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'Fierce Conversations'

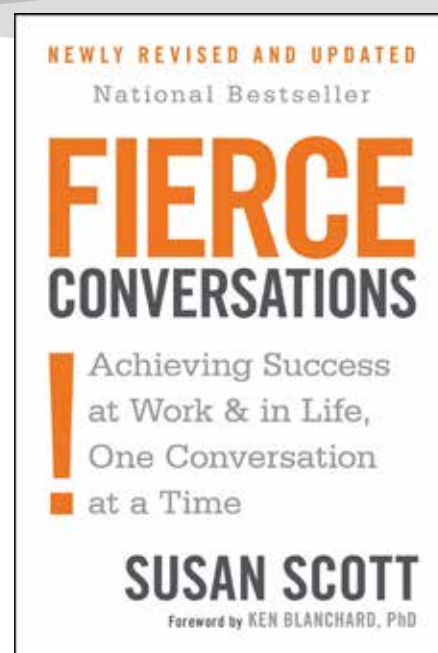
LEARN HOW TO GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

So often, we talk to our friends, coworkers, and loved ones without actually saying anything. We'll beat around the bush on important subjects or hesitate to bring up sensitive matters. Global business coach and best-selling author Susan Scott has set out to change that. In her life affirming book "Fierce Conversations," Scott argues that the key to get more out of our personal and professional relationships is to learn to lower our barriers and convey our message honestly.

"Fierce Conversations" is one of those works born out of a simple idea with big implications. As the author explains it, "While no single conversation is guaranteed to change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship, or a life, any single conversation can." By having the communication skills necessary to create lasting bonds, handle strong emotions, and overcome barriers, you'll be prepared when crucial conversations present themselves.

Those who tend to judge a book by its cover may make the mistake of associating the word "fierce" with "aggressive." However, as a master of meaningful communication, Scott has found that it's important not to force emotions one way or the other. As she observes, "If your behavior contradicts your values, your body knows." Instead of relying on fake bravado or false modesty, the author argues it's better that the bravery be genuine. Breaking down those social barriers to be authentic in our conversations takes true ferocity.

Scott does more than simply explain why frank and honest communication is important; she gives readers the tools to get there. Having spent years as a business coach, and now as the head of a firm that trains CEOs around the globe, Scott is well-versed in the art of teaching exercises. "Fierce Conversations" is brimming with action items, tactics, and tailor-made examples of how to communicate



in every situation, from board meetings to parenting. If you're someone who likes concrete guides over vague concepts, this book will pleasantly surprise you.



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A Better Building IAQ POINTS IN LEED CERTIFICATIONS

Everyone wants a better building, which is why so many new buildings aim to meet the high standards outlined by the Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED-certified buildings are recognized internationally for green building design, occupant comfort, productivity, construction, operations, and maintenance solutions.

The levels of LEED certification (silver, gold, or platinum) depend on how many points a building is able to earn. Part of the LEED certification process involves healthy indoor air quality. There are two ways for buildings to score these IAQ points.

Option 1: Flush-out

Conducting a flush-out demands a little more than opening a lot of windows. The requirements for a flush-out involve "supplying a total air volume of 14,000 cubic feet of outdoor air per square foot of gross floor area while maintaining an internal temperature of at least 60° F and no higher than 80° F and relative humidity no higher than 60 percent." A flush-out requires a specific volume of outdoor air prior to occupancy and additional volumes after occupancy.

This strategy works best in places like San Francisco or San Diego, where you can bring in a lot of outdoor air without making the air conditioning work overtime. However, if you try to flush-out a building in Houston, you need to dehumidify the air and cool it down

“ Building Air Quality provides IAQ testing for new buildings to get LEED certified. ”

in addition to filtering it. When you take into account that the whole process takes 8–10 weeks, it's no wonder that few buildings in Houston use the flush-out approach. It's very expensive to bring in and cool that much outdoor air, and most HVAC systems aren't designed to handle that much humidity.

