

- Do Our Differences Affect the Way We Communicate?
- From the Office of James Malarney
- Year End Reminders from the Payroll Department
- A Drivers Parallel Career
- Safety Awards
- From the Safety Department
- One Easy Way to Simplify Your Life

## DO OUR DIFFERENCES AFFECT THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE?

by Shelly L. Robinson

In business, we deal with many different types of people from many different backgrounds and upbringings. Have you ever stopped to think about whether these differences affect the way we communicate?

Most researchers in the Communication field believe these differences do affect the way we send and receive messages, or how we communicate. Most people easily believe how age can affect communication. You've heard the terms baby-boomers, Generation "X", and now Generation "Y." This one seems obvious, but there are other differences we should also consider that can also have a significant impact on the communication process. Differences in our schooling, religions, regions, races, family lives, and personal experiences all play a factor in the way we communicate with those around us.

As much as we are forced to communicate with others on a daily basis, it still amazes me to see or hear how messages are misunderstood or misinterpreted in the workplace. It doesn't really matter what position or title a person holds, misinterpretation or miscommunication happens all the time. On a daily basis, simple conversations, official presentations, or even e-mails are completely misunderstood or misinterpreted by the intended recipient due to our differences. But is it any one person's fault? Should we blame the person sending the message for not being more decisive in the word choice, or do we blame the receiver for not being more open-minded? The truth is, it is no one person's fault, but the end results can lead to unnecessary hostility in the workplace and animosity between co-workers, supervisors, and even with our customers.

All this considered, the bottom line is that we all want to be better commun-

icators! Nobody intends for the communication process to fail. The good news is that there are some key tips for avoiding a breakdown in the communication process and here they are:

**TAKE TIME TO LISTEN.** Turn down your Nextel, look away from your computer, make eye contact when possible and just listen! Skillful listening takes practice and makes other people feel heard, and it also ensures a higher chance of understanding the message someone is trying to send and also establishes a positive connection with others.

**ASK QUESTIONS TO CLARIFY AND UNDERSTAND.** Asking good questions is a part of skillful listening and creative thinking. We aren't talking about interrogation, where you grill someone because you don't like their personal ideas or beliefs. Clarifying questions also avoids statements such as "You don't really believe that, do you?" You should ask questions because you want to understand more, and by understanding you achieve successful communication with co-workers, supervisors and customers that will also decrease misunderstandings.

### **SPEAK CLEARLY AND CONCRETELY.**

Use of slang, vague instruction, ums, ahhs, errs, uh-hmmms, speaking too quickly, softly, or slowly make it difficult for people to understand what it is you're trying to communicate. Take a deep breath, make eye contact, think about what you really want to say, and express yourself.

### **BE OPEN-MINDED AND RECEPTIVE.**

Everyone is part of a team! Be open to what others are saying or offering even if you do not agree with them. Often, we restrict the flow of ideas or communication by rejecting other's ideas before we hear them out. We are often guilty of making assumptions or being too quick to judge and criticize. Relax and allow yourself the pleasure of increased receptivity and others the opportunity to express creativity. We all win in the end when we put the best product, idea, or solution forward.

Whether you are a driver or a vice-president of a corporation, these tips are more like life skills that can be a benefit to everyone. Just being aware of our differences and taking the time to improve understanding can help improve our communication with others.



## ***From the office of... James Malarney, President***

All of the experts agree, attitude is the most important factor in determining whether an employee will be an asset or a liability on the job.

If someone has a poor or negative attitude, he or she will invariably fail to get the job done and get it done right.

Also someone with a poor attitude will "poison" everyone around them on the job. Nobody wants to be around a person who constantly complains and is never satisfied no matter what you do for them.

On the other hand, a person with a positive attitude will be more productive and efficient in the long run. Someone with a "can-do" attitude is fun to work with and they are always appreciated by their employer and fellow workers.

A good attitude is so important that it will often make up for a slight deficiency in technical skills.

We at Vanguard Services, Inc. try to hire people with positive attitudes because we know that they are the winner.

Everybody needs an attitude adjustment from time to time so let's check our own and make improvements where called for. I promise, it will pay off for you.

### **ATTENTION DRIVERS:**

**If you would like to receive an electronic copy of "Vanguard Views", please send your e-mail address to [mcloud@vanguardservices.net](mailto:mcloud@vanguardservices.net).**

## **A DRIVER'S PARALLEL CAREER**

**By Dan Buckley, District Manager - Simpsonville, SC**

Stephen Euin Cobb "Steve" joined the Vanguard family in March, 2001. He is assigned to our office in Aiken, South Carolina. I remember interviewing Steve at a truck stop in Spartanburg, South Carolina and thinking, this is not your typical driver. At that time, Steve was running over-the-road for a major common carrier and, like so many other hard working drivers, he was looking for a better paying opportunity that allowed him to touch home base more often. He had spent nearly five years doing so and in the process found himself away from home

for weeks at a time. Again, nothing out of the ordinary but, still, Steve's story is different. With the idle down time that is common when running the road, Steve embarked on a parallel career as an author.

