

**Patrick:** [00:00:00] Anybody can talk, but not everybody can communicate with impact.

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**Peter:** [00:00:13] Welcome to Improv is no Joke podcast, where it's all about becoming a more effective communicator by embracing the principles of improvisation. I'm your host Peter Margaritis, the self-proclaimed chief edutainment officer of my business, the Accidental Accountant. My goal is to provide you with thought provoking interviews with business leaders so you can become an effective improviser, which will lead to building stronger relationships with clients, customers, colleagues, and even your family. So let's start to show

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**Peter:** [00:00:44] Welcome to episode number 58 and today my guest is Patrick Donadio, MBA, CSP, and MCC. For the past three decades, Patrick has spoken nationally and internationally and trained thousands of leaders and their teams in a variety of industries from Fortune 100 companies to associations. In his desire to help C-suite executives and all leaders grow their people, Patrick has taken his decades of experience and crafted a results-based process for his new book, [Communicating with IMPACT](#), focused on improving communication, increasing profits, and boosting performance in less time. Patrick serves on the board of the National Speaker's Association and is one of only four people in the world to have are both the certified speaking professional designation from the National Speakers Association and the Master Certified Coach designation from the International Coach Federation (The highest earned designations in both associations). As an educator, he has taught communications at the University of Notre Dame, the Weatherhead School of Management, the Ohio State University, and the John Glenn College of Public Affairs.

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**Peter:** [00:02:04] Patrick welcome. I appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to be a guest on my podcast today.

**Patrick:** [00:02:10] Hello there Peter. How are you my friend?

**Peter:** [00:02:12] I'm doing wonderful. And how about yourself?

**Patrick:** [00:02:14] We're doing great. Always good to talk with you.

**Peter:** [00:02:17] Always good. Always good to talk with you. And before we begin this interview I do want to share a story about you that really resonated with me for... Still to this day. And I don't know if you remember this but way back when, when the NSA Ohio chapter had our meetings down at downtown Columbus at the Crown Plaza. My first time I walked in there I was a little bit intimidated - it was probably 75, 80 people in the room - and at one of the breaks you came up to me and introduced yourself and said I see you're new and kind of tell me a little bit about yourself. And I did. You were very kind. And then after the meeting was over you stopped me and you said "do you have a one page?" And I had this... what? What's a one page thingy? And you said Sit down. I sat that and you scoped this one page out for me on a piece of paper and gave it to me and said next meeting I want you to come to me and when you show me your

one pager, and I did. I've never forgotten that because, I could summarize my interaction with you over the years, you're kind, you're helping - just as we're going to talk about today, you want to have an impact in other people's lives and you had a huge impact on mine. And I greatly appreciate it.

**Patrick:** [00:03:41] Yeah. Well thank you. You know I don't remember that. Obviously I love helping and you know I think what we do is so critical. And people who are listening you know you don't realize the kind of difference you can really make a great difference when all you do is just be kind and help others.

**Peter:** [00:03:54] And you did that. And I tell everybody that story when they ask me "Tell me about an NSA. What is it?" And I revert back to that story. My first experience, which has been a lasting experience. So I once again thank you my friend.

**Patrick:** [00:04:10] Well you're welcome.

**Peter:** [00:04:11] So what's going on in your life, Patrick? Anything new? Anything you've been working on? Anything you'd like to share?

**Patrick:** [00:04:18] Yeah you know it's funny you should ask because I've been working on this book for about eight years now. You know every time I go to the next Speaker Association in Ohio chapter they're going "so hey how's that book." Like in the sense that you're really not writing a book are you. You're just making that up. So finally, believe it or not, I've gotten the book out and it's called Communicating with Impact. And it's not so much about the book, Peter, it's just about the idea of giving something to someone that they can take with them to continue the learning. Because you and I know when people come to our workshops and seminars they get some great ideas, but a lot of times either they want to go deeper or they go back to work and they forget to apply the skills that they learn. So having these resources are a great value to my clients. That's the biggest reason I wrote the book. Not to be a best-seller, but the keep adding value.

**Peter:** [00:05:05] And that's that's a critical point because I feel the same way. In my speaking engagements or an event, we're there, we're doing what we do, we're sharing our knowledge... But after that, if there's not some tangible pieces out there that they can go to - whether it's your book, my book, articles, listening to podcasts - then they'll revert back. They'll go back into that rut and they won't change that behavior that they ultimately want to change, and keeping things like this in front of individuals I think is very important.

**Patrick:** [00:05:34] Well I found that for me I was teaching this topic for years and then I finally realized that people kept asking me "do you have a book?" and I'm like no. And so I realized I need to listen to my customer. If you're listening today, the best thing you can do to really make an impact in your business is listen to your customer, and when my customer kept asking me that question I figured I better take the hint.

**Peter:** [00:05:55] So when you took the hint, I'm just curious - Did you have the title in mind? You had the topic in mind, but how did the first piece flush itself out.

**Patrick:** [00:06:09] Yeah well I've been teaching communication skills for 20 some years and I change the title to Communicating with Impact and I thought I want to come up with a process. And so initially I just had a five-step process, and it worked. But then I realized that's hard to remember. So then I took my five step process and I took the word impact and I created an acronym to come up with a six-step process. Because I think, if something's simple, people will remember it. And I also think, if people have a process, they get a much greater result. So that's kind of how the book got started.

**Peter:** [00:06:42] And when you say the word process that's the second thing that comes into my mind as it relates to you: you're very process oriented. I remember the time that I was a coaching client of yours and you were helping me put processes and procedures into place because I had no process, nor did I have a procedure, and you're very good about processes. And as I've looked through some of the materials that you have sent in advance, I just looked at it and immediately think, "That's Patrick." I mean this this is you. This is your brand.

**Patrick:** [00:07:13] Thank you. Part of that because I believe in processes. Just a quick little story: I was in Japan, 1991, as a goodwill ambassador and after about two or three weeks staying with Japanese families and eating sushi, which by the way sushi is great but I'm not a big raw fish guy. I grew up you know in the 60s when we had fish sticks. That was my kind of fish. So about the third week I was with these Japanese families and I had this one host family and I said to the young children hey listen you guys have McDonalds? Because I would really like a hamburger because I'm just kind of homesick. So we went to McDonald's. I got the Big Mac, which was about six bucks. I don't care. I would have paid 20. I was so happy to have some comfort food. I had the fries and the green tea shake. And as I was eating those French fries, Peter, I said wow these fries taste exactly the same as they do right here in Ohio. How can you be around the world and still get the same thing? And then I realize McDonald's has a process to make sure that you get this consistent result, and then that's when I got the idea: you know if I want to come back to the States I want to start creating processes because I'm not getting consistent results.

