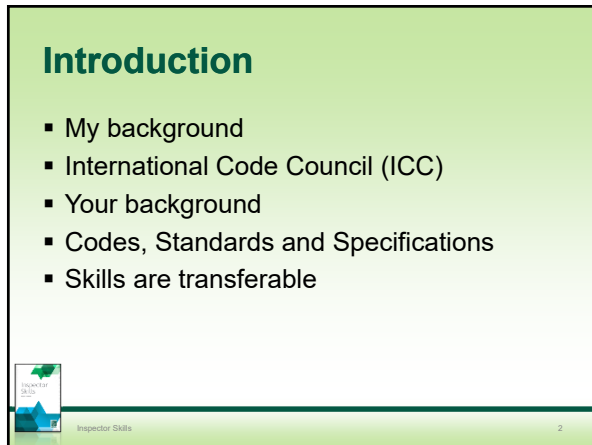


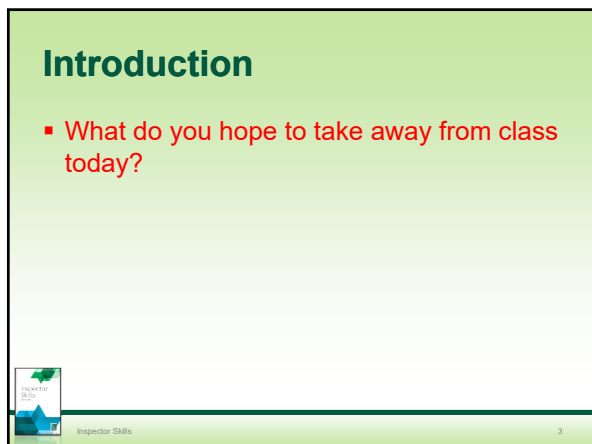
Inspector Skills



1



2




3

Inspector Skills

Inspector Skills

- What does the term “inspector skills” mean to you?
- Which one is the most important?




Inspector Skills 4

4

Definitions

Hard Skills:
Specific, teachable abilities that can be defined, observed, quantified and measured. For an inspector, these are the technical skills required to perform the job.




Inspector Skills 5

5

Definitions

- **Soft Skills**
 - Personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that enhance an individual's interactions and job performance.
- In our list of inspector skills, which are soft skills?




Inspector Skills 6

6

Inspector Skills

Inspector Skills – Purpose

- To raise awareness of the importance of soft skills
- Provide guidance on recognizing and improving soft skills
- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Identify some pitfalls



Inspector Skills 7

7

Job Description

- Employers recognize importance of soft skills
 - Interaction with public
 - Provide service to the public
- **Are any soft skills listed in your job description?**
 - Customer service
 - Communication



Inspector Skills 8

8

Cedar Rapids Gazette - October 19, 2014




Inspector Skills 9

9

Inspector Skills

Foundation

- Solid technical knowledge
 - Construction methods and materials
 - Code provisions
- The codes serve as the basis for the decisions and actions of the inspector.




Inspector Skills 10

10

Soft Skills

- Equally important to hard skills
- Elevate inspector from good to excellent
- Accomplish goal of safe buildings
 - Public acceptance of department mission
 - Inspections benefit community
- Success depends on buy-in from the public. (How can we get public “Buy-In”?)



Inspector Skills 11

11

Support from Jurisdiction

- Builds confidence in decision making
- Inspector is able to work independently
- Signals the inspector’s work is
 - Worthwhile
 - Beneficial to the community




Inspector Skills 12

12

Inspector Skills

Support from

- Managers
- Director
- City manager/ County Manager
- Elected officials




Inspector Skills 13

13

Methods of Support

- Training
- Staff meetings
- Mentoring
- Recognition
- “Engaging” work
- Incentives




Inspector Skills 14

14

Principles of Code Administration

- Code Department is charged with five (5) broad functions- Chapter 1:
 - 1) Take permits
 - 2) Review- interpret, evaluate alt's.
 - 3) Inspections
 - 4) Appeal process
 - 5) Issue COO's, COC's




Inspector Skills 15

15

Inspector Skills

Principles of Code Administration

- Chapter 1
 - Minimum requirements
 - Interpretation
 - Alternatives




Inspector Skills 16

16

Minimum Requirements

- Intent
- Consensus
- Balance
- Practical limits
 - Feasibility
 - Affordability




Inspector Skills 17

17

Interpretation

- Responsibility and authority
- Performance provisions
- Multiple solutions
- Conflicts
- Meaning and intent




