \$0-\$999,000.)

13) *What is your approximate salary in US dollars? (Please lump in bonuses or other income on which you do or will pay income tax.)*

For #14-#17 please answer each question. For #14-#15 the answers have a range of 0-9999. For #16-#17 the answers have a range of 0-99.

14) *In one year what is the approximate number of cases you personally handle, where a case takes more than one hour?*

15) *In one year what is the approximate number of concerns that you personally handle, where a concern takes less than one hour?*

16) *For how many hours per week are you theoretically (formally) paid?*

17) *How many hours per week do you actually work (on the average)?*

For #18 please reply in THOUSANDS, to the nearest thousand (i.e. \$65,250=65.) For #18 the answer has a range of 0-9999 thousand (i.e. a savings of \$0-\$9,999,000.)

18) *Of the cases you have handled over the last two years, which you think may have saved your employer money, what is your estimate of the money saved (in US dollars) in the case that saved the most for your employer?*

For #19-#22 please answer yes (Y) or no (N).

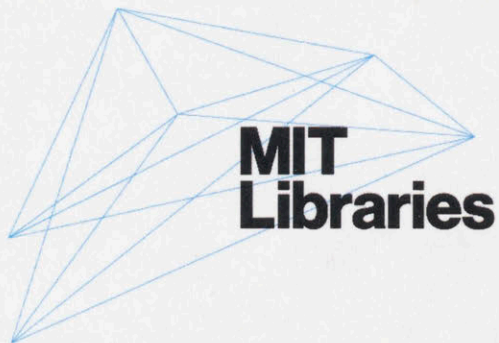
19) *Are you formally designated as a neutral?*

20) *Do you have an agreement with your employer that you will not be called to testify in formal hearings inside or outside your place of work?*

21) *Do you believe most ombudspeople need such an agreement?*

22) *Do you believe ombudspeople need laws shielding them from testimony in formal hearings?*

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed envelope. Results will be reported back to everyone in the new Ombuds Directory.



Department of Distinctive Collections
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

libraries.mit.edu



The remaining contents of this folder have been redacted.

If you would like to see the full folder, please email the

Department of Distinctive Collections at

distinctive-collections@mit.edu