

*Welcome to the*

# 2018 Annual Conference Educational Sessions

**Session: 7 C's for Inspectors**

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# *7 C's for Inspectors*

A skills guide for Building Safety Officials -  
2018

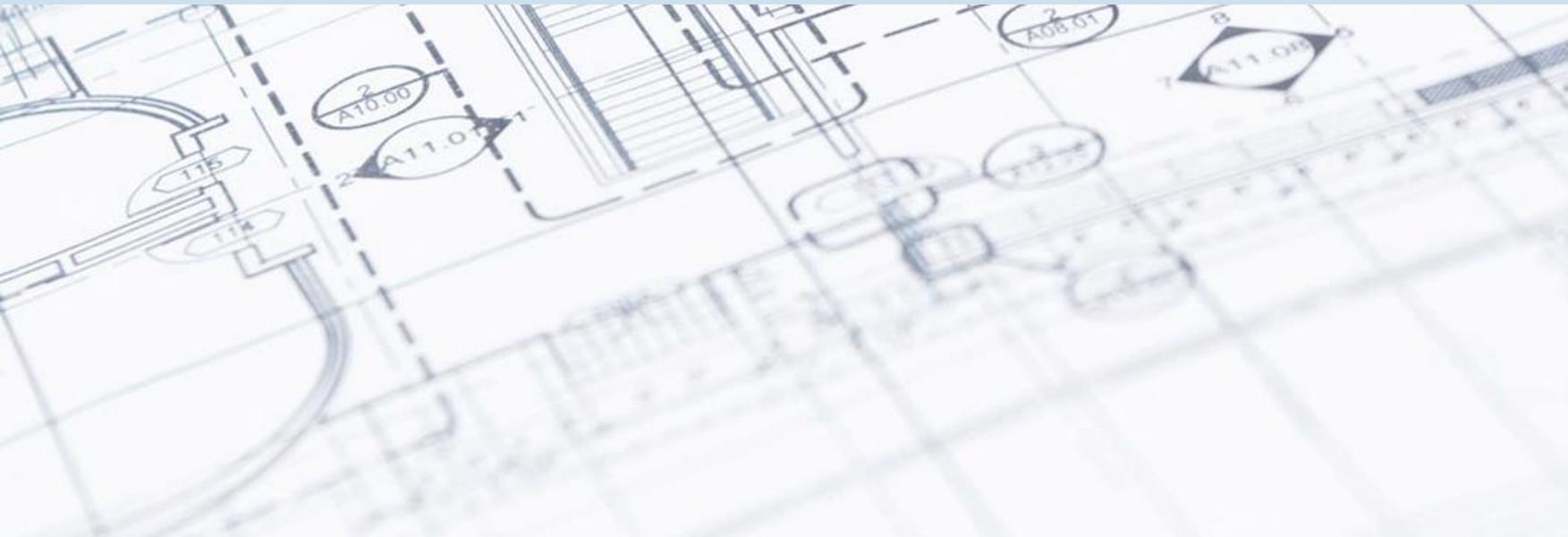
Authored by ICC



# INTRODUCTION

**This class was written for Building Safety Officials to;**

- Introduce and Reinforce Soft Skills
- Identify approaches to defuse complex problems.
- Provide Statutes to assist in understanding policies and appeals.
- We will structure the course around 7 “C’s “ to convey the concepts



# What Are the 7 C's?

**The 7 C's we set sail on are:**

- **Context**
- **Communication**
- **Consequences**
- **Consistency**
- **Competence**
- **Character**
- **Customer Service**



# Why Was This class Written?

This class was written as a resource for inspectors to respond to public attitudes toward Regulations and Regulators and responses to elected officials acting on behalf of constituents.



**INTRODUCTION**

# GOALS

**By the end of this class, the Building Safety Official will identify with;**

Approaches that are not taught as part of getting your certifications – referred to as “soft skills” that include;

- ✓ Tools to defuse problematic situations,
- ✓ A background to the General Statutes that will make policies and appeals easier to understand and explain, and
- ✓ Identify programs such as “Raise the Profile” to improve impression of the inspector.



## **One of the main goals of this course focuses on soft skills:**

**What are hard and soft skills?**

- **Hard Skills** are the specific, teachable abilities that can be defined, observed, quantified and measured. For a code official, these are the technical skills required to perform the job
- **Soft Skills** are the personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that enhance an individual's interactions and job performance.



**GOALS**

## Why are Soft Skills Important Now?

- Public opinions against rules and regulations - desire for
  - “less government”,
  - “less regulation”
  - “Cost” versus “Investment”
- Public apathy towards safety – until there is an accident
- The fact that “people” just do not know what CEO’s do - Elected officials and the public need to be educated about the value Code Enforcement Officers offer



*As part of the “Raise the Profile” program, Inspectors need to tell their story and promote value!*

**GOALS**



Where do Inspectors fit in the equation;

- Do inspectors blindly look at the text in the code book without consideration to the persons we are serving – hoping the public does what it says and goes away?
- Do inspectors cultivate a relationship, confirm the public understands the codes and work to a solution?



As the class begins, each individual needs to step outside of their role. Identify what roles are fulfilled and how each interaction is received -

**WHAT .....IS A “CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL?”**

# Consider the roles that a Code Enforcement Official fills;

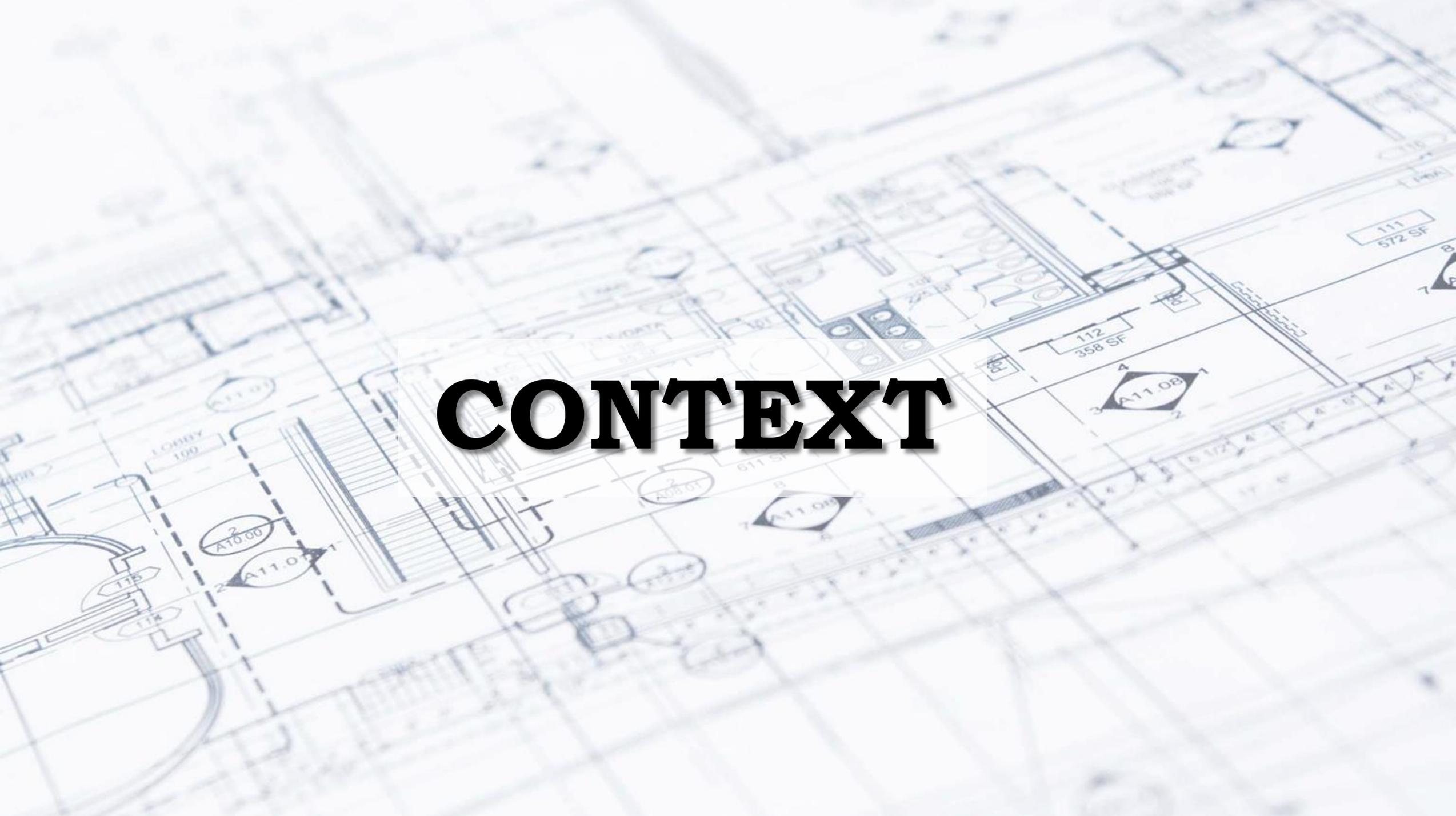
- **Facilitator**
- **Ambassador**
- **Educator**
- **Mentor**
- **Expert**
- **Public Resource**
- **Role Model**
- **Therapist**
- **Coach**
- **Politician**
- **FRIEND!**



# What are the public's expectations of a Code Enforcement Official?

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



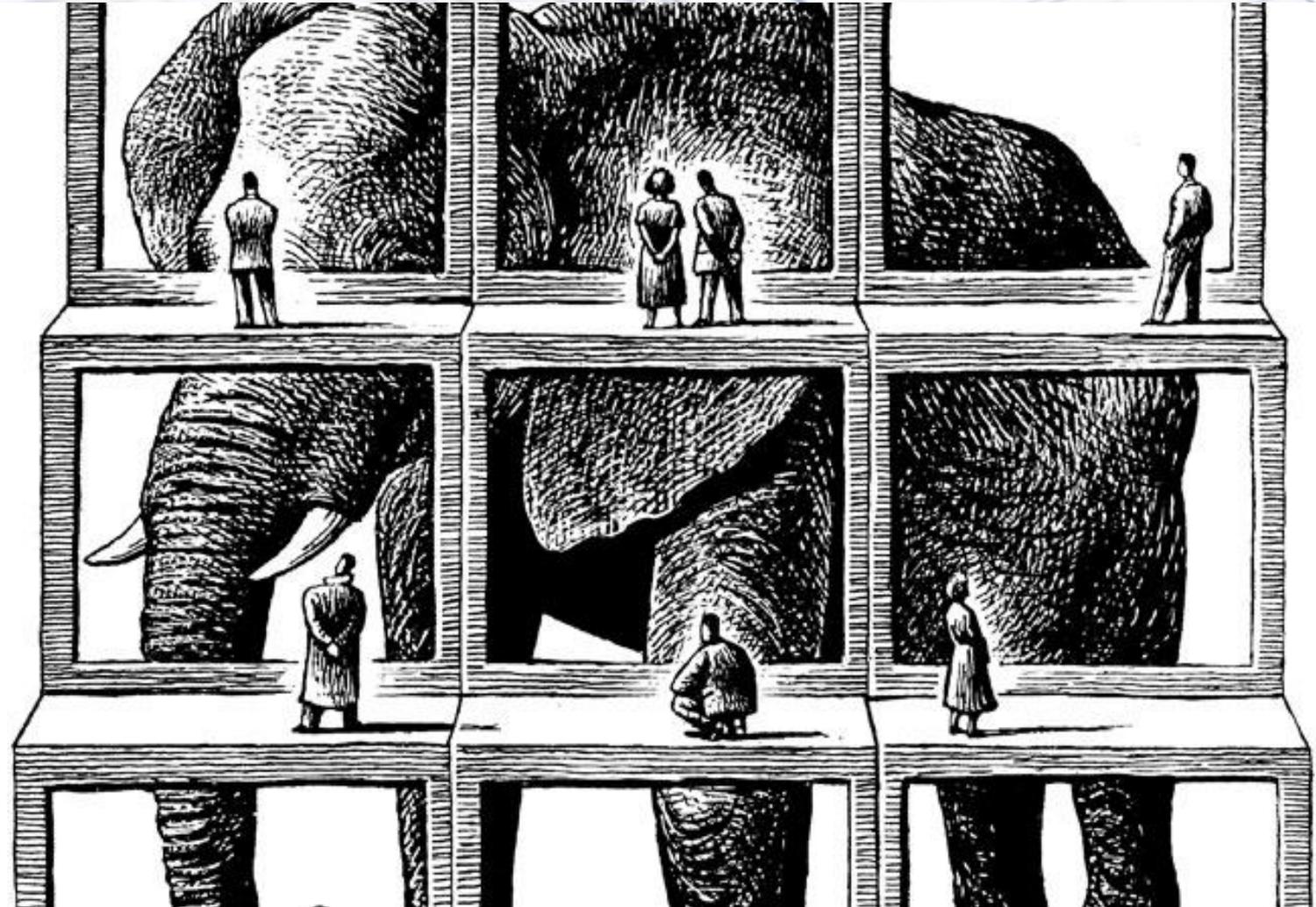
The background is a detailed architectural floor plan of a building. It shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Labels include 'LOBBY 100', 'DATA', '112 358 SF', and '111 572 SF'. There are also circular callouts with codes like 'A10.00', 'A11.00', 'A08.01', and 'A11.08'. The plan is drawn in blue lines on a light background. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the plan, containing the word 'CONTEXT' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**CONTEXT**

# CONTEXT DEFINED -

The dictionary defines “context” as the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.

