If they can't come UP to you, how will they ever get BEHIND you?

The Authority on Approachability shares principles and practices for management success!

Inside you will learn...
- Dozens Of *Phrases That Payses*
- How to create a question friendly environment
- How to grow bigger ears

...and more!

Scott Ginsberg is the only person in the world who wears a nametag 24-7 to make people friendlier. He is the author of seven books, a professional speaker and an entrepreneur who teaches business-people about approachability.

Scott lives in St. Louis where he often talks to strangers.

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Scott Ginsberg

The Approachable Manager

NametagTV.com

HELLO, my name is

The Approachable Manager

24 Daily Practices for Getting Employees to Come to You

by Scott Ginsberg
That Guy with the Nametag

HELLO I'm Scott

If they can't come UP to you, how will they ever get BEHIND you?

What makes an approachable manager?

Not **BOSSING** staff members.
Coaching them.

Not **SOLVING** the problem.
Defining it.

Not **TYPING** employees' behavior.
Understanding it.

Not **INFORMING** your staff.
Forming your staff.

Not **JUDGMENTAL** attitudes.
Curious thoughts.

Not **ACCUSING** people.
Observing them.

Not **SNOOPING** around.
Searching for.

Not **PRACTICING** what you preach.
Preaching what you practice.

What else?

Not **CRITICIZING** someone.
Critiquing her.

Not **GETTING** employees to act.
Causing them to.

Not **CONFRONTING** individuals.
Encountering them.

Not **TALKING** to or at people.
Conversing with them.

Not **MANIPULATING** people.
Harmonizing with them.

Not **IMPOSING** an agenda.
Proposing potential solutions.

Not **DEBATING** with someone.
Having a dialogue with him.

Approachable Management requires two things:

<u>Sticking yourself</u> out there AND <u>getting them</u> to come to you.

The
Approachable
Manager

24 Daily Practices for Getting
Employees to Come to You

by Scott Ginsberg
(That Guy with the Nametag)

The Approachable Manager

Scott Ginsberg
Copyright © 2007 HELLO, my name is Scott

We all work in the **people business.**

It doesn't matter
> what you sell.

It doesn't matter
> what you create.

It doesn't matter
> what your job
> title says.

It doesn't matter
> what service you
> provide.

You work in the people business.

THEREFORE:
Lead with your
person
and *follow*
with your
profession.

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Why approachability?

<u>Because</u> it puts employees at ease.
<u>Because</u> it encourages engaging communication.
<u>Because</u> it uncovers problems & delivers solutions.
<u>Because</u> it gives employees a reason to come back again an again with their concerns and questions.

And, because it achieves the most important goal of every sales interaction: comfort.

That's why approachability is essential for managerial success.   __

Now, how do I know this?

Well, let's take it from the top…

My name is Scott Ginsberg.

Since November 2, 2000, I've spent every waking hour of my life as a student AND practitioner of approachability.

See, I wear a nametag 24-7.

Yes, 24-7.

It all started out as an experiment. Just to see how people would react.

But over time, it evolved into somewhat of a phenomenon.

And over (more) time, it evolved into a career!

I now run a company called HELLO, my name is Scott! My books, training materials, consulting programs, speaking events and online learning tools teach businesspeople around the world about approachability. My work has been recognized in *The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Cosmopolitan* and *20/20*, to name a few.

And all this from wearing a nametag!

Since 2003, I've had the opportunity to work with thousands of managers in a variety of industries. And in my experience, here's what I've learned:

> **Approachability is the essential philosophy that enables employees to come to you.**

Of course, it's not just about the philosophy. It's about the words. The actions. The re-actions.

And that's exactly what you're going to learn in this book: practical ideas that you can use right away. Not a seven-step process. Not a bunch of vague platitudes. Not a saccharine collection of touching stores.

Just the meat. The nuts and bolts. Killer ideas. Solid suggestions. Tried and true tips guaranteed to boost you (and your company's) approachability.

So, if that's cool with you, turn the page and let's begin!

Scott Ginsberg: August, '07

Oh, and while you're studying this book, don't forget to tune in to...

NametagTV.Com

NametagTV was founded on (and is driven by) the principle of approachability.

Stick yourself out there; get them to come to you.

HELLO, my name is Scott & NametagTV give you practical advice so you can make a name for yourself – one conversation at a time!

o NametagTV teaches approaches that get noticed, get remembered and get business.

o NametagTV delivers concise, engaging and educational video modules you can watch, download and share.

o NametagTV promises information, tips, techniques and ideas you can put to use TODAY!

Log on to www.nametagTV.com NOW and transform The Approachable Salesperson into a multimedia learning experience!

How are
you
giving your
employees
permission?

Approachability
begins with
PERMISSION.

Geneva, Switzerland, 2005.

I was hosting my annual workshop at YPO's Junior Leadership University.

We'd just started our program, so I began telling the teenagers about approachability.

Suddenly, the hand of an enthusiastic student shot up.

"Yes, Sean!" I said.

"Well, it's not really a question, but more of a comment," he explained.

Forty highschoolers turned their heads towards the back of the room as he spoke, "You know why this whole 'approachability' this is so cool? Because it's like … you're giving someone PERMISSION to talk to you."

The room fell silent.

Wow! From the mouths of babes, huh? For years I'd been teaching businesspeople about approachability, and that word had never even occurred to me.

Permission.

Now, as a manager, here's why that matters to you...

Ultimately, when it comes to employee interaction, your team members are thinking to themselves: *How will having a conversation with my manager make me feel?*

If their answer is "comfortable", you BOTH win.

Because comfort eliminates worry.
Which diffuses defensiveness.
Which gives employees permission.

Permission to... open up.
request help.
ask questions.
offer feedback.
share their victories and mistakes.
volunteer information *and voice concerns.*
discuss workplace problems before they snowball.

So, this dimension of approachability was the impetus for the opening line of this book. In case you already forgot, that line was:

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If they can't come up to you, how will they ever get behind you?

That's the one idea you need to keep in mind for the rest of this book.

Cool?

Welcome to Approachable Management!

LET ME SUGGEST THIS...

List five examples of how you presently give employees permission to talk to you.

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

5. _____
_____

Open Door Policies *only* work if your door swings ***both*** ways.

The dangers of being unapproachable

I used to work at a hotel.

Marcus, my manager, was one of those ex-military types that stared subordinates down with his eerie green eyes until they eventually averted their gaze and allowed him to take control of the conversation.

Not exactly approachable.

Also, he RARELY smiled. Sure, maybe to a guest -- but rarely to his teammates. You could crack the funniest joke in the world, and, NOTHING!

I'm not even sure if he had teeth.

Anyway, because Marcus didn't smile (among other behaviors), it didn't feel like he gave us permission to approach him with our concerns.

And because he didn't give permission, he wasn't approachable.

As a result, our team lacked open, effective communication.

<u>**FOR EXAMPLE**</u>: I once had a problem with my work schedule. (Namely that I was working 54

hours a week as a part time employee!)

Unfortunately, I never felt comfortable approaching Marcus with my problem.

He was just THAT uncomfortable to talk to.

My thought was: I'd rather suck it up and work overtime than have a conversation with this jerk. That's how unapproachable he was.

Of course, that only made things worse.

As the problem remained hidden from my immediate manager, it escalated. Then, I ended up working eight out of the next nine days in a row (remember, I was a part timer!) and ultimately became so stressed, so overworked and so frustrated … that I just lost it!

Ultimately, on that ninth day, I walked off property in the middle of my shift and went home.

I just couldn't take anymore. So I quit. And I never went back. Now, I fully admit that I probably should have said something early. And I took full responsibility for my voluntary termination from that position.

BUT REMEMBER: Approachability is a two way street.

Sure, you can tell your employees that there's an "Open Door Policy."

But it CANNOT always be up to the employee

to take the first step.

FACT: The word "approachability" comes from the Latin verb *apropiare*, or "to come nearer to."

Which means it's both proactive AND reactive. Which means it's about sticking yourself out there… AND getting them to come to you!

So, make sure your door swings both ways.

