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TO: Executive Addressed

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Chairman

RE: Managing the Victim Dimension

This outline has been constructed for those wishing to walk management through the concept of managing the victim dimension of a crisis or serious situation. For additional background on this topic: 1) visit www.sorryworks.net, a Web site that describes the efforts that improve patient relationships and reduce litigation in health care; 2) search the Web for “extreme honesty,” which will lead you to a 10-year study at the Veteran’s Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky that explored the power of apology and dealing with emerging situations quickly and empathetically; 3) also search for “Chill Out, Have a Heart: Managing the Victim Dimension of High Profile Litigation” (http://www.e911.com/articles_monographs.htm, under “Speeches”), where the author discusses, in detail, this entire victim management process.

Victims Are:

- People
- Animals
- Living systems

Victimization Is:

- Self-designating
- Self-maintaining
- Self-terminating

Causes of Victimization:

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| • Abuse | • Commission | • Dismissiveness | • Negligence |
| • Arrogance | • Confrontation | • Disparagement | • Omission |
| • Assault | • Contention | • Embarrassment | • Ridicule |
| • Bullying | • Deception | • Exclusion | • Sarcasm |
| • Callousness | • Demeaning | • Fear | • Shame |
| • Carelessness | • Discrediting | • Lies | • Surprise |

Victims Feel:

- Anger
 - Betrayal, disbelief, dread, excitability, and anxiety

- Frustration
 - Powerlessness, helplessness, fearfulness, impotence, irritability
- Inadequacy
 - Wounded—without help, agonized, lonely, judgment impaired
- Betrayal
 - Trust no one, no one is trustworthy, anxious

Victim Reaction:

Your Action

Their Response

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly gestures • Personal interest • Well meant advice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreted as threats • Perceived as intrusions and betrayal • Perceived as insulting or controlling |
|---|---|

Victims Suffer:

- Intellectual deafness
- 24/7 internal and external monologue
- Everything is a question

Victims Need:

- Validation
 - Preferably by the perpetrator
- Visibility
 - To describe their pain and warn others
- Vindication
 - Resolution that prevents the victimization of others
- Apology
 - Verbal or written admission of responsibility, the promise of amends

Victim Management Imperatives:

1. Control your own sense of outrage and betrayal
2. Keep the real victim's circumstances in perspective
3. Recognize the utter loneliness of victims, much of which they end up having to resolve themselves, by themselves, in their own time
4. Be empathetic, keep at it, be helpful
5. Anticipate and act ahead of patterns
6. Recognize the deafness problem, repeat key information frequently
7. Help move toward closure

If you'd like more information or equally interesting views, ideas, and concepts, contact the author's Web site at www.e911.com.