We have to see the “whole picture.”





## **IN THE BEGINNING....**

Due to the urbanization of the United States, property losses created a need for building codes.

The Chicago  
Fire was not the  
only one...



Great fire of Manhattan in 1835. Source:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:1835\\_Great\\_Fire\\_of\\_New\\_York](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:1835_Great_Fire_of_New_York).



**MORE  
LESSONS TO  
BE  
LEARNED  
ABOUT LIFE  
SAFETY...**

**IF THERE WAS ONLY A WAY TO  
REMEMBER ALL OF THESE  
ACCIDENTS IN A WAY TO  
PREVENT THEM IN THE  
FUTURE...**

# BUILDING CODES?

- The building codes are a set of guidelines taken from problems and accidents to prevent them from being repeated.
- An inspector's job is to enforce the code, in effect preventing history from repeating.



# WHAT IS SOCIETY TO DO TO PROTECT CITIZENS?

In each State, the legislature establishes General Statutes creating Building Code Development and Enforcement rules, regulations and processes.

In our State the process begins with.....

# Where Does the Authority for Building Safety Officials Come From?

As identified in Law and Admin Classes, authority for inspectors comes from the General Statutes for Cities and Counties;

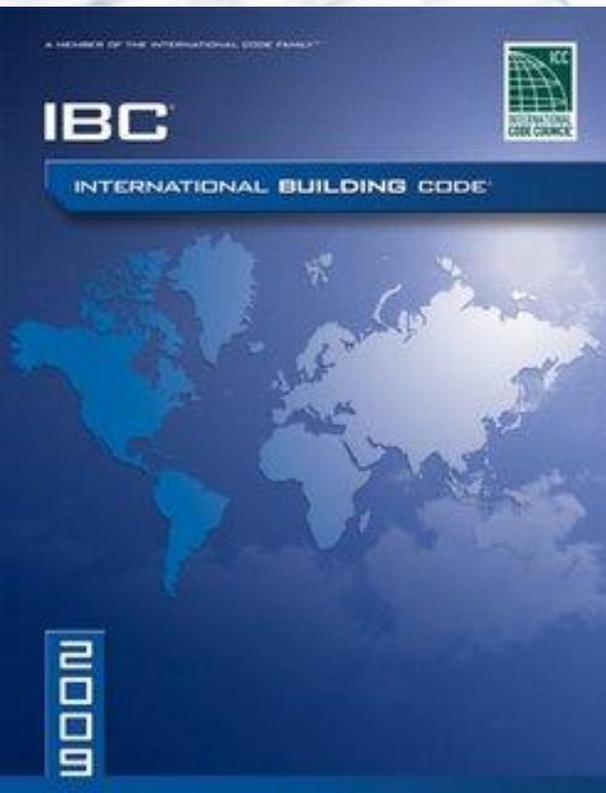
The General Statutes (GS) have specific chapters that apply to specific areas:

What are ours?



# The Building Codes are “Rules” that support General Statute ????????????????

The Intent behind the creation of the code is the development of consistency in safety, defining the language we all speak.



When the codes are promulgated, input is made by all facets of construction, including; designers input for feasibility, builders input for cost and inspectors input for safety

# CONTEXT

**If the duty of the inspector is distilled down to a single purpose, it would be keeping our communities safe.**

As Building Safety Officials, attempting to quantify every task is difficult, but lets look at a part of how hazards may be mitigated.

Building codes for example mitigate hazards that include activities in:

- Prevention (operations)
- Response (responders)
- Recovery (SERT)



# **When creating context, the codes and the appellant process establish a common language for the industry.**

Throughout the construction community, codes are used to communicate complex ideas:

- Designers use the code as a guideline for the minimum level of safety
- Builders use the code to establish contracts and build to an understood set of guidelines
- Inspectors act as an agent for the jurisdiction, using the code to;
  - Communicate violations in writing.
  - Explain minimum requirements for Alternative Means and Materials
  - Standardize listings





# CONTEXT

- **How does your jurisdiction maintain context and consistency?**
- Should a checklist be used to verify the minimum items checked for consistency?
- If a decision is being made, is it challenging and complex to get assistance
- Is the conclusion within the framework and spirit of the code
- The code is the basis, keep an open mind when making a decision.



**As a point of contact with the jurisdiction, what should be expected from an inspector?**

- One of the hard skills – knowledgeable of the codes
- There is an inherent expectation from the public that buildings are safe.
- Responsible for mitigation of risks associated with construction and safety of the subsequent occupants
- A fair and equal application of the codes

The background features a stylized, dark-toned illustration of a multi-story building under construction, with visible structural elements like beams and scaffolding. In the foreground on the left, there is a silhouette of a person wearing a hard hat and holding a clipboard, with the word 'INSPECTOR' faintly visible on their back. The overall color palette is monochromatic, using shades of blue and grey.

## **Building Safety Official responsibilities:**

- Public safety advocate – community risk reduction
- *Administration* of construction and fire safety codes
- Knowledge of the codes – the letter of the code and the *intent* of the code
- Fair & consistent application of all codes – “AHJ Abuse”
- Effectively working with all stakeholders
- Prioritization of tasks based on community risks and available resources (personnel and budget)
- Obtaining code compliance by educating and changing behavior

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**IBC**



INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE®

2009

**Context for this class is conveying mistakes made in our past by using the code to provide guidelines for current construction. The key to success in finding solutions comes from understanding the extent of your hard skills and conveying them using your soft skills.**

Without context, the code is simply a book of abstract ideas.

# Exercise

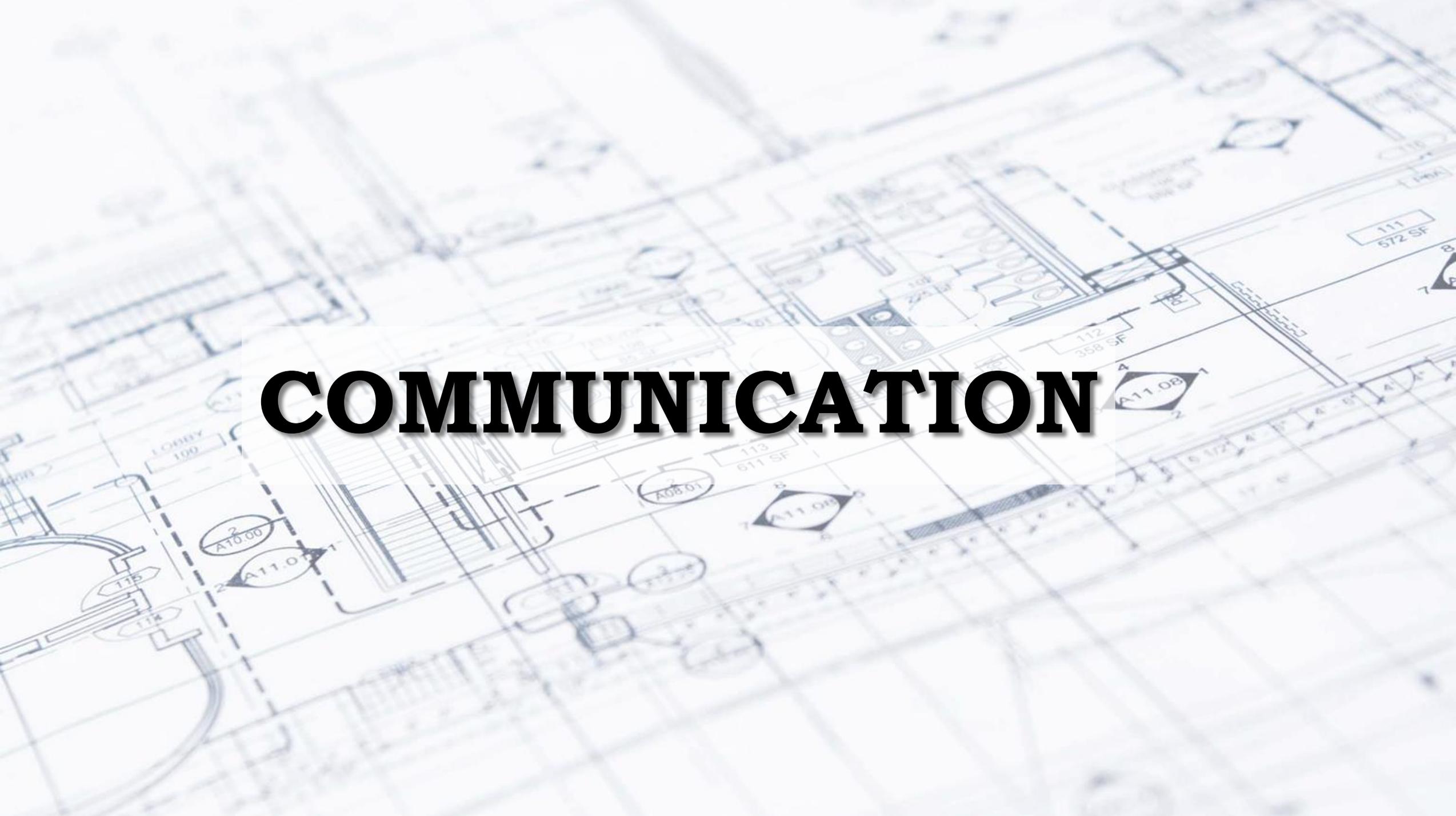
Example - An inspector may be tasked with the approval of a unique construction.

Using Alternative Materials and Designs;

- The codes contain the minimum prescriptive and performance guidelines for the most common construction practices,
- The alternative design may be for an element of the code written to protect against a certain accident.

How does an inspector approve the project?



