



Interpersonal Skills – Tip #2

Don't Give Unsolicited Advice

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Are you one of those people who go around giving advice that no one asked you for? (And yes, there are a lot of you!) Well, stop right now! Whenever anyone “offers” me unsolicited advice, I incline my head at the appropriate angle and ask politely “*and you are?*”

So to save you a similar fate, here are *5 reasons you shouldn't give unsolicited advice*:

1. **It almost always feels like criticism to the recipient.** I have been on the receiving end of much unrequested advice. It's part of the territory I call work. So I can testify to that fact. That's because the advice is usually about what the recipient has done wrong, often delivered with a touch of “superiority”.
2. **It is seldom valued by the recipient.** Even as people smile politely and thank you, they are uncomfortable with your forwardness. Therefore your advice is neither valued nor appreciated. Moreover, they tend to think your motives are suspect.
3. **You don't have the full picture.** Here's a scenario. You enter an event and you could not believe the poor presentation skills of the speaker. At the break, you seek out the speaker and gives her some sound advice on how she can improve her presentation. You had no idea that she was demonstrating “*how you can spoil your presentation*”. That's because you didn't have the full picture!
4. **It is given without established authority.** When you give unsolicited advice, it is highly unlikely that you would begin by establishing what gives you the authority to offer the advice in the first place. Put yourself in the recipient's place and consider yourself lucky that they didn't ask “Who the @\$%& are you??”
5. **It is not the best use of your time.** You know why? Very few people will act on your advice, anyhow. They will react with defensive defiance and remember you with resentment for a long time. If you have such an uncontrollable need to give advice, consider becoming a consultant...at least you will be paid for it.

So there! I've shared my 5 reasons why you shouldn't give unsolicited advice. If they're not for you, my bad. Perhaps you will love to learn [how to improve your writing instead?](#)

Lorna@impacttrainingservices.com

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