**Peter:** [00:08:18] Wow, that's a great story, and what a cool way to see that vision - being in a foreign country and craving a big mac, or however you pronounce that.

**Patrick:** [00:08:33] The other reason I created processes, I'll be quite frank with you Peter, is I'm not a very good structured person. And when I started my business I wasn't making a lot of money because I didn't have a system, and I would have little post-it notes or pieces of paper and things on index cards and realize that I forgot the follow up with this client. And I said well I've got to do something to get organized. So it's really valuable for me to keep be focused to get more work done.

**Peter:** [00:08:59] I'm glad you don't have your camera on and can see into my office because there's post-it notes and index cards and stuff lying around. I digress. Let's keep moving forward.

**Patrick:** [00:09:09] I was going to say so anyways I thought about this workshop, I thought I was teaching these five steps, and I thought if I can make it easier. So I came up with the word impact and that's how I created the six keys to communicating with impact, and these six pieces are what I think, anytime you have a conversation with a prospect or you're in front of a group

making a presentation or if you're out with a client... you know everything we do. I mean it's amazing how much of what we do is communications. So I create this quick simple impact process, and if you'd like I can quickly give you the six keys. It's easy to remember - you just remember the word impact you know the six keys.

**Peter:** [00:09:43] I'd love to hear the six keys.

**Patrick:** [00:09:44] Yeah. And we can go deeper into whatever you want, but here they are. They're very easy: The I in the IMPACT model is the intention. What's my intention for this conversation? We have an intention today. The M is the message. So how do I craft a message that's going to help me achieve the intention I have for this communication? M is also the method, too, because you know people respond differently to different forms of communication. The P in the IMPACT is the person. So who am I communicating with and how do I adjust my communication to that particular person? So that's the first part - I call this the planning phase of the process. Or you can think IMP - I am planning. But the IMP part is the first phase, and then the ACT is actually how do you take the process that you came up with and then you put it into action. So the A is to activate. How do I activate this message to engage me and my receiver? The C is clarify. How do you make sure that what we both sent is being communicated correctly? Because a lot of times there's a lot of miscommunication that happens. And then the T, which you know prior to coming up with this new model I had the five steps and I stop with the C, and I realized there's something more important that we don't think about: how do you transform this particular interaction into the result that we actually set for ourselves? So that T is transformed. So that's it. IMPACT: intention, message, person, active, clarify, transform. Put it all together, take about two minutes before you open your mouth, and you too can be communicating with impact.

**Peter:** [00:11:16] OK so I think, for the benefit of my audience, going maybe not real deep but putting some depth into each one of these little bit more because I think those who are listening, as well as myself, are intrigued by this process that you have developed.

**Patrick:** [00:11:34] Yeah. So we could even start at the beginning if you're like. You know you can take me through wherever you want to go.

**Peter:** [00:11:38] Let's start with the I and go all the way through.

**Patrick:** [00:11:41] Well the I is the intention. So I have this simple little phrase: intent before content.

**Peter:** [00:11:49] I like that. I like that.

**Patrick:** [00:11:51] Right so you and I have an intention today: we want to share some great ideas so that your listeners walk away with some tools that they could use to be better communicators. That's my intention for our call. So no matter what I do today I want to make sure I'm giving value to our listeners because that's my intention.

**Peter:** [00:12:08] OK.

**Patrick:** [00:12:09] Now here's the thing, Peter: This step is so simple it takes basically 30 seconds, but I can guarantee you most people don't take 30 seconds and ask themselves before they pick up the phone, before they go to lunch, before they make a presentation. You know why am I having this conversation? So the first step is the why. I mean to be honest - I mean do you take that 30 seconds a lot of times before you pick up a phone or send an e-mail and ask yourself why am I saying this?

**Peter:** [00:12:32] I will be honest with you.. Some years ago, no, I didn't, but I've become more.. I've practiced that a lot more. Why am I making this phone call? Why am I asking this individual to be part of my podcast? I have a lot of Whys out there so I've become better at that.

**Patrick:** [00:12:48] And I tell people in the workshop you know if you left right now you'd be a better communicator. Just spend 30 seconds and ask yourself why this conversation, why this communication. So it's a very simple step, it doesn't take a lot of time, and it's very easy. So I want our listeners today, as they go as we go through these six keys, think about what's one of these things that you may not be doing that well. Maybe the first one is really I'm not spending that 30 seconds on asking myself why before I go out there to communicate. But I hope if you're listening today, and if you're not driving, you take out a pen and a piece of paper and see if you can pick up a couple of tips you could put in the practice tomorrow to be a better communicator, to grow your business, and to build deeper relationships.

**Peter:** [00:13:26] OK next is the M.

**Patrick:** [00:13:28] Next is the M, But let me just tell you, before we go onto the M, there's a little formula that I created in the intention process called the laser focused intention. And basically if you just answer these questions you can actually create a really good intention. So I'm going to give it to you for a minute and see if you might want to think about how you can apply it to communication you've got coming up. I'm going to talk to this audience or person about whatever the topic is so that they will think, do, or feel something. So just like a little fill in the blank. So do you have anything coming up where you could maybe use it as an example where you're going to be talking or communicating with someone about a topic and maybe Let's talk about what you want to have happen as a result of that interaction?

**Peter:** [00:14:15] I've got a number of speaking engagements coming up. I'm going to be talking about ethics with a CPA firm coming up.

**Patrick:** [00:14:23] OK. That's so good. So I'm going to be talking about ethics with a CPA firm so that they will... What do you want them to think, do, or feel?

**Peter:** [00:14:30] I want them to think about... we get put in situations of gray. The gray part of ethics, and I want them to be able to think, feel, remember some of the stories that we're talking about - real life situations like Wells Fargo, like Scott London former KPMG partner. So if they're ever in that similar situation they'll pause before they act.