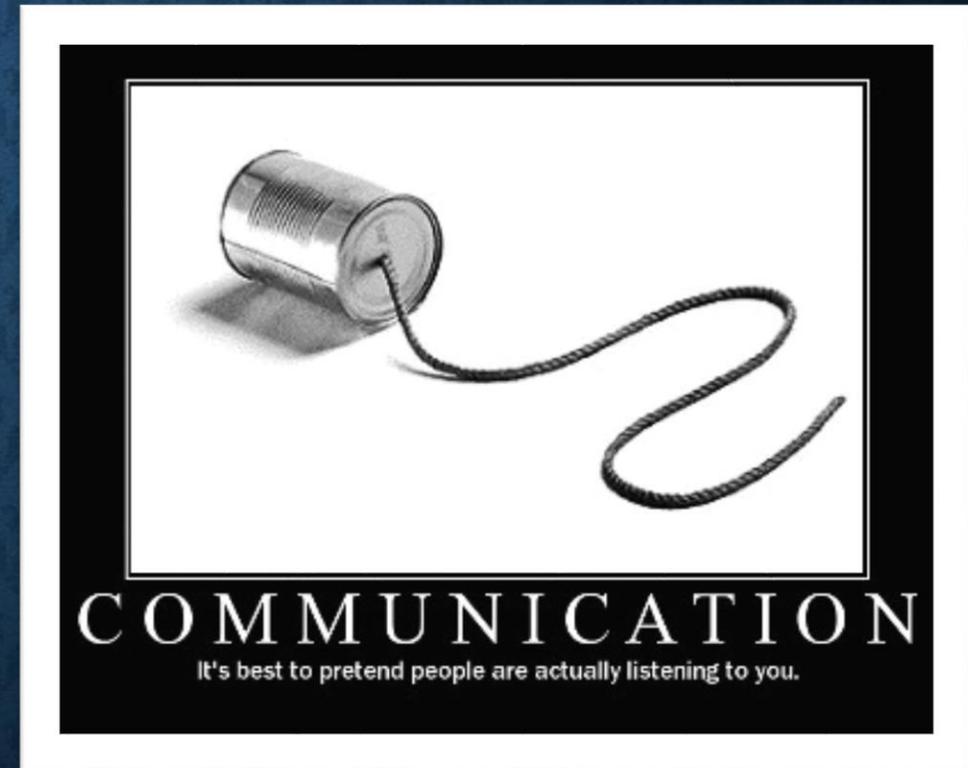
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# COMMUNICATION

# COMMUNICATION IS DEFINED AS THE “IMPARTING OR EXCHANGING OF INFORMATION OR NEWS” AND CAN BE THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT.

Besides the verbal conversation between the owner and the jurisdiction, communication (or the lack of it) can occur in numerous points of a project:

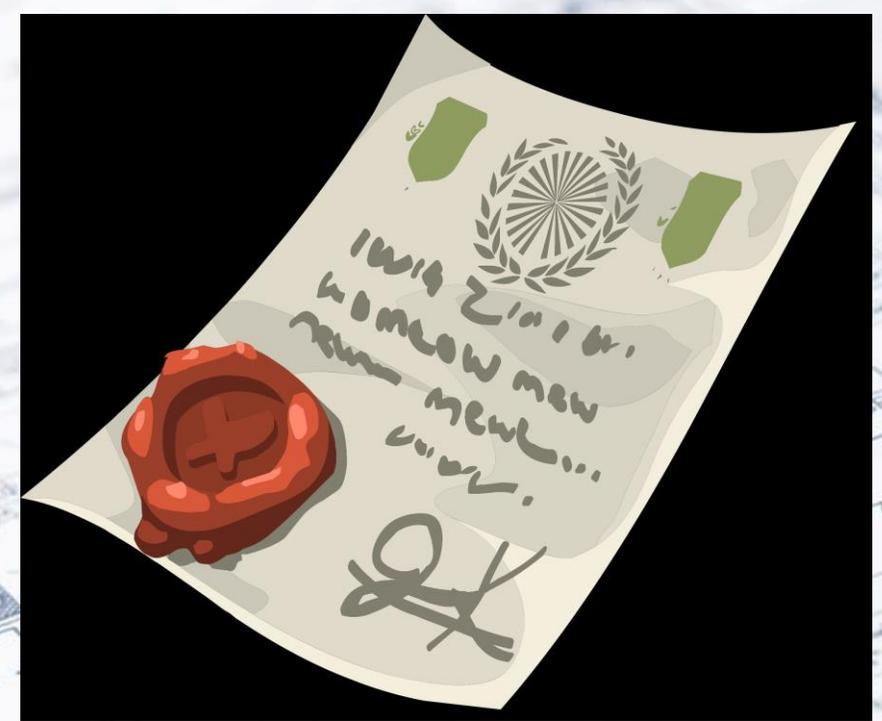
- Written documentation that communicates the scope of the project.
- The permit representing a written communication of what the jurisdiction understands will be done.
- Written violations identifying where construction was not in compliance with the code.
- A Certificate of Occupancy communicating the fact that it is the jurisdiction's opinion that the building is safe for use.



## More About the Permit -

The communication in a permit issuance includes;

- Scope of work
- Limits of the project
- The parties Involved
- Compliance with the UDOs
- Ensure that all parties will know the completed project is safe and the investment has some security
- Allows the Jurisdiction to identify potential problems with;
  - Local zoning
  - Local procedures
  - To become accustomed to the process and to educate the people involved



The permit communicates the overall intent to Jurisdiction



# COMMUNICATION

**Sounds easy - where do most of the problems come from?**

- Performance requirements from the codes
- Construction options
- Zoning and Setback requirements
- Communication, lack there-of, misunderstandings, inflexibility
- Conflict among “interested parties”

# COMMUNICATION

## How is your communication received?

- How do you communicate with others?
- Is the written and verbal communication understood
- Does most of the communication occur face-to-face
- How do you deliver bad news? Is it empathetic?
- Do you try to attach a solution to a problem before you relay the bad news?
- Do you have time to listen to what was intended, even if the explanation is not well-reasoned
- Do you value “teachable” moments
- What will spending a few extra minutes with a customer cost you/ What might it gain you?



## How can Communication help an inspector?

- Understanding the background to the code makes it easier to explain and others will remember the issue on the next project.
- Explaining the importance of the codes can result in closer working relationship with the jurisdiction leaders.
- Conveying the goals, in context, summarizes the purpose of the inspector's work.
- Overall, there is a validation to the inspection process.



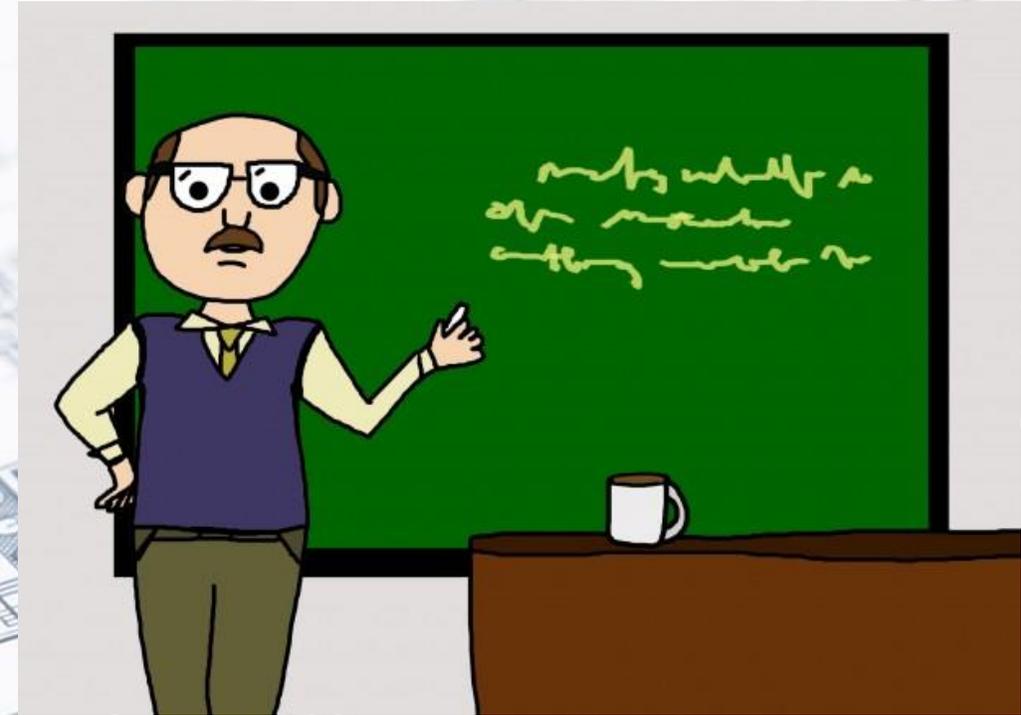
National programs such as ICC "Raise the Profile" focus on these skills.

**COMMUNICATION**

**Communication extends beyond what is taught;**

Raise the Profile/Code understanding  
Establishing personal relationships

- Builders
- Local government officials
- Media outlets
- How Inspectors can increase respect
- Who are your partners/customers



COMMUNICATION

**In addition to communicating with the traditional stakeholders, are you communicating with the decision-makers?**

- Do you share your concerns and responsibilities with elected official or town/city managers
- Do they understand the priorities of your job
- Do you get a chance to explain your role and responsibilities
- Do you have regular communication and reporting
- Have you built a relationship of trust and mutual respect

This level of communication signals the Building Safety Official's work is worthwhile and beneficial to the community  
BSM – What a great opportunity!!!!!!!

Ultimately, communication builds confidence by the city or county leaders in a Building Safety Official's decision making ability. In most cases, BSO's should be able to work independently. Building trust promotes effectiveness and efficiency.



COMMUNICATION

### **How does the communication come across?**

- Critical
- Judgmental
- Condescending
- Unprofessional
- Caring
- Concerned
- Does your acceptance of their message inspire confidence that the message was delivered to the right place or person?

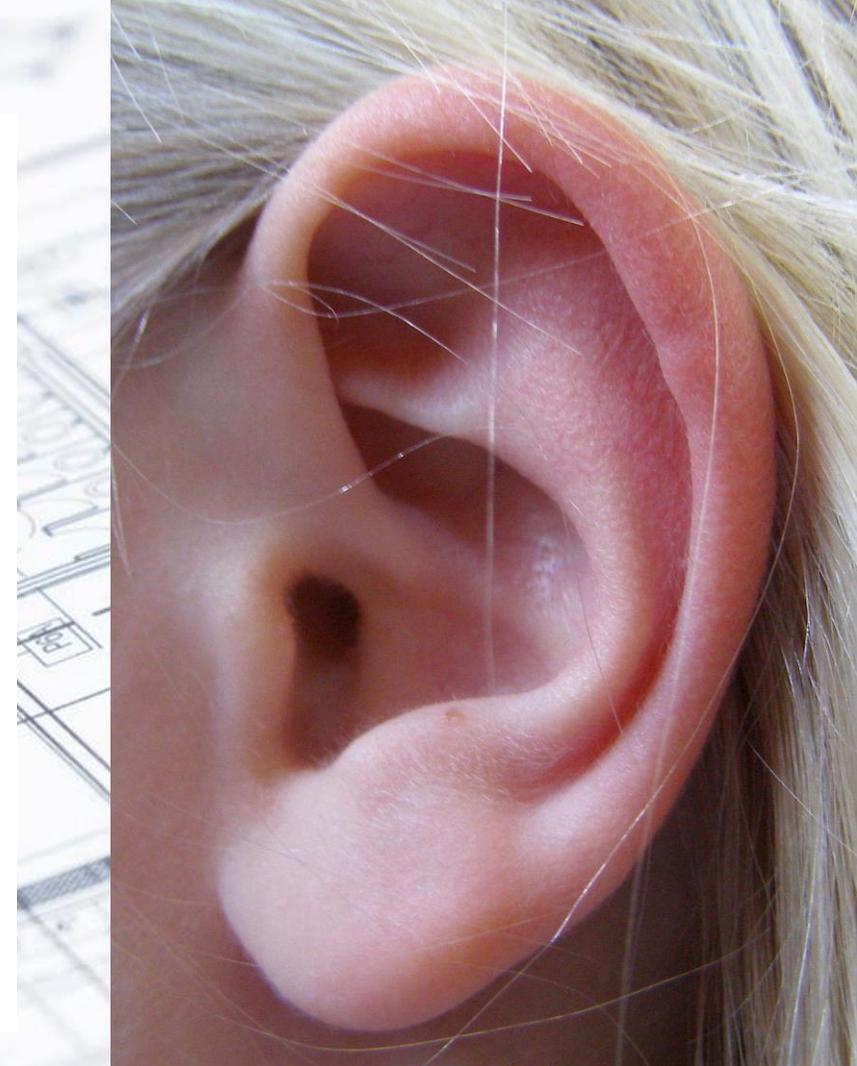


There are better ways to say no...