Or else you might end up like Dell Computers.

In 2001, an issue of *BusinessWeek* revealed the results of a company-wide survey that indicated a few of the managerial problems of then-CEO Michael Dell.

According to the report, "Over half of Dell's employees would quit if they found an attractive opportunity elsewhere."

Their reasoning? Because Mr. Dell was unapproachable.

Wow. Fifty percent! All because of a lack of approachability! Nice employee loyalty.

LET ME ASK YA THIS…

How much employee loyalty are you sacrificing by being unapproachable?

Are you practicing service or *servitude?*

Everybody serves somebody.

OK! By now, you've probably got a solid mental picture of what an approachable (or unapproach-able!) manager looks like.

Next, there's ONE more big-picture idea to con-sider before exploring approachability in action:

Managers still have customers.

In fact, EVERYBODY has customers!

But few businesspeople actually write out their definition of a customer.

So, during my seminars and staff trainings, I almost always ask my participants to write out their "defi-nition of a customer."

Here are a few of my favorites:

A customer is

someone who: …has a need.

…you deliver value to.

…uses what you produce.

A customer is (also) someone who:

…has a problem you can fix.

**…benefits from
      what you do.**

…your business engages with.

…buys your goods

…participates in   and services.
   your business.

…*follows, listens and obeys you.*

…you depend on
for your success.

…depends on you
      for her success.

…you are
   dealing with
   right now.   …you complete
                     a sale or
                     transaction for.

A <u>customer</u> is (also) someone who:

…admires or supports
your business.

…seeks to benefit from your expertise.

…advances the cause
of your organization.

…*reads your blog or
comes to your website.*

…has a stake in your
company or organization.

…can potentially create a perception of your company.

…is affected by the decisions or
actions of your company.

…*is connected to your organiza-
tion and can enhance the value
of its product and services.*

Approachability is being physically _AND_ personally available.

Everyone look busy!

In Tom Peters' *In Search of Excellence*, he coined his own theory of approachability called "Management by Walking Around."

Getting out of the office. Walking around the building. Talking to folks, seeing what's up.

Making yourself physically available to the people you serve.

That was over twenty years ago! And it's still a powerful idea today. This brings us to one of the dichotomies of approachability…

Back in 2004 when I was researching for my book, *The Power of Approachability*, my research indicated that the most common synonym for "approachable" was "available."

I also discovered two forms of availability: physical and personal.

Physical Availability is defined as "openness of personal space."

See, if you look like you're always too busy or always rushing; your employees will do one of two things:

Not approach you because they
don't want to bother you.

- or -

Approach you with the mindset, "Oh, well, I'm
not going to get his or her full attention, so I'll just
talk about the big important stuff." (Then you
know less about the small stuff, which is what you
REALLY need to know about!)

Now, this doesn't mean you have to be "on" all
the time. Every manager needs boundaries.

Just remember:

Anonymity is the greatest barrier to business.

Now, throughout this book, you're going to learn
several examples of how to project physical avail-
ability. So for now, here's a quick list of ideas to
get you started:

1. The floor isn't interesting. Make eye contact
and greet everybody, even the people you don't
know.

2. Oxygen is good. Use adequate pauses in your
conversation so employees feel comfortable
chiming in.

3. Set a precedent. As you exit conversations or
meetings, remind people that they can still come
to you at any time in the future with related ques-
tions or ideas.

4. Lay an anchor. Use the word "permission" in conversations to deliberately remind people that they can feel comfortable approaching you.

5. If you have a nametag, wear it! And if the only reason you're NOT wearing it is because you feel uncomfortable, just think how uncomfortable other people will feel when they forget your name.

6. Watch those non-verbals. Similarly, if the only reason you're crossing your arms is because you're cold, that's exactly what your staff will think you are: cold.

7. Alignment, not resistance. Sit with your toes pointing directly at your conversation partner. Toes pointed away = resistance.

8. Set the stage. Smile for ten seconds every time you walk into a room.

9. Why are you rushing? Walk slower around the office. Make it easy for employees to get your attention.

10. Experiment with space. Most people avert their eyes from oncoming people when they get within ten feet of each other. See how many of them you can get to acknowledge you in one week. Then try to double that number the next week.

11. Hold it! Make eye contact for two extra seconds when being introduced (and saying good-bye) to someone new. Bill Clinton was famous

for this one!

12. Stop fiddling. Keep your hands away from your nose or mouth while talking. Freud says it shows dishonesty.

13. Lunchroom, not boardroom. Spend lunch with your employees on occasion. Screw the "manager table." Offer a casual, open environment that encourages both work related and casual conversation.

WATCH THIS...

Tune into NametagTV.com for video lessons on making your employees (not) afraid of you!

Do Not
Disturb

It's OK to be busy.
It's OK to close your door.
It's OK to (not) want to be bothered.

<u>HERE'S THE GOOD NEWS:</u> You can still be approachable to the other people in your office – even when you're busy!

Here are some examples of ways to make your "Do Not Disturb" sign more approachable:

> **On Break!**
> Prefer Not
> to Talk
> About Work

"If You Come In Here, I Might Eat You Alive!"

"Do Not Disturb, Trying to Meet Deadline"

"Sorry, I'm in a Bad Mood"

Fugeddaboutit

"SANDWICH TIME!
Please Come Back in 30 Minutes"

"Busy Making Money for this Company,
Try Me After Lunch"

ZZZZZZZZZ...
Sleeping, Come Back in 20!

"In a Super Secret Meeting,
Please Return Later"

"DO NOT DISTURB:
Devising a Plan for
World Domination"

"This Doorknob is Connected to
a 500-volt Electric Shock"

"I Would Love to Chat,
Just Not Right Now.
Thanks!"

"Crazy Busy Today.
Just Email Me!"

**Leave a picture
of your question
on my dry
erase board!**

→

"Today is a Great Day –
Let's Talk about It After Lunch"

"**TSAM:** This Sign
Is Absolutely
Meaningless!"

I Just Got on the Phone
with a *HUGE* Customer
– *Try Me Later!*

Make them...

...fun!

...honest.

...specific.

...visually cool.

...expectation-based.

Can I talk to you for a minute?

Now, whereas Physical Availability pertains to openness of space, Personal Availability is defined as "openness of mind and heart."

In the next few chapters, we'll explore several facets of this idea.

First, the big picture stuff.

In three words, here is what Personal Availability looks like:

<p style="text-align:center">

<u>Align</u>, *don't counter.*

<u>Help</u>, *don't intrude.*

<u>Wag</u>, *don't bark.*

<u>Warn</u>, *don't threaten.*

<u>Observe</u>, *don't react.*

<u>Suggest</u>, *don't order.*

</p>

Cooperation, *not compliance.*

Curious, *not "Gotcha!"*

Discovery, *not answers.*

Informing, *not accusing.*

Pausing, *not jumping.*

Observing, *not looking.*

Observation, *not judgment.*

Questions, *not suggestions.*

Reflection, *not blame.*

Responsive, *not reactive.*

Synthesis, *not analysis.*

Why, *not who.*

Got that? Cool.

The problem with tolerance

Let's talk about "tolerance."

<u>FIRST:</u> **"Tolerance" as a word.**
It comes from the Latin word *tolerare*, which means, "to bear or endure."

<u>SECOND:</u> **"Tolerance" as an idea.**
The word "tolerance" was first recorded in 1539, although it wasn't until 1868 that it was used in the context of "a physiological ability to take large doses."

<u>THIRD:</u> **"Tolerance" as an attitude.**
As our country – and our world - becomes more connected and more multicultural, our society's attitude has also become more sensitive.

Sometimes overly sensitive, too.

Too many campaigns for "Zero Tolerance."

Too many organizations callously throwing that word around.

And the worst part is, very few people who maintain a "tolerance attitude" don't give a second thought to the true meaning of the word.

LASTLY: "Tolerance" as a relationship status.
OK, now it's time to put together those first three factors you just read. Let's use two examples:

• If you say that you "tolerate" your spouse, what you're really saying is, "I suffer when dealing with my spouse."