**Patrick:** [00:14:54] Yeah look at that. So basically in 40 seconds you've already crafted almost your whole presentation. That's how powerful this first step is. So if you're listening right now and you've got a potential meeting with a prospect or you happen to be going out to see a client

today you know just spent 30 seconds and saying Why am I having this meeting today and what do I want my client to think, do, or feel after we've met? And that's how easy their first step is.

**Peter:** [00:15:17] It's simple. It's way too simple Patrick.

**Patrick:** [00:15:20] You've got to keep it simple for me Peter.

**Peter:** [00:15:22] Well me too.

**Patrick:** [00:15:26] So number one is intent before content, the intention step. The second piece is your intent drives your content. Right. So now you know what your intention is now spend a few minutes and think about what are the pieces of the message that I want to put together. And basically you kind of did that by answering that first laser focused intention formula. So I call this message management. Right. And we communicate, as you know, really there's three different ways we can articulate our message: you can do it verbally, you can do it nonverbally, or you could do it in writing. Right. So you got to figure out which of those particular types of methods you want to use to communicate my message.

**Peter:** [00:16:04] OK.

**Patrick:** [00:16:05] Now it's very critical to think about what's the right approach. I always ask people, for example, Peter, what's your preference for communication? You prefer a phone call, an email, a text?

**Peter:** [00:16:16] I prefer a phone call. I prefer face-to-face. I prefer a voice.

**Patrick:** [00:16:20] Yes. And that's great. What I remind people of, when your craft and your message, is it's not just about what you like; it's about what they like. So if you understand the concept called projection - projection means you project on to other people what you would like. So if I said Peter I think you should be a little better at being funnier. That's because I think funny is really important. I know you're funny. But the point is I'm projecting onto you what I think is important. Well when you're crafting a message you have to be careful that you don't project onto your receiver. "Oh well they'll like email or they'll like phone calls because I like phone calls.

**Peter:** [00:16:59] Ah. Got it.

**Patrick:** [00:16:59] So when you're crafting your message, you think about the method and it might be you know I love phone calls but this person is a CEO. They're not going to pick up the phone so I may have to communicate by email or text. So in the end part you want to think about the message, but you also want to think about the method.

**Peter:** [00:17:16] I've never really thought about it like that, especially from the projection point.

**Patrick:** [00:17:19] Yeah. So we tend to do what we like.

**Peter:** [00:17:21] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:17:22] Now I know a lot of us know the basic pieces of good communication. If anybody's been to college or high school and had a speech class we know the three parts: opening, body, closing. So when you're crafting the message you know what am I going to say in the first few moments to get the audience's attention? Even on a phone call. When you pick up the phone, Well what do you say in the first few moments when you're calling somebody to make sure you got their attention? And then what do you say in the middle to make sure you cover the content? And then a lot of people forget about the closing. You know they just wrap it up with thank you or hey talk to you soon. And I think the closing, and we'll come back to that little bit in that transformation step, is really important part of that transport and this interaction into the results that we really want. So again don't forget the basics - like you know open, body, closing. Every communication, whether it be a phone call or a luncheon or a presentation, should have those three pieces.

**Peter:** [00:18:14] Exactly. As you're communicating this to the audience and myself, I'm sitting here reflecting on past, present, and potentially the future of those three. And I would say of of mine the weaker of the three is probably the closing.

**Patrick:** [00:18:33] And I think a lot of folks... first of all, I don't think a lot of people spend enough time thinking about these things. Because how many times have you heard this Peter? "Oh well you know I'd love to have you come on and help us but we really have to focus on the hard skills.

**Peter:** [00:18:47] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:18:47] Like what could be harder than communicating? Now you're a CPA right? I mean no offense but two plus two is four. That's pretty simple. We know the answer. When you go talk to somebody you can't always guarantee that person is going to be the same as a person who just spoke to yesterday. It's a very hard skill to be a good communicator.

**Peter:** [00:19:05] That's my responses, usually. We call communication the soft skills but the way I look at it it's really hard to master. We call them soft, but they're really hard to master.

**Patrick:** [00:19:19] Exactly.

**Peter:** [00:19:19] And when I put in that context people go "oh yeah I guess he's right."

**Patrick:** [00:19:24] So I try to remind people that anybody can talk but not everybody can communicate with impact, and that's the idea of having this process. So if we had a little more time I would go into some different tools we could use to craft the message because there are some simple things you can do that are very quick. You know when people want to do a presentation usually they think linear. So linear thinking is when you take out a piece of paper and you go OK what's the first thing I want to say, what's the second thing I want to say, what's the third thing I want to say? And if you've ever had to write something, Peter, and you're like me, you sit there you look at the blank screen or the blank piece of paper and you just feel like I don't know what to say. It's like I'm stuck because you're in linear thinking about.

**Peter:** [00:20:04] OK. I think I think I know where you're going with this please go on.

**Patrick:** [00:20:09] And if you really want to jumpstart your thought process I ask you to think non-linear, or as my book coach said: "Puke and polish."

**Peter:** [00:20:20] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:20:20] I love that phrase, right? I hope you're not having lunch right now. But the idea is just to puke it out and You could polish it later, but so many people want to polish it before they get it out there.

**Peter:** [00:20:33] Oh my gosh - yes they do. That's true. And actually that was something that you also taught me about writing and I have used this - this puke and polish - Pete just put it in Dragon Dictation. Just get it out of your body.

**Patrick:** [00:20:49] Right.

**Peter:** [00:20:50] And then once it's out of your body and onto paper or on the screen, now go in it and polish that thing.

**Patrick:** [00:20:56] Yes. So, again, because I'm an extrovert and you know extroverts like to speak before they think. So I found for me I pick up my phone or I just dictate a story or I dictate something and then I go back and look at it and I can actually fine tune it. Because it's faster for me to dictate a story than to sit there and try to type out the story. Now everybody's a little bit different but I think in general if you want to craft your message I encourage you to think non-linear and, if you want a quick tool, one of the tools I love to teach is called the mind map.

