

General Session I

The Art of Motivation and Communication

Dr. David G. McClary, *Presiding*

Did you ever notice how some individuals are successful at motivating themselves and their clients to do a better job? General Session I features a group

of individuals who excel in the art of self and client motivation and communication.

Motivation and Communication: The Client's Perspective

JoAnn Smith, *Past President, National Cattlemen's Association*
Micanopy, FL 32667

Moderator: JoAnn is the 1985 President of the National Cattlemen's Association, a 230,000 producer, cattle producer and feeder organization. She is currently chairperson of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion & Research Board, which is overseeing the handling of the dollar per head check off program that you are all familiar with. Just recently, she was elected to the Hereford Cattle Association's Hall of Merit for distinguished service. She is a rather unique individual. I just met her this morning for the first time and I felt I knew her very well though from our phone conversations.

Mrs. Smith: It's a pleasure for me to be here this morning. People like David really do a super job in selling you on the fact that they really want you to come and be a part of a program.

I must say to you that I feel a little bit this morning, after having gone through the introduction of some of your other speakers and having the opportunity to visit with them, like being from rural America, I can very well understand this.

You have challenged me to talk about motivation as a producer's perspective and as I look at it — Motivation and Communications. I have to say to you that number one, we're all living in a different society and a different world and things are changing. I don't have to tell you that. David asked me if I would share with you some of the things that I experienced as the first woman president of a national cattlemen's association. I think Phoenix is my lucky city. I was installed into office here in Phoenix. Ten years ago it would have been difficult for a female to have tried to be president of a national cattlemen's association but the more interesting thing was, I didn't choose to run. I was asked to run for the office and there is a big difference. In the time frame and the work of our association much like yours and

the things that we jointly do, there is a lot of time given to projects. Very important in your business today and in my business is not what we have to say, but how we say it. More than that is what is heard. I wouldn't stand up here and profess in any manner to know anything at all about your profession, other than to tell you I respect it and that's why we employ you, but I need you to tell me in a manner I can understand what you need me to know. I have to be receptive and you have to get my attention to do that. In 1984 it was obvious that because I was going to be the first woman president of any agricultural commodity organization, that I was going to be number one, challenged by the media, number two, was going to have to defend my ability, more so than any other president the National Cattlemen's Association had ever had. I was going to have to defend the fact that I was a woman, and I was going to be tested. Put that in your right hand and in your left hand let me share with you the fact that I resented within myself, JoAnn Smith, who is a farm girl who grew up on the farm and ranch in rural America, that I would not be accepted because of my ability but yet I would be challenged because I was a woman. I had to work within the inner JoAnn Smith to make some decisions, not unlike some you may have to make along the way. I had to decide that either I would take that chip on my shoulder or else I would have it as an opportunity and I worked my way through that and I decided that I would try to be the best spokesperson the National Cattlemen's Association had ever had, because I would be given an opportunity, it was obvious, to deal with the media a great deal. It was going to be up to me to turn that in to a motivation to be able to sell our association and give the truth about American agriculture. Yes, they were going to ask some technical questions, no double, but they wanted to be able to see how I would handle them. I want to share with you a very

personal experience in as much as when you asked me “what do you need to do to motivate your client, you have communications that your client must know. You have to understand the art of communicating to some degree because your audience is very different from the audience that deals in Wall Street. The times of day that you deal with them, the ways you deal with them, the things you know that they need to know are entirely different. The professional training that I had was absolutely the most valuable thing that could have been done for me. Because I didn’t always answer the question that was asked but I knew how to answer a question. If it was what you wanted them to hear, that’s what you answered. Two days after I was elected, I flew to Washington, D.C. for the Washington press corps breakfast and I’ll promise you those were two hours of a test that when you walked out of there you either made it or you failed. One or the other. I would say to you, a very important part of your life today (since you have nothing else to do I know!) is to go and make certain that you understand the art of communicating to your client, to your people. Somehow take some time in today’s world to communicate. In 1985 I was called and run down “by 20/20”. They wanted me to appear on the program that had to do with residues, drugs, hormones, development of children in Puerto Rico, so on and so forth. Now if there’s one thing I am, I’m smart enough to know when I don’t know something and I knew I didn’t know that. I said yes, I would be happy to appear because that basically our people had taken before. We were in the eighties. We had sat back literally and been condemned often but we would not stand up and counter it in any way and I don’t always think you can win by countering. I don’t mean to use that term in the way you often think of it, but I wanted to have an opportunity, ladies and gentlemen, to meet that challenge by telling just the truth. Because the perception was there that beef is filled with every kind of drug, every kind of anything you could pump into it. We needed to communicate, look, it is the most safe, healthsome checked product that we produce in this country. I wanted the opportunity to tell the truth about it and to be positive and to be positive for all of agriculture. To talk about food safety and run away from it. So when I got the call from 20/20, I accepted, knowing only that I would be interviewed by Geraldo Rivera. I knew it was on the drug residue issue. I didn’t know what we were going to get into or anything else. The one thing I did when I had the opportunity to have some professional training was to make certain that we understood how to answer a question when it was thrown at me or try to know and be able to perceive what might be asked of me. In that night session when we got to New York we went through it. I wore a red suit. Brave! I walked into the studio of ABC and Geraldo Rivera was there, his brother is a part of that productions program there and Rivera looked at me and said “you don’t look like a cowboy to me”. I said that’s got to be the smartest thing you’ve ever said in your life. My point being, make certain that you can figure out what you need to say. What did that do? I am

