

“P” is for Professionalism

Setting the Standard for Excellence

Cindy Whittum - Sr. Career Coach
Davenport University - Lansing Campus



Objectives

- ▶ Three Key Take-Aways
- ▶ Defining Professionalism
- ▶ 6 Key Qualities Every Administrative Professional Needs
 - ▶ Communication
 - ▶ Organization
 - ▶ Time Management
 - ▶ Dependability/Reliability
 - ▶ Confidentiality
 - ▶ Customer or Client Service Orientation
- ▶ Open Dialog/Q&A

Three Key Take-Aways

- ▶ Understand the deeper definition of professionalism
- ▶ Identify your impact and influence on your organization's image
- ▶ Understand the image you portray both intentional and unintentional

Defining Professionalism




**How do you define
or describe
Professionalism?**

Defining Professionalism

- ▶ Webster's Dictionary defines professionalism:
 - ▶ the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person
- ▶ How you perform your work functions/responsibilities
- ▶ How you conduct yourself
 - ▶ At work
 - ▶ In public (yes....even off the clock)

Defining Professionalism



**PROFESSIONAL IS NOT
A LABEL YOU GIVE
YOURSELF
– IT'S A DESCRIPTION
YOU HOPE OTHERS
WILL APPLY TO YOU.**

- David Maister
True Professionalism

Defining Professionalism

Karma

The joy of watching someone get what they deserve.

Professionalism.

The ability to sit back and enjoy the show while keeping your mouth shut!



6 Key Qualities That Every Administrative Professional Needs

6 Key Qualities

Communication

Organization

Time Management

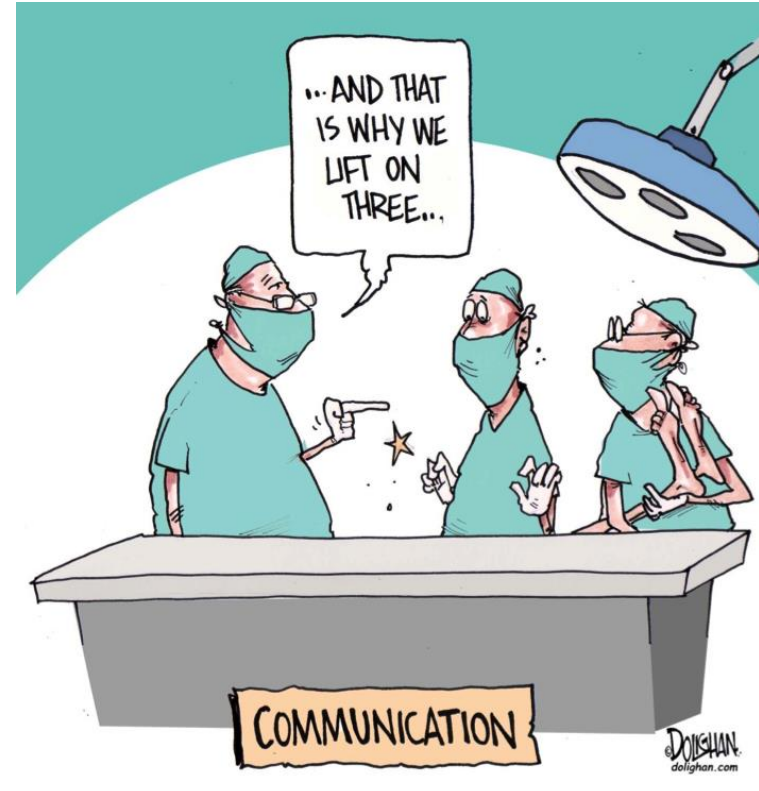
Dependability/Reliability

Confidentiality

Customer and Client Service Orientation

#1 - Communication Skills

- ▶ Verbal -
 - ▶ Effectively expressing your message
 - ▶ Clear and concise but enough detail for the receiver to understand
 - ▶ Watch using 'jargon' or terms only your inner circle would know
 - ▶ Over communication is better than under communication (assuming)
 - ▶ Opportunity for quicker resolution or decision making



#1 - Communication Skills

▶ Written

- ▶ Not quite as effective as verbal
 - ▶ Difficult to gauge emotion, lacks inflection...intent easily misinterpreted
- ▶ Opportunity to have communication trail, documentation of conversation
- ▶ Becoming a lost art (texting, emojis, etc)



