

PLENTIFUL PROVERBS PREACH POETICALLY

"Give me liberty..."

"Too many cooks ..."

"Haste makes..."

OBJECTIVES

- To energize team meetings.
- To impress upon participants the value of concise, cogent communications.
- To provide opportunities to work in task-oriented teams.

MATERIALS REQUIRED

Sufficient copies of the Proverb Simplification Exercise for all team members.

PROCEDURE

Distribute copies of the exercise appearing on page 185 to all members.

Remind them that a proverb is defined as "a short, pithy saying in frequent and widespread use, expressing a well-known truth or fact."

Ask them to translate each hidden proverb into its more commonly known and poetic form. (This can be done individually or in groups.)

When sufficient time has been provided, randomly call on individuals to disclose their interpretations of what each proverb says. (This can provide a substantial opportunity for levity.)

Engage the group in a debriefing session, in which these answers are shared, and some or all of the discussion questions are used:

1. A fool and his or her money are soon parted.
2. When the cat's away, the mice will play.
3. Too many cooks spoil the broth.
4. Haste makes waste.
5. Crime does not pay.
6. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
7. The early bird gets the worm.
8. Give me liberty or give me death.
9. Better late than never.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who talks or writes like this on our team? Why?
2. What is the impact of such obfuscation (Okay, we're guilty, too!) on effective communication?

TIP

If you note a large number of blank looks after a few minutes, it is wise to share one example with the group. This ...