Steve is now the published author of two science fiction novels, the first written on a notebook computer while in the sleeper berth of his eighteen-wheeler. His first novel, *Plague at Redhook*, was published in March 1999 and his second novel, *Bones Burnt Black*, published in September 2004. Steve was kind enough to send autographed copies of his newest novel to all of us in the Simpsonville office, and yes, I have read my copy. And yes, Steve is a talented author (and I'm not even a science fiction fan). Both of his novels can be found at major book retailers and through on-line retailers such as Amazon.com. Steve also has his own website, [www.stevcobbs.com](http://www.stevcobbs.com).

Congratulations Steve on your parallel career and thank you for your contributions to Vanguard and its client.



## **YEAR END REMINDERS FROM THE PAYROLL DEPARTMENT**

As the year winds down, there are some things that you need to think about for the upcoming year.

- *Have you moved?*
- *Do you have a new spouse, lost a spouse or otherwise changed your filing status?*
- *Have your kids graduated from college or are otherwise on their own? Do you have more children?*
- *Has your spouse changed work status?*

Reviewing the form W-4 is a good idea for everyone to do each year. Your withholding requirements can change. The local and state withholding should also be reviewed. If you have claimed "exempt" from withholding during 2004, you must complete a new W-4 by February 15, 2005 to keep that "exempt" status. You can download a new W-4 from the internet address: <http://www.irs.gov>. Put the form number in the box marked "Search Forms and Publications". Each state is different. Your number of exemptions for local taxes may have changed too.

It's also time to review your pay stub. Is the address correct? Is the correct state and local tax being withheld? Any problems with your name or social security number? These must match your Social Security card. Please contact payroll with any questions or changes. Payroll can be contacted through your local area office.

The W-2s for 2004 will be printed and mailed in late January 2005. Please remember that your stub is not adequate for filing your tax return. The taxable wages for federal, state and local might be three different figures, depending on your elections for Section 125 or 401k. It's best to wait until the W-2 is received. No requests for duplicate W-2s will be processed until February 18, 2005, since we need to allow time for the Post Office to return any undeliverable forms.

# SAFETY AWARDS



## 1 YEAR SAFETY

Jack Adams  
William Archer  
Peter Averso, Jr.  
Paul Bailey  
Nathaniel Banks  
Basil Bennett  
Brian Bertotto  
Jerry Bingham  
Herman Brady  
Lanny Broadwater  
Jason Broome  
Geoffrey Brown  
Neil Canata  
Randall Cannon  
Bryan Cantor  
Larry Carter  
Ricky Carty  
Steffon Clay  
John Colon  
John Costley  
Wayne Covely, Jr.  
Stanley Cowan  
Dean Cretsinger  
Craig Cunningham  
Hugh Cunningham  
Stephen Daniels  
William Daugherty  
Michael Delamar  
Miller Dickson  
Charles Dixon  
Theodore Dixon  
Mark Duncan  
Joe Ellenburg  
Douglas Fairfield  
Judy Fairfield  
Lloyd Farmer  
Dwain Finn  
Terry Fondren  
Ronald Ford  
Benito Gonzalez  
Steven Haven  
Everett Hayes  
Russel Helmers  
Gary Hilliard  
Kelly Hillis  
Edward Hooker  
Chad Hubbard  
William Isabell  
Cecil James  
Richard James  
Gary Johnson  
Philip Johnson  
Jesse Jordan  
Raymond Keller  
Buna Kinkela  
David Kohler  
Karl Krapf  
Rosie Krapf  
James Kutzer  
Michael Lester  
Charles Lockey  
John Lucas  
W. Jim Lynch III  
Harrison Mapp  
Michael Margavio  
Ted Mason  
Kevin McAlister  
Joe McClellan  
Thomas McCormack

Ryan Miller  
Jerry Mitchell  
Robert Morgan  
Donald Oldham  
Toby Oldham  
Gary Passwater  
Dwight Pember  
Jason Presley  
Tim Raymer  
Greg Rouse  
Jonathan Rowe  
David Runells  
Thomas Ryan  
Vahid "Jeff" Salah  
Steve Salyer  
Michael Seymour  
William Smith  
Chad Stewart  
Norman Talley  
John Thompson  
Steve Turner  
Rafael Velasquez  
Douglas Vieira  
William Webster  
Thomas West  
Theodore White  
Clayton Williams  
Claude Wiser  
Charles Wright  
Egerton Wyatt