## **Reasons you may not be heard –**

- They have already made up their mind
- They hear only what they want to hear
- Both sides have jumped to conclusions
- Lack of interest
- Being angry, upset, or worried about other things
- “I just don’t like that guy/girl”
- Who was the last person that guy/girl talked to, and what did that person say?

**So.....the reasons you may not be heard by others..... are also the reasons you sometimes might not seem to be listening!**



**COMMUNICATION**

## **Body Language – what messages are being sent?**

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

## **Appearance – How does your appearance shape your message?**

**How does my manner of speech, of dress, affect the way my community, my team, my mgmt. staff, view my professionalism?**

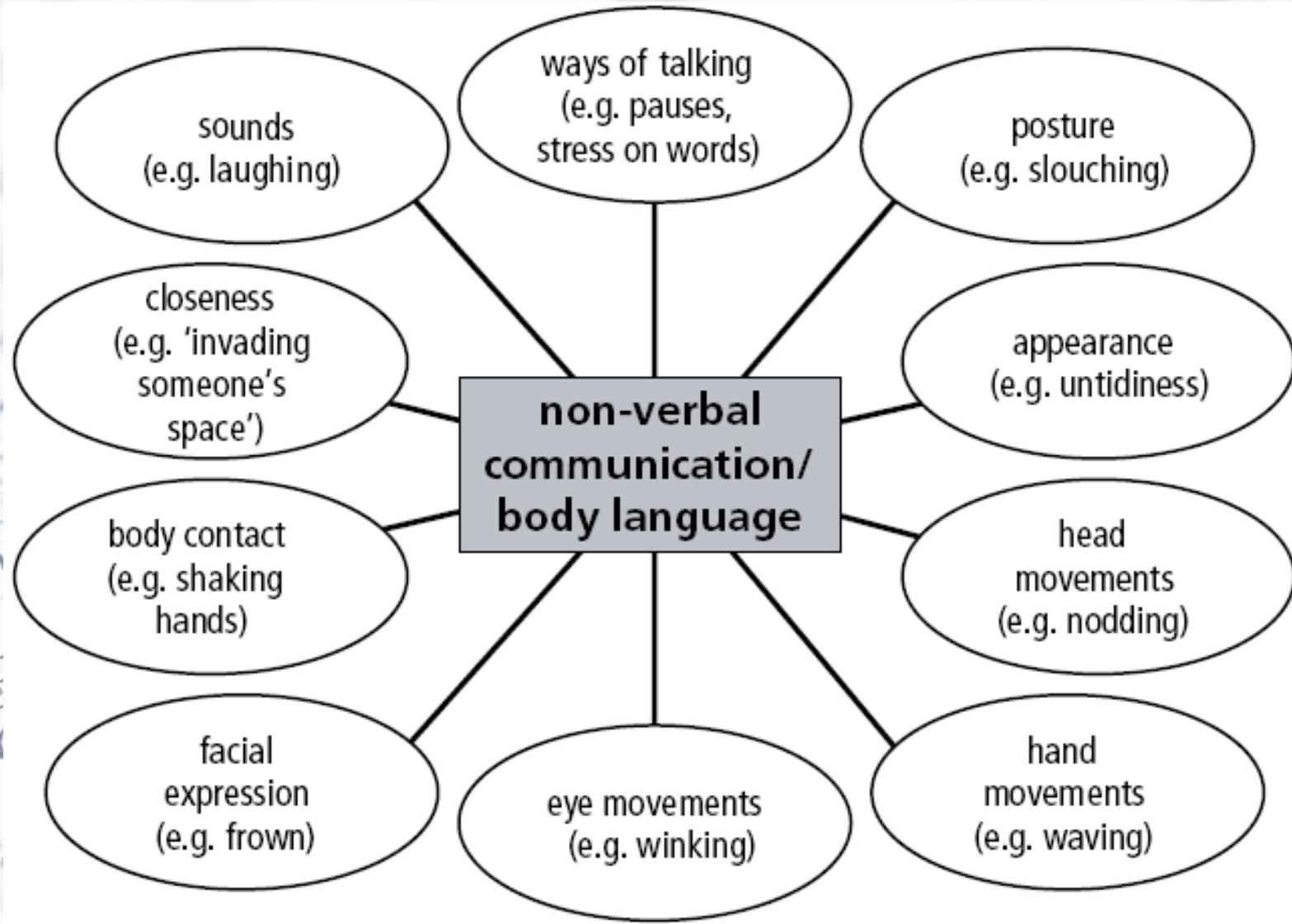


# COMMUNICATION

## **Nonverbal communication cues can play five roles:**

- **Repetition:** they can repeat the message the person is making verbally.
- **Contradiction:** they can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey.
- **Substitution:** they can substitute for a verbal message. For example, a person's eyes can often convey a far more vivid message than words do.
- **Complementing:** they may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can increase the impact of the message. (Not to be confused with complimenting, which is also important for reinforcement)
- **Accenting:** they may accent or underline a verbal message. Pounding the table, for example, can underline a message.

**Source:** *The Importance of Effective Communication*, Edward G. Wertheim, Ph.D



COMMUNICATION: I DID NOT STEAL THAT \$5.00

## **Facial expressions**

The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word. And unlike some forms of nonverbal communication, facial expressions are universal. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, and disgust are the same across cultures.

## **Body movements and posture**

Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself communicates a wealth of information to the world. This type of nonverbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements.

## **Gestures**

Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we're arguing or speaking animatedly—expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.

## **Eye contact**

Since the visual sense is dominant for most people, eye contact is an especially important type of nonverbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact is also important in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person's response.

## **Touch**

We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a weak handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, a reassuring slap on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm.

## **Space**

Have you ever felt uncomfortable during a conversation because the other person was standing too close and invading your space? We all have a need for physical space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different nonverbal messages, including signals of intimacy and affection, aggression or dominance.

## **Voice**

It's not just what you say, it's *how* you say it. When we speak, other people “read” our voices in addition to listening to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding, such as “ahh” and “uh-huh.” Think about how someone's tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

**Sometimes the most important thing in a conversation is “What’s not said”!!!!**

## Interpretation in conclusion -

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

Giving bad news - Empathy (Look at it from their side)  
Difficult people - Exception rather than the rule

- 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.
- 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.

**RULES WITH NO REASON ..... CORRECTION WITH NO CAUSE**

- 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

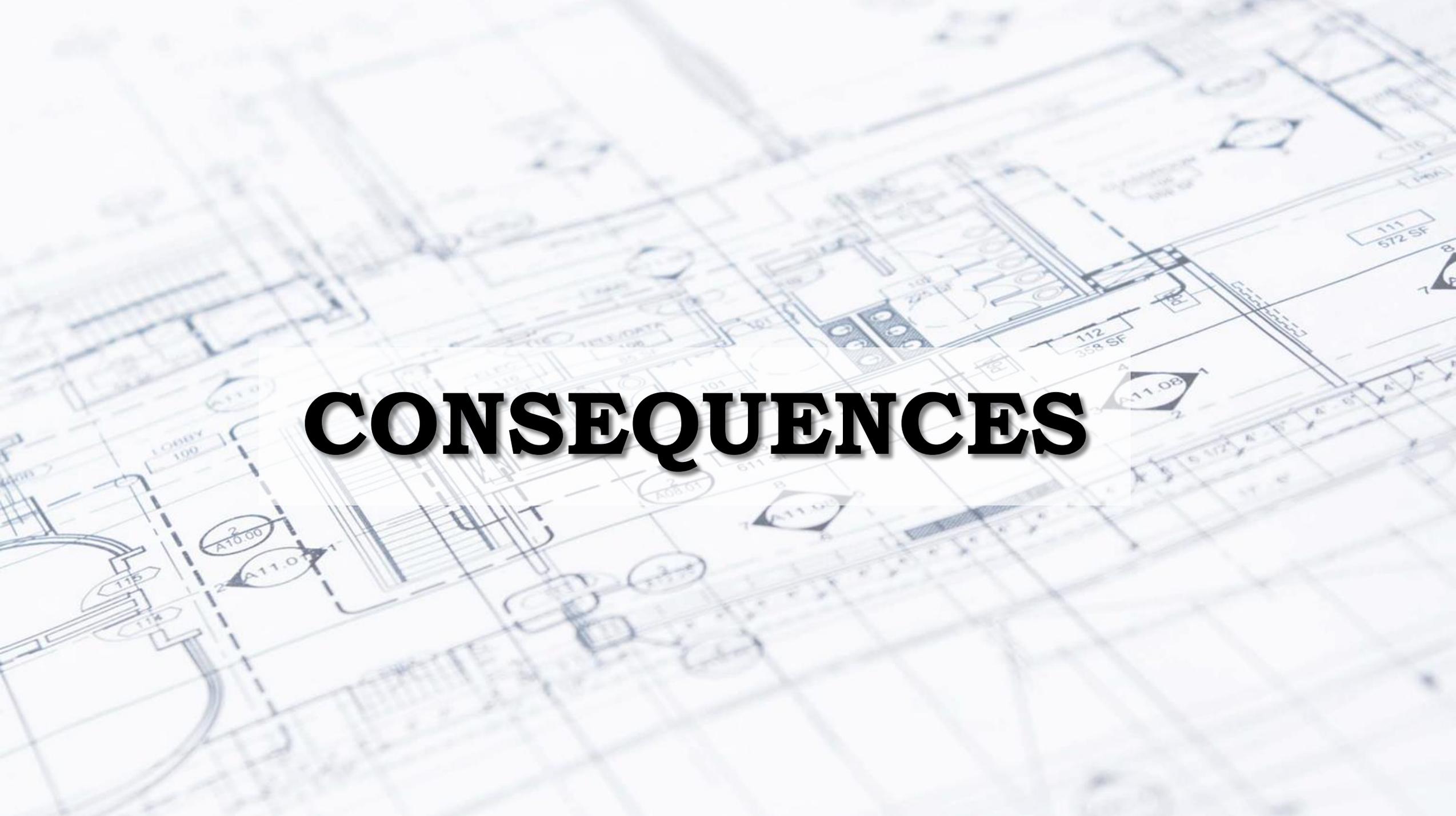
- Remarks to avoid
  - “The code allows it, and you can try it that way, but I’m telling you now that it will fail inspection.”
- Negative message sent
  - “You’re not skilled enough to putt this off...I’m going to fail inspection. Then, you will have to do it my way.”
- Correct action
  - Remain objective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

**AUTHORITATIVE,** OR JUST A JERK! ..... **OH, SO NOW YOU’RE A FORTUNE TELLER!**

The background of the entire image is a detailed architectural blueprint of a building floor plan. It shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements with technical annotations. Labels such as 'LOBBY 100', '112 358 SF', '111 572 SF', and 'A11.08' are visible. The drawing uses fine lines and shading to represent walls, doors, and furniture.

**10% of conflicts  
are due to  
difference in  
opinion.  
90% are due to  
wrong tone of  
voice.**

**COMMUNICATION STARTS  
HERE**

The background is a detailed architectural floor plan of a building. It shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Labels include 'LOBBY 100', 'TELEDATA 109', 'ELEC 110', '112 358 SF', and '111 572 SF'. There are also circular callouts with alphanumeric codes like 'A10.00', 'A11.01', 'A11.08', and 'A08.01'. The drawing is in blue ink on a light background.