• If you say that you "tolerate" those employees who call you every day, what you're really saying is, "I've grown physiologically accustomed to taking large doses of those employees who call me every day."

Doesn't sound very positive, does it?

After all, if YOU were the employee - or the wife, or the partner, or the friend - how would it make you feel if the other person said she had to "tolerate" dealing with you?

Probably not like a "partner" at all.

More like a pain.

So, the word, the idea and the attitude of "tolerance" can send the wrong message.

In Chip Bell's seminal book on service, *Customers as Partners*, he talks about the dangers of "tolerance."

According to Bell, "tolerance" is about sufferance and continual resignation. It's about endurance and fortitude.

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More specifically, he explains three key problems about relationships based on tolerance:

1. **Tolerance-Based Relationships maintain a degree of rigidity.** They have the volume turned up on every flaw and error.

2. **Tolerance-Based Relationships make people suffer in silence.** As if they were perpetually pained by partner imperfections. What's more, they propagate the attitude that, "This unfortunate disruption comes with the territory," as Mr. Bell said.

3. **Tolerance-Based Relationships are exercises in long-suffering.** And unfortunately, they assume superiority by one party.

So the challenge, Bell says, is to view partnerships not with "tolerance," but rather with "elasticity."

Great word.

Coined in France in 1651, "elasticity" was a scientific term first used to describe certain gases. However, it derives from the Greek word *elastos,* which means, "ductile, flexible."

Sounds a lot better, doesn't it?

Being FLEXIBLE WITH your employees, as opposed to be TOLERANT OF your employeess.

LESSON LEARNED: Employees would rather you deal with them with "flexibility" than "tolerance."

See, here's the thing about elastic, or flexible relationships:

They <u>expand</u> to accommodate.
They <u>grow</u> and unfold in their acceptance.
They <u>absorb</u> the negatives without attention.
They <u>stretch</u> so the relationship can breathe.
They <u>experience</u> little bumps in the rocky road of the partnership.

Wouldn't it be great if all your relationships looked like that?

SO, HERE'S YOUR CHALLENGE…

STEP 1: Consider what you've just learned about the meaning, the history, the implications and the attitude of the word "tolerance."

STEP 2: Take some time in the next few weeks to monitor and evaluate how often that word enters your mind or exits your mouth.

STEP 3: Ask yourself the following question: Whom are you tolerating? Make a list. Be honest with yourself.

STEP 4: Make the CHOICE to change your thinking about that word.

How would your employees feel if their boss said he "tolerated" them?

Dare To
Be Dumm

Being an approachable manager is about NOT being a know-it-all.

It's about being...

>...constantly curious.
>...an asker, not a teller.
>...open to lifelong learning.
>...confident enough to be humble.

IN SHORT: It's about daring to be dumb. Admitting to your ignorance.

Which is a perfectly acceptable state of mind for a manger!

As long as it's temporary.

There's nothing wrong with *BEING* ignorant, only *STAYING* ignorant.

AND THAT'S THE SECRET: Using ignorance admission to show employees that you're authentically listening to them.

Here's a list of 15 *Phrases that Payses* you can use TODAY to be a little dumber:

1. Help me understand…

2. Here's a dumb question…

3. I don't know what that means.

4. I don't know.

5. I need to write that down so I can look it up later!

6. I never knew that!

7. I never thought of it that way!

8. I've never heard that before…

9. Is that bad?

10. Is that good?

11. OK, I just got here and I don't know what happened.

12. Tell me that again, I didn't follow.

13. Tell me what you mean by…

14. Wait, I don't understand…

15. What does that mean?

THE GOOD NEWS IS: When you start using phrases and questions like these, you do a LOT more than just admit to ignorance.

You clarify the conversation. You demonstrate the desire to understand. You make the speaker feel validated and valued. That's what approachability is all about!

Growing bigger ears

Next, let's delve into Personal Availability on a micro level.

By growing bigger ears.

Not literally, of course. That's just my way of saying, "LISTEN UP!" See, of all the ways to demonstrate Personal Availability, listening is BY FAR the most important and, ironically, the most complained about facet of unapproachable managers.

And in my years of experience writing, teaching (and of course, learning how to grow bigger ears myself!) there are three ways to become a better listener:

1. **BY LEARNING**: Techniques, tricks, tips, formulas and systems from books, seminars and other resources.

2. **BY DOING:** Which means engaging in every conversation with an employee as an opportunity to practice growing bigger ears.

3. **BY EVALUATING:** Yourself, your words, your conversations and your patterns objectively and honestly.

In this chapter, we're going to focus primarily on the latter. (Don't worry - I'll still give you a GREAT resource of listening techniques when we're done!)

For now, here's a list of self-assessment questions to ask yourself before, during and after an encounter with one of your employees. These questions will help you understand the present size of your ears AND keep your actions focused on projecting personal availability.

BEFORE THE CONVERSATION

- Do you have the time and energy to really listen to the answers to your questions?

- Do you know why you're listening?

- How do you define the atmosphere needed to ask your questions successfully?

- What are the best possible questions you could ask this employee?

DURING CONVERSATION

- Are there enough breaths between your words?

- Are you being asked for advice or asked for understanding?

- Are you listening or controlling the conversation?

- Are you listening or trying to fix?

- Are you listening or waiting to talk?

- Are you listening to the silences beneath employee's words?

- Are you monopolizing the listening or monopolizing talking?

- Are you trying to heal or cure?

AFTER CONVERSATION

- Did you, at any point, hijack the conversation by adding too much value?

- Did you listen twice as much as you talked?

- What percentage of your listening was passive, indirect and rational?

- What questions was your employee asking with her body?

- What words are still ringing in your ears?

Lastly, here's an additional list of (general) self-assessment questions to ask yourself on a regular basis. Think of them as opportunities to check up on the size of your ever-expanding ears!

- How often are you asking questions you don't know the answers to?

- What does it feel like to really listen to someone?

- What does it feel like when someone really listens to you?

- When was the last time someone complimented your listening skills?

- When was the last time you listened, all the way through, to someone else's idea that made you uncomfortable?

- When you realize it doesn't apply to you; do you keep listening?

- Who taught you to ask questions?

- Why do you put so much effort into listening?

LET ME SUGGEST THIS...

E-mail me for a list of 27 Ways to Grow Bigger Ears at:
scott@hellomynameisscott.com

Avoid Conversational Narcissism

Forget yourself and submit to the other person.

That's the BIG challenge of listening.

To check your ego.
To relinquish you agendas.
To suspend your preoccupation.

Unfortunately, it's dangerously easy for people to fall into the trap of Conversational Narcissism.

Especially when they're too busy..

...trying to contribute.

...trying to prove themselves.

...trying impose their own agenda.

...trying to take ownership of someone else's ideas.

Today we're going to explore some practices to help you avoid Conversation Narcissism so you can continue to grow bigger ears!

1. Watch your intent. First, beware of listening for selfish reasons. In fact, ask yourself this: *Why are you listening?* Could it be…

· Listening to give advice?
· Listening to change people?

· Listening to hear yourself talk?

· Listening to control the conversation?

· Listening to appear like a good listener?

· Listening to find your opportunity to steal the stage take over?

Or, are you listening to understand, learn and help? The choice is yours.

2. Switch the spotlight. Give THEM the glory. REMEMBER: Listening isn't about you. And your words need to reinforce that principle. So, try these *Phrases That Payses* after you've finished making a comment:

· And you…?

· Have you had similar experiences?

· Is it the same in your industry?

· What about yourself?

· What's YOUR philosophy on that?

3. Silently check yourself. In the back of your mind (while still listening, of course), find a way to keep yourself accountable. Consider using QREATIVITY™ by asking silent self-assessment questions like:

· Am I granting others space to talk?

· Am I listening or controlling the conversation?

· Am I listening or trying to fix?

· Am I listening or waiting to talk?

· What questions wants to be asked next?

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· Will this comment disrupt or contribute?

4. Don't add too much value. Trust in your ability to add value AFTER (not during) the listening process. Resist the temptation to hijack the conversation by matching or one-upping people's points, or by trying to solve the problem too quickly.

