



Good Companies – Troubled Projects

Newsletter

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NURSE KRAMER

Recently my world was set on its ear as my dad had to undergo unexpected open-heart surgery. In the ICU I learned the critical care nurses are everything. Not only are they the key caregiver but they're the main communication point for the family. We would hang on every word uttered and scrutinize every action for deep meaning. They were the experts and we were at their mercy.

Without a doubt, day two after the surgery was the worst. As they attempted to bring my dad back to normal operations, the pain from the surgery, the multitude of tubes and a pre-existing back condition were causing major problems. And as luck would have it, in came Nurse Kramer. She looked and acted exactly like a female version of the character Kramer from the Seinfeld series. If Kramer had a twin she was it. She was a solid six footer not counting the eight inches of frizzed up out of control hair. Not only did she look like Kramer but she moved like him as well. She would zip here and bound there like a runaway ping pong ball. To her credit she always responded to our questions. The problem, her response came as a deluge of words that only lead to more questions and further confusion.

My mom, who tends a worry a bit anyway, was on overdrive as one can imagine. Watching her trying to deal with Nurse Kramer was simply painful. If being in a stress free environment is important for recovering heart surgery patients my dad was in trouble. I did not doubt Nurse Kramer's competency or the fact that my dad was getting the care he needed. But as far as the family was concerned, the situation emphasized the impact of good communication, especially during times of high stress.

If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed in this article, please contact:

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How effective a team communicates will directly impact project performance. Like talking with the nurses in the ICU, project leaders are at the mercy of the functional experts to know what is happening in their respective areas. During these conversations, more often than not, some version of Nurse Kramer shows up. Too often this means playing 50 questions to discover what is going on to needing a code breaker to untangle convoluted answers.

Being a good communicator is an acquired skill. Like all things some people will be better than others but there is no reason we all cannot be competent. Good communication is the cornerstone to project success.

Is your critical project team struggling? Sit back and listen. Is clear and actionable communication taking place? Imagine the impact if communication improved just 10% across the team and organization. At Waypoint Leadership we are blessed to have associations with several outstanding communication experts. Give us a call and let us help your team improve performance by establishing solid project communication.