# CONSEQUENCES

# CONSEQUENCES

“THOSE WHO CAN'T REMEMBER THE PAST  
ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT.”  
- GEORGE SANTAYANA

There is a background to each code requirement.  
“Those who remember the past but do nothing about it are doomed to experience the negative consequences of all the people around them.....busy repeating the past.”

# CONSEQUENCES

## How does this relate to communication?

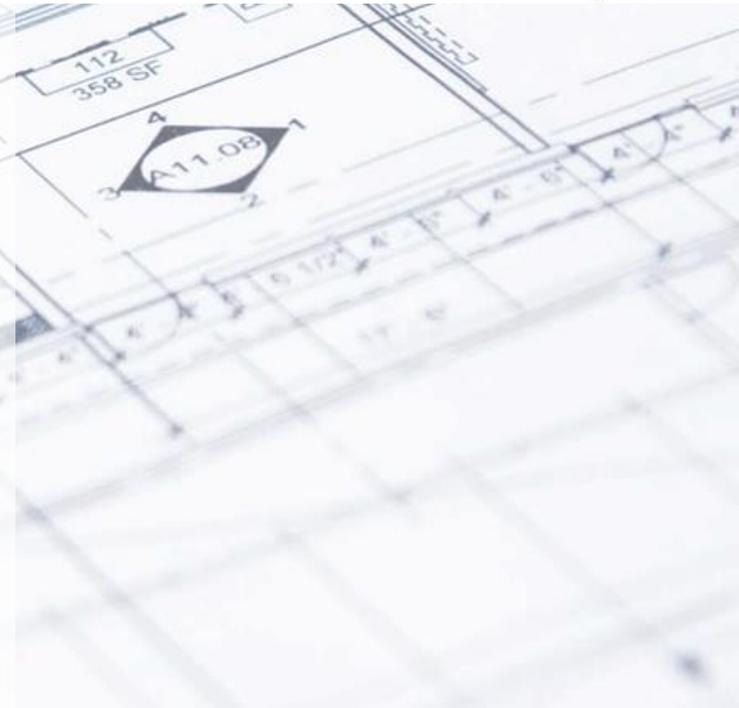
In explaining code violations, knowing why a code change was written can make all the difference to your customer.

This is part of the communication, confirming each violation you listed has a basis in an accident it is trying to prevent.

- Without providing the communication and having a context explained later, a code violation simply becomes a rule that has no meaning.
- If you can't offer background or context, some stakeholders may come to the conclusion that the code section is baseless or even worse, made up by the inspector.



By Frits Ahlefeldt



**All Code Sections are based on an event;**

It is fair to say that each code section has a story. Some people have even said that the code is “written in blood”.

Without the drama; lets look as some case studies that represent the basis for some of the code language.



# CONSEQUENCES – CASE STUDY #1

## Means of Egress In a Factory

10 story Triangle Shirt Waist Company  
March 25, 1911  
147 fatalities



# CONSEQUENCES – CASE STUDY #

THE KENTUCKY ENQUIRER

## 120 Feared Dead, Scores Hurt In Beverly Hills Fire Disaster

By [Name] Staff Writer  
 Beverly Hills, Calif. (AP) — A fire that broke out in a club here Saturday night killed at least 120 people and injured scores more, according to a preliminary report by a state fire marshal.

The fire, which started in a cabaret room, spread rapidly through the club, which was packed with people. It was one of the deadliest fires in the history of Beverly Hills.

The fire started at about 9:00 p.m. in the cabaret room, which was on the second floor. It spread to the main dining room and the kitchen. The fire was so intense that it caused the roof to collapse in several places.

The fire marshal's report says that the fire was caused by a faulty light fixture. The fire spread so quickly that many people were unable to escape. The fire was extinguished at about 11:30 p.m.

The fire caused an estimated \$10 million in damage. The club was closed for several weeks. The fire was a major disaster for Beverly Hills.



6 SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1997

## The fire's destructive toll

"I felt a great sense of danger coming over me. Like, you know, we were really in trouble."

Janetta Johnson  
 Beverly Hills Supper Club waitress

Reports from three teams of investigators, including one named by then-Governor Julian Carroll indicated that many factors contributed to the May 28, 1977 fire. Among these were inadequate wiring, no sprinkler systems, combustible wall and carpet materials and the absence of an alarm system.

Below is a detailed look at the causes and effect of the fire.



### KEY TO FIRST LEVEL

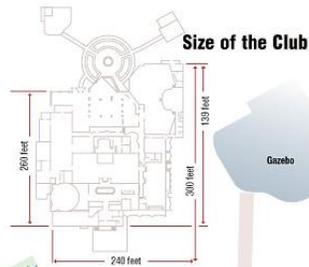
- Recommended room occupancy
- Actual room occupancy
- Exits
- Fatalities

### First level

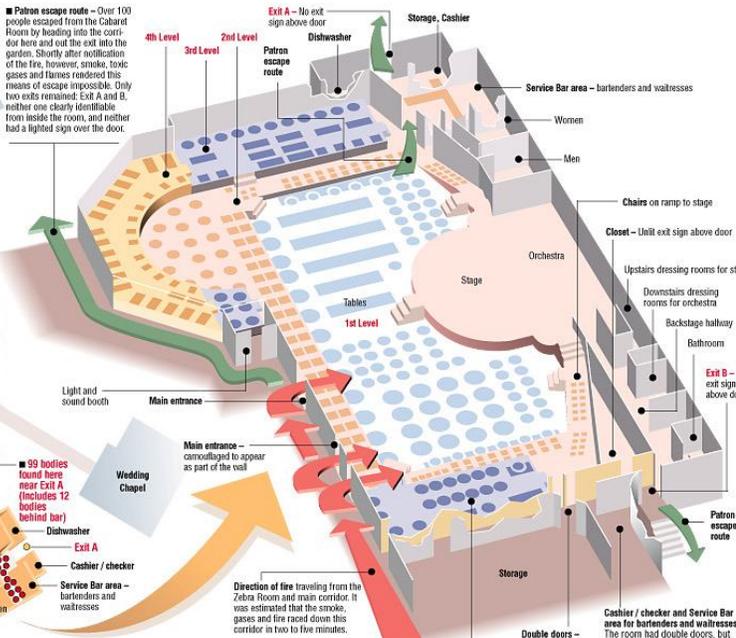
### LIFE SAFETY CODE

- These code violations were noted, among others:
- 1. Carpeting and paneling in the main north-south corridor contributed combustible gases to the fire.
- 2. The club was not equipped with a fire sprinkler system.
- 3. The Cabaret Room should have had a fourth exit, and all the exits should have been wider.
- 4. The Cabaret Room had more than double the recommended number of people the night of the fire.

### THE BEVERLY HILLS TRAGEDY



### Cabaret Room



### Sequence of key events\*

- 8:00 p.m. — Patrons in the Zebra Room complain about the heat. Behind the walls and the thin plywood paneling, wiring smolders. At 8:50 p.m., Eileen Drucman, a reservationist, spots smoke under the door, opens it. Smoke billows out. Minutes later, flashover occurs, i.e., all chairs, paneling, ceiling tile and carpeting ignite simultaneously.
- 9:00 p.m. — Fire breaks through the double doors, spreading up the spiral stairs, blocking off the stairwell. At the same time, the fire ignites the carpet and the hardwood wall paneling in the main north-south corridor to the Cabaret Room.
- 9:02-9:05 p.m. — Busboy Walter Bailey, after seeing smoke creeping from under the Zebra Room door, runs into the Main Bar and tells people to leave. He then runs down the corridor to the Cabaret Room. Smoke and toxic gases race down the corridor.
- 9:07-9:08 p.m. — On his way to the Cabaret Room, Bailey tells people in hallway to get through the Garden Room door, into the Cabaret Room. He enters the Cabaret Room, gets up on stage, interrupts the comedy act in progress, and tells the crowd and employees to evacuate the building.
- 9:11 p.m. — Smoke fills the Cabaret Room. "Like a swimming pool being filled with water," according to waitress Janetta Johnson, carbon monoxide gas follows. Fire bursts into the room almost immediately after.

### The body count, minute by minute

- 9:30-10 p.m. — Rescuers begin carrying first bodies out on litters near the Wedding Chapel. Official count: 50
- 10:30 p.m. — Official count: 100
- 11 a.m. — Governor Carroll announces 14 more bodies have been found. Official count: 144
- 12:15 p.m. — Eight more bodies have been found. Official count: 152
- 2 a.m. — Seventy
- 4 p.m. — Seven more bodies have been found. Heavy rains sweep the disaster site. Official count: 159
- 9:20 p.m. — One man dies en route to hospital. Official count: 160
- Final count: 165 (includes 162 bodies found at the scene; three people died in the hospital later)

Graphic and research by MICHAEL BRUGH/ The Post  
 Sources: Post staff report; The Governor's Investigative Team report; The National Fire Protection Association; The Courier-Journal; Report of the Special Prosecutor (Cool F. Beverly Hills Supper Club Fire Beverly Hills: The Anatomy of a Nightclub Fire)

## Beverly Hills Supper Club

# CONSEQUENCES – CASE STUDY #3

## Blowing Rock CO Poisonings



# CONSEQUENCES – CASE STUDY #4

**Frozen high-efficiency furnace discharge**



# **Sometimes the consequences are related to the individual's actions;**

- Not being diligent on an inspection can create the potential for larger issues later in the process**



CONSEQUENCES

**There are rules to address malfeasance and misfeasance by the individual;**

How does your jurisdiction or your state determine if you are guilty of any of the below:

- **Gross Negligence**
- **Gross Incompetence**
- **Willful Misconduct**



CONSEQUENCES

**Law Dictionary: What is GROSS NEGLIGENCE OF DUTY?** When a public official has done things to endanger welfare of the public. Gross negligence is a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property, or both.

**Law Dictionary: What is GROSS INCOMPETENCE?** Gross Incompetence is a difficult one, and will reflect not only on the Inspector but his/her entire Inspections Department. Obviously, flagrantly or exceptionally wrong or culpably unable to perform in his or her duties in a reasonably professional or expected manner.

**Law Dictionary: What is WILLFUL MISCONDUCT?** Willful misconduct generally means a knowing violation of a reasonable and uniformly enforced rule or policy. It means intentionally doing that which should not be done or intentionally failing to do that which should be done, knowing that injury to a person will probably result or recklessly disregarding the possibility that injury to a person may result. (Note that injury can also be substituted for the word "costs").

CONSEQUENCES



# CONSEQUENCES

Consequences aren't restricted to just what happens to buildings or other people.

CONSEQUENCES are what happens to YOU!

- How do you keep your self mentally prepared to deal with your responsibilities daily?
- What are your “Coping” techniques?
- Don't take it personally
- Write down what annoys you
- Think about why it annoys you
- Which of your buttons does someone frequently push
- Why do you respond to that person the way you do?
- How would you rather respond
- Do you monitor yourself and your behavior
- Do you try to give yourself positive feedback, or accept positive criticism from others
- Q-TIP
- You are not as likely to change someone else as you would be to change yourself.



**CONSISTENCY**

The image shows a detailed architectural floor plan of a building, rendered in a light blue and white color scheme. The plan includes various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Key labels visible on the plan include 'LOBBY 100', '112 358 SF', '111 572 SF', '611 SF', 'A10.00', 'A11.00', 'A11.08', and 'A08.01'. The word 'CONSISTENCY' is prominently displayed in the center of the image, enclosed within a white rectangular box with a subtle drop shadow. The overall composition is clean and professional, emphasizing the theme of consistency in architecture or design.