#1 - Communication Skills

► Non-Verbal

- Impacts how your message is received - how you make others feel
- **Eye Contact**, expression, focus

How We Communicate

Verbal

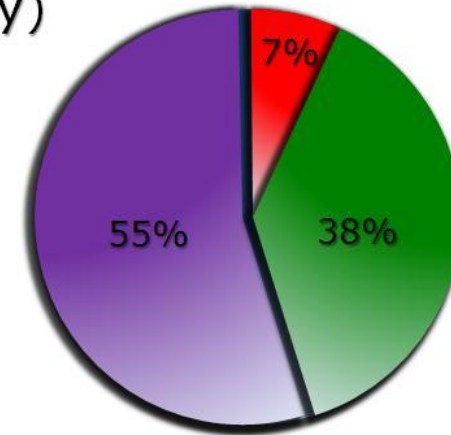
Words – (What we say)

Para-verbal

Tone (How we say it)

Non-verbal

Our Expressions and actions



#1 - Communication Skills

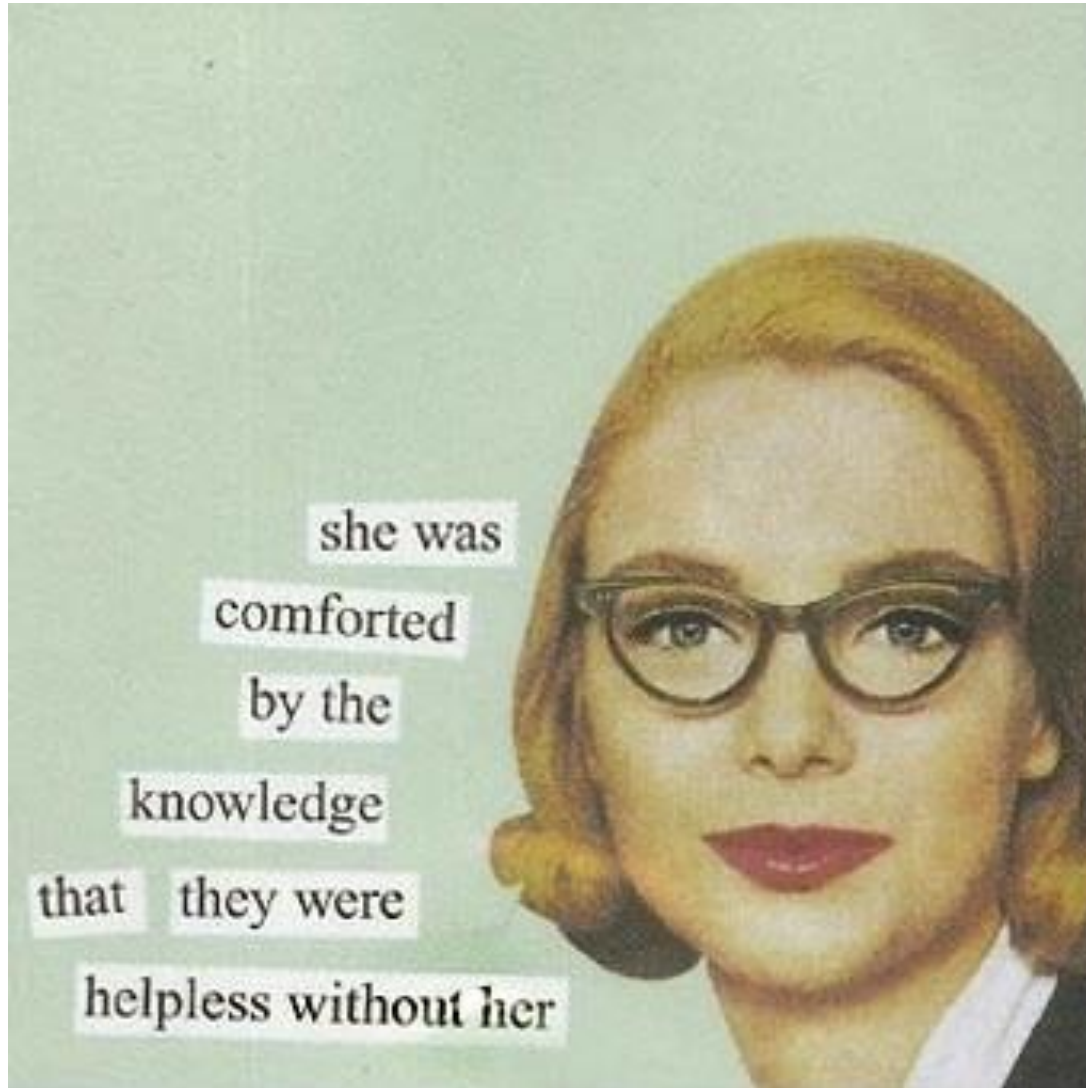
▶ Listening

- ▶ Biggest challenge in effective communication
 - ▶ Most of us are thinking of our response before we actually hear the message
- ▶ Engage in Active Listening
 - ▶ Make eye contact and STOP what you are doing
 - ▶ Acknowledge you understand by repeating/paraphrasing their message
 - ▶ Defer judgement and respond appropriately

THE MORE SENTENCES YOU COMPLETE, THE HIGHER YOUR SCORE! THE IDEA IS TO BLOCK THE OTHER GUY'S THOUGHTS AND EXPRESS YOUR OWN! THAT'S HOW YOU WIN!