**Peter:** [00:21:30] Love the mind map.

**Patrick:** [00:21:32] Yeah and the mind map is a very simple tool we draw a circle. You put spokes - It looks like a wheel - and all you do is you say to yourself I'm going to give myself 90 seconds and all I'm going to do is write down the first thing that come to my mind when I think about my subject. So let's say for example our listener today has got a meeting with a prospect tomorrow, a potential client. They're going to do a mind map. What do I want to do at lunch tomorrow with this client? And I'm going to draw a circle and I'm going to start putting down thoughts. My first thought might be I'm going to ask questions. I just need to ask good questions. Second thing is I want to find a way to make it fun because I think if we build deeper relationships and have fun people will more likely want to work with us. I'm going to make sure that I have good manners because we're having lunch.

**Peter:** [00:22:14] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:22:14] So I'm going to listen to my mom and make sure that I don't hunch over my plate. But you just take 90 seconds and you do a little mind map, come up with some things you want to think about before you go and have this luncheon, and all of a sudden you'd be surprised at all the kind of thoughts you come up with. So I don't know if we can you know put a link on a site for the mind map, or you could just google mind map, but it's a great tool that I think gets you out of linear thinking and quickly helps you come up with some content.



**Peter:** [00:22:41] I was taught the same thing but just in a slightly different perspective... because I was doing a mind map, I was trying to fill out all the circles and dots and everything, and someone taught me this concept - I think it's what you're talking about - called clustering. It's putting something in the middle of the page, dump in your mind, get it all out, then go through and organize those things that are alike and try to figure out what maybe those topics are. Then it fits cleanly into a mind map and you can continue to explore even more.

**Patrick:** [00:23:11] Yeah well you're right. And once you've done the creativity part, which is just the puke part, then you polish. Then you say I like this idea and I guess I should cover this first and I should talk about this a little bit more. So it's a process, again another process, But the idea is so many people, when they want to craft content, they get stuck because they're so worried about being perfect or saying the right thing they can waste five minutes just looking at an empty screen. When you do a mind map, in two minutes, you'd have or five six ideas already.

**Peter:** [00:23:39] Exactly.

**Patrick:** [00:23:40] Don't work harder, work smarter when you're crafting your content. So intention right. Why am I having his communication. Message. What do I want to say or how do I want to say it or what method do I want to use to help me accomplish this intention? And then we jump into the P part, Or the person. And you know what? There is no one size fits all when it comes to people. You and I are totally different. People listening today are different. So a lot of times people again they do projection and they think oh well this is a fun, Extroverted person so we'll just tell lots of stories and you happened to be talking to analytical who is like oh my gosh not another story. So it's important when you're in the planning phase, IMP, the p is take a look at the people and I don't know if you're familiar with the different personality profiles. There's the Myers-Briggs on the DiSC and all these different approaches. You've done any of those, Peter?

**Peter:** [00:24:33] Yes I've done Meyers-Briggs. I was s-l-o-w.

**Patrick:** [00:24:36] [laughs]

**Peter:** [00:24:36] Actually, you put me through the DiSC model some some years ago, and I've done the Hermann Brain Dominance model, and it said I had a full brain, a whole brain, which freaked out my friends.

**Patrick:** [00:24:54] Yeah, but you know it doesn't matter what you use it just goes back to fundamentals. It goes back to Hippocrates, really. 400BC Hippocrates came up with four different styles. So when you start to think about communicating with impact, it's always important to remember to blend your style with the person you're communicating with. So if I'm talking to a very analytical person you know I know that they're going to want a little more detail, a little more data, a little more structure. But talking to a relational person they're going to want a little more fun, a little more story, a little more engagement. So don't just go out there and you know assume that it's really easy. I'll just say this or say that. Take the 30 seconds and think who am I talking with and what is a good way to engage them?

**Peter:** [00:25:32] Exactly. Know your audience.

**Patrick:** [00:25:34] Know your audience, right. And I think when we do presentations we do a lot of that audience analysis. But I'm not always sure what we're having a conversation we spent that extra couple of minutes thinking about that person who I'm going to talk to. I love, if you have a business card right now, I'd like you to take it out and I want to take a look at your title and just scratch out your title and write down this title: problem solver. Because everybody I think, particularly if you're in business or an entrepreneur, you are really a problem solver. So your job is to figure out how to help that person get better at whatever they need. Now the other piece of that is you're also figuring out what kind of style is that person and what's the best way for me to help that person by picking the right communication tool with the right style.

**Peter:** [00:26:20] And understanding the different styles and understanding the left hemisphere of the right hemisphere of the brain. And you know as I tell audiences, CPA audiences, when you deal with those who are sitting on the right side of the brain, the right hemisphere of the brain, Don't confuse them with facts because that's the last thing they really want to see as facts. And then I tell those who sit on the right, when you're talking to the left side, just as you said, you've got to give them points, bullet points, detail, spreadsheet, things like that in order to get them to have action on what you're trying to communicate.

**Patrick:** [00:26:52] Right. So again we can spend a lot of time on the personality style and that's the P step. But I'm just going to give our listeners today a couple of quick tips. So you know as a coach I like to coach people. So if you happen to be an extrovert today - you know somebody who is very outgoing, you like to speak before you think - I'm going to give you just a two-word little tip. I'd like you to jot it down if you're an extrovert. Here's your two words: Be quiet.

**Peter:** [00:27:16] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:27:16] If I was not so nice I'd say shut up, but I want to be nice and say be quiet. Because extroverts talk too much.

**Peter:** [00:27:22] Yeah yeah.

**Patrick:** [00:27:24] And luckily today it's all about us so we can talk a lot. It's OK. Because I know we're both extroverts to some degree. And if you happen to be an introvert - you know the person is a little quieter, you tend to think before you speak - I'm going to give you two words: Speak up. Because introverts you tend to wait a little too long before you say something. And so again just a simple little tool. If you take nothing else away from our podcast today, just remember if you're an extrovert, Be quiet; if you're an introvert, speak up. But those are just some things you want to think about yourself too. So when you're looking at the person, not just about the other person, it's about you and what can you do to be effective when you're communicating with other people.

**Peter:** [00:28:01] Perfect. Love it.

**Patrick:** [00:28:03] So that's phase one right. Quickly planning what's my intention, what am I going to say to achieve the intention, how am I going to adjust it to make sure it fits this person I've communicated with? The second half in a bottle is the ACT, or the activate. So how do you bring this message to life? You're still kind of planning and I'm not really communicating yet. I'm still thinking about communicating. So the Activate is basically how do I engage people? You

hear a lot today about engagement. I'm sure that's something that comes up quite a bit with your clients, in terms of engaging the customer.