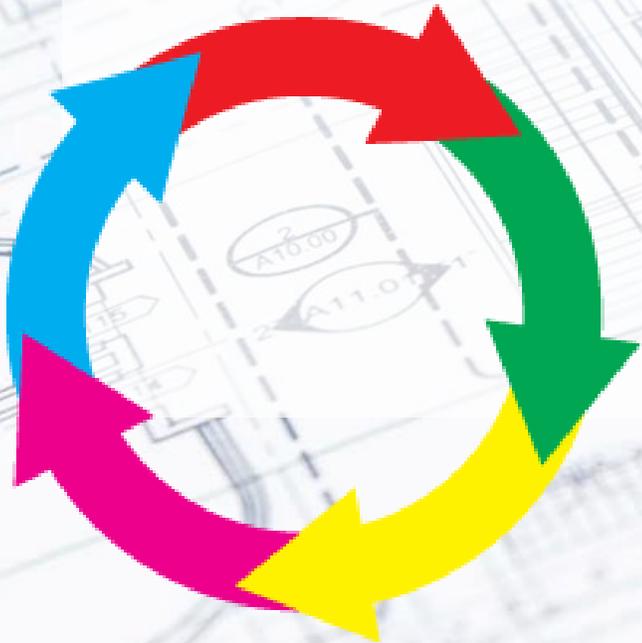
# CONSISTENCY

**What is the one thing you hear most often in the field?**

- **“This is the only place that requires this”**
- **“I have built it like this for years”**
- **“Another jurisdiction doesn’t require this”**

There is a common belief among the public and our customers that all Building Safety Officials don’t work from the same book.

**Do all contractors work from the same book?**



# KEEPING CONSISTENCY IN CHECK

## How does your jurisdiction keep track of policies?

- **Do you use check lists to confirm spot check items?**
- **Do the plan review staff work with the field staff for difficult items to check in the field? What are some of these items?**
- **Are the deficiency's shared with the entire staff to confirm no unusual violations are identified? Are they documented?**
- **Do you talk...to one another....across jurisdictional boundaries...to your partners and stakeholders?**



# Which common resources are available to everyone?

- Commentary
- Monograph (Specialized documents)
- Networking
- Idea Sharing
- Other staff
- ICC ESR reporting
- Trade Journals
- Association participation
- Association websites w/ Q&A forums
- Continuing Education



**CONSISTENCY**

# CONSISTENCY:

A CHECKLIST IS A GOOD THING FOR THE BEGINNER, BUT CAN'T BE A REPLACEMENT FOR:

- 1.) PROPER GUIDELINES
- 2.) SHARED PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES
- 3.) COMMON GOALS
- 4.) METHODOICAL APPROACH AND
- 5.) EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS AMONG ALL STAKEHOLDERS.



# CONSISTENCY:

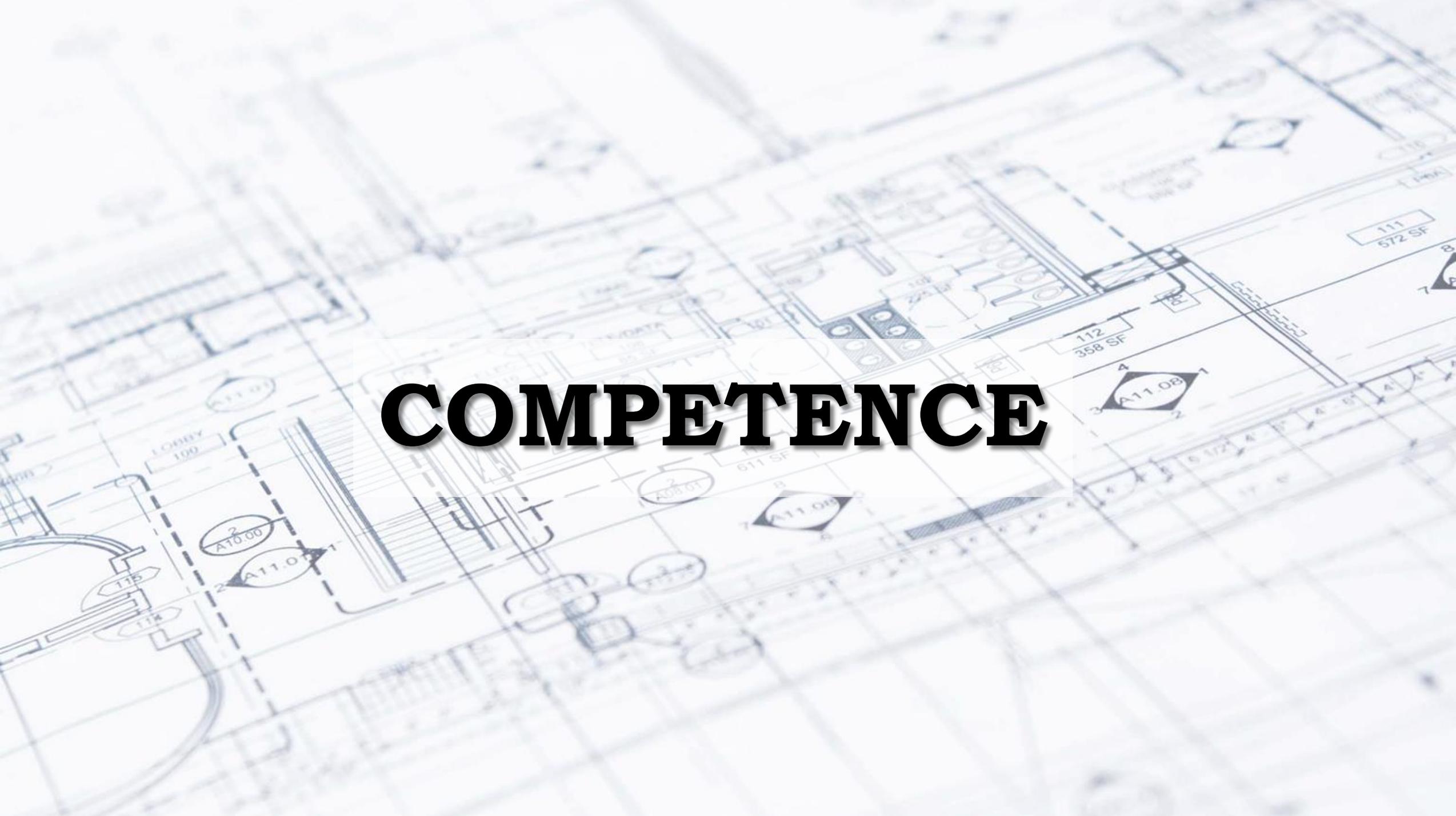
WE ALL HAVE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION.

WE ALL HAVE STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT  
QUALITY  
CONSTRUCTION.

WE ALL “CARE”, BUT WE ONLY HAVE A  
“MINIMUM” STANDARD WE CAN ENFORCE.

THE CODES CHANGE AND SO SHOULD  
YOU!!!!!!

**My name is**  
**consistency,**  
**I am related to**  
**success.**  
**We should hang out**  
**more than...**  
**every once in a while.**

The image features a detailed architectural floor plan of a building, rendered in a light blue and white color scheme. The plan shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Overlaid on the center of the plan is a semi-transparent white rectangular box containing the word "COMPETENCE" in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The background plan includes labels such as "LOBBY 100", "611 SF", "112 358 SF", and "111 572 SF", along with circular callouts like "A10.00" and "A11.08".

**COMPETENCE**

# STATE MEASURED COMPETENCE

## **§ 143-151.13. Required standards and certificates for Code-enforcement officials. (a)**

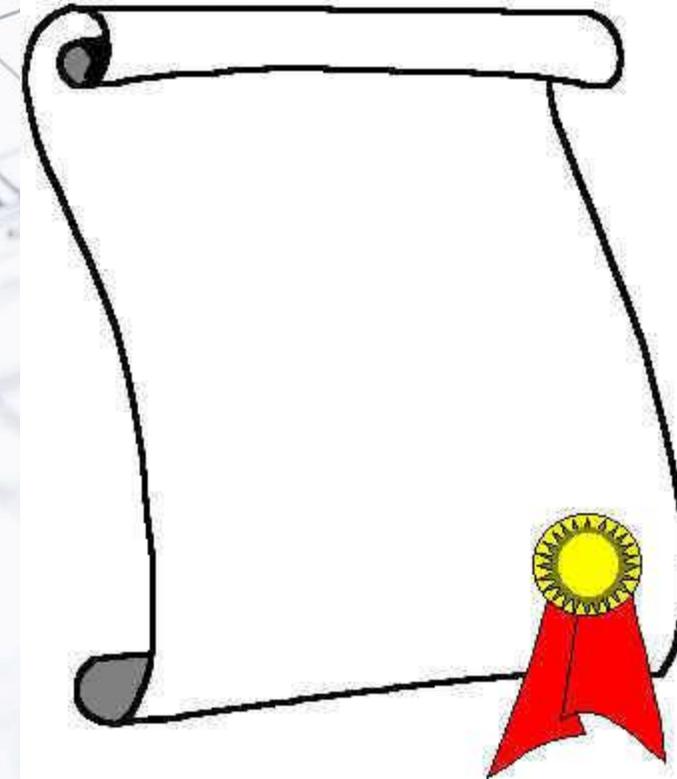
No person shall engage in Code enforcement under this Article unless that person possesses one of the following types of certificates, currently valid, issued by the Board attesting to that person's qualifications to engage in Code enforcement: (i) a standard certificate; (ii) a limited certificate provided for in subsection (c) of this section; or (iii) a probationary certificate provided for in subsection (d) of this section. To obtain a standard certificate, a person must pass an examination, as prescribed by the Board or by a contracting party under G.S. 143-151.16(d), that is based on the North Carolina State Building Code and administrative procedures required for Code enforcement. The Board may issue a standard certificate of qualification to each person who successfully completes the examination. The certificate authorizes that person to engage in Code enforcement and to practice as a qualified Code-enforcement official in North Carolina. The certificate of qualification shall bear the signatures of the chairman and secretary of the Board. [...]

What do you think of when you think of competence?

- Qualification and examination
- Pre-service / In-service training
- Assessment and feedback / best practices / benchmarks

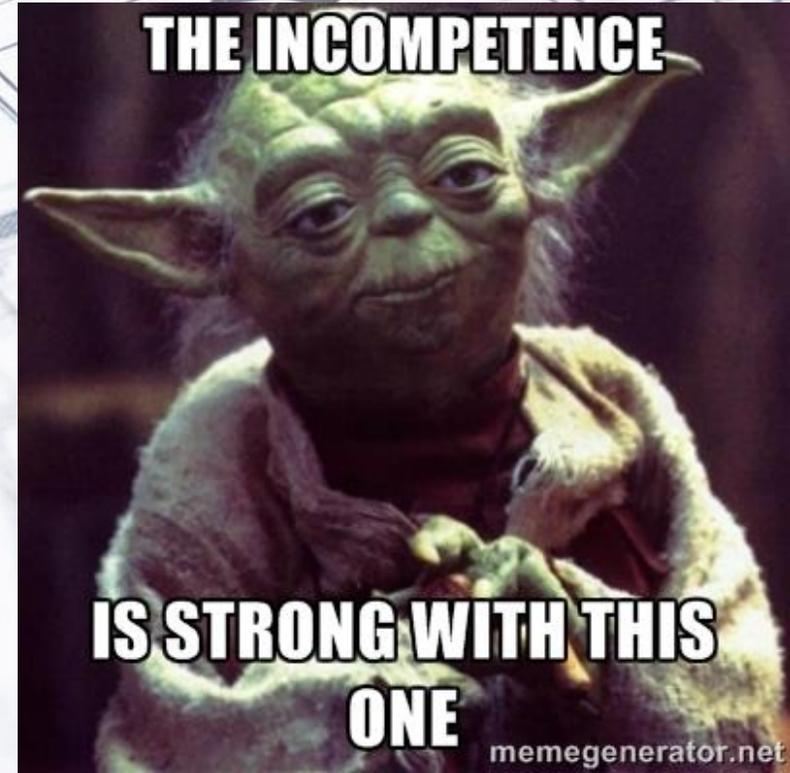
What about **TRUST, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, PERSONALITY, CHARACTER**, etc. You don't just earn your "Hard" skills, you also earn your "Soft" skills. You have to have both to be competent!