convinced today that that kind of rapport that he and I established on initial contact cushioned my ability to communicate to him because there were two points that came out of that whole discussion that morning as we sat there and we taped all of this. I did this on Tuesday and it was to go on Thursday. They pulled that show and they went back and talked to the poultry industry, to the pork industry, and to the beef industry. They went back out to the feedyards and redid the footage on feeding cattle. There were some things that happened that came to light there that had we not had established communication, we would have never gone any further than me looking probably like a hick from Micanopy, Florida, in answering their questions. I’m trying to say that in the art of communication and motivation there are two sides — there’s my side and there’s your side. Unless we establish a link in some way, it’s not going to work.

When I was elected president of the National Cattlemen’s Association, I thought about the difference between women leaders. I thought about the fact that Sally Ride and I shared something. She shuttled from Cape Canaveral into space and I shuttle from Micanopy to Denver, to Chicago to wherever. I thought about Sandra Day O’Conner, the Supreme Court Judge. The difference between the judge and me is I would. You are going to be, and your industry is going to be in the media in the line and fire of communication ten fold tomorrow from what you have been. The issue of food safety is an issue of Washington, D.C. and the consumers of this nation. I didn’t run from that one. I think we the producer should make sure we produce a safe and wholesome healthy product, because I don’t want to eat it if it isn’t and I’m fond of my family. I don’t know you that well but I like you too. I don’t want to deliver to the consuming public a product that is bad.

Now, as a producer I can only go so far. They’re going to look to you to answer that technical question even if they can’t understand what you said. You know what those drugs do. You know why we use them. We know you know which ones we use and you are the people that prescribe what is put into an animal. I happen to think that America is moving forward and I’m pleased. Nobody in 1929 asked anybody what they put on anything. Why? America was hungry. America today does not know anything about being hungry. They’re going to question people are living longer. We know more about heart disease. We know about cancer.

I have just returned from China. Would you like to guess the three leading killer diseases in China? Now all of you are well educated people. And you answer this one to me cause I didn’t get a piece of meat while I was over there. Heart disease is number one, cancer is number two, and respiratory disease is number three.

As we look at the fact that we are going to have to defend what we do and we are going to have to make sure that we are doing the right thing, we are going to lead and leave it to you.

As a bottom line in society today, the consumer wants to

know what's put into something, what's taken out, and so on and rightfully so. I don't think that's bad. I think that's good. I think food safety is good. As you know, a part of the 1985 farm bill was a check off program for both the pork industry and the beef industry. I happen to come from that state that not only has cattle and some dairy herds that are the largest in the nation like MacArthur and the Larson Dairies but also the citrus industry.

In the 1985 farm bill with our check off program that was established by law, we are now checking off a dollar per head every time that animal is sold and this year we will collect over seventy million dollars. Half of that money stays within the state and half of that comes to the board and the board has charge over their half as far as expenditures are concerned. There is a board of 113 people which are producers as well as importers. For the first time in this country, we are checking off on any animal or any part of a bovine animal that comes into the United States when it comes in through customs. That is if some company processes corned beef, when it comes in a carton, it's checked off on the tariff code. That money is spent for promotion, research, consumer information, industry information, and administration. Right now, the administrative costs for that is less than three percent. By law, we can only spend five percent, but we are keeping administration at a minimum, and we are spending the largest portion of that dollar for promotion. Let me share with you about a challenge I met. I have tried to always communicate one thing, that is honesty. We had a choice as a board. We didn't have time to build our own Bartles and James kind of approach. That takes a long period to build that identity. We had a program. We had money for the first time. We knew that the consumer liked beef. We knew that the people that had the money to spend were in a target audience from 22-52 who had turned away from eating beef because of health reasons or active life style. Those were the things we knew. We targeted that. And who rated very high with them as spokesperson? James Garner and Cybil Shepherd. Now there are women who religiously buy movie magazines and movie sheets and all this. There are those of us who would rather be talking to this association or working in something else and are not movie freaks. I mean I hardly knew who Cybil Shepherd was to be honest with you. Not that my age has got anything to do with that but I did not know. One of the challenges was having a new board and spending that producer's dollar who had never been used to giving a dollar in his whole life and pay somebody an enormous fee to sell their product and then have happen two weeks after that campaign kicked off, in Mid-America, in a very popular, popular magazine the headline saying Cybil Shepherd didn't eat beef and she attributed her beautiful complexion to not eating meat! Now as a chairman that really is something to wake up to. Let me tell you. How do you handle a situation where all of a sudden you have been the responsible party or part of the responsible party who in good faith have taken x number of dollars from the producer