**Peter:** [00:28:33] Bingo.

**Patrick:** [00:28:34] So I think it's important to think about engaging people both physically and mentally and emotionally. So there are three ways I like you to think about engaging people. Because everybody wants to be a part of the problem or solution. So a lot of folks give a lot of lip service to engagement, but I'm not sure they really do it.

**Peter:** [00:28:56] OK.

**Patrick:** [00:28:57] So give me an example. When you talk about engagement, what comes to your mind?

**Peter:** [00:29:04] Asking questions.

**Patrick:** [00:29:05] OK. Exactly. That's one way to engage people. Now if you noticed, Peter, I just modeled for you how I was engaging you. Because I brought you into the conversation.

**Peter:** [00:29:15] Bingo.

**Patrick:** [00:29:16] Yeah. So again you're an extrovert. You're going to be careful that you don't do all the talking. If you're an introvert, You got to be careful you don't let them do all the talking. So you want to be engaged. Go back to your personality style. But when it comes to today's listeners, I think most people today are just very impatient. Nobody wants to be lectured to. Nobody wants to just sit there and have someone talk to them. So I got a little rule of thumb: every three to five minutes you want to be engaging the receiver in some way, physically, mentally, or emotionally. Every three to five minutes. So you do that in a lot of ways. Right you do that by asking questions. You do that by nonverbally. On the phone It's great to be doing a little bit of that uh huh, Oh OK, Wow. That's engaging. Because they know you're still there. Stories are a great way to engage your customers. I tell all my coaching clients in the business development - I think we talk about this also Peter - You need to have some success stories so that you can share what's been working. So when a customer talks about well I'm kind of curious do you work with anybody in health care? Funny you should ask. We just had a client last week we were talking with about... and you tell a mini, two-minute success story. That's another way to engage people. So activating the message is really critical. So as you're thinking about creating this great impact you know you want to make sure that you're thinking about how do you gauge those folks.

**Peter:** [00:30:40] Can I ask a question?

**Patrick:** [00:30:41] Yes.

**Peter:** [00:30:42] Because you've engaged me in this conversation, and in order to have that engagement - that two-way communication... so I'm going to bring a little bit of improv in here because, in improv, I think one of the key components of it is listening to understand versus listening to respond. If we went Old school, we used to call it active listening.

**Patrick:** [00:31:06] Yes.

**Peter:** [00:31:07] I think that's a big part of that engagement because, one, you know you have a dialogue and, two, you know that you're having this conversation that you're present and you're not being distracted or you're not bringing your agenda and forcing it on somebody. I think that's a big piece of this communication model, as it relates to activate. Is that correct or am I off base here?

**Patrick:** [00:31:30] You're right on target. And again you want to be engaged yourself, And you also want to make sure you keep that other person engaged. And people, as you know Peter, we think about listening and we usually to think about listen to what they're saying. Obviously. But you also want to listen to what they are doing and what they're not saying and how they're saying it because all of those come together. As you always know, there are three parts to your message: your words, your voice, and your nonverbal, and a lot of people think that you know words are really critical. I have what I call the Donadio theory of communication. And I basically came up with this theory that... I don't know what the studies show. There's been a lot of studies out there - you've probably heard about the Moravians study - you know 7-38-55. Well that's not really applicable to regular communication. So I came up with that Donadio rule of thirds - your CPA clients will love this - Let's just take 100% of the message and divide it into thirds. And so you got 33 and a third for words, voice, and non-verbal. If you just did that right. I don't have any research. But if you just did it simply. Well think about it. You only have a third of your message in words then. Both studies show it's less than that, but I'll just say it's a third. But how many times, when we're looking or communicating, do we focus on the words when only a third of your message is going to be the words?

**Peter:** [00:32:47] Right. So it's much more visual.

**Patrick:** [00:32:49] Yes. So when you're communicating again thinking about you know your facial expression, you're nonverbal. Good morning. Good morning.

**Peter:** [00:32:58] Morning.

**Patrick:** [00:32:59] Yes. You just change the tone. So many people would... you ever call up somebody on the phone and you're like oh did I wake you? It's like it's 2 in the afternoon because they just don't have any energy.

**Peter:** [00:33:13] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:33:14] And that is a part of your brand. So when you're engaging others you want to make sure you engage them both physically, mentally, and emotionally.

**Peter:** [00:33:21] And every time I have this conversation it takes me to the State Farm commercials where they have the words, and they have it in one scenario and then they do it again in the complete opposite, like the girl gets the car for the first time.

**Patrick:** [00:33:35] Yes. I love that commercial.

**Peter:** [00:33:37] And then you know the guy walks out and his car has been been stripped apart and they use the using the same words but in a different context. I just I think that's brilliant.

**Patrick:** [00:33:46] I love it. That's a great commercial. I hope you haven't seen it. Just google that. That's a really good example of just changing the words and changing the message. So you want to activate you know the receiver, you want to ask good questions, you want to tell stories. You know if you happen to be in the financial services arena, graphs are a great way to engage people. Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words. I hate to be cliché-ish, but that's also a way to engage people - visually getting them to see that. But don't overwhelm them like you see with some of these folks who have PowerPoint slides and they say now I know you can't read this, and I'm thinking then why are you putting it up there.

**Peter:** [00:34:21] Bingo.

**Patrick:** [00:34:22] Yeah. So you know just be mindful that you want to every three to five minutes making sure you're engaging that other person in the conversation. That's why it's called a conversation.

**Peter:** [00:34:34] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:34:34] It's two people communicating. So that's the Activate part. You've got an intention. You crafted the message to reach the intention. You adapted to the person. Now how do you make sure that you engage people in the process? That's the activate. And the C is how do you clarify? Because a lot of times what you think they receive isn't exactly what they got. So there is a thing called selective perception. You've heard of selective perception?

**Peter:** [00:35:00] I have to say no. It doesn't ring a bell.

**Patrick:** [00:35:03] Well selective perception is where the meaning of the message comes from the receiver not the sender. So you selectively perceive what you want to hear. So if I happen to say dog, what comes to your mind Peter when I say dogs?

**Peter:** [00:35:20] Labrador.

**Patrick:** [00:35:21] OK. Well actually I'm hungry. It's time for lunch.

**Peter:** [00:35:25] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:35:25] But the point is I say the word dog, who puts the meaning of the message? The receiver.

