

*timefinder*

**Quick Fact: Vague Deadlines -- Missed Deadlines**

When I was at Syracuse University, in the Newhouse School of Communications, my major was TV and Radio. I worked on many television productions. One of the key positions in a TV production is the "floor manager," the liaison between the director in the control room, the floor staff on the set and the talent.

As floor managers, we would use hand gestures to the talent to indicate it was time to wrap up and end a segment or there was more time left in the segment, so stretch it out.

However, there was one professor who taught us a lesson that I never forgot and continue to find it extremely practical today.

He told us that the hand signals were really quite useless and it was important to indicate the actual time left in a segment. Using stretching motions or whirling our hands in a circle as a symbol to hurry up, does not give the talent useful information as to how much "real" time was left. He made us use cue cards or had us hold up our fingers to indicate 5 minutes, 3 minutes, 1 minute left, etc.

How often are we, today, not clear in communicating when we want something to be completed or when we will get something done.

**The ambiguous, vague terminology we use does not really convey useful information.**

Do you use any of the following? What do they really mean?

*ASAP (As Soon As Possible)*

*When you get a chance*

*When you have time*

*Later in the week*

*Before the end of the day*

*Yesterday*

*Right away*

*Soon*

*At your convenience*

Yesterday I was walking by a store that had a sign on the door, "Be Back in 20 minutes." 20 minutes from when?

On the other hand, now many traffic lights count down the amount of time you have to cross the street when the signal says "Walk." You know how much time you have to cross.

If you avoid vague and ambiguous expressions, you will, in all probability, reduce communication and deadline mishaps.

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Dear Mitzi ,



Wishing you a wonderful rest of spring and a terrific and fun summer.

Your feedback and ideas to write about are important to me, so please stay in touch.

Warmly,

*Mitzi*

**One Final Time Thought!**

Non-ambiguity is the shaping force of reality." -- Joseph Pierce

Just On Time!

I am available to speak at your next conference, trade show or meeting. To learn more, contact me at: [Mitzi@TimeFinder.net](mailto:Mitzi@TimeFinder.net) or 781-444-3220

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