and thought you were using wise judgment to spend it over here in a specific manner and it just comes round and knocks the living heck out of you? Let me say to you that there are ways, and in that particular event, "how do you handle a celebrity who is working through an agent through her own attorney and pretty strong willed?" I told them that all the staff could stay at home. I was going as a producer to talk to that women. I would be happy for her attorney to be there but in essence I was the one that had signed the check and I represented 1.6 million producers in this nation and we were not a corporate board. Everybody was putting some of that money in and everybody needed to know an answer. And I did. I flew out and she was very receptive. Her people were very receptive in as much as they say that her publicist said this and she did not say this, you know and she gave us footage where she said she did not say this. What I'm trying to say to you, those kind of situations where you need to take total control in communications, you sometimes just have to be strong to do so. Very strong, often times its easier to turn around and say it will work itself out, don't believe it. You have to be in control. Out of that figure that I just gave you of 1.6 million cattle producers in share with you some interesting things. How many in this audience are from Texas, number one beef producing state in the nation.² Cattle are not going to vote in this referendum. People are going to vote. Producers are going to vote. What do you think the number three producing state, peoplewise that own cattle happens to be? Wisconsin. The dairy industry is very important. Cattle are owned in herds less than 25 average so that we have a potential of 1.6 million producers who can go to an extension office in their county one day before the 18th of May, we don't know the date of referendum, and vote. They vote the same vote as somebody that owns 40,000 head. Of those 1.6, about 1 million of them do not belong to an organization. They do not take what I term agricultural publications. They do listen to the radio but the point I'm trying to make is that you, in our survey, are one of the key communication links we have with those people. Many of you call at one time or another on that small producer who probably has a job somewhere else and his livelihood is not actually derived from the cattle business. What are the advantages for you and your profession to be supportive of a check off program for the beef industry? We're talking about programs that can be funded by that dollar of quality assurance that we've talked about between NCA and your association of underwriting that safety factor. We're talking about some research that really needs to be done and done quickly. We're talking about communicating to that target audience of over half of Americans being in the 22-52 age bracket that have turned away from beef because they think there are some problems but yet they like it. We talk about having funds to be able to communicate to motivate them. What's happened? Has the dollar check off paid off? In the third quarter, I think everyone in this audience is very astute and would agree with me that cattle

numbers are lower now. The census is lower than at any time since 1980. During the third quarter of this year, 1987, we sold more beef than we had sold at any time since 1983. Now somebody's turning somewhere for some reasons. Because cattle numbers are down and even though we've had a supply that has been steady through the feedyards, we were slipping as you know—consumption patterns. We saw that the consumption shifted up in the last quarter. The awareness of the positives of selling a product that is safe and wholesome and good to eat, not filled with all those calories but a product that fits into the lifestyle is very important to our business and certainly to my business. I need your help to communicate the positives of a program to a producer that only knows one thing. He's got 25 head and he sells them when he wants to put money in his pocket. He doesn't have any idea what it is costing him. To him it doesn't cost him anything. It's cash crop to him. I need you to share with him the fact that in the real world we need to support a program. Is commodity advertising worthwhile? Does it pay off? I had Washington tell me in 1985 that all we'd do would be to compete against one another. Commodities. I said that's right. But by golly I want that opportunity. I want to be able to compete against my buddy in the poultry business because he's been more successful at marketing a product the consumer wants than I have. I want to be able to put a product in a purple box that says cook it three minutes in a microwave and everybody liked it. So far we haven't done that and they have. I admire them for it, but I'm saying to you that we must meet the challenges of lifestyle changes, ladies and gentlemen, and be able to communicate to the consumer what he wants to hear. He and she today want a meal that's prepared in less than 30 minutes. They're willing to pay for it but they don't want to spend their life in the kitchen. And when they go out to eat, they want a size and serving that they want and they want to be able to know it's a lean product if that's the type of product they're looking for. The communication skills take money. The communication message that we have today for the consumer is the same thing that you know, but that producer out there in the country may not realize that his only source of information is the milk truck driver and I say that facetiously. (In our research there were some interesting open ended questions. When asked, "where do you get your information?" One of the answers was, "the milk truck driver".) Now I think that is a valid point here. Whoever has been around a farming or ranching operation knows that those truck drivers that comes through there know more than anybody else. But first of all they are able to convey it. What I'm saying to you is the art of communication has to have the receiver in order to be able to communicate and the receiver in order to get the message across.