**Peter:** [00:35:30] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:35:31] So we're communicating so many times we forget that we really don't have that much control. Really the person that controls the message meaning is the receiver. So you can't make an assumption just because I've done a great job communicating that that person got exactly what I wanted them to get.

**Peter:** [00:35:46] So if I said the word bank what do you think of?

**Patrick:** [00:35:49] Money.

**Peter:** [00:35:50] I think I'm going down to the river and fishing off the bank.

**Patrick:** [00:35:55] [laughs] Well that's cause you're a CPA and you don't care about money.

**Peter:** [00:36:00] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:36:00] So a lot of times, again, you just want to check for understanding. You want to just ask a different kind of question. You know you might ask what I call... like a couple of quick tips: One would be what I call re-state. So if somebody says bank you might say "do you mean the bank on the corner of Broad and high?" No I'm talking about fishing. Have you been out to fish at the bank? So you say back to them what they said and you ask and make sure it's the same thing. If I said you we're start having bi-weekly podcasts. How often would we be meeting?

**Peter:** [00:36:37] Every two weeks.

**Patrick:** [00:36:38] Yes. I looked it up. Biweekly means twice a week or every two weeks. It means both. It depends on how you use it. So I'm here twice this week and you don't show up - I'm all ticked off because Peter said we're going to do bi weekly podcast. Again, The meaning of the message comes from the receiver. Don't just assume because I said it that we both get it.

**Peter:** [00:36:58] Great example. Great example.

**Patrick:** [00:37:01] And yeah that's the big challenge, again, with e-mail. Because when you send that e-mail, there's nobody there to clarify. Now if you have a conversation and I you say bank and I say this and you say that and go oh no. If you sent me an e-mail that said let's meet at the bank, I'm going to the bank. You're going to the bank. We're going to two different banks.

**Peter:** [00:37:18] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:37:18] So be very careful when you're using e-mail to remember that, even though you think you communicated effectively, there's a good chance they didn't get what you thought they were going to get. I give you like a couple... in the workshop I always share somebody classified advertisements where people write things and I say now is this what they really meant? And here's what I have here. Here's an ad: "Man wanted to work in a dynamite factory. Must be willing to travel.

**Peter:** [00:37:44] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:37:44] That sounds like a dangerous job to me because you get blown up and you know you're in Ohio and the next thing you know you're over in Parkersburg you get blown over there.

**Peter:** [00:37:51] Exactly.

**Patrick:** [00:37:52] Or here's another: "Dog for sale. Eats anything and is fond of children."

**Peter:** [00:37:58] [laughs]

**Patrick:** [00:37:59] Yeah. So any time you send something out in a linear way, like an e-mail or an ad, be mindful that the meaning of the message comes from the receiver. You may not necessarily be sending the same message that you think they're getting.

**Peter:** [00:38:11] Got it.

**Patrick:** [00:38:13] Then the last one out. Now wrap this up quickly with the T. As I said before you know I pretty much stopped there. Like well you know we both get it. We should be done right. Then I realized that so many people think communicating is an event because if we're done it's over. It's an event. But again going back to processes -communicating is a process. So many times it's not over just because we both got the same message. If you and I had an intention today that I want you to become my next client... just because you liked me and we both agreed that we might want to work together it doesn't mean we're done. We're not done till either you sign an agreement with me or you tell me you don't want to be a customer. So I realized that I needed to add to step in there, and that is transform. How do you transform this interaction or these words into the results we set for ourselves? And there are two types of transformations. There's an internal transformation and an external transformation. And again for the most part I always thought about external transformations right. A deadline, set another appointment. You know those are the kind of things that we all talk about to be more efficient about making sure things happen.

**Peter:** [00:39:17] OK.

**Patrick:** [00:39:18] So when I say internal transformation What do you think I mean by that Peter?

**Peter:** [00:39:22] Beliefs.

**Patrick:** [00:39:23] Yes. Oh you are so good. You must have had a great coach.

**Peter:** [00:39:27] I did [laughs].

**Patrick:** [00:39:30] I think a lot of times we don't think about what's getting in the way of this person actually becoming a customer.

**Peter:** [00:39:36] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:39:37] Is it something that they believe about me or my service? And so many times I think we don't explore that a little bit. So the internal transformation is how do I understand what they're thinking or what they think about, and then how do I shift that (if it's not the way I think that they might perceive me)? You know we all have a brand. Right. You, at the beginning of the podcast, kind of gave me my brand. You say oh you know I think of you as

being such a you know kind and helpful... that's my brand. You know whether I plan it or not that's my brand. And so many times we have brands in our customers mind that may not be the brand that's valuable. I don't know if any of you are listening but if you happen to offer more than one service sometimes your customer only sees you as one service provider. Like a lot of my customers only think of me as a coach because I only do coaching for them. And I have to kind of transform their process of how they think of me because I am a coach and I'm a speaker and I'm a trainer and I'm an author. So I've got to kind of help shift the way they see me and that's also part of that transformation - is that if I don't get to just get them to see me differently they're never going to want to hire me as a speaker because all they think of me as a coach.

**Peter:** [00:40:47] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:40:48] So that's the IMPACT process. You know it's a very complicated but very simple thing. I mean anybody could be a good communicator. It's very simple to do but sometimes hard to master.

**Peter:** [00:40:57] But you said there are two pieces in the transformation.

**Patrick:** [00:40:59] Internal transformation and external transformation.

**Peter:** [00:41:03] And what's that external piece?

**Patrick:** [00:41:05] Well the actual piece is what most of us think about. So after the end of our meeting "is it OK if I call you next week and see if you give me more details about what you think about the proposal?" So the external is what's happening to move that conversation along. The internal is what's happening inside that person that may be getting in the way. So they may come back next week and say yeah I've looked at it. I need a little more time. And the internal transformation is well I wonder why the more time. You know why? Because I haven't done a good job of showing them the value. So they believe that there's no value that that's why they need more time. But if I keep thinking OK then I'll call you two more weeks. I keep going external. OK I'll call you in two more weeks. You talk about it and get back to me. I'm never going to make the shift because it's not about the external - it's the internal part. So we need to be thinking about what's getting in the way of people moving towards action.