Inspector Skills 18

18

Inspector Skills

Interpretation (Continued)

- Interpretation and applying intent requires developing skills in:
 - Critical thinking
 - Independent decision making
 - Problem solving




Inspector Skills 19

19

Alternatives

- Flexibility in codes
- Obligation to approve alternatives
- Open mind on new technology and different methods
 - (ICC ESR- Inspector Skills Appendix A, pg. 145)



Inspector Skills 20

20

Alternatives



Inspector Skills 21

21

Inspector Skills

Approaches to Inspection




Inspector Skills 22

22

Approach to Inspection

- Inspector's
 - Attitude
 - Behavior
 - Methods
 - Actions
- Profound effect on the outcome




Inspector Skills 23

23

Attitude

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

– Winston Churchill




Inspector Skills 24

24

Inspector Skills

Attitude (continued)

- Positive approach
- Respect, courtesy and diplomacy
- Raise bar of professionalism
- Improve image of inspector
- Makes life easier all around




Inspector Skills 25

25

ATTITUDE

- “Our Attitude governs our thoughts...
- Which controls our actions...
- Which becomes our habits...
- Which shapes our character...
- Which therefore determines our destiny!”




Inspector Skills 26

26

Roles of Inspector

- What roles do you see the inspector filling?



Inspector Skills 27

27

Inspector Skills

Roles of Inspector

- Ambassador
- Educator
- Facilitator




Inspector Skills 28

28

Ambassador

- Who is the first point of contact?
- At times, the Inspector is the first point of contact
- Inspector is an ambassador for the department
 - Gain public trust and support
 - Gain code compliance




Inspector Skills 29

29

Educator

- Skilled inspector is committed to education
- Outreach efforts of department
- Informational handouts
- Website
- Plan review
- At jobsite




Inspector Skills 30

30

Inspector Skills

Facilitator

Facilitate:
To make easier, to help bring about.




Inspector Skills 31

31

Facilitator (continued)

- Change public's perception
- Facilitator rather than regulator
- Resource rather than adversary
- Work to find solutions
- Beyond a simple duty of enforcing rigid rules



Inspector Skills 32

32

Public Trust and Acceptance

- Promotes adoption of codes
- Improves public safety




Inspector Skills 33

33

Inspector Skills

Decision Making



- Checklist?
 - Much more than a checklist
- Challenging and complex
- Within framework and spirit of the code
- Code is the basis for decisions
- Open mind



Inspector Skills 34

34

Perspective




Inspector Skills 35

35

Perspective

Flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Explores alternatives•Intent of the code•Meets minimum standards•Open mind	Boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none">•What is required?•Where does the code end?•Don't ask for more than code requires
Precision <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Level of precision varies•Not an exact science	Consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Consistent and fair

Problem or Issue



Inspector Skills 36


36

Inspector Skills

Perspective

Flexibility	Boundaries
Precision	Consistency

Is 3.75 inches close enough for a house number? The code says ≥ 4 inches.




Inspector Skills 37

37

Perspective

Flexibility	Boundaries
Precision	Consistency

How do you measure fire separation distance from a lot line?




Inspector Skills 38

38

Consistency

- Consistency and fairness in the application of the code helps to
 - build credibility
 - gain the respect and trust of the public
- Policies and procedures
- Public information



Inspector Skills 39

39


Inspector Skills

Finding Solutions

- Problem-solving approach
- Help people navigate hurdles
- Department seen as a resource

There's no use talking about the problem unless you talk about the solution.

—Betty Williams




Inspector Skills 40

40

Time Management Tips

- Turnoff email notification
- Handling paperwork
- Identify roadblocks
 - Procrastination
 - Indecision
 - Processes



Inspector Skills 41

41

Professionalism

- Not easily defined
- Appearance is one small part
 - Varies based
 - role and duties
 - local expectations
 - Not offensive to public
 - (Do you see this as location dependent?)



Inspector Skills 42

42

Inspector Skills

First Impressions

- “7/11” rule
 - 1) Cleanliness 2) Attractiveness 3) Credible
 - 4) Knowledgeable 5) Responsive 6) Friendly
 - 7) Helpful 8) Empathetic 9) Courteous
 - 10) Confident 11) Professional
- a) Like b) Don't like c) Don't trust



Inspector Skills 43

43

Professionalism (continued)


- Specialized expertise
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Respectfulness
- Effective communication
- Reliability
- Confidence
- Fairness
- Responsibility
- Punctuality
- Team-oriented attitude
- Appropriate appearance



Inspector Skills 44

44

Getting Along



Inspector Skills 45

45


Inspector Skills

Skills for Getting Along

- Respectful
- Helpful
- Open minded
- Fair
- Empathetic

Empathy: The ability to understand and be sensitive to another person's feelings on a personal level.