We need you communicating the fact that what's happening in the beef industry today is good for it. We are producing a better product. We are genetically breeding a better product. You are scientifically making sure that that product is more healthy. Food editors in this country have

a tremendous influence and a tremendous audience. They know just enough about implants, hormones, residues to get it all confused and know nothing about drugs, titles, names, etc., but they have heard of penicillin and you know some of those kind of things. The only way that I could ever get them on a real basic open up window look was to say yes, that most of the time in the feedyard when the animal went in to it, it got the same thing that years ago every parent gave their child which was a three in one shot. They began to understand that parallel and that we didn't pump that animal unless he was sick. It costs too much to do it anyway if you don't have to. Secondly, you only tried to keep them well the same way we do with humans. They listened. They wanted to understand the real world of what we were trying to do, but to start rattling off the drugs, rattling off the feed and what it has in it is confusing to everyone. It's very confusing to America, to the consumer. I need you to communicate the positive with a sense of pride. In 1985 I spent a great deal of time in Washington, D.C., let me assure you. One afternoon after lobbying on heaven knows what, I got on the plane. It was my assigned responsibility to JoAnn Smith to make sure at my age to write down who I had seen that day and what they did because I might not remember it by the time I got home. I immediately identified that I wasn't going to write too much that afternoon because I sat down by an elderly gentleman who was very well groomed. My Dad holds a very special spot in my heart at 94 and he likes to talk too so this fellow and I began a conversation. We talked about what he did. He happened to be in the computer business. I talked about what I did. We talked about the differences how in the beginning with the computer era, the computer industry manufactured a computer and said, "world here it is." You know, they didn't realize that we all didn't need the same kind, we didn't need the same size, we didn't all need those programs. When they began to look at their industry, they began to realize the opportunity of redefining it and designing computer sizes for different businesses, government, etc. You remember we had a slow down there and they really did a good job. What have we done in the beef business? In the 1960s we couldn't produce enough and we just kept on going full steam ahead. So what did we do? We had a cycle up here and then the cycle came down and that ten year cycle you can throw out the window right now. Just forget it. But we didn't believe, philosophically, that we could produce enough so we stayed with it. What were the poultry people doing in the 60s? They could not sell one of those whole birds, remember? At 65¢ a pound they sat in the retail counter. They knew they had to do something different. That's when they took it out, cut it up and sliced it and chipped it and put it in purple, yellow, and green boxes and brought it back and said, "Here you are! With sauce on top of it and everything else. You can get it any way you want it." We in the beef industry haven't done that. We talked about all of those things. We talked about life style changes, about when I grew up how things were; when he grew up how things were. We talked about how specific

Americans are today in their lifestyle habits. We talked about the magazines in advertising and I said you know I grew up in the era of Reader's Digest, National Geographic and Life Magazine. You can buy a magazine today that deals with anything from knitting to fishing to hunting. You just name it. So I said to him, "what type of periodicals do you enjoy?" He looked at me and he said National Geographic and Playboy! I thought, okay, and I said that I failed to correlate between those two and he didn't say anything. So I said, "why those two?" He said I read them for the same reason. Well I knew I'd missed it again so I asked him what might that reason be? He looked at me and he said "young lady, I look at the pictures and dream of places I've never been!"

My message to you today is that we are living in a changing world a fast changing world, a world of communications.

The stock market crash took all of 30 seconds to be known world wide. In 1929 it took a month for it to get to Hong Kong. We are living in a communications era. What you do with that tool is up to you but the link to your client is to know and understand him and to say what he needs to hear that you want him to hear but don't feed him too much. Just like a coffee cup. Once that cup is filled, it runs and spills out.

Thank you very much for the opportunity of being with you this morning. I would say to you that I think you picked a wonderful, wonderful city for your meeting. It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to visit with you about communications and being motivators, but the most important thing is that you are leaders. Know that as leaders we look to you to help us make certain that we deliver to the consumer a healthy, safe product. Thank you.

