

Communication

By Yumi Ueda



Over the course of my career, many of the soft skills trainings I have attended are about communication. These

trainings reiterate the same ideas of how to be a better communicator:

- Listen
- Be clear
- Be concise
- Keep it simple
- Stay calm
- Understand the situation

I have learned that being an effective communicator is relevant not only at work; it is also very important in everyday life, especially with family and friends. One of the hardest things I find about being a parent is teaching my kids how to communicate. Teaching them how to express their feelings (in a calm manner), how to listen

(communication is a two-way street), and how to think about how others feel (understand the other person’s point of view).

Some ways of practicing how to communicate effectively is to have short discussions without distractions (no phone or screen nearby). Pass around a ball so only the person holding the ball is allowed to speak. Everyone else will practice listening. Have a topic that will generate thinking and asking questions. I have used this one with my kids before (see picture below):

Is the girl in this picture being naughty or nice? My daughter immediately said “nice! because she is sharing her ice cream.” My son took his time answering and finally said “naughty.” When I asked him why his response was “COVID – no sharing food.”

One other thing we all need to remember – some people are naturally better at communicating than others. My kids are also prime examples of this. My daughter has no trouble telling me “Mommy, can you put away your phone and pay attention to me!”. My son on the other hand, is like a ticking time bomb. He doesn’t speak up when things bother him, but will suddenly explode for no reason, and we have to back up to figure out what is really bothering him.

Like anything else in life, we will not master communication after one lesson; even the ones who are naturally better at communicating still need practice. So, remember to use constant reminders, tips on improvement, and continuously practice our skills so good communication becomes more natural. Ganbatte!







CPA FIRM





MICROCOMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

By Joy Takaesu of The CPA Collective



The Security Summit partners – including the IRS, state tax agencies, and the tax community – are working on a campaign to raise awareness about the rising number of data thefts reported by tax professionals to the IRS. The Security Summit asks for tax professionals to help protect client data, and offers suggestions such as:

• Taking steps to implement multi-factor authentication in tax software and other accounts, in addition to using strong password phrases, anti-virus software, and virtual private networks when connecting between the office network and other locations.

• Asking clients to sign up for Identity Protection PINs (IP PINs) – Any taxpayer may now request an IP PIN, either online (using the Get an IP PIN tool), on the phone with an IRS employee after filing a Form 15227, or in-person. After verifying their identities with the IRS, eligible taxpayers will receive a six-digit IP PIN annually, to be entered when signing and submitting a return. The IP PIN is meant to help prevent an identity thief from filing a fraudulent return on behalf of the taxpayer. Note: The IRS will never ask for your IP PIN. Phone calls, email or texts asking for your IP PIN are scams.

• Helping clients fight unemployment compensation fraud – According to the IRS, one of the larger scams of 2020 involved unemployment compensation fraud. Identity thieves used stolen or previously breached

information to file unemployment claims on behalf of victims without their knowledge. Victims may receive mail about an unemployment claim or payment, or unexpected 1099-G tax forms showing unemployment benefits that were not received. Fraudulent unemployment claims may have been made even in states where the victims did not live, or even if they were employed.



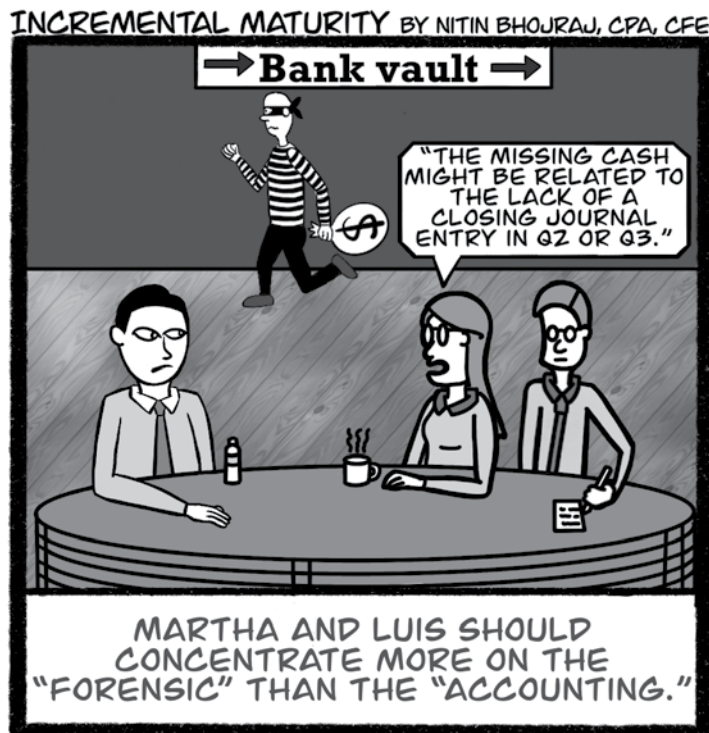
To report unemployment insurance fraud in Hawaii, please call (808) 762-5751 or (808) 762-5752 and select Option #4. For more details, or to file a report online, please visit the State of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations website on Unemployment Insurance & Assistance Fraud Info.

• Avoiding spear phishing scams – The Security Summit warns that “for 2020, tax pros were especially vulnerable to spear phishing scams from thieves posing as potential clients. Thieves might

carry on an email conversation with their target for several days before sending the email containing a (malicious) link or attachment.”

• Knowing the signs of identity theft – According to the Security Summit, warning signs “include multiple clients suddenly receiving IRS letters requesting confirmation that they filed a tax return deemed suspicious. Tax professionals may see e-file acknowledgements for far more tax returns than they filed. Computer cursors may move seemingly on their own.”

If you have any questions or comments, please call me at (808) 837-2517, or send e-mail to jtakaesu@thecpacollective.com.





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