**COMPETENCE**



# COMPETENCE:

PROFESSIONALISM -  
TIME MANAGEMENT -  
TEACHING/LEARNING -  
CONSENSUS BUILDING -  
DECISION MAKING -



**Competence in both hard and soft skills can be found;**

- **Training – Networking**
- **Staff Meetings**
- **Mentoring**
- **Encouragement**
- **Recognition**
- **Engaging work**
- **Incentives (Certifications)**
- **Chapter and Regional/National Meetings**



**COMPETENCE**

*One of the most important responsibilities held by the code official is applying and enforcing the code – which includes “interpretations” and “intent”.*

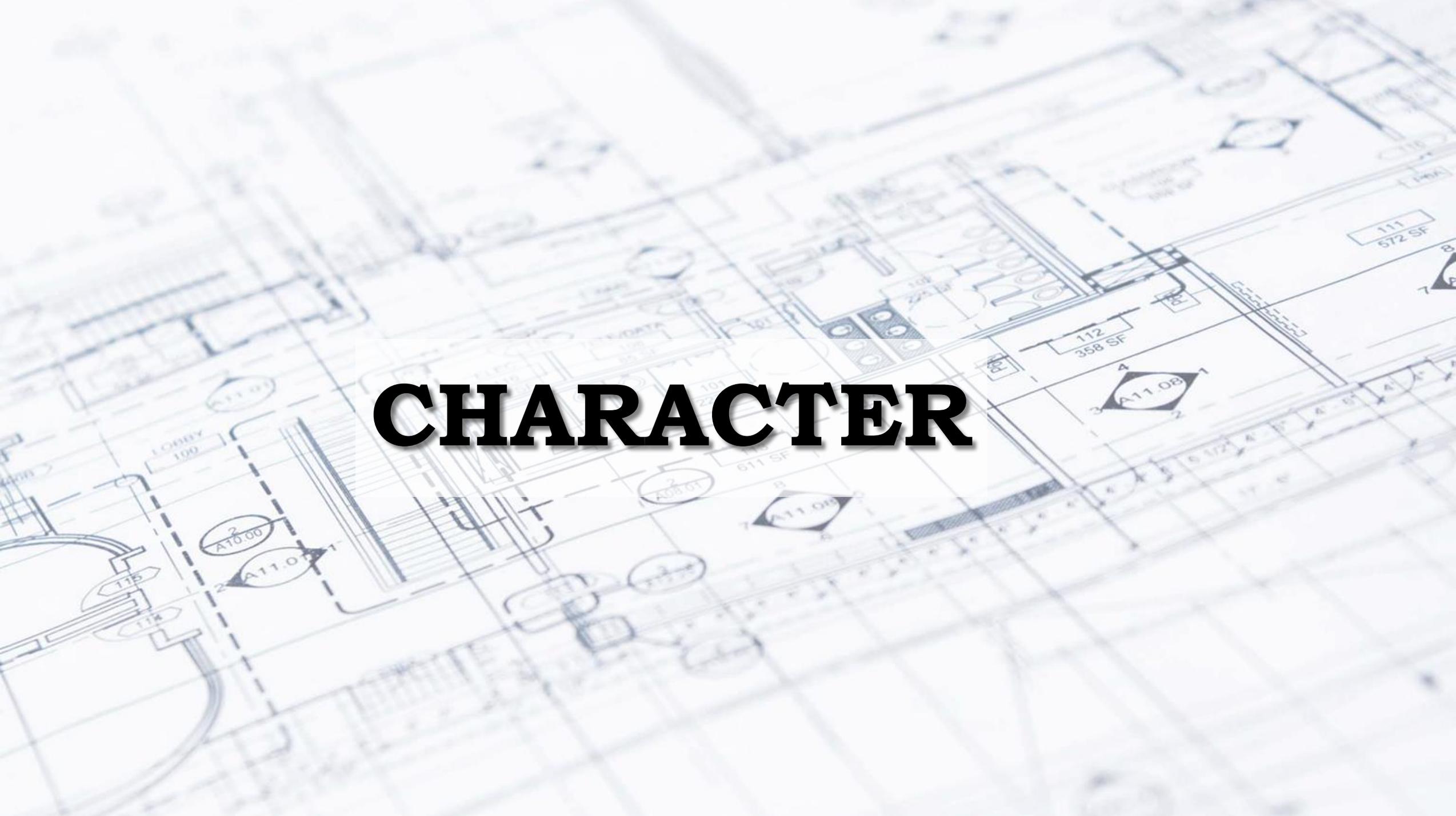
The following has to be taken into consideration when an interpretation is made;

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

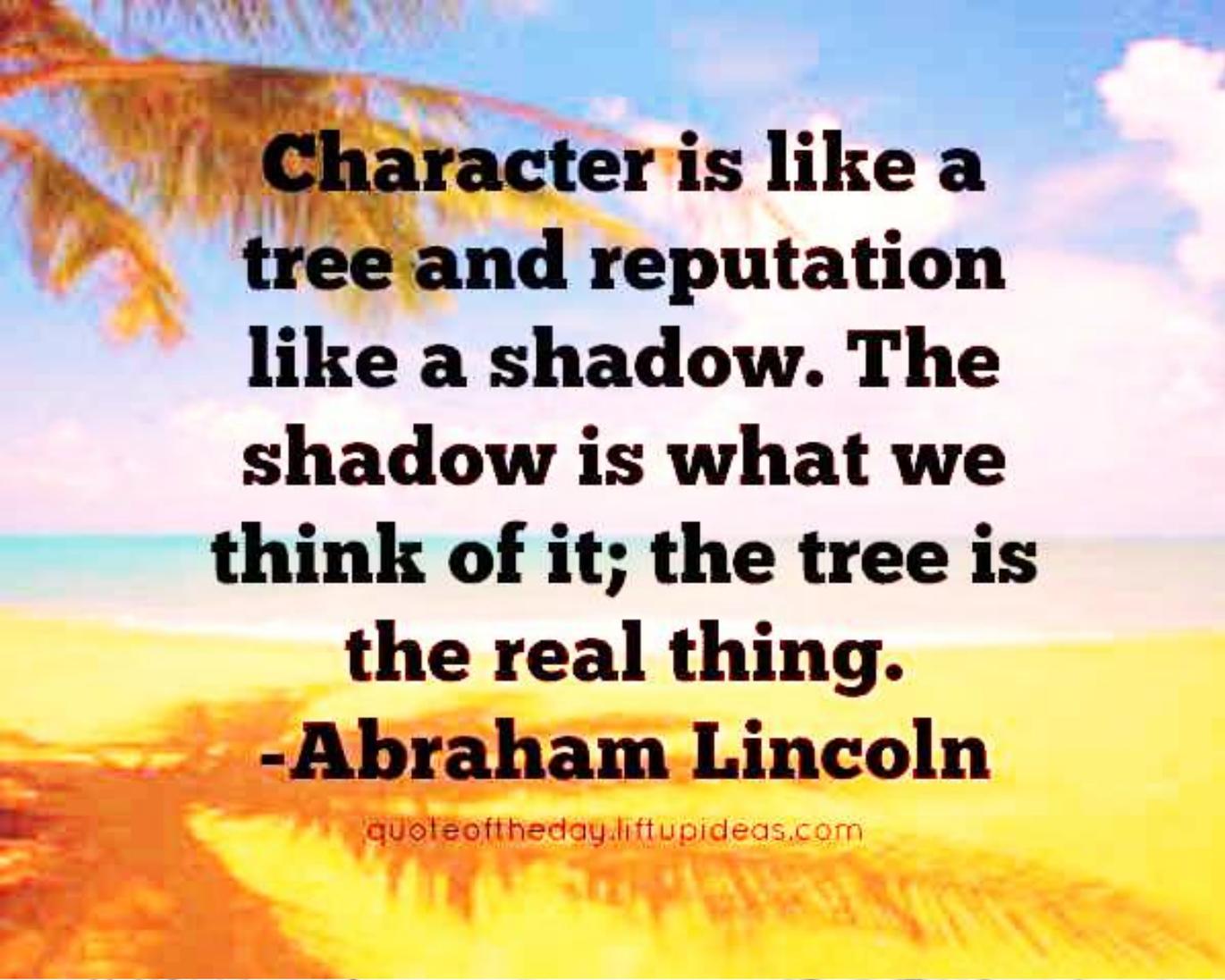


**COMPETENCE**



The background is a detailed architectural floor plan of a building. It shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Some rooms are labeled with numbers and square footages, such as 'LOBBY 100', '112 358 SF', and '111 572 SF'. There are also circular callouts with alphanumeric codes like 'A10.00', 'A11.00', 'A08.01', and 'A11.08'. The drawing is in blue ink on a light background, with a grid system visible. The word 'CHARACTER' is superimposed in the center in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font.

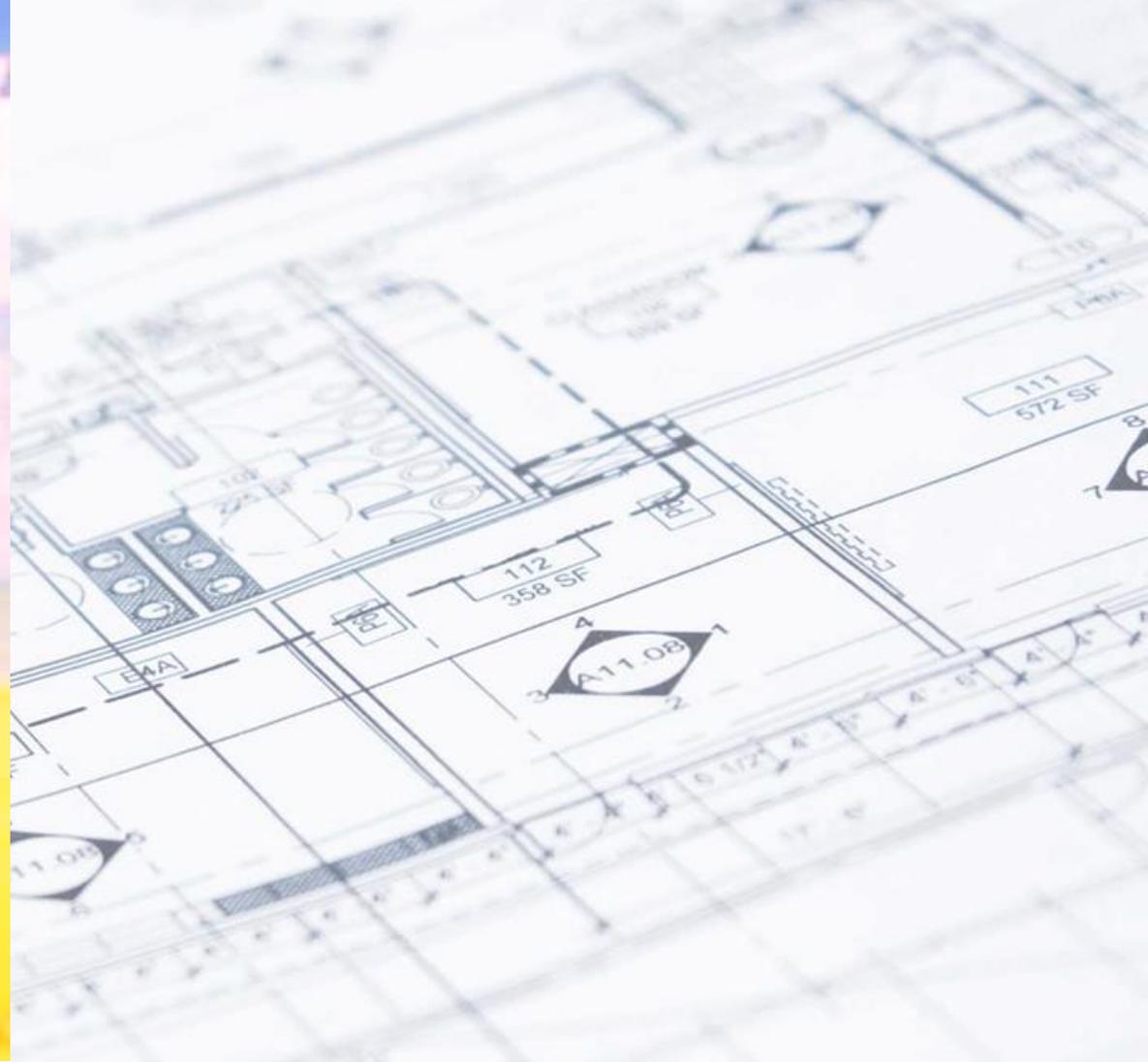
# CHARACTER



**Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.**

**-Abraham Lincoln**

[quoteoftheday.liftupideas.com](http://quoteoftheday.liftupideas.com)