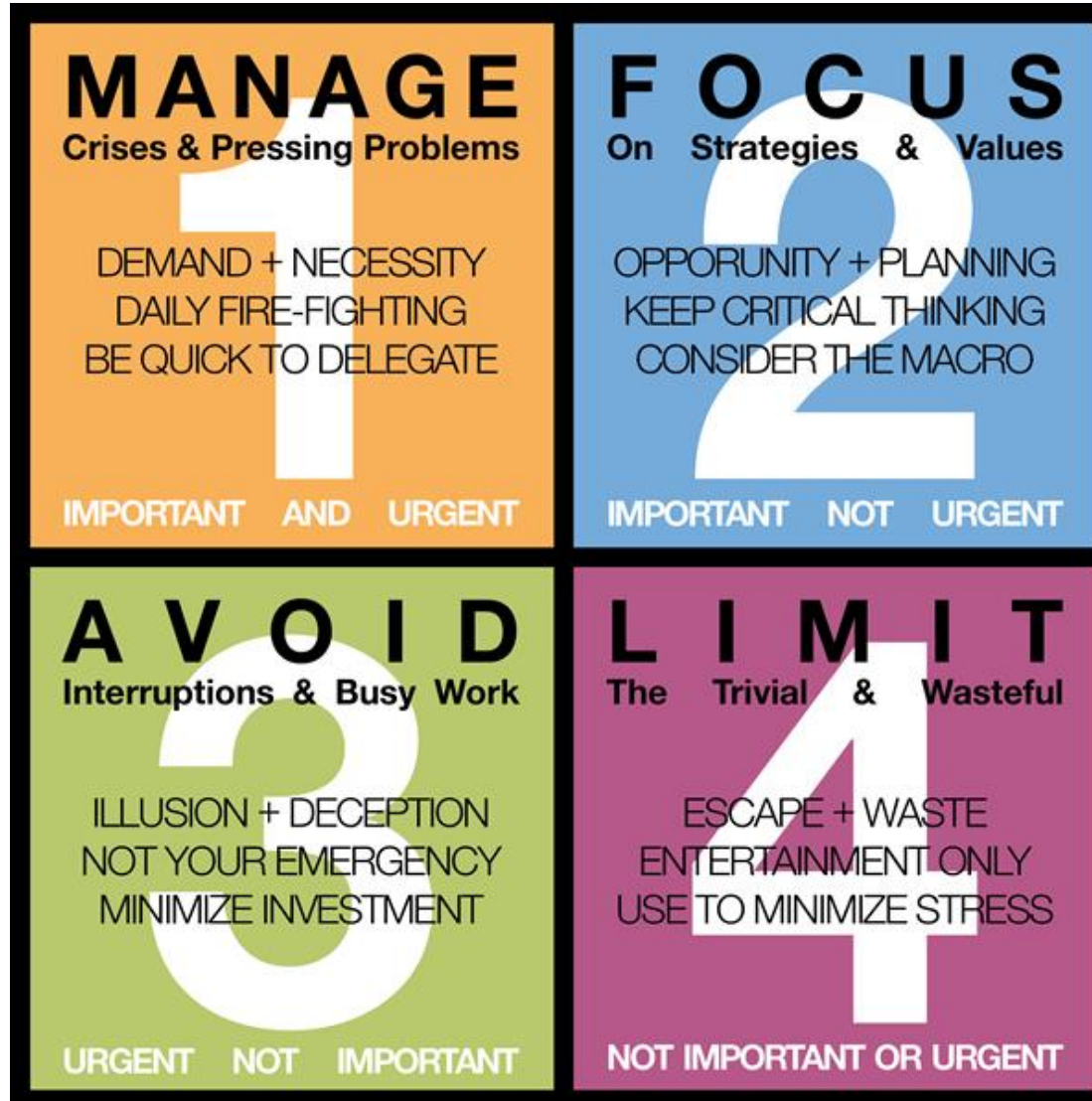
#2 - Organizational Skills



#2 - Organizational Skills

- ▶ **Ability to prioritize and multi-task effectively**
 - ▶ Priorities ever changing - being able to change direction without losing focus
 - ▶ Explore Apps and other technology to make your life easier
 - ▶ Travel Planning - Tripit, SeatGuru, GateGuru
 - ▶ To -Do Lists - SuperNote, Wunderlist, Timeful
 - ▶ Project Management - Teamwork, Trello, Asana, Basecamp
 - ▶ Virtual Meeting - GoToMeeting, Skype, Google Hangout
 - ▶ Note Taking - EverNote, OneNote
- ▶ **Maintaining an organized desk and filing system (paper and electronic)**
 - ▶ Don't keep your processes secret...have a back up person you trust...just in case...

#3 - Time Management Skills



#4 - Dependability and Reliability

- ▶ You are the lifeline for the person you support
- ▶ They trust you to:
 - ▶ Give them the information they need to successfully operate in their role
 - ▶ Keep at bay the people and distractions that impeded their productivity
 - ▶ Maintain their calendars and get them where they need to when they need to be there
 - ▶ Make their success your priority
 - ▶ In some cases...maintain balance between personal and professional worlds

#5 - Confidentiality

- ▶ **Critical in the workplace AND as an Administrative or Executive Assistant**
 - ▶ You may be privy to information that cannot be shared with others
 - ▶ You may overhear conversations containing sensitive information
 - ▶ According to SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) office gossip causes:
 - ▶ Erosion of trust and morale.
 - ▶ Lost productivity and wasted time.