Option 2: Indoor Air Quality Testing

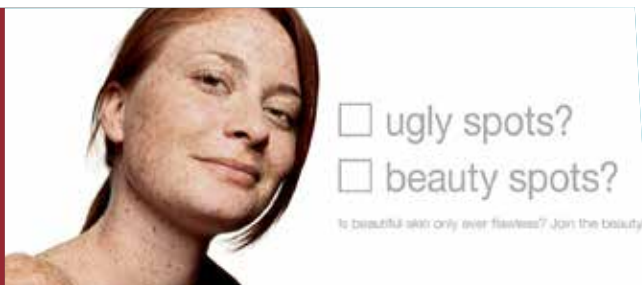
The second option to achieve the IAQ point for LEED certification is to conduct baseline IAQ testing. This must be done after construction is over but within a few days prior to occupancy. Timing is critical. The testing looks at airborne particles, carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, total volatile organic compounds, and other items to confirm that they do not exceed specific concentration levels. Testing is conducted in all occupied spaces, and if one area fails, the

building fails the entire process. Passing the IAQ testing can be difficult, but the upside is that the owner gets a baseline IAQ report confirming good air quality for the occupants before they occupy the building. This is something you can't get with a flush-out.

It won't surprise anyone to hear that Building Air Quality provides IAQ testing for new buildings to get LEED-certified, but the aid we offer LEED buildings doesn't end there. Every five years, LEED buildings must apply for recertification to prove they are as good as or better than when they were initially certified. After requests from our clients, we also offer testing for recertification.

To be honest, testing for recertification turned out to be pretty simple. The proactive surveys we already perform on many buildings, meet most of the criteria of the recertification process! Our clients can take the report generated from the proactive survey and submit that in their packet for recertification.

IAQ is only one part of LEED certification, but the nature of a building's IAQ can impact the building and its occupants for years to come.



And What You Can Learn From Them

A great advertising campaign transcends the company that creates it. The Budweiser Clydesdales are nearly as iconic as the beer itself. People still say, "Dude, you're getting a Dell," in 2019, despite the fact that PCs aren't even a major part of Dell's business model anymore. When it comes to creating an ad campaign that Don Draper would be proud of, it's best to look at massively successful examples from recent history. Here are a few of our favorites, as well as commentary on why they work and how you can use similar tactics.

Brand Differentiation: Apple

This mega-popular ad campaign consisting of 66 spots personified the difference between PCs and Apple computers. Playing the role of "PC" was a buttoned-up, nebbish character you'd expect to find in the most morose workplace on earth. The "Mac" character, by contrast, was laid-back, youthful, and effortlessly cool. After launching the campaign in 2006, Macs became the default laptop for nearly every incoming college student. Clearly, the lighthearted jabbing at the competition worked.

Off-the-Wall Irreverence: Old Spice

Most deodorant and shampoo commercials are bare-bones basic. They describe the "odor protection," "moisturizing effects," and the like. Old Spice takes the opposite approach. Their ads often feature absurd imagery, insane special effects, and Terry Crews literally yelling at you that you smell bad. Would this tone work for a life insurance company? Probably not, but it's a great way to make simple consumer goods feel fun and exciting.

Social Awareness: Dove

Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty," which launched in 2007, was a long overdue change of pace for the beauty industry. Since time immemorial, fashion and beauty campaigns featured only impossibly beautiful women who had body types that the average person could never attain. Dove threw this aspirational, and potentially toxic, messaging in the garbage and decided to celebrate women of all shapes and sizes. If you can create a campaign that includes those who aren't used to widespread representation, you'll increase your reach in a hurry.

Curated Cool: Dos Equis

Here's a dirty little secret the beverage industry won't tell you: Most industrially produced beers are made by one of two companies, and the vast majority of them taste remarkably similar. The difference, for the most part, comes down to the way they are marketed. Dos Equis, with their "Most Interesting Man in the World" campaign, carved out a name for themselves as the beer for urbane, thrill-seeking drinkers, despite the fact that their product is about as exotic as a Coors Light. Sometimes, perception really is reality.

No Do-Overs

4 Ways to Fail Your LEED IAQ Testing

One of the most misunderstood aspects of receiving LEED 3.2 indoor air testing clearance is how a building can fail or succeed. At Building Air Quality, we've worked on a number of projects in recent years where general contractors have been successful, and other projects where the contractor failed miserably. We know where many mistakes are made and how to prevent them. Here are four mistakes made during real projects that can cause your building to fail.

School House Blues

Three years ago, we were involved in a school project where everyone knew what should and should not be done prior to the air testing. Unfortunately, one of the subcontractor's people noticed a spot of glue on a stair riser. They quickly grabbed a cleaning compound and scrubbed the glue away. Though the bottle was only open for 30 seconds, he later admitted that it took him almost two minutes to get all the glue off of the riser. Two days later, the VOCs emitted by the cleaner showed up during the final air test, causing this project to fail the TVOC air sampling in the area where the work was done.