A great practice to remind you of this principle is to post listening reminders on sticky notes by your desk and phone. Examples might include:

· Listening, not solving.
· Don't add (too much) value!
· Listen, don't fix.
· Listeners don't bulldoze!
· Three seconds before responding.
· Two ears, one mouth!

5. Open the space. Part of your role as the listener is to make room (both physically and emotionally) in the conversation. Your best practice for this principle is the strategic use of silence. This lets the other person fill in the empty spaces AND enables him to set the pace of the conversation.

The challenge, of course, is that most Conversational Narcissists don't like silence. They talk for the sake of talking. As if silence made them look weak and indecisive.

Nope. *Silence is strength.* And "silence is golden" because it helps the other person articulate their

most precious emotions. Shhhhh…!

6. Be mindful of ownership. Don't take over people's problems. That's not your job. And that's (probably) not why they came to you. Instead, provide support so they can safely process their own thoughts and eventually formulate their own solutions. In so doing, you show the other person respect and reinforce their ability to manage their own lives. Use *Phrases That Payses* like:

· What do you think is the best option?
· What does your gut tell you?
· What outcome would be optimal in this situation?
· What are you going to do about it?

7. Listening is NOT a performance. Listening is about temporarily suspending your need for self-expression. So, don't use what people say as triggers for your own jokes. Listening takes, among many things, self-control. One of my favorite rules is: Acknowledge, then shut up! SO REMEMEBR: Take in; don't take over.

8. Recognize and return. Notwithstanding the first seven suggestions on this list, it's still nearly impossible to avoid ALL traces of conversational narcissism. So, the challenge is to recognize when you feel yourself being pulled into narcissistic territory. That way you can correct it, then pass the conversation back to the other person. Consider using these *Phrases That Payses*:

· "I've been doing most of the talking, so let me

stop now and just listen."

· "Enough from me, what about you?"

· "I'm sorry; I've been talking too much!"

Ultimately, Conversational Narcissism boils down to this simple idea:

Listening isn't about you.

It's about forgetting yourself and submitting to the other person.

So, check your ego. Relinquish you agendas. And suspend your preoccupation.

Start growing bigger ears today!

WATCH THIS...

Tune into NametagTV.com for video lessons on how to avoid adding too much value to your conversations!

How are you making employees feel ESSENTIAL?

Clarify the conversation

One of the primary tasks of Growing Bigger Ears is to guide the conversation into focus. To help the speaker clarify what type of conversation she wants to have with you.

You do this for three reasons:

FIRST, open up the space.
People need to feel free and relaxed in your presence. So, by first negotiating the space between you, you make it safe to share. This builds a foundation of comfort and approachability that endures throughout the entire encounter.

SECOND, to set expectations.
Without an initial understanding of your conversational objectives, you'll never know whether or not you and your employee were successful. So, think of this practice as sort of a mini-goal for creating a harmonious climate.

THIRD, establish boundaries.
Listening is a process of suspending your own agenda in the service of the speaker. So, when you know what your respective roles are – and what areas are off limits - you prevent yourself AND the speaker from wasting emotional energy.

OK! Now that you understand the value of clarifying, let's explore five questions you can pose to help the speaker guide the conversation into focus:

1. What needs to happen during this conversation for you to feel that it was successful?

2. What type of conversation do you want this to become?

3. Do you want me to suggest ideas or just listen?

4. Is this a dialogue or a discussion?

5. How would you like me to listen to you?

CAUTION: Be sure to pause for at least three seconds after every question AND answer. Let the pearl sink.

REMEMBER: When you clarify the conversation by asking future-focused, positive questions, you not only open up the space, set expectations and establish boundaries; but you also demonstrate your willingness to move forward together.

LET ME ASK YA THIS...

How do you ~~tell~~ show employees that their feelings are legitimate?

Ask,
don't tell.

People don't like to be told what to do.

That's why, as an Approachable Manager, you must maintain the following philosophy: <u>Ask, don't tell.</u>

Here's why: Employees will...

... **remember** something if they say it.
... **believe** something if they say it.
... **learn** something if they say it.

This brings to mind the words of Aristotle, who once said, "He who persuades me with my own words is the best."

Ask; don't tell.

In this next section of The Approachable Manager, we're going to spend a good chunk of time talking about WHY to ask, HOW to ask and WHAT to ask.

—

OK, first let's explore the core differences between asking and telling...

!!! TELLING

Leads to:

·Controls

·Talking

·Defensive responses

·Negative framing of
a conversation

Is:

·Judgemental

·Retrospective language

·One-sided

Will:

·Show that your answers are
the only ones of importance

·Bypass empathetic emotions

·Overlook information and
assume you already know
what somebody needs

ASKING ???

Leads to:

·Goals

·Listening

·Dialogue

·Positive framing of
a conversation

Is:

·Curious

·Generative language

·Engaging

Will:

·Show that you trust others
to develop their own answers

·Acknowledge someone's
feelings

·Uncover information that
helps you present your ideas
in a highly customized manner

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Got it? Cool.

OK. Now that you understand the value **OF** and the difference **BETWEEN** asking and telling, let's heighten the approachability of your language.

Here are several *Phrases That Payses* and examples of how to **ASK** instead of **TELL:**

REPLACE "You should sit down and think about…"
WITH "Have you ever thought about…?"

REPLACE "I'm upset with you because…"
WITH "Do you know why I'm upset with you?"

REPLACE "You screwed up because…"
WITH "Do you know where you went wrong?"

REPLACE "Here's why you need my…"
WITH "What are your biggest challenges with…?"

REPLACE "Your customers would love…"
WITH "What are the major concerns of…?"

REPLACE "I can't believe you did that!"
WITH "Is that what you were expecting to happen?"

REPLACE "You should have been more successful!"
WITH "What else would need to happen for you to accomplish your goal?"

Ask; don't tell.

Don't take this the wrong way, but...

When it comes to approachable language, framing is everything. So, when interacting with your staff, employees, volunteers or members, be careful of using "Kill Phrases."

These types of setup comments can negatively influence and/or negate whatever comes out of your mouth next.

For example:

1. "With all due respect…"

<u>PROBLEM:</u> People use this as a Get Out of Jail Free Card. As if insulting someone is OK if you say this first.

<u>SILENT DIALOGUE:</u> *Oh, great. I bet she's going to say something disrespectful to me.*

2. "Don't get defensive…"

<u>PROBLEM:</u> Mentioning the mere idea of defensiveness usually causes it.

<u>SILENT DIALOGUE:</u> *Yeah right! Now I probably WILL get defensive about what he says next!*

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3. "Let me give you some advice…"

PROBLEM: This assumes superiority, even when advice wasn't requested.

SILENT DIALOGUE: *I didn't ask for your advice!*

4. "Try not to take this personally…"

PROBLEM: Creates immediate self-consciousness.

SILENT DIALOGUE: *How can I NOT take this personally?*

5. "Don't take this the wrong way…"

PROBLEM: Puts people on the defensive.

SILENT DIALOGUE: *Yep, here comes the insult…*

6. "I'm only telling you this for your own good…"

PROBLEM: Based on the assumption that the manager KNOWS what's good for the employee.

SILENT DIALOGUE: *My own good, or YOUR own comfort?*

—

SO REMEMBER: Framing is everything.

If you can avoid these Kill Phrases, you will be sure to lay a foundation of approachability for the people you lead.

Phrases That Payses

Now that you know what (not) to say, consider these additional *Phrases That Payses* to project permission, comfort and approachability:

1. **Is there anything else?** Usually, there is. Keep asking until, eventually, the answer becomes no.

2. **Would you like to hear a suggestion about this?** Doesn't give unsolicited advice, enables permission. Also, offering a "suggestion" is less threatening than telling someone what they should do.

3. **That triggered the following thought for me.** Demonstrates that you've listened. Bridges the conversation without sounding too interruptive.

4. **I sense you have something more to say about this.** Objective in that you "say what you see." Invites the other person to dig deeper and get everything out in the open.