Sympathy: To understand another's perspective




Inspector Skills 46

46

Fairness

Due process: Fairness; to respect all of the legal rights that are owed to a person; a constitutional guarantee that all legal proceedings will be fair and that one will be given notice of the proceedings and an opportunity to be heard.




Inspector Skills 47

47

Barriers to Getting Along

- Most inspectors get it right
- May unintentionally create barriers
 - What we say
 - How we say it
 - Actions at jobsite




Inspector Skills 48

48

Inspector Skills

Rules without reason

Remarks to avoid	I don't write the code, I just enforce it.
Negative message sent	I'm not very interested in learning the reasons for code requirements.
Correct action	Support the code and give reasons for the rules. Emphasize minimum requirements.




Inspector Skills 49

49

Correction without cause

Remarks to avoid	That's the way we like to see it done.
Negative message sent	We make up rules based on our personal preferences because we think it's better that way.
Correct action	Require only what the code requires. Avoid the perception of enforcing rules based on personal preferences.




Inspector Skills 50

50

Authoritative

Remarks to avoid	There's a new sheriff in town. It's my way or the highway. Not in my town.
Negative message sent	I'm in charge, I decide ... just do what I say. Don't cross me or there will be consequences.
Correct action	Encourage a collaborative working relationship Avoid "I," "me" or "my". Be respectful.




Inspector Skills 51

51

Inspector Skills

Fortune telling

Remarks to avoid	The code allows it and you can try it that way, but I'm telling you now that it will fail inspection.
Negative message sent	You're not skilled enough to pull this off ...I'm going to fail inspection. Then, you will have to do it my way.
Correct action	Remain objective - stick to facts - what the code says. Give instructions in a positive and helpful way.



Inspector Skills 52

52

Communication



Inspector Skills 53

53

Communication

- Marcie's grocery list
 - *hamb.*
 - *tapioca*
 - *wh. cr.*



Inspector Skills 54

54

Inspector Skills

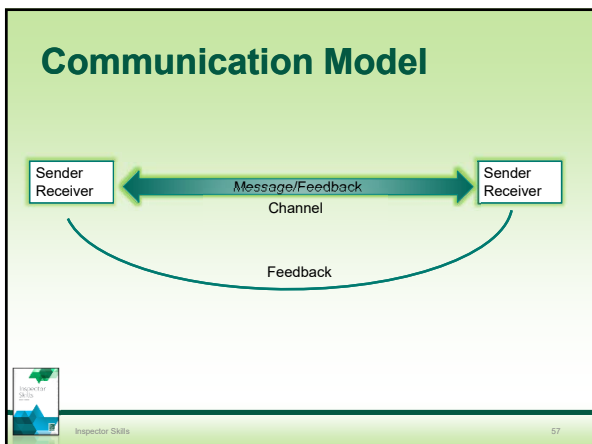


55

Communication

- Written
- Verbal
- Non-verbal (55% of the message)
- Delivering bad news

56



57

Inspector Skills

Choosing the Right Channel

- The sensitivity & emotional content of the subject
- How easy it is to communicate details
- The receiver's preferences
- Time constraints
- The need to ask and answer questions



Inspector Skills

58

58

Plan Your Communication

- Understand your objective
- Understand your audience
- Plan what you want to say



Inspector Skills

59

59

Creating a Clear Message

- Understand what you need & want to say
- Anticipate the other person's reaction
- Choose words that allow the other person to really hear what you're saying



Inspector Skills

60

60

Inspector Skills

Four truisms of communications

- 1) Unavoidable (necessary)
- 2) Can't take it back
- 3) Has a memory
- 4) May not go your way




Inspector Skills 61

61

Communication

- Telephone
- Written
- E-mail
- In Person (Face-to Face)



Inspector Skills 62

62

Telephone Communication Tips

- Answering
- Making
- Voicemail



Inspector Skills 63

63

Inspector Skills

Telephone Communication Tips

- Answering Phone
 - Friendly, cheerful, professional
 - Focus on caller
 - Patient and helpful
 - Clear and concise
 - Verify message received correctly