Takeaway: Manage the emission of airborne chemicals. Limit the use of wet products prior to testing. Things like touching up paint, cleaning smudges, or attempting to glue down loose items can all generate chemical levels that can cause you to fail.

Storage Wars

This project involved LEED air sampling done at a senior center that was attempting to receive the LEED IAQ points. Everything was going along quite nicely until the final location. After setting up the equipment, our investigator walked around the corner and noticed an unusual smell approximately 35 feet from our air sampling. Following his nose, he found a contractor had placed all of his tools and equipment, including open containers of caulk and poorly sealed paint buckets, in a back storage room. The biggest problem was the gas-powered generator, which was leaning to one side and causing gasoline to

leak onto the floor. This room was within the occupied spaces and considered part of the test area. The emissions from the gasoline failed the TVOC sampling levels in this area.

Takeaway: Relocate contractor equipment and tools to a location outside of the building.

When Vacuuming is a Big Mistake

While completing a LEED IAQ test in the division headquarters for an Army base in Kansas, custodians came in through a back door and began to sweep and vacuum the office spaces during our sampling. Though we stopped them the moment we caught them, 30-45 minutes had passed before we noticed, and the damage was done. The project had high levels of airborne particulate and needed to be retested three weeks later.

Takeaway: Be aware of airborne particulate matter, and certainly keep the custodial staff "in the loop."

Who You Gonna Call?

If you want your building to score those LEED IAQ points, you even need the telephone guys in on the act. During a recent project, in spite of all of our warnings and meetings with the general contractor and his subsequent direction to all subcontractors, we encountered a crew of four data installers who were running cabling through wall cavities. On the day of our testing they had removed cover plates to pull cables through dusty wall cavities, kicking up a sufficient amount of particles and dust to cause this project to fail.

Takeaway: Don't leave cable applications until the last minute.

It is incredibly important that you make sure the areas to be tested are clean and controlled during the days leading up to the air sampling. There are many ways to succeed, but these stories show how easy it is to fail. The contractors we worked with on these particular projects have learned important lessons at expensive costs.

When it comes to LEED testing, you only have one chance to get it right. Once the space is occupied, it is technically too late to get that IAQ point!

Don't Take a Chance When It Comes to Water

Why the WRT Course Could Save You Time and Money

Over the years, I've been involved in a number of water loss situations where water leaking from a faucet, toilet, or broken drain line flooded some portion of a commercial building. During those times, I wondered how water restoration contractors work and decided that I needed to have the insight and understanding of what they do to help my clients in the best possible way. As a result, I found a water restoration technician (WRT) training course in the Houston area and dedicated three days to my continuing education.



The WRT course provided lots of great information on how to effectively dry water when losses occur. I was not surprised to learn that you can dry spaces out quicker or slower depending on the number of fans and the type of dehumidifiers you use. I was, however, surprised to learn that there could be problems when drying too quickly or too slowly. We also spent a considerable amount of time talking about the different kinds of equipment to use in water restoration and how to document and log the drying process.

During the first day's visit, the water restoration contractor is supposed to determine how much water has leaked. Knowing how much water is in the building materials helps the technician understand how much dehumidification is required. Temperature, humidity, and moisture content readings then get logged every day until the drying is finished. Failing to do that could lead to extra fees paid by the owner (or insurance company).

In the years since my training, I have learned to ask the water restoration contractor for copies of their drying logs. In all honesty though, I've only seen drying logs from three projects (out of the dozens that I've worked on) during the last 10 years. Since the water restoration contractor works for the building owner, I assumed that they were not provided to me. However, in some instances, I've asked the building owner if they received copies of the drying logs and they have not; in fact, the owner's request was ignored in many of those cases. That makes me wonder if no one is logging the daily readings that are supposed to be collected as part of the drying process.

Water restoration contractors all understand that they should be taking readings and recording them on a daily log. I believe that most will do that ... but I seldom see the proof.

I think it is important for management companies to have a building engineer who has taken the WRT course. That person can ensure that you are getting the services that you're paying for.

You can find a list of WRT training providers at iicccert.org.

HAVE A LAUGH WITH TRAVIS



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