

conscientious employee. I think you know that. If something went wrong, I'd like to fix it. A mistake in judgment means I have something to learn. But I'm still the same loyal, conscientious person I always was."

End Constructively

The best outcome from such a confrontation is for the boss to know you're adult enough to hear the issues and not also fold personally. Show how well you take direction and how willing you are to try again, his/her way. Make it a team effort. Ask to come in and check as you re-do to be sure you're on the right wavelength. If you can, try:

"I want to tell you that I appreciate your being so straight with me. No one likes to mess up, but I'm glad you showed me you have faith in my ability to do this better by calling me in this way. I won't let you down."

Role Play and Practice

In closing this chapter, let me again suggest that you practice. Do some role playing by improvising a questioning session, especially about audience questions. Peers can really help you hear because they know the right questions to ask.

Give your friends/family the outline of what the meeting's about, who's coming, what they want, and what they'll probably ask you. This is true whether it's for an audience after a speech or the boss. If you prepare a list of what you think will be asked, you help yourself focus and give your group of "Not for Prime Time" players something to work from.

The idea is to find out what it feels like before the big day. To discover some of your weak points both personally and content-wise.

If you have a video camera, you might even want to tape it. You can then judge for *yourself* how you came across, what you said, and if that's how you want to do it.

If you have no camera, you can still audio-tape it. Then listen and critique.

And, of course, you'll want to ask your friends to give you live feedback so you can discuss how it went with them right after you do it.

Everything feels better after you've experienced it. Practice not only helps you get used to the upcoming experience; it can stop you from making some errors in attitude and in how you're coming across. It can show you if your presentation and method of explanation work. And it