5. **Mmm. Tough problem.** More objective and less invasive than, "Wanna talk about it?" Doesn't take ownership of someone's problems. Provides support so the other person can safely process their own feelings and discover solutions. Enables the other person to continue talking, feel heard and feel relaxed.

6. **What are your options?** Another objective response that doesn't take over someone's problems, yet allows them to dig for the answer on their own. Also, the use of "options" plural indicates multiple possibilities for solutions.

7. **You know, if I were in your spot, I think I might do (x).** Do you think that might work for you? Empathetic and inviting. Avoids telling someone what they "should" do, while still offering a potential solution.

8. **Are you interested in a second opinion?** A permission question that allows you to offer suggestions and ideas, not advice and condemnation.

9. **I don't think this is up to your usual standard. What can we learn from it?** Doesn't berate, still complimentary. Future focused and promotes lifelong learning.

10. **That is one option we will need to look at.** An objective, open-minded and non-judgmental way to respond to someone. Indicates a question-friendly and creativity-friendly environment. Doesn't label their suggestion as a positive or negative and honors their contribution. What's more, this phrase is more effective than, "That doesn't work!" or "I've tried that, it won't be successful."

11. **What have you already tried?** Gauges the situation, helps you understand where the other person stands. Another way to phrase it would be, "What options have you thought about trying?"

12. **You're raising an important issue.** Another objective way to respond to someone's comment or suggestion you disagrees with. Lays a foundation of openness and compliments the other person.

13. **What do we need to talk about?** Non-assumptive. Lets the other person lead the way.

14. **How can be I prepared for our talk?** Shows your commitment to being a good listener. Helps you prepare yourself to receive the other person.

15. **You're right. I don't understand. Would you be willing to help me understand?** Admits you don't know everything. Agrees with other person and "helps them help you."

16. **Is this a good time to talk?** Shows you respect that person's time and space. Lays a positive foundation, whereas "Is this a BAD time to talk," does the opposite.

17. **Yes, that is a problem. So, how are we going to resolve it?** Shows you respect and address their legitimate point of view. Solution oriented, avoids using the dangerous word "but."

18. **That's not the issue here.** An effective response if someone tries to change the subject and sidestep the real issue. Helps control the discussion and move toward a solution.

19. **I noticed. Follows the philosophy of "say what you see."** It's objective and not "you" ori-

ented. Also, this phrase is non-comparison based and non-judgmental, simply a statement of observation. So, it's an impartial piece of feedback that doesn't challenge someone's character or attitude. Other phrasings include, "Here's what I observed," "I see that," and "It looks like."

20. **Tell me about…** Opens the door to awareness, discussion and further exploration, rather than accusation. Doesn't put the other person on the spot for an immediate answer. Also, this enables someone to take the conversation in whatever direction she chooses. So, this gives you a perfect opportunity to notice patterns in the way she chooses to respond, i.e., if she immediately frames all comments negatively.

21. **I wonder if…** A creative and curious way to frame a comment. Reduces threat level and is emotionally unreactive. See, saying, "I wonder" is non-accusatory. The other person doesn't feel like they're being interrogated! So, it's a smart way to offer advice or solutions without "should-ing" all over someone.

LET ME SUGGEST THIS...

On the other hand... for a list of the 68 things employees NEVER want to hear their manager say, e-mail me at scott@hellomynameisscott.com!

Don't add
(too much)
value

Imagine your employee, Karen, is enthusiastically telling you about her great new idea. She's excited, optimistic and really "getting into" her explanation.

So, a few seconds into the conversation, you can't help but interrupt with suggestions to make it better.

"You know that's a great a idea Karen! Here's what you should do. Start by going to this website and buy these two products. Then, talk to Mark, he's good with this kind of stuff. Oh, and instead of selling ads online, you know what would be a BETTER idea? Well, one time I told one of MY clients…"

And all of the sudden, the momentum is reversed.

And Karen is thinking, "Wait, wasn't this MY idea?"

Well, it WAS, until you hijacked the conversation by trying to add too much value to it!

Which means you did three things wrong:

1. **You weren't LISTENING** -- You were too busy trying to contribute.

2. You weren't COLLABORATING -- you were too busy trying to prove yourself.

3. You weren't HELPING -- you were too busy trying to take ownership of someone else's idea.

BIG mistake.

Because even if you DID make Karen's idea a little better, you still took away some of her ownership of that idea -– which made her feel A LOT worse.

Not a good tradeoff.

AND HERE'S THE THING: Some people don't even realize THAT they try to add too much value.

(I should I know: I used to be one of them.)

SO, REMEMBER THIS: While adding too much value is not always intentional, it's still an unconscious display of disrespect.

And the eomployees you're engaging with will know it. Because it's rude, frustrating and unapproachable.

So, if you want to avoid adding too much value to your conversations, remember these DO's and DONT's:

DON'T … match or one-up people's points.
DON'T … try to solve the problem too quickly.

DO …   give them the glory.
DO …   trust in your ability to add value after (not during) listening.

DON'T … feel the need to prove yourself every ten seconds

DON'T … respond too soon or rush to give answers.

DO … allow the speaker to set the pace of the conversation.

DO … let the other person fill in the empty spaces.

DON'T … impose your own structure on what is being said.

DON'T … project your own meaning onto the speaker.

HERE'S YOUR CHALLENGE: Post these caveats in a visible location somewhere in your office. That will help you become more mindful of this dangerous interpersonal habit.

REMEMBER: Listening is not the same thing as waiting to talk.

So, next time a colleague comes to you with a new idea or a business challenge, don't try to add too much value to the conversation.

Grow bigger ears by biting your tongue.

What questions are your employees afraid to ask *you*?

Creating a Question - Friendly Environment, Part I

Questions are the basis of all creativity.
Questions are the basis of all connection.
Questions are the basis of all understanding.

SO, THAT'S THE BIG CHALLENGE: Creating a question-friendly environment.

Because while you have little (or no) control over the people IN the environment; you DO have (some) control over the environment itself.

Some.

And that's why you need to let things organically and naturally occur.

Because if you create the right kind of environment, the right atmosphere, the right space and the right energy, the people inside of it will take care of themselves.

Now, this doesn't mean, "getting" employees to ask questions.

This means creating an environment in which questions can be comfortably asked and answered.

And that's where you come in, my approachable friend!

If you want to build this type of environment, there are four key tasks ahead:

1. **LISTING** the reasons why employees might (not) ask questions.

2. **MAINTAINING** a Question-Friendly Attitude.

3. **AFFIRMING** your employees when they ask questions.

4. **REINFORCING** a Question-Friendly Environment.

The next four chapters will tackle these elements of approachability.

—

Creating a Question-Friendly Environment begins with identifying barriers to question asking.

This is another one of my favorite questions to ask my audiences: *Why don't people ask questions?*

Lots of potential answers…

1. They don't want to look stupid.

2. They don't want to hear the answer.

3. They don't want to share responsibility.

4. They don't want to waste someone's time.

5. They don't want to appear in need of help.

6. They don't want to risk ridicule and rejection.

7. They don't want the other person to lose face.

8. They don't want to hold up the discussion or class.

9. They don't want to question authority or the challenge the status quo.

10. They don't want to rock the boat, ruffle the feathers or commit one of those other clichéd corporate sins.

11. They fear being politically incorrect.

12. They fear going deep inside the issue.

13. They fear making a big mess and getting in trouble.

14. They fear their questions (and the answers) will later be used against them.

15. They have low self-esteem.

16. They have (not) discovered a safe place to be vulnerable.

17. They think it's the wrong time to ask.

18. They think they know the answer already.

19. They think the answer will be threatening.

20. They think their questions will be threatening.

21. They think their questions aren't good questions.

22. They think that everyone else in the room already understands everything.

23. They want to protect their self-image.

24. They want to avoid change (or BEING) changed.

25. They want to sidestep psychological pressure.

26. They want to steer clear of any threats to formality.

27. They want to avoid reflexive resistance to (perceived) interrogation.

28. They want to maintain control of the conversation.

29. They associate question asking with conflict.

30. They were in trouble, victimized or frightened.

31. They were highly emotional and not thinking clearly.

32. They were ridiculed when they questioned in the past.

33. They were never educated on the topic of asking questions.

34. They were put on the spot and couldn't think of anything to ask.

35. They were talking to someone really smart whom they thought knew best.

36. They were never given permission – directly or indirectly – to ask questions.

37. They were told NOT to question by parents, teachers, peers, religious or authority figures and other childhood influencers.