## 2 YEARS SAFETY

Larry Alwert  
William Boykin  
Aaron Clark  
Jerry Cook  
Larry Eick  
Luard Escobar  
David Fierro  
Joseph Gilbert  
Julian Hall  
Clarence Jackson  
Patrick Keyser  
Charles Locklear  
Bruce Morgan  
Emanuel Moses  
Douglas Padgett  
Larry Perry  
Gary Pierce  
David Ramsey  
Gordon Robertson  
Carl Robinson  
Jerry Roper  
Terry Ross  
Kenneth Ryder  
Tim Stump  
Richard Thrift  
Melvin Vickous  
David Willis

## 3 YEARS SAFETY

James Baker  
Jonathan Banks  
Gurney Bennett, Jr.  
Charles Brandenberger  
Daniel Busher  
Edilberto Espitia  
Bruce Everett  
Larry Garner  
John Grounds

Allen Hegarty  
Felipe Hinojosa  
Frederick Howell  
John Joran  
Richard Kline, Jr.  
Richard Marks  
Anthony Milam  
Howard Mills  
William Morlok  
Jeffery Muntean  
Kevin Norvell  
Scott Oezer  
Osville Paules  
Dennis Peeler  
Rhonda Robertson  
Greg Rouse  
Gregory Rule  
David Shackelford  
Patrick Sutton  
Neil Swartz  
Clinney Thomas  
Mark Vigier  
Kevin Weber  
Alan White  
John Williams, Jr.

## 4 YEARS SAFETY

Michael Baker  
Richard Blackburn  
Richard Brown  
Garry Coble  
Steven Grossmann  
William Guthrie  
Randy Johnson  
Charles Keeney, Jr.  
Bob Kirkpatrick  
Jeffery Leftwich  
Robert Lesure  
Robert Maddox  
Robert Manns  
Barry Meacham  
Steve Mitchell  
William Morlok  
James O'Leary  
Juan Peralta  
Steven Sager  
Douglas Tekulve  
Mark Thompson  
Mark Tidmore  
Kevin Weber  
Donald Williams  
John Williamson

## 5 YEARS SAFETY

Michael Baker  
Edwart Baker, Sr.  
Keith Baldwin  
Robert Beard  
John Bunner  
Robert Cooper  
Glen Ellison  
William Haddon  
Stephen Henritzy  
Andy Holland  
Larry Jones  
Jeffery Leftwich  
Deywett Locke  
Barry Meacham  
Richard Merrick  
Steven Sager  
Todd Steward  
Robert Stone  
Wayne Strejcek  
Mark Tidmore

## 6 YEARS SAFETY

Paris Bentley  
Alvin Blackmon  
James Boyd  
Terry Brown  
John Danehower  
Erwin Frazier  
Jerry Hyman  
Thomas Ramaley  
William Scott  
Rickey Townsend

## 7 YEARS SAFETY

Charles Bartl  
Larry Bright  
Ralph Bright  
John Danehower  
Lee Duncanson  
James Layfield  
Thomas Loitz  
Joseph Mack, Jr.  
Eugene Martin, Jr.  
Eugenio Martinez  
Donald Massey  
Michael Nelson  
Glenn Price  
Craig Ruis  
Donald Sasser  
Charles Sweitzer  
Robert Wayne Thornton  
John Wardlaw

## 8 YEARS SAFETY

Bernard Bray, Sr.  
Jerry Crook  
Mark Harding  
Alvin Hunter  
Roger Riddle  
Richard Roach  
Grady Stone  
Franklin Wells, Jr.  
Ronald Wilson  
John Cain  
Gary Kirschenman  
Franklin Moravits  
David Roberts  
Edward Schurevich  
Ronnie Smith  
William Smith  
James Carroll  
Milton Grimes  
Thomas Hunter, Jr.  
Robert Jansen  
Larry Rosenbrock  
Robert Walton

## 11 YEARS SAFETY

Larry Bowman  
Michael Copes  
Merle Smith

## 12 YEARS SAFETY

Robert Blackmon, Jr.  
Robert Chestnut  
Randy Gravely  
James Prime

## 13 YEARS SAFETY

Ernest Hinkle  
Charles Owens

## 14 YEARS SAFETY

Richard Bagwell  
Charles Barbare  
Robert Hall  
Edward Ives  
Robert McNabb  
Carthel Reese  
Norman Winchester

## 15 YEARS SAFETY

Stephen Albertson  
John Price  
Bobby Stevens

## 16 YEARS SAFETY

J. Randall Hurst

## 17 YEARS SAFETY

Furman Jordan  
Jerald Noel

## 18 YEARS SAFETY

George Carter  
John Spearman

## 21 YEARS SAFETY

James Marling

## 22 YEARS SAFETY

Edward Davis  
James Rodgers, Sr.