Inspector Skills 64

64

Telephone Communication Tips

- Making a call
 - Prepare
 - File and plans available
 - Introduce yourself
 - Reason for call
 - Stay on topic and be brief




Inspector Skills 65

65

Telephone Communication Tips

- Voicemail
 - Short and to the point
 - Speak slowly and clearly
 - Introduce yourself
 - Briefly describe purpose
 - Give phone number and repeat slowly



Inspector Skills 66

66

Inspector Skills

Communication

- Telephone
- **Written**
- E-mail
- In Person (Face-to Face)




Inspector Skills 67

67

Types of Written Communication

- Inspection approval
- Deficiency or correction notices
- File notes
- Documentation
- Letter writing
 - form letters
 - templates




Inspector Skills 68

68

Written Communication Tips

- Point of message stated clearly and briefly
- Clear direction for required actions
- Written as if they might be read by anyone
 - Elected official
 - Judge
 - Manager
 - Reporter
 - Contractor
 - Public




Inspector Skills 69

69

Inspector Skills

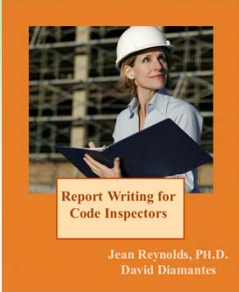
Written Communication

- Respectful tone
- Helpful intent
- Clear and concise message



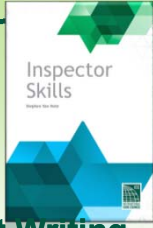
Inspector Skills 70

70



Report Writing for Code Inspectors

Jean Reynolds, Ph.D.
David Diamantes




Inspector Skills

Report Writing for Code Inspectors

71

71

The Stages of Report Writing



- Preparation
- Drafting
- Revising



Report Writing for Code Officials 72

72

Inspector Skills

What Goes into a Good Report?

- All reports share some common features, and all require the same qualities:
 - Accuracy, brevity, and completeness
 - Objectivity
 - A clear description of the unsafe condition or violation
 - The required corrective action(s)
 - Elements such as the right to appeal, code or ordinance section, reinspection date or other information required by the code or by law.



Report Writing for Code Officials

73

73

important points to remember when you write a report:

1. Use names.
2. Be efficient.
3. Don't write statements that might be challenged.
4. Be complete.
5. Don't generalize.
6. Don't use industry slang or acronyms that may be misinterpreted.
7. Write like the professional you are.



Report Writing for Code Officials

74

74

Effective Word Choices

1. Sarah Wilson advised me that she left for work at 7:45 that morning.
 - Is this correct?



Report Writing for Code Officials


75

75

Inspector Skills

Effective Word Choices

1. Sarah Wilson advised me that she left for work at 7:45 that morning.
 - *She told you. Save advise for actual advice.*
 - *Does **NOT** meet the requirements*




Report Writing for Code Officials 76

76

Effective Word Choices

2. A leaking kitchen sink was found when Ms. Wright's apartment was inspected by this inspector.
 - *Is this correct?*




Report Writing for Code Officials 77

77

Effective Words Choices

- A leaking kitchen sink was found when Ms. Wright's apartment was inspected by this inspector.
 - *During my inspection of Ms. Wright's apartment I found the kitchen sink was leaking.*
 - *"I" and "me" are fine.*
 - *This isn't Dragnet!*
- *Does **NOT** meet the requirements*



Report Writing for Code Officials 78


78

Inspector Skills

Effective Word Choices

5. Sawyer cursed and swore when he saw my identification.

- Is this correct?



Report Writing for Code Officials 79


79

Effective Word Choices

5. Sawyer cursed and swore when he saw my identification.

- Curse means to call down evil powers.
- Swear means to take an oath.
- Write exactly what he said.
- It's one of the few times you can write obscenities and not get in trouble!

- Does **NOT** meet the requirements




Report Writing for Code Officials 80

80

Inspection Notices

- Don't be a critic

Incorrect	Correct
This is the worst framing job I've seen in 20 years! Need lots of truss bracing. Rest of framing approved—reluctantly.	Framing corrections required: Lateral bracing on trusses ... Call for reinspection before covering.



Inspector Skills 81


81

Inspector Skills

Inspection Notices

- Stick to the code requirements:

Incorrect	Correct
I can't approve this installation of It might meet the code now, but it's not in my best interest to approve it. I'm always going to err on the side of safety.	The ... meets the minimum clearance requirements and is approved.