 - ▶ Increased anxiety among employees as rumors circulate without clear information as to what is and isn't fact.
 - ▶ Divisiveness among employees as people take sides.
 - ▶ Hurt feelings and reputations - diminishes your credibility
 - ▶ Attrition due to good employees leaving the company because of an unhealthy work environment.
- ▶ **Depending on company's policy, can be grounds for immediate termination**

#6 - Customer or Client Service Orientation

- ▶ **Fine line between being the rigid gatekeeper and being accommodating and helpful**
- ▶ **8 Essential Customer Service Skills for Executive Assistants**
 - ▶ 1. Active Listening - clear understanding of the individual's needs
 - ▶ 2. Smiles - even on the phone....a smile on your face or in your voice will help even if you are not able to accommodate their needs
 - ▶ 3. Know your audience - who are you speaking to? A client? An employee? A vendor? Do they regularly interact with you or your boss or is their first contact?
 - ▶ 4. Dealing with difficult customers. Be prepared to face some push back. Stay calm. What are some tactics you use to deal with difficult or demanding people?
 - ▶ 5. Confidentiality - they need to feel they can trust you
 - ▶ 6. Common Courtesies - please and thank you go a long way!
 - ▶ 7. Empathy - try to understand the customer's position
 - ▶ 8. Follow up - Under promise and over deliver.

Were our goals accomplished?

- ▶ Deeper understanding of what professionalism is
- ▶ Identify your impact and influence on your organization's image
- ▶ Understand the intentional and unintentional image you display

**QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?**

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect against the white background.