Of course, those aren't the only reasons employees don't ask questions.

However, by first identifying the obstacles and objections to questioning, you calm the silent dialogues that often prevent questions from being articulated.

Questions are **ideas waiting** to happen.

Creating a Question - Friendly Environment, Part 2

Now that you've uncovered some of the barriers to employee question-asking, the next step is to adopt a Question-Friendly Attitude.

Here's how:
Think **verbs,** *not nouns.*
Think **dialogue,** *not debate.*
Think **searching,** *not snooping.*
Think **curious,** *not judgmental.*
Think **insinuating,** *not imposing.*
Think **harmonizing,** *not manipulating.*

See, inasmuch as questioning is valuable; it's not really about finding the answer. In fact, it's not really about asking the question, either!

It's about the PROCESS. The thinking. The challenging. The encouraging of diverse viewpoints. The admitting that there are multiple solutions to every problem.

So, seek conclusions not to elevate yourself above everyone, but to bring us all closer together. Make sure you maintain a Questioning-Friendly Attitude. It will shape all future questions, conversations and question-friendly environments.

And now, onto the next step!

Does your **company** have a **Suggestion Box** or a **Question Box?**

Creating a Question - Friendly Environment, Part 3

Because acknowledgement is a universal human need, listening is (initially) about AFFIRMATION.

Making employees feel valued, validated and important.

See, human beings shape their self-image based on how they are responded to by others.

For example:
• If someone grew up hearing messages like, "I don't wanna hear it right now!" and "Stop asking so many questions!" it's likely that she would develop a reticence when approaching people in the future.

• On other hand, if comments like, "Tell me more!" and "That's a great question!" were ingrained into someone's mind, his future level of approachability would be dramatically different.

For that reason, your (potential) influence as the listener is powerful.

And you MUST take the opportunity to lay a foundation of affirmation, that way the speaker will authentically open up to you.

AND REMEMBER: Even if you don't care FOR, approve OF or agree WITH someone's ideas, when they approach YOU in need of a bended ear, you job is to let them know that you heard them.

Here's a quick list of 8 *Phrases That Payses* to help affirm your speaker:

1. You're raising an important issue.

2. Great question!

3. I'm really glad you brought that up.

4. When you said (x), that triggered the following thought for me…

5. I'm SO glad you asked that question.

6. Interesting point.

7. That is one option we will need to look at.

8. I was hoping you'd ask that question!

Verbiage like this is positive, approachable and affirming. And the best part is, it advances the conversation into a mutually shared space in which people feel safe to open up to you.

Growing bigger ears is about first laying a foundation of affirmation.

Creating a Question - Friendly Environment, Part 4

The final (and most enduring) step of creating a Question-Friendly Environment is reinforcement.

You must give employees REMINDERS that they work in a question-friendly environment. So, here's a list of observable actions to reinforce your commitment to approachability:

1. Make anonymity optional. Go back to your recent list of barriers to asking questions. As you probably learned, it's important to give employees, customers and members the option to remain nameless. This will increase the probability of a question being asked.

For example, you could introduce an anonymous ~~suggestion~~ question box, a secure online forum or a name changing policy for all questioners.

<u>REMEMBER:</u> People tend to speak up when their name isn't on the line.

2. Diffuse defensiveness. Yes, it ALWAYS exists. Consider these suggestions:

• Instead of saying, "Does anybody have any questions?" consider saying, "What questions do you have?" It's less threatening.

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• Encourage people to write their questions on cards ahead of time and pass them to the front. This approach is less aggressive and diverts attention so people aren't put on the spot.

• If you're holding a group meeting, having a one-on-one interview or delivering a speech, make sure to say, "We'll have plenty of time for questions at the end!" or "Feel free to ask questions at any time." That way people can prepare themselves.

REMEMBER: Your primary task is to make the other person(s) feel comfortable.

3. Post past questions. On your website, in your marketing materials and all around your facility, post lists of frequently (and infrequently) asked questions and their answers.

This tool accomplishes several goals. First, it's a VISUAL representation of your question-friendly environment. Secondly, it immediately addresses the key issues faced by the people you serve. Thirdly, it builds a foundation of comfort and enables people to move past their primary concerns.

Ultimately, your employees and members will start to ask more specific, more penetrating questions, now that they've been given permission to do so.

REMEMBER: Ask the first question and people will follow.

4. Be curious, not judgmental. Honestly ask yourself: *Are you genuinely curious to hear employee's*

answers? If not, don't bother asking. See, we live in a sort of "Gotcha" Culture. And it's easy for people to assume that your questions are just a means to an end. Just a way to catch them in the act.

So, give signals to people that you're their PARTNER, not PERSUADER.

Prove to them that questioning is merely a small part of the discovery process. That way, they'll perceive your questions as helpful, not threatening; curious, not interrogating.

REMEMBER: Ask with the intent to listen and learn, not to control the conversation.

—

OK, let's review!

In the last three chapters, you learned that creating a Question-Friendly Environment (QFE) requires three essentials:

It STARTS…with understanding the barriers.
Listing the reasons why people might (not) ask questions.

It CONTINUES…with modifying your attitude.
Being curious. Being always watchful and open for better conclusions.

It GROWS with affirming your employees.
Creating a mutually shared space. Making them feel important, valued and essential.

It ENDURES…with observable actions.
Doing (not SAYING) specific things that enable
and reinforce a question friendly environment.

SO REMEMBER:

Questions are the
                    basis of all…

…creativity.
                    …connection.
…understanding.

If you can understand and practice the key ideas
we've talked about today, you'll be certain to
uncover the answers you're looking for. Keep
curiosity burning!

WATCH THIS…

Tune into NametagTV.com for
video lessons on how to keep
curiosity burning!

The problem with WHY

Now that you've learned about creating a Question - Friendly Environment, let's continue exploring the "Ask, don't tell" principle of Approachable Management.

Starting with one of the best/worst words around: "Why?"

It's THE crucial question.

It fuels creativity.
It generates answers.
It promotes discovery.

In fact, asking, "Why?" has probably enabled more businesses, more organizations and more people to explore more ideas than any other question in the universe.

Now, that being said, I'd like to spend a few minutes talking about the potential dangers of the word WHY.

Because as routinely as that word is used, its valuable to understand the possible negative implications.

1. WHY? …can be seen as criticism

Especially if you use the wrong tone of voice or body language.

2. WHY? …can make people feel defensive.

Especially if it conveys judgment, not curiosity; accusations, not observations.

3. WHY? …can force someone to justify his actions.

Which can be tough, because people don't always know why they do stuff. They just do. And sadly, they (sometimes) don't give much thought to their motives.

4. WHY? …can be internalized as a personal attack.

This goes WAY back. See, during a child's socialization process, he hears things like: "Why did you do that?" "Why didn't you listen to me? "Why did you disobey me?" And these feelings are ingrained in their minds forever.

5. WHY? …can be easily countered with because.

Because I just DID! Because I just don't understand!

Because I felt like it! Because I said so! Sound familiar? Sound frustrating? See, these "because" answers, while valid, still offer very little information. Plus, they sort of leave you nowhere to go in the conversation. It's best to avoid the possibility of "because."

So, what do you say instead of "Why?"

I'm glad you asked.

SECRET #1: Instead of asking, "Why?" ask, "What?"

"Why's" produce generalizations, rationalizations, justifications.

"What's" uncover information, specification and motivation.

SECRET #2: Use words like what, how, when, which and where.

They are less defensive.
They are more objective.
They enable you to depersonalize the question.

SECRET #3: Along with "Why's," watch your "You's."