Inspector Skills 82

82

Inspection Notices

- Give clear instructions for required actions and follow-up:

Incorrect	Correct
Framing violations: Nail plates for plumbing Fireblocking Exterior wall blocking	Framing corrections—install the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">List Okay to insulate, but leave these areas visible for reinspection. Please call for inspection.




Inspector Skills 83

83

Communication

- Telephone
- Written
- E-mail**
- In Person (Face-to Face)




Inspector Skills 84

84

Inspector Skills

E-mail Tips

- Never assume privacy exists in e-mail
- Never say in an e-mail what you wouldn't say in person
- Capture the e-mail's objective in the subject line




Inspector Skills 85

85

E-mail Tips (continued)

- Fill in the "To:" box at the end (prevent sending before you're ready)
- Don't always rely on e-mail:
 - Meet face to face or
 - Call on the phone when appropriate.




Inspector Skills 86

86

E-mail Tips (continued)

- Turnoff e-mail notification
- Review/respond to e-mail 1 or 2x daily
- Don't handle e-mail multiple times
- Use flags (reminders)



Inspector Skills 87

87

Inspector Skills

Advantages to E-mail

- Documentation for records
- Ability to distribute message to several people at once (only if necessary)
- Recipient can read and respond when convenient
- Reinforces previous verbal instructions
- Reference for the recipient in following instructions



Inspector Skills

88

88

Things to Avoid

- All capital letters
- All small case letters
- Emoticons (smiley faces)
- Text colors
- Distracting fonts
- Bold or underline text
- Backgrounds (stationary)



Inspector Skills

89

89

Written Communication Tips

Shouting, condescending

EGRESS WINDOWS ARE REQUIRED IN **ALL** BASEMENTS, **NOT** JUST BASEMENTS WITH HABITABLE SPACE!!!!!!

Respectful, sticks to facts and reason.

... The code changed several years ago to require at least one emergency escape and rescue opening in every basement to improve the level of safety ...



Inspector Skills


90

90

Inspector Skills

Written Communication Tips

Unprofessional	Professional, courteous
Jason - not receiving truss dwg so I can check trusses btw not at job eitehr :-(r u sending over soon???? :-)	This is just a reminder that we haven't received the truss design drawings yet. Please have the supplier send us a set so we can check ... and not hold you up.




Inspector Skills 91

91

Written Communication Tips

Critical, judgmental, imposing personal preference, fortune telling.	Accurate, respectful, helpful.
Yes, the code says you can do it that way, but everybody gets this wrong and so will you. ...	You are correct. Please see the attached information for the specific requirement and example of a correct installation. Let me know if you have any questions.




Inspector Skills 92

92

Communication

- Telephone
- Written
- E-mail
- In Person (Face-to Face)



Inspector Skills 93

93

Inspector Skills

Receiving the Message

- Look at the person
- Pay attention to his or her body language
- Nod and smile to acknowledge points
- Allow the person to speak
- Don't interrupt



Inspector Skills

94

94

Reasons for not Listening

- Already made up mind
- Hearing only what you want to hear
- Jumping to conclusions
- Lack of interest
- Being angry, upset, or worried about other things



Inspector Skills

95

95

Body Language- Informal Feedback

- Defensiveness
- Agreement
- Comprehension (or lack of understanding)
- Level of interest
- Level of engagement with the message
- Truthfulness

