What’s That You Say?

People are notorious for saying things they don’t actually mean, particularly during an argument. On the flip side, saying things that have a different meaning than what’s intended is human nature and often the cause of an argument in the first place. After all, no one is a mind reader.

[CLICK HERE] to read the article, “Cracking the Code,” from Psychology Today, March 6, 2015.]

[CLICK HERE] to read the article, “How to Be a Better Mind Reader,” from Psychology Today, Nov. 4, 2014.]

This dichotomy creates an interesting dilemma for market researchers, particularly those who invest in focus groups to get feedback on new products. Henry Ford, founder of Ford Motor Company, was famously prolific regarding customer input, having once said, “If I had asked people what they wanted, they would have said a faster horse.”

Late Apple co-founder Steve Jobs also was a big proponent of not listening to customer words, but rather to their needs. He’s quoted as saying, “It’s really hard to design products by focus groups. A lot of times, people don’t know what they want until you show it to them.”

[CLICK HERE] to read the article, “Bridging the Gap Between Actual and Reported Behavior,” from UX Booth, May 19, 2013.]

[CLICK HERE] to read the article, “Why Steve Jobs Didn’t Listen to His Customers,” from The Huffington Post, Sept. 28, 2014.]

It’s also not an uncommon phenomenon that people will say what they think in writing, but not face to face. In recent years, the Internet has provided a popular forum for readers to make comments and get opinions off their chest without rankling anyone they know personally. Experts have observed that the mask of an online identity permits inhibition in a way similar to drinking alcohol. However, because people do change their behavior in different situations, it’s important not to make quick judgments. Rather, true behavior patterns reveal their consistency over time and in various situations.


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Sometimes when posed a direct question, you can surprise even yourself with the answer. We don’t often get interviewed in the manner of movie stars and famous athletes, but if we did, consider how you might answer pointed questions about life lessons.

[CLICK HERE to read the article, “Kevin Costner: What I’ve Learned,” from Esquire, April 23, 2012.]

[CLICK HERE to read the article, “Hope Solo: What I’ve Learned,” from Esquire, accessed June 12, 2015.]

At the end of the day, one of the best ways to plan, set goals, compromise and move forward is to communicate better -- with ourselves and with each other. In the financial world, we get to know our clients through face-to-face meetings, stay in touch via phone calls and emails and sometimes work with clients through written materials -- questionnaires, profiles and individualized plans. Everyone has different communication preferences, but what’s important is that we discover what it is we really want to say, and mean it.

If we can help you better define your plans for the future, please reach out and communicate with us by whatever means suit you the best.

We are an independent firm helping individuals create retirement strategies using a variety of insurance products to custom suit their needs and objectives.

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