**Peter:** [00:41:55] OK so I want to explore this for second. So in essence you are saying perception is reality in the person's mind.

**Patrick:** [00:42:03] Yes.

**Peter:** [00:42:03] Whether it be right or wrong... So if I'm trying to get you to be a client and you already have this perception that might not be real there would be that hesitation there. How does one change that perception into the the new reality, or what it really is? Like you were saying that people think you as a coach, but if you came to an organization and said I could do a keynote, I could speak. "But Patrick only I only hear you as a coach." How do you change that?

**Patrick:** [00:42:35] Well let's do a little bit broader. For example if somebody believes that I am priced too high - it's an easier example I think for a lot of our listeners - OK your price is too



high. Well they may not come out and tell me that. And so they keep thinking the price is too high, well then I want to shift that. So that's a belief they have right. Well one of the ways to change a belief. First of all you need to be aware of what the beliefs are. So you got to make sure you're asking good questions to kind of figure out what's getting in the way. But if somebody said now your price is too high my response might be compared to what?

**Peter:** [00:43:07] Right.

**Patrick:** [00:43:08] And they might say well compared to XYZ company... so then I'm starting to figure out... Oh I see. So they think that what I offer is the same as X Y Z company. So I haven't done a good enough job explaining the value. So if you want to change people beliefs, first of all you need to find out what their beliefs are and then you can change beliefs sometimes with more information. You can change beliefs sometimes with you know a story or an example that could shift the way they might see something. You can change beliefs by not you changing them, but them changing themselves by asking them questions to get them to start thinking different. Does that make sense?

**Peter:** [00:43:46] That makes sense and makes me think of a a guy named Dan Swartwout, who's based out here in Columbus, Ohio. I interviewed him on an earlier podcast. He is a comedian and he was doing some corporate event or proposing some corporate event and the person who's proposing to said you want that much for an hour? And his response was classic. He said "No I want that much for the last 25 years."

**Patrick:** [00:44:11] Right.

**Peter:** [00:44:11] "Plus that hour," and changing that belief.

**Patrick:** [00:44:15] Yes. So again people will believe "Oh my gosh. You get that much by the hour." Well I always remind my clients because what I do now Peter when I set up my proposal is I just don't tell them how much it is. There are 10 bullets that tell them all the things that I do for that investment. See I don't even call it a fee because a fee gives them a belief that they're paying something. I call it an investment. See I'm already changing the belief by the language that I use. So here's the investment for my time with you. And here are the 10 things that that includes. So now they know there's a lot that's going on for that investment. That's an example of transformation.

**Peter:** [00:44:53] And I use that one all the time, especially when I'm more working with CPAs and stuff. Get rid of the word cost.

**Patrick:** [00:44:59] Yes.

**Peter:** [00:45:00] Where will this investment take this company? Where will this investment take my career? Where will this investment... And to that point it's a much broader way of communicating and it's what's in it for them.

**Patrick:** [00:45:16] Right. Now even though I kind of give you this process, IMPACT, in an order, you don't have to do it in this order. You can start out with thinking about their beliefs and you know you could shift in a different way. But I want to give people at least a little tool to

memorize the process. So now when you hear the word impact I'm hoping, Peter, you will know the six keys and it's easy to remember.

**Peter:** [00:45:38] I most certainly will. I'll begin to commit them to memory. But when I hear the word impact now I think of you. Patrick Donadio and the book that took only eight years to write.

**Patrick:** [00:45:51] [laughs] Yeah. And you know what, I don't even call it a book. I call it a leader's guide. Because it's really not a book - you know what it's almost like a workshop in a book and I really wrote it in a way that somebody would keep it on their desk and, if they're going to have a great big proposal meeting tomorrow, they'd walk through the book very quickly and take a look at the P chapter and think about different personalities or they go you know what I get at work on questions. They go to that clarify chapter and take a look at what they could do to be better at clarifying. So it's really a guide as opposed to your average book. It's just packed full of great resources, and I wrote a book that I would want to buy. I'm not a kind of story novel kind of guy. I'm the person who is like let's get to work I got stuff to do.

**Peter:** [00:46:28] So how can people find your book?

**Patrick:** [00:46:32] Well it's easy to find the book. It's actually at my web site PatrickDonadio.com. And the book is up there on the site underneath the store. It's available. Right now I don't have it on Amazon. Maybe eventually but mostly what I'm doing with my book is trying to just offer it to my client. It's not a book for the world. It's just a book for my clients who want to go deeper, or potential clients like maybe your listeners.

**Peter:** [00:46:57] OK. And I think maybe for my listeners I think it's a great resource as they begin to try to change that or transform into more of an impact communicator. I mean I'll be honest with you, Patrick, the tips that you gave today are priceless. I mean I appreciate you giving away so much information here and tips to help the audience become better communicators, so they can communicate with impact. Alone this takes them to another level. I think by actually reading your book, doing the things in book will take them to a completely whole new level that might start pulling people's socks away.

**Patrick:** [00:47:41] Yeah. Well I want people to be successful and to be happier and to get more clients and find more time to go to the bank... and go do some fishing.

**Peter:** [00:47:49] [laughs] I knew you were going to do that.

**Patrick:** [00:47:53] [laughs] That's the callback technique, right Peter?

**Peter:** [00:47:55] Exactly. Yeah.

**Patrick:** [00:47:58] Really it's been great talking about the process and I hope if you're listening today you think about, of the six keys, What's the one that you want to work on the most? You know maybe you're good at crafting a message and you're pretty good at adapting to different people, but you know what? I forget to take that 30 seconds and ask myself why am I having this conversation. Or I forget about the transformation internally because a lot of times I don't think about what people perceive or believe about me and I need to shift that because that's the way that they're going to want to come up or hire me. So if you listen to the six keys, which is

the one that stands out the most for you to work on? I hope that's what you're going to take with our call today.

**Peter:** [00:48:32] I think they will. And I think the one that of all of these, and because it's improv and and I think it's extremely important, is that listening one.

**Patrick:** [00:48:41] What did you say?

**Peter:** [00:48:43] Excuse me? You said what sir?

**Patrick:** [00:48:45] [laughs]

**Peter:** [00:48:46] It's the ability to be an active listener, or as I call we call it in improv: listening to understand. So Patrick would you play a little improv game with me real quick?