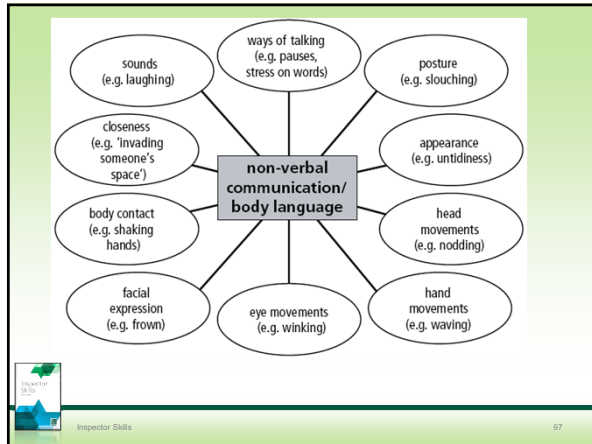


Inspector Skills

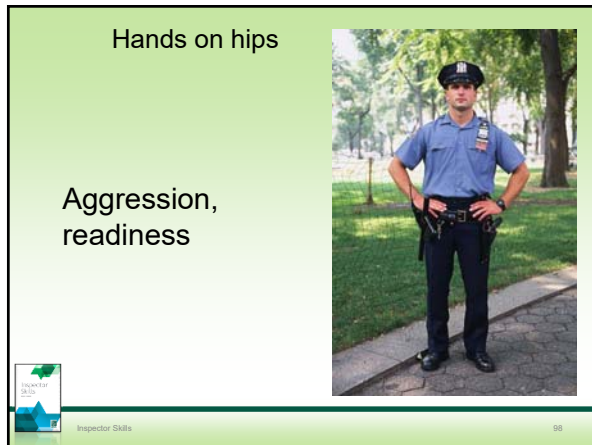
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96

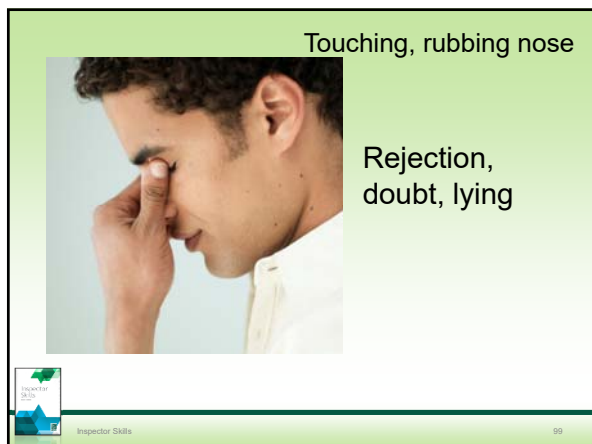
Inspector Skills



97



98




99

Inspector Skills

Rubbing with eyes closed

Negative evaluation



Inspector Skills 100

100

Hands clasp behind head/back


Anger, frustration, apprehension



Inspector Skills 101

101

Head resting on hand



Boredom

Inspector Skills 102

102

Inspector Skills

Biting nails


Insecurity, nervousness




Inspector Skills 103

103

Smiling, expressive, open arms




Excited




Inspector Skills 104

104

Arms crossed on chest



Defensiveness




Inspector Skills 105

105

Inspector Skills

The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said.

Peter Drucker




Inspector Skills 106

106

Formal Feedback

- Ask questions
- Repeat in your own words




Inspector Skills 107

107

Difficult Conversations

- Giving bad news
 - Empathy
- Difficult people
 - Exception rather than the rule




Inspector Skills 108

108

Inspector Skills

Difficult Conversations

- Prepare
 - Gather your thoughts
 - Know what you want to say
 - How you want to open the conversation
- Begin and end on a positive note




Inspector Skills 109

109

Difficult Conversations

- Deliver focused and clear instruction
- Invite comment
- Listen
- Thank the customer for listening




Inspector Skills 110

110

Angry People

- Counting to 10
- ABC
 - Ask
 - Breathe
 - Choose



Inspector Skills 111


111

Inspector Skills

Avoid "I" and "You"

I want you to do this.

The code requires this.




Inspector Skills 112

112

Avoid "I" and "You"

You always do this. OR
You don't understand.

This department handout will be helpful in understanding the code requirements




Inspector Skills 113

113

Avoid "I" and "You"

Why didn't you do it this way? OR That's for you to figure out.

There are a number of ways that would satisfy the code requirements.



Inspector Skills 114

114

Inspector Skills

Communications Recap

- Plan your communication
- Create the message
- Choose the right channel
- Feedback
 - Body language
 - Questions




Inspector Skills 115

115

Communications Recap


- Difficult conversations
- Prepare, prepare, prepare
- Things to avoid
 - ie: email etiquette



Inspector Skills 116

116

Customer Service



Inspector Skills 117

117

Inspector Skills

Who are our Customers?

Associates Technicians
 Property owners

Installers Homebuilders

Designers Coworkers Contractors

Home owners Those in other departments



Inspector Skills 118

118

Customer Service

- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- Complaints
- Honesty



Inspector Skills 119

119

First Impressions

- **“7/11” rule**
 - 1) Cleanliness 2) Attractiveness 3) Credible
 - 4) Knowledgeable 5) Responsive 6) Friendly
 - 7) Helpful 8) Empathetic 9) Courteous
 - 10) Confident 11) Professional
- a) Like b) Don't like c) Don't trust



Inspector Skills 120

120

Inspector Skills

First Impressions

- Greet
- Identify yourself
- Have a positive attitude
- Be courteous and respectful
- Be cheerful and friendly