## 23 YEARS SAFETY

Roy Fowler

## 24 YEARS SAFETY

Tommy Stoddard

## 27 YEARS SAFETY

Randolph Barber  
Ronald Flowers

## 28 YEARS SAFETY

Dorsey King

## 29 YEARS SAFETY

Paul Coleman  
Willie Johnson

## 30 YEARS SAFETY

Willie Hutchinson  
Gary Martin

## FROM THE SAFETY DEPARTMENT

### THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS FRIGHTFUL...

The snow is beginning to fall and once again we need to think about driving safely during the winter. Driving accidents increase at a chilling rate in the winter months. Many drivers often do not understand the complete winter driving picture. Most drivers fail to take into consideration the hazardous conditions, tricky traction and poor visibility caused by poor winter weather conditions. Here are some helpful driving tips for this winter:

#### POOR TRACTION

Poor Traction is often blamed as the leading cause of winter traffic tie-ups and accidents. To improve traction, good tire treads are essential. Start off slow and easy and do not spin your wheels. Turn your wheels from side to side before starting out to remove heavy snow from around your tires. Another good trick is to move forward and back 1 to 2 meters to pack the heavy snow before shutting down.

#### REDUCED TRACTION AND INCREASED STOPPING DISTANCE

On ice and snow, it may take 3 to 12 times more stopping distance than required under ideal conditions. Remember that the heavier the vehicle, the longer it will take to bring it to a stop. Braking techniques such as feather and ABS systems can help but should never be relied upon solely. In poor weather, increase your following distance. A good rule of thumb under ideal conditions is one second following distance for every 10 feet of your vehicle (i.e. 6 seconds for a tractor trailer unit) In adverse weather, add at least one second for every 10 feet (i.e. 12 seconds for a tractor trailer)

#### HILLS

If you downshift to make a hill, do it smoothly or do it before starting up. Beware of shaded areas and the shaded side of hills, which can remain icy, while the sunny side may be dry and bare. Reduce your speed when cresting hills in order to be prepared for unseen hazards on the other side such as a stalled vehicle, snow, ice or downhill sharp curves.

#### JACKKNIFING

Repeated studies have shown that once a jackknife develops beyond 15 degrees of center, it is almost impossible to recover. Since a jackknife can develop past the 15 degrees of center in 1.5 seconds, any attempt to power out and or counter steer must be immediate in order to recover from a developing jackknife situation. An immediate response in correcting a jackknife is essential. It is important to try to keep all of the wheels rolling. Many jackknives develop when a wheel or wheels have locked up. Spinning tires due to overpowering can cause loss of control and be a contributing factor to a tractor-trailer jackknife.

Please remember that winter driving requires additional attention. We all should do our part to show the industry and the public that we are professional truck drivers and the safest drivers on the road.

## FROM THE BENEFITS DEPARTMENT ONE EASY WAY TO SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

From time to time many of us have to take different medications for different reasons. However, the majority of medications taken by Vanguard Services, Inc. employees and their families are for on-going treatments; treatments that do not go away at the end of a month, or when the medication runs out. These types of maintenance drugs can take a real bite out of a family's monthly cash budget, and one way to help reduce this cost is by utilizing our plan's home delivery program. Like many insurance companies, United HealthCare's pharmacy benefit will provide you with a mail-order option, and this option is offered at no additional cost! When combined with reduced co-pays through obtaining a 90-day supply, and no annual deductible, the Home Delivery Pharmacy makes sense for any type of maintenance drug regimen.

FOR EXAMPLE, LIPITOR:

	RETAIL PHARMACY	HOME DELIVERY PHARMACY
Month One:	\$30.00*	
Month Two:	\$30.00*	
Month Three:	\$30.00*	
TOTAL 90-DAY SUPPLY:	\$90.00*	\$75.00**

\*This co-pay assumes you have already reached your \$100 or \$200 annual deductible.

\*\* No annual deductible.

For more information, simply visit United Health Care's website at: [www.myuhc.com](http://www.myuhc.com) or call the Home Delivery Pharmacy toll free at 1-877-START-MAIL (1-877-782-7862).

One important note, make sure your doctor writes your prescription for a 90-day supply, and as always, if you have any questions feel free to call the Vanguard Services, Inc. Benefits Office at 1-800-428-9225.