For example, in the sentence, "Why did you do that?" part of the accusatory tone is carried by the word "you." So, consider replacing the pronoun "you" with objective, depersonalized nouns like "reason," "part," "factor" and "motivation."

—

Ultimately, your challenge is to use verbiage that

focuses on the problem, not the person.

So, next time you're face to face with an employee, customer, or even your partner, consider these alternative *Phrases That Payses*:

REPLACE "Why did you…?"
WITH "What was the reason for…?"

REPLACE "Why would you…?"
WITH "How could the task have done it differently to avoid this error?"

REPLACE "Why didn't you…?"
WITH "What steps could have been take to follow the proper procedure?"

REPLACE "Why couldn't you…"
WITH "What, specifically, was the confusing part?"

REPLACE "Why weren't you…"
WITH "What factors led to that decision?"

Practice using these alternatives instead the often accusatory, potential dangerous and overly personalized "Why?"

As a result, you'll give people permission to feel comfortable volunteering the information you need to know.

Watch your WHYS!

Be more challenging

Some people make assumptions.
Some people are nothing but talk.
Some people speak without thinking.
Some people use invalidated, vague arguments to prove their points.

Your job is to challenge them.

For two reasons:

1. **YOU** gain clarity on their motives, intentions and beliefs.

2. **THEY** gain an opportunity to restate, reform and rethink their ideas.

Here are several examples of common situations and dialogues:

THEM: "I never thought I'd say this, but…"
YOU: "Why did you never think you'd say that?"

THEM: "I can't do that!"
YOU: "Why not?" or "Says who?"

THEM: "Well, they say that…"
YOU: "Who's 'they'?"

THEM: "I've been calling you all week and I'd really like to get together to talk about a business opportunity!"
YOU: "What is your positive motivation for wanting to meet with me?"

THEM: "I heard/read it was terrible…"
YOU: "Who'd you hear that from?" or "Where's you read that?"

THEM: "I dunno, this seems pretty expensive?"
YOU: "Compared to what?"

Other examples include, but are not limited to:

• How did you arrive at that?

• How do you measure that?

• Is that always the case?

• So?

• What do you plan to do with this feedback?

• What stops you?

• What would happen if you didn't?

• What's (really) bothering you?

• What's your point?

• When did you decide this?

• Why?

• What's your proof?

- How do you know that's true?

- Where's the evidence?

- Are you sure that's true?

- Why do you believe that?

- Can you prove it?

- Why did I receive this email?

- Why do you think that happened?

- Why is that so important to you?

Ultimately, the whole reason these questions work is because they break people's patterns.

Which catches their attention.
Which causes them to stop and think.
Which causes them to clarify their remarks.
Which causes the REAL motives and beliefs to surface.
Which causes you to better understand where they're coming from.

If you want to be more approachable, be more challenging.

If everybody did **exactly what you said,** what would their **world look like?**

Questions Approachable Managers MUST ask themselves

OK! Since we've spent a lot of time learning questions and Phrases That Payses to use with employees, let's continue by turning inward and approaching YOURSELF.

So, here's another list (can you tell I like lists?) of questions you can ask yourself every day to rein-force and maintain your managerial approachability.

NOTE: This is the most important list in this book.

It's worth the price that you paid for this book. Even a single question on it could change your entire managerial attitude and style!

So, I encourage you to use this list in three ways:

1. Give the questions a quick once-over now.

2. Refer to them on regular basis as an on-the-job resource.

3. Share them with your colleagues to promote discussion and brainstorming.

• Are there any perspectives you haven't heard yet?

• Are you sure this employee understands what is expected of him?

Do you give people a reason to help you in the future?

• Do you have any personal biases that influence how you ask questions?

• Do you have reactions or feelings you don't want the other person to detect?

• Did you ask the right questions so you can act?

• Do you consistently act in a supportive manner?

• Does this email that you're about to send demonstrate a deep respect for the other person's precious time?

• Does this question have the potential to initiate a breakthrough discussion?

• Does this statement give you any insight about yourself?

• How are people responding differently to you?

• How are you closing the credibility gap?

• How are you creating an environment in which employees naturally connect?

• How are you creating an environment that enables, supports and rewards authentic dialogue?

• How are you creating an environment where healthy employee participation naturally emerges?

• How are you visually reminding people of your commitment?

How are you creating a non-threatening environment?

• How are you creating a question-friendly atmosphere?

• How can you focus your questions on the right information at the right time?
• How can you listen to these silences?

• How can you phrase this question to everyone's advantage?

• How can you refine your questions, given what you now know?

• How do you create an atmosphere in the workplace that encourages the generation and application of your best ideas?

How can you give this idea away so that the team will own it, develop it further and let it surface?

• How do you demonstrate supportive leadership?

• How could you have been of more help?

• How do you diffuse defensiveness?

• How do you get people to improvise?

• How do you dismantle employee barriers?

How do you earn people's trust?

• How do you learn what someone treasures?

• How do you make employees feel essential?

• How do you make yourself more desirable to the best employees available?

• How do you show people that their feelings are legitimate?

How idea-friendly
is your meeting?

• How do you thank people for their answers?

• How frequently do you comment on people's improvements?

• How friendly are your first words?

• How idea-friendly is your office?

• How is information shared or guarded?

• How is it possible that this person could think or behave in this way, and under what circumstances would it make perfect sense to do so?

If everybody did
exactly what you
said, what would the
world look like?

• How much difficultly will people have in answering this question?

• How often are you reinforcing your authenticity?

• How often you overlook people who might offer meaningful ideas?

• How well do your employees know YOU?

• How willing are you to disagree?

• How willing are you to question basic premises?

• Is the level of communication adequate?

• Is there a better way you can phrase that?

• Was forgiveness expressed or just implied?

• What are the best possible questions you could ask this person?

• What are the Potential Silent Dialogues?

• What are the signs that you haven't earned someone's trust yet?

• What are the three questions is every employee member is asking themselves when you walk in the room?

• What are the underlying patterns under these conflicting responses?

What are you doing to maintain transparency?

• What can you be more open minded about?

• What can you do to expand your thinking?

• What could you do to listen non-judgmentally?

• What did this person NOT tell you that you needed to hear?

• What do you see when you see people?

• What is the one thing you could say that would totally piss off everybody?

What questions are your employees afraid to ask you?

• What questions must you have answered by the time the meeting is over?

• When does the feeling of formality keep your employees from communicating freely?

• When was the last time you apologized for being wrong?

• When you meet with employees, is your first thought about what they think of you or how you can make them more comfortable?

If you don't **set boundaries for yourself, people will set them for you**

Where to draw the line

The primary focus of this book has been the positive ramifications of being an Approachable Manager.

SO, HERE'S MY FINAL QUESTION: Can a manager be TOO approachable?

According to almost every client, every audience member and ever manager I've ever worked with, the answer is a resounding YES.

For that reason, this semi-final chapter is going to address the crucial issue of where to draw the line.

—

Boundaries are saviors.

I know this because I didn't used to have any.

See, that's what happens when you wear a nametag 24-7: You open yourself to anyone, anytime, anyplace.

And if you don't set boundaries for yourself, people will set them for you.

Now, in my eight years of nametagging, I've experienced my share of boundary violations:

I've had stalkers.
I've had time wasters.
I've had bloodsuckers.

I've had prank phone calls at 2 AM.
I've had people start fights with me.
I've had hatemail and death threats.

I've had cult members attempt to persuade me.
I've had religious zealots attempt to convert me.

I've had hundreds of salespeople try to suck me into their pyramid schemes.

I've had complete strangers walk up to me in the middle of airports and physically poke me in the chest.

All of this from wearing a nametag!

(I mean, wouldn't that get to YOU after a while?)

THE POINT IS: When it comes to approachability, setting boundaries is a MUST.

Especially when your precious time, physical space and personal safety are at stake.

AND THAT'S THE CHALLENGE: Figuring out where you draw the line.

In her bestselling book, *Where to Draw the Line: How to Set Healthy Boundaries Everyday*, Anne Katherine defines a boundary as "a limit that promotes integrity."

