

Yours

Step three in creating your Fore-Thought Chart is consciously to imagine what *you* expect will happen and what your opposite number expects; to discover what's predictable. Let's see what our Exec might expect to happen at the meeting, especially if he/she fills out his/her whole half of the chart first, which, as I told you, is the best way to do this.

YOU (Exec)	THEY (Mike)
EXPECTATIONS	
1. I'll be firm and irritated.	
2. Mike will apologize and make excuses.	
3. He'll promise to fix it.	
4. I'll give him another chance.	

Number 1 on the Exec's list tells us that he will probably move into an emotional mode that we've now discovered won't work. Seeing that in the light of both sides of the chart when he fills it all in can make our Exec reconsider and decide against it. Especially after the insights he'd gain from the other two categories.

Numbers 2 and 3 tell us that, no matter what the Exec says, Mike's response is a foregone conclusion. This can alert the Exec to try something quite different, if he really wants to shake Mike up a little and make him think and change. The previous two categories—GOALS and NEEDS—on Mike's side of the ledger will tell the Exec that more bombast, "firm and irritated," isn't going to do it.

Therefore he has a chance now to find his way to the approach I recommended—naming the problem, *without blame*, and then asking questions in order to uncover the underlying flaw, the reason why Mike's reports are always late. This can finally lead to the Exec's helping in the solution.

The "no-blame" issue deserves an extra moment of thought. The most destructive thing we do when something goes wrong is to spend time blaming and being judgmental. The dynamics are so wasteful and the outcome so predictable. Here's why:

- It's done. Berating for past mistakes cannot fix the past. It can only polarize two people.