To: Steve Bucher,

Director, Engineering Writing Program

From: Gaurav Gireesh (USC ID- 6874-1107-01)

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Re: DESCRIBING AN INSTANCE OF BAD COMMUNICATION and CONSEQUENCES

Man is a social animal hence, communication is the key ingredient of the kind of relationships people share among themselves. You either build a bridge or burn one! However, in personal and academic setting, miscommunication can still be spared but professional life is often more demanding. Sadly, it took a bad experience for me to realize this.

During my stint as a team lead with a Multi-national IT firm, I was in charge of Project planning and estimation. I received an unusual client request to reduce the workforce currently assigned on a sprint- this being an agile project. Being a team lead, one has got to be very careful to break this news as this may hurt the individuals both professionally and personally. One of the employees in my team, Raj, who was also my friend, had been repeatedly faltering and missing the deadlines on his share of deliverables. Raj ended up as the first one on the chopping block for a couple of sprints. Breaking this news to him was tougher than I had anticipated ***.***However it had to be done, so I e-mailed him. Things changed pretty quickly between us. A week later there was hardly any communication or technical help from Raj. I felt completely ignored both professionally and personally. Then I realized why. I read my email again. It had a dangerous vibe, highlighting me as the culprit. I felt very apologetic and decide to fix this without further delay. I met Raj and apologized and explained him the scenario and the mistake in the e-mail. Thankfully, the repercussions of the error was not huge as Raj was a friend. However, this would have been much worse and might have led to a professional rift between us which would be bad for the company as well as be detrimental for our personal terms. This would also result in a compatibility issue where work throughput would be less.

However, this incident taught me, a lesson for my life, to be more careful while sending e-mails or any written communication in general, and now I make sure to review each of my e-mails before sending and evaluate my tone in the emails. It was a tough experience but a good learning.