**Patrick:** [00:48:58] Sure... Is there a prize?

**Peter:** [00:48:59] Yes there is.

**Patrick:** [00:49:00] OK.

**Peter:** [00:49:01] The winner gets a copy of your book.

**Patrick:** [00:49:04] OK. I love it.

**Peter:** [00:49:05] And the game we're going to play is called last word spoken, and the essence around this is someone will say a sentence. And when they end that sentence the last word that is spoken becomes the first word in their next sentence.

**Patrick:** [00:49:21] OK.

**Peter:** [00:49:22] OK. I'm glad you enjoyed playing this game.

**Patrick:** [00:49:27] Game to me is something that is exciting, particularly when I win.

**Peter:** [00:49:32] Win - that's all I do is win win win no matter what.

**Patrick:** [00:49:37] What are you thinking about rapping in this particular venue? I think you should keep your day job.

**Peter:** [00:49:42] Job? I love my day job... and you're right, I should not be rapping.

**Patrick:** [00:49:47] Rapping, to me, is or... when it comes to wrapping I'm better gifts probably well than I am with singing. Now I could do a mean Frank Sinatra.

**Peter:** [00:49:57] Sinatra... I would like to hear you sing some Frank Sinatra.

**Patrick:** [00:50:02] All right well there is a charge for that, Peter.

**Peter:** [00:50:05] Peter says it's time to end this game.

**Patrick:** [00:50:08] I love it.

**Peter:** [00:50:09] So it's a fun game to play but it really helps in reinforcing the thought that we need to listen to the entire sentence because many of us, if not all of us, when someone's talking, we're two or three or four steps ahead. And by being two or three four steps ahead we're not really listening and we're not focused - we're distracted, and we could miss something.

**Patrick:** [00:50:33] Yes.

**Peter:** [00:50:33] And those who are active listeners actually parked their agenda, whatever they came to the table with, and listen to understand and ask questions and pursue. And the only way you can do that is to be completely focused on the conversation and listen to the last word spoken.

**Patrick:** [00:50:48] Yes. You know what it's always interesting to me Peter when I'm out there training or speaking, typically on the subject. I always asked the audience "how many of you had listening skills training?" You know usually it's like less than 15 percent of the folks raise their hands. Isn't it amazing? One of the most important skills we use every day and we've never had a class or a workshop on listening. So I agree with that hundred percent. If you're listening today, take some time to learn this skill. And it's a tough skill. I'll tell you why: because your brain operates at a different speed than your mouth. And studies show this. Right. You know the results?

**Peter:** [00:51:22] Yes.

**Patrick:** [00:51:23] We can think three times faster than we can speak, and it's really hard to be an active listener because our brains just jump around on a bunch of different things, and that's why this game is tough. You really have to focus and hone in. And listen for that last word, as well as think of what you want to say next. And sometimes you're thinking of what you want to say next and you don't get that last word and it's not working at all. You can't win the game.

**Peter:** [00:51:44] I think the one training class probably everybody has undertaken and it was that when we were children. What did your mother used to tell you? God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason.

**Patrick:** [00:51:57] Well my mother always said don't take two meatballs because you got to make sure everybody else gets one.

**Peter:** [00:52:02] [laughs] Well and you are you are very active on social media and on Facebook, and I love it when you're at your mother's house and you're live streaming her and her meatballs.

**Patrick:** [00:52:16] [laughs]

**Peter:** [00:52:16] And at the September NSA meeting, I would love for you to bring some of those meatballs to the meeting.

**Patrick:** [00:52:21] Yeah you're right Peter. You know I think it's really cool though. Some of the advice we get is so simple. You know what we all need to go back to the basics. It's the kind of things that been around forever - universal truths I call them. We're learning about the latest and greatest techniques and we forget about the simple things. And that's kind of what this process is - it is very simple. Go back to the simple things that you'd be surprised at kind of impact you'll make.

**Peter:** [00:52:43] And with that we'll leave on the impact word. And Patrick I can't thank you enough for spending time with me. I always learn when I'm in your presence and I appreciate that and my audience please go out. It'll be in the show notes: his website, how you can get to it. Go out and explore, but become better communicators and have an impact in every one of those communications. Patrick thank you so very much.

**Patrick:** [00:53:12] Peter my pleasure my friend and good luck to you and I enjoyed the podcast. Thank you for having any time.

**Peter:** [00:53:19] Any time.

[music]

**Peter:** [00:53:19] I would like to thank Patrick again for being a guest today and sharing key points on his book communicating with impact. Remember to think about the six steps of impact and which of the 6 is your weakness. Start working on that today. Patrick has given me a PDF to put in the show notes to help you remember these six steps in IMPACT. Listen, learn, and learn. I have partnered with the Maryland Association of CPAs and the Business Learning Institute to bring [an exciting new learning opportunity for accounting professionals to earn CPE credits](#). You can earn up to one CPE credit for each completed podcast episode purchased for only \$29 through the American Association of CPAs and the Business Learning Institute [self-study website](#). The podcast episodes are mobile friendly. Open your browser on your smartphone, tablet, or computer, Go to the MACPA and BLI self-study account, and listen to an episode. Take the review and final exam while you're working out or after listening to an episode on your commute to and from work - It's that easy! While all Improv is no Joke podcasts are available on my website, only those purchased through the MACPA and BLI self-study Web site are eligible for CPE credit. You can get detailed instructions by visiting my website at [www.PeterMargaritis.com](http://www.PeterMargaritis.com) and clicking on the graphic "Improv is no Joke for CPE credit" on my home page. I hope you enjoy this exciting and flexible new way of earning CPE credit. Remember you can subscribe to my podcast on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#), and [Google Play](#). If you'd like to purchase an autographed copy of my book *Improv is no Joke: Using Improvisation to Create Positive Results in Leadership and Life*, for \$14.99 with free shipping, please go to my website, [PeterMargaritis.com](http://PeterMargaritis.com), and you'll see the graphic on the homepage to purchase my book. Please allow 14 days for shipping. You can also follow me on social media. You can find me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#). In episode 59, I interview Allison Estep, who's a former creative services associate at the Indiana Society of CPAs. However she's also studied improv for eight years at Second City in Chicago and I'm so looking forward to this interview.

Thank you again for listening and remember to use the principles of improvisation, along with communicating with IMPACT, to help you become a stronger leader.

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