

Ombuds Outlook — October 2017

Ombuds/Dispute Resolution Services for Faculty

<http://ombudsfac.unm.edu>

Open House at Ombuds Services



The third Thursday of October is **International Conflict Resolution Day**. This global event promotes working for peaceful conflict resolution.

Stop by and visit with colleagues.

Learn more about our services for faculty and staff.

Enjoy complimentary refreshments.

We look forward to seeing you!

Date: Thursday, October 19, 2017

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Location: Ombuds/Dispute Resolution Services
1800 Las Lomas
SE corner of Las Lomas and Buena Vista
(Bldg. #29 on main campus map)

Ombuds Workshop: Wait . . . What?

“Wait, What? And Life’s Other Essential Questions”

This workshop is based on the book of the same title, authored by James Ryan, Dean of Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education. Ryan presented the idea of Wait . . . What? in a commencement speech that was so well received by the graduating class that it went viral and recently became a book.

In this workshop, we explore five essential questions designed to improve interpersonal relationships in the workplace, especially amid conflict. We explore how asking better questions presents numerous possibilities to engage our curiosity, find common ground, approach relationships with humility, avoid snap judgements, and truly find the important facets in our lives and relationships, all of which play key roles in times of disagreement and conflict.



PRESENTERS

Matthew Hoeg & Nina Cooper

Graduate Assistants

Ombuds Dispute Resolution Services for Faculty

Date: Friday October 20, 2017

Time: 12:00 - 1:30 PM

Location: UNM Business Center
(SE Corner of Lomas & University)
Room 1016

RSVP

Ombudsperson for Faculty

Jean Civikly-Powell

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THE POWER OF AN APOLOGY

“Apology changed my life. I believe it can change yours as well” - Beverly Engel

Going far beyond the words of apology, Engel’s book guides readers in becoming more tolerant and compassionate in the workplace and in life. In the midst of workplace stresses, there may be times when individuals are unintentionally inconsiderate, impatient or rude in dealing with colleagues, staff and students. An apology may be offered, but can be ineffective if it comes across as ritualistic and disingenuous, or is being offered only to avoid punishment or humiliation.

Engel notes that by using an apology effectively, we can repair harm, dissolve anger, mend relationships, and foster healing. An apology holds the potential to develop and maintain a healthy work environment.

In Chapter 15, “Healing Your Business Relationships through Respect and Compassion,” Engel discusses how apologies may be used to promote respect and solve disputes. While it may be challenging to formulate and verbalize an apology, failing to apologize may create greater harm and may be indicative of some level of pride, stubbornness, or insecurity,

By assuming responsibility for oversights, mistakes, and delays, however, we show respect for others in the workplace and acknowledge our willingness to try harder. While we are not required to like everyone with whom we work or do business, offering an apology shows respect by acknowledging that a person has experienced some level of disappointment or inconvenience. According to Engel, an apology offers three things: 1) a statement of regret acknowledging that harm, disappointment, or inconvenience has been experienced; 2) an opportunity for the person to be heard so that they do not feel ignored or minimized; and 3) someone to take responsibility for the oversight with assurance that the difficulty will not only be remedied, but also not repeated.

There may also be times when you have not upset someone, but there remains a need to remedy a difficult situation. Why would we apologize when we have done nothing wrong? An effective apology diffuses anger and shows respect. Engle notes that while you should not take responsibility for something you did not do or that which is beyond your control, there are times when we can acknowledge that a person is upset. Providing acknowledgment, regret, and making an attempt to remedy the situation can lessen upsets and demonstrate respect for the person.

In sum, an apology communicates both compassion and respect while also promoting a more constructive work environment for you and others.

Engel, B. (2001). *The power of an apology: Healing steps to transform all your relationships*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.