I think that's a great definition.

Because ultimately, that's what boundaries are about: Staying true to yourself.

Devoting your time, attention, energy and focus to pursuits that match your interests. *(Man. I wish I'd read that book when I started wearing my nametag!)*

On the other hand…

I believe there's a reason I've experienced so many boundary violations:

So I can help you avoid the same.

So, straight from the mouth of a (formally) boundary-deficient person, here are a few things I've learned about boundaries over the years.

NOTE: I am not a therapist, psychologist or a PhD.

I am a practitioner. Just a guy who's learned how to draw the line.

Hope this helps!

Boundaries REINFORCE integrity.
You elicit more respect because people respond to policies.

Boundaries DEFINE who you are (and who you aren't).
Which helps you become the world's expert on yourself.

Boundaries FREE you to be who you are.
There's nothing more liberating than developing
the strength to say no.

Boundaries IDENTIFY your responsibilities.
Because you're not just saying no to employees,
you're saying YES to yourself.

Boundaries TEACH people how to treat you.
This assures that boundary violations won't occur
again.

Boundaries DEVELOP your discipline and maturity.
People will admire your stick-to-itiveness, commit-
ment and consistency.

**Boundaries HELP you avoid manipulative people
and situations.**

As Mr. Miyagi once said:

"The best way to block a punch – no be there."

AND HERE'S THE BEST PART: Boundaries are
reciprocal.

This goes back what you learned earlier about
the etymology of the word approachability, which
means, "To come nearer to."

So, in your employee and colleague relationships,
here's how it plays out:

When you know your boundaries, you
know who you are.

When you know who you are, you
feel more confident.

When you feel more confident, you aren't
threatened by other people's differences.

When you aren't threatened by other people's
differences, they're not threatened by yours.

When people aren't threatened by each
other, they accept each other.

When people accept each other,
the rules change.

Now that you have an understanding of the power
and importance of your boundaries, the final step
is to reinforce them with self-questioning.

And since you've already read 100+ questions in
this book so far, what's one more list?

NOTE: Once again, consider writing a few of
these questions on sticky notes. Post them on
your computer, car dashboard or office bulletin
board as reminders of where you draw the line
on YOUR approachability.

Boundary Checklist

1. **Are you pressing your Off Button enough?**
Managers are notorious workaholics. It's easy to
want to work all the time. Be careful.

2. **Are you valuing your alone time?** Even if you
LOVE being around your employees, you need
DAILY moments of quiet and reflection. Cherish it.

3. **Is this a prudent use of your time?** Figure out
what your #1 income generating activity is, and
stick with it. Time is the most valuable resource
you have.

4. **Is this an opportunity, or an opportunity to
be used?** Before undertaking any new pursuits,
projects or interests, look at the big picture. Make
sure it's worth it.

5. I**s what you're doing right now consistent
with your #1 goal?** I guarantee this question will
keep you focused and loyal to your boundaries.
Better write this one on a sticky note.

6. **What conversations are you avoiding right
now?** Procrastination is a dangerous force.
Remember: the longer you wait to approach
someone with a problem, the more it will snow-
ball, and the more it will hurt when you DO
approach that person.

Do as I say ... AND as I do

For our final lesson on becoming an Approachable Manager, let's examine what Shakespeare once said:

"Action is eloquence."

Wow.

Consider the sheer magnitude of those three words!

Action is eloquence.

Brings to mind a few thoughts:

1. Having a great, positive attitude doesn't do you any good if you don't follow UP, and follow THROUGH with action.

2. Employees don't give you credit for what they HEAR you SAY consistently. They only give you credit for what they SEE you DO consistently.

3. Instead of practicing what you preach, preach what you practice. It's MORE authentic, MORE believable, MORE credible, MORE approachable and MORE motivating. *Orthopraxy, not orthodoxy.*

4. DO first; don't SAY first. Lead by example. Do something, THEN tell employees what you

learned and THEN encourage them to do the same. *Action, not words.*

Action is eloquence.

This idea also brings to mind a common phrase unconsciously uttered by managers, bosses and professionals around the world:

"Do as I say, NOT as I do."

All right. Hold it right there.

Is it just me, or does anyone else see the SHEER STUPIDITY of this expression?

See, when someone says that, the person is willfully admitting that his words and actions are contradictory!

THAT shows lack of character.
THAT shows lack of consistency.
THAT shows lack of approachability.

THEREFORE: Your goal as an approachable manager is to be able to say to your employees…

"Do as I say …AND as I do."

And finally, here's what matters most...

...because everything you've read in this book so far means NOTHING without:

COMMITMENT

COMMIT yourself…
COMMIT your team…
COMMIT your company…

…to becoming more approachable every
single day.

Make sure you're VISUALLY reminding the people you serve OF that commitment every single day.

CONSISTENCY

Because customers won't give you credit
for what they HEAR you SAY consistently.

They will only give you credit for what
they SEE you DO consistently.

Because you never know where your next customer will come from.

So, remember the Approachable Sales Philosophy:

1. People buy people first.

2. Friendly always wins.

3. Make the mundane memorable.

4. Unique, not different.

5. Interaction, not interruption.

6. Be That Guy.

7. Fans, not customers.

8. Don't sell; enable people to buy.

9. Consistency is far better than rare moments of greatness.

10. If you don't make a name for yourself, someone will make one for you.

My name is Scott.

I'm The Nametag Guy,
reminding you:

When you stick yourself out there, you get them to come to you.

Scott Ginsberg
That Guy with the Nametag

AUTHOR. Scott is the author of seven books including *HELLO, my name is Scott, The Power of Approachability, How to be That Guy, Make a Name for Yourself, The Approachable Frontline* and *The Approachable Salesperson.*

SPEAKER. As a member of National Speakers Association, Scott gives presentations, breakout sessions, keynote speeches and seminars to thousands of people each year. Companies and organizations worldwide have been successfully implementing his programs since 2003.

THE NAMETAG GUY. Scott is the only person in the world who wears a nametag 24-7 to make people friendlier. (In case you're wondering, he has a nametag tattooed on his chest for certain occasions.) While transforming his simple idea into a business, his adventures have earned him recognition as "The World's Foremost Expert on Nametags" and secured a spot in *Ripley's Believe it Or Not!*

COLUMNIST. Scott is a regular contributor to the *St. Louis Small Business Monthly, INSTORE Magazine* and

Expert Village. His conversational, content-rich articles have appeared in hundreds of online and offline publications worldwide. Also, his work has been reprinted in dozens of textbooks and resource guides.

MEDIA EXPERT. Dubbed as "The Authority on Approachability," Scott is regularly interviewed by various online, print, radio and TV media for his unique expertise. He has been featured in hundreds of outlets such as *CNN, 20/20, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Inc. Magazine, REDBOOK, The Associated Press, FastCompany, The Washington Post, Paul Harvey, The CBS Early Show* and *Headline News.* He even wrote "The Quiz" on approachability for *COSMO*!

NAMETAG NETWORK. Scott's award winning, content-rich websites get as many as 35,000 hits a day from readers and audience members around the world. His ubiquitous web presence and powerful platform set the standard for entrepreneurs and marketers in his field, and have earned him an surprising amount of credibility seeing that he's just some guy who wears a nametag every day. Check out www.thenametagnetwork.com for details!

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Bring The Approachable Salesperson Program to YOUR organization!

HELLO, my name is Scott's The Approachable Salesperson is now available as a corporate training program!

Teach your staff the principles of first impressions, last impressions, Phrases That Payses, growing bigger ears and other essential sales lessons!

To learn more about customized training kits, NametagTV courses and multimedia tools, e-mail scott@hellomynameisscott.com and write, "I'm approachable!" in the subject line!

HELLO, my name is Scott
Resources

Books

HELLO, my name is Scott

The Power of Approachability

How to be That Guy

Make a Name for Yourself

The Approachable Frontline

The Approachable Salesperson

The Approachable Manager

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If they can't
come UP
to you,
how will they
ever get
BEHIND you?