Inspector Skills 121

121

First Impressions

- Be helpful
- Be fair
- Keep an open mind
- Be punctual
- Smile




Inspector Skills 122

122

Customer Service

- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- Obstacles
- Complaints
- Dealing with difficult people




Inspector Skills 123

123

Inspector Skills

Expectations

- Accurate information
- Answers to inquiries
- Follow-up when promised
- Punctuality
- Courteous behavior




Inspector Skills 124

124

Meeting Customer's Expectations

- Be courteous and punctual
- Follow through
- Research
- Be accurate and honest
- Return phone calls and e-mails promptly
- Under-promise and over-deliver




Inspector Skills 125

125

Expectations

“Customers don't expect you to be perfect. They do expect you to fix things when they go wrong.”

Donald Porter, VP with British Airways



Inspector Skills 126

126

Inspector Skills

Customer Service

- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- Complaints
- Dealing with difficult people




Inspector Skills 127

127

Listening

- Listener is Listening 25% of the time.
- Listener is Thinking up a response 75%.

- Spoken words approx. 180 wpm
- Brain can process spoken words @ approx. 500 wpm
- Brain can visually process @ approx. 80,000 wpm



Inspector Skills 128


128

Choose Words Carefully

Avoid—I don't know.

Better—That's a good question. Let me check and get back to you.

Comment—It's OK to not know the answer, follow up by researching and communicating to the customer.



Inspector Skills 129

129


Inspector Skills

Choose Words Carefully

Avoid—You can't do that. You'll have to...

Better--There are a number of ways to accomplish this and meet the code requirements.

Comment—Keep an open mind, be flexible and look at alternatives or solutions. Make helpful suggestions



Inspector Skills 130


130

Choose Words Carefully

Avoid—NO!

Better--The code doesn't allow that because...but here is a suggestion.

Comment—Turn a negative into a positive




Inspector Skills 131

131

Choose Word Carefully

- Frequently
- Often
- Seldom
- Never



Inspector Skills 132

132

Inspector Skills

Customer Service

- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- **Complaints**
- Dealing with difficult people




Inspector Skills 133

133

Handling Complaints

- Listen
- Keep a good attitude
- Be open to suggestions
- Try to understand (put yourself in the customer's shoes)
- Restate what the customer said




Inspector Skills 134

134

Handling Complaints

- Avoid arguing
- Offer a resolution
- Know when further discussion will not be beneficial
- Document and follow up



Inspector Skills 135

135

Inspector Skills

Customer Service

- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- Obstacles
- Complaints
- Dealing with difficult people





Inspector Skills 136

136

Why are People Difficult?

- People
 - Are rushed – not enough time
 - Feel insecure
 - Feel angry
 - Have some need or interest
 - Are stressed




Inspector Skills 137

137

Conversations with Difficult People

DO	DON'T
Defuse	Escalate
Stay calm	Argue
Listen	Interrupt
Let them vent	Blame
Speak quietly	Raise your voice
Be objective	Criticize
Remain confident and positive	Take it personally



Inspector Skills 138

138

Inspector Skills

A Difficult Person can be

- Hostile-Aggressive
- Know-it-all
- “Yes” person
- Whiner
- Never say a word
- Indecisive staller
- “No” person





Inspector Skills 139

139

Hostile aka “The Tank”

- Bullies their way
- Belittles you
- Tries to convince you that you are doing a bad job
- “I pay your salary”




Inspector Skills 140

140

Dealing with “The Tank”

- If possible, get them to sit down
- Don’t back down
- Let them vent
- Identify the issue...the facts
- Explain the benefits of your point
- Allow aggressor to “save face”



Inspector Skills 141

141

Inspector Skills

The Know-It-All

- Controls people and events by dominating
- Tries to find flaws in everything




Inspector Skills 142

142

Dealing with the Know-It-All

- Know your facts....be prepared
- Listen carefully and paraphrase the main points
- Use questions to raise issues





Inspector Skills 143

143

Yes Person

- Answers "yes" to everything
- Seeks approval and avoids disapproval




Inspector Skills 144

144

Inspector Skills

Dealing with the Yes Person

- Work to get to the underlying issue
- Tell how much you value their opinion
- Listen for hidden messages




Inspector Skills 145

145

Whiner

- Avoids taking responsibility
- Wants sympathy
- Has negative view of the world
- If you ignore them, they increase protests




