

# Educating by Example...Civility and Citizenship

Emilye Mobley

Vice President for Student Affairs

Bennett College

July 12, 2006

# Learning Outcomes

- To define civility and its importance
- To consider the impact of incivility on our work, our students, and our lives
- To discuss examples of uncivil behavior and strategies to address and correct it
- To use information to enhance positive interactions in personal and professional settings

# Outline of Today's In-Service

- Forni's *Choosing Civility*
- Civility and the Academy
- Administrator/Staff/Faculty to Student Civility
- Effects of Incivility
- Importance of Civility
- Strategies toward Civility

# Impressions of *Choosing Civility*

- One of the most boring books I've ever read
- Common Sense
- Elementary
- Enjoyable...would like to add it to my personal library
- Reminder
- Section on acknowledging the presence of others most helpful and informative

# Why Read *Choosing Civility*

- Encourage reflection and increase awareness
- To “**detrivialize**” the issue
- To emphasize the relational nature of life and work
- To further reiterate divisional expectations for all to embrace and practice the tenets of civility

# What is Civility?

- A form of awareness; goodness
- Not just an attitude of benevolence and thoughtfulness to others, but also an active interest in the well-being of our communities and the environment
- Has to do with courtesy, politeness, and good manners
- **GOOD and COMPLEX.**

# Examples of Civil Actions

- Saying please and thank you
- Lowering your voice when it may interfere with others
- Speaking when entering a room
- Acknowledging mistakes and correcting them
- Welcoming newcomers (neighborhood, job, etc.)

# Examples continued

- Putting paper in the printer or copier after completing large print/copy jobs
- Informing co-workers when equipment and facilities are not functioning properly
- Notifying individuals when you cannot not do what you committed to (e.g. keep appointments, return calls, etc.)
- **Other examples**

# Examples of Uncivil Behavior

- Leaving trash, trays, etc. for someone else to pick up
- Taking credit for others' ideas
- Resorting to rude, vulgar, and/or violent behavior when frustrated
- Multitasking ( e.g. texting, blackberrying) when one should be paying attention

# Forni's 3 Most Compelling Reasons for Practicing Civility

- Respect for persons
- Incivility and Violence
- Overall Health, Well-Being, and Sanity

(Forni, P.M., Keynote Address, Flipping the Switch: Encouraging Civility on  
Campus Conference, January 26, 2006)

# Effects of Incivility in the Workplace

- Low Morale
- Reduced Team and Overall Effectiveness
- Abuse of Leave
- Decreased Quality of Service
- Attrition and Retention of Students, Faculty, and Staff
- Retaliatory Behavior

# Causes of Incivility

- Lack of Self-Restraint
- Personal Likes and Dislikes
- Stress
- Pursuit of Self-Identity
- Arrogance
- Poor Character and Personality (not judgment, but demonstrated fruit)

# Forni's 25 Rules of Considerate Conduct

- Pay Attention
- Acknowledge Others
- Think the Best
- Listen
- Be Inclusive
- Speak Kindly
- Don't Speak Ill

## 25 Rules continued

- Accept and Give Praise
- Respect Even a Subtle “No”
- Respect Others’ Opinions
- Mind Your Body
- Be Agreeable
- Keep It Down (and Rediscover Silence)
- Respect Other People’s Time

# More of Forni's Rules

- Respect Other People's Space
- Apologize Earnestly and Thoughtfully
- Assert Yourself
- Avoid Personal Questions
- Care for Your Guests
- Be a Considerate Guest
- Think Twice Before Asking for Favors

# Last 4 Rules

- Refrain from Idle Complaints
- Give Constructive Criticism
- Respect the Environment and Be Gentle to Animals
- Don't Shift Responsibility

# Application of Rules

- Staff to Student
- Colleague to Colleague
- Stranger to Stranger
- Family to Family
- Friend to Friend
- Friend to Foe

# Commitment to Civility

- Personal goal setting in the areas of your life
- Professional obligation
- Divisional mandate

# Why Behave Civilly?

- Better Quality of Life
- More Positive Interactions
- Feel Better
- Bring Glory to God
- **Additional reasons to promote civility**

1.

2.

3.

# Suggested Campus Initiatives Around Civility

- Campus R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
- Code of Conduct and Community Standards
- Voter Registration Drives
- **Additional Examples**

1.

2.

3.

# Closing Thoughts

- Civility falls in the realm of ethics.
- Bruised and broken relationships cause stress at work and at home. Better relationships cause less stress.
- Being polite is the right and expedient thing to do.
- Being civil is healthy for us.

# More Closing Thoughts

- Common decency should not be secondary to our daily lives.
- Incivility costs and we really can't afford it. Civility pays and has great dividends.
- Be sure that self-esteem and personal agendas do not cause you to ignore the rights of and/or your responsibility to others.
- **CIVILITY WILL NEVER BECOME OBSOLETE.**

# Bibliography

- Carter, S. L. (1998). *Civility: Manners, Morals, and the Etiquette of Democracy*. New York: HarperPerennial.
- Dresser, N. (2005). *Multicultural Manners: Essential Rules of Etiquette for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.
- Forni, P. M. (2002). *Choosing Civility: The Twenty-five Rules of Considerate Conduct*. New York: St. Martin's Press

# Bibliography

- Post, P. & Post, P. (2005). *Emily Post's The Etiquette Advantage in Business: Personal Skills for Professional Success* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York: HarperResource.
- *Washington's Rules of Civility*. Bedford, MA: Applewood Books.