Inspector Skills 146

146

Dealing with the Whiner

- Don't respond if they are blaming you
- Make sure facts are correct
- Ask them to propose solutions




Inspector Skills 147

147

Inspector Skills

Never say a word aka “The Clam”

- Timid, uncomfortable and uncertain
- Wants to avoid conflict
- Feels angry because “the wrong decision was made”
- Some can't relate authentically




Inspector Skills 148

148

Dealing with the Clam

- Discuss non-threatening topics
- Ask open-ended questions
- Wait for a response.....calmly




Inspector Skills 149

149

No Person

- Able to defeat big ideas with a single syllable-----NO
- Deadly to morale



Inspector Skills 150

150

Inspector Skills

Dealing with the No Person

- Work to get to the underlying issues
- Find out the reason for disagreement
- Show the other side
- Show the benefits
- Find the common ground for “Yes” answers.



Inspector Skills

151

151

Most heard comments

- I've been doing it this way for years.
- Why don't they have to do that?
- You are not welcome on my land.
- You're just making me spend more money.
- I moved here because I didn't want rules.

- What comments have you heard?



Inspector Skills

152

152

Coping Techniques

- Don't take it personally
- Write down details of what annoys you
- Think about why it annoys you
- Which of your buttons does this person push
- Why do you respond to them the way you do?



Inspector Skills

153


153

Inspector Skills

Coping (continued)

- How would you like to respond
- Monitor yourself
- Give yourself positive feedback
- You are not going to change someone else
- Q-TIP!


OTHER WAYS?



Inspector Skills 154

154

Doing the Right Thing (Ethics)




Inspector Skills 155

155

Doing the Right Thing

Whenever you do a thing, act as if all the world were watching.

- Thomas Jefferson



Inspector Skills 156

156

Inspector Skills

Doing the Right Thing

- Job subject to public scrutiny
- Good inspectors welcome that scrutiny
- Embrace ethical principles of honesty and lawfulness
- To benefit society
- Apply rules fairly and objectively with no vested interest



Inspector Skills

157

157

Grabbing Headlines



Inspector Skills

158

158

Slander



Inspector Skills

159

159

Inspector Skills

Conflict of Interest

- Any situation where the inspector is in a position to benefit personally from a decision.
- Causes the public to lose trust in the objectivity and fairness of the inspector.
- Regulations must be applied consistently and equitably.



Inspector Skills

160

160

Ethical Decisions

- Butterfly Test
- Authority Test
- Public Scrutiny Test



Inspector Skills

161

161

What would you do?

You inspect what you consider to be poor quality work by a local contractor. You call the homeowner to report that there were an unusual number of deficiencies, that you've had problems with this contractor in the past and you just wanted the homeowner to be aware of some workmanship issues. Is that appropriate?



Inspector Skills

162

162

Inspector Skills

What would you do?

You discover a \$500 error in your paycheck, in your favor. Would you call it to payroll team's attention immediately or wait for payroll personnel to discover it?



Inspector Skills

163

163

What would you do?

You have a little side business unrelated to your position. You need copies made now and then so you use the copier at work. Is this ethical?



Inspector Skills

164

164

What would you do?

During a rental housing inspection you find violations. You give the building owner your personal business card and let them know that you do work on the side, to just call and you would be happy to fix the violations. Is there an issue?



Inspector Skills


165

165

Inspector Skills

Fact or Myth?

- The codes serve as the basis for the actions of the inspector.
- Inspection is following a checklist
- The general public enthusiastically values the work of inspectors




Inspector Skills 166

166

Fact or Myth?

- Success of a building department depends on buy-in from the public.
- The inspector is an ambassador for the building department in gaining the public trust.




Inspector Skills 167

167

Fact or Myth?

- Customer service does not apply to code enforcement.
- The success of an inspection can be measured by the number of violations identified.




Inspector Skills 168

168

Inspector Skills

Fact or Myth?

- Inspectors are educators.
- The inspector needs to make reasonable decisions in following the intent of the code.




Inspector Skills 169

169

Fact or Myth?

Soft skills are specific, teachable abilities that can be defined, observed, quantified and measured.

Soft Skills are personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that enhance an individual's interactions and job performance.



Inspector Skills 170

170

Thoughts?

- **DID WE COVER YOUR EXPECTATIONS?**
- Any items/ thoughts about the seminar?
- Thank you for your participation!
- (Go forth and be “skillfully” soft!)




Inspector Skills 171

171

Inspector Skills

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172

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173

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Inspector Skills 174

174