**CHARACTER..... WHAT IS IT?  
AND WHERE CAN I GET A BOTTLE OF IT?**

# CHARACTER

## What defines character?

- **Courtesy toward contractors and consumers**
- **Confidence among peer group**
- **Courage (conflicts of interest and other ethical considerations)**
- **Honesty in all public and private dealings**
- **Accuracy in assigned tasks, no matter how trivial**
- **Morality, Tolerance, Understanding, Fairness, Values**
- **Sense of Duty and a Commitment to our mission**

*Character,  
not circumstance,  
makes the  
person.*

*- Booker T. Washington*

WWW.POSITIVEMOTIVATION.NET

**Unknown character or a poor attitude can be an inadvertent obstacle for a Building Safety Official. Some of the best, and most simple approaches you can use are;**

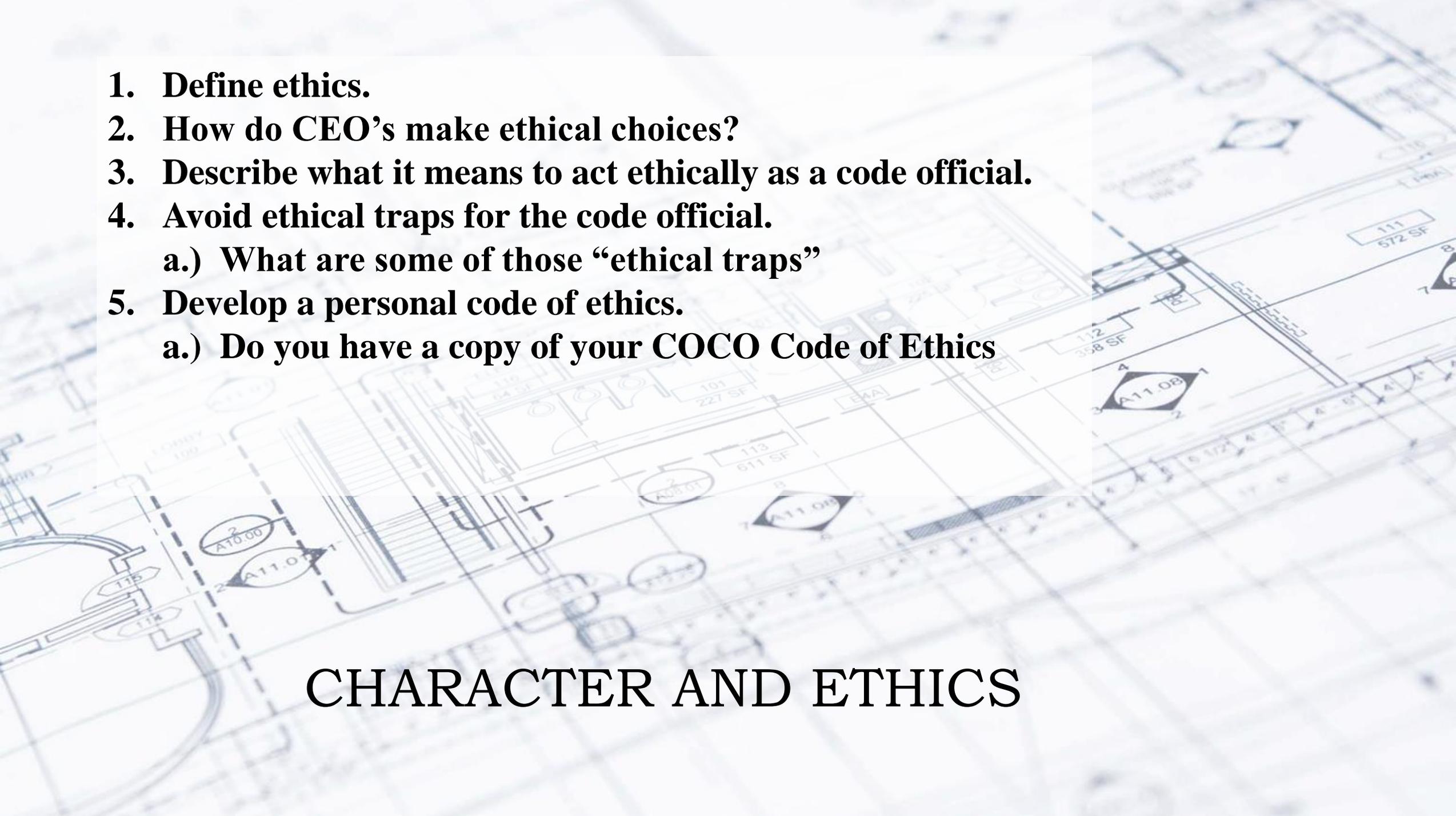
- **Positivity**
- **Respect, courtesy and diplomacy**

**While these suggestions sound simple, they can;**

- **Raise bar of professionalism**
- **Improve your image as well as that of other BSO's**
- **Makes life easier all around**



**CHARACTER**

- 
- The background is a detailed architectural blueprint of a building floor plan, showing various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the top-left portion of the blueprint, containing a numbered list of five items. The list items are:
1. Define ethics.
  2. How do CEO's make ethical choices?
  3. Describe what it means to act ethically as a code official.
  4. Avoid ethical traps for the code official.
    - a.) What are some of those "ethical traps"
  5. Develop a personal code of ethics.
    - a.) Do you have a copy of your COCO Code of Ethics

## CHARACTER AND ETHICS

- Should your job be subject to public scrutiny
- Do good inspectors welcome that scrutiny or hide from it
- Do good CEO's embrace ethical principles of honesty and lawfulness
- Is what you do a benefit to your community
- Do you apply rules fairly and objectively with no vested interest
- Has avoiding the public eye created a situation where we have no voice for "good"



**CHARACTER**

# HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT QUALIFY ETHICS?

## § 153A-355. Conflicts of interest.

Unless he or she is the owner of the building, no member of an inspection department shall be financially interested or employed by a business that is financially interested in furnishing labor, material, or appliances for the construction, alteration, or maintenance of any building within the county's territorial jurisdiction or any part or system thereof, or in making plans or specifications therefor. No member of any inspection department or other individual or an employee of a company contracting with a county to conduct inspections may engage in any work that is inconsistent with his or her duties or with the interest of the county, as determined by the county.

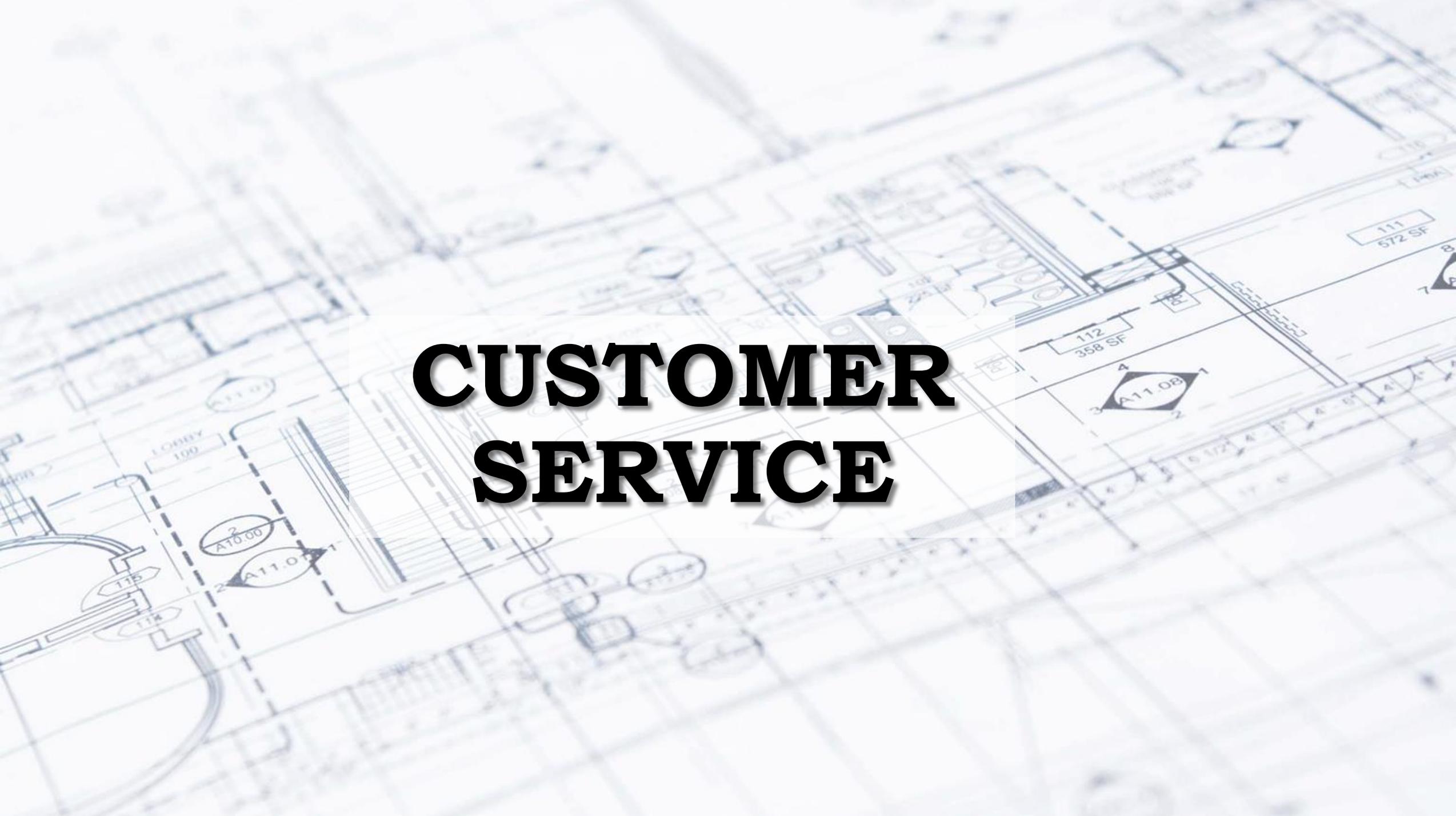
The county must find a conflict of interest if any of the following is the case:

- (1) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county has worked for the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected within the last two years.
- (2) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county is closely related to the owner, developer, contractor, or project manager of the project to be inspected.
- (3) If the individual, company, or employee of a company contracting to perform inspections for the county has a financial or business interest in the project to be inspected. (1937, c. 57; 1941, c. 105; 1947, c. 719; 1951, c. 651; 1953, c. 984; 1955, cc. 144, 942, 1171; 1957, cc. 415, 456, 1286, 1294; 1959, cc. 399, 1031; 1961, cc. 763, 884, 1036; 1963, c. 868; 1965, cc. 243, 453, 494, 846; 1967, cc. 45, 73, 113; c. 495, s. 3; 1969, cc. 675, 918; c. 1003, s. 7; c. 1064, ss. 1, 4; c. 1066, s. 1; 1973, c. 822, s. 1; 1993, c. 232, s. 2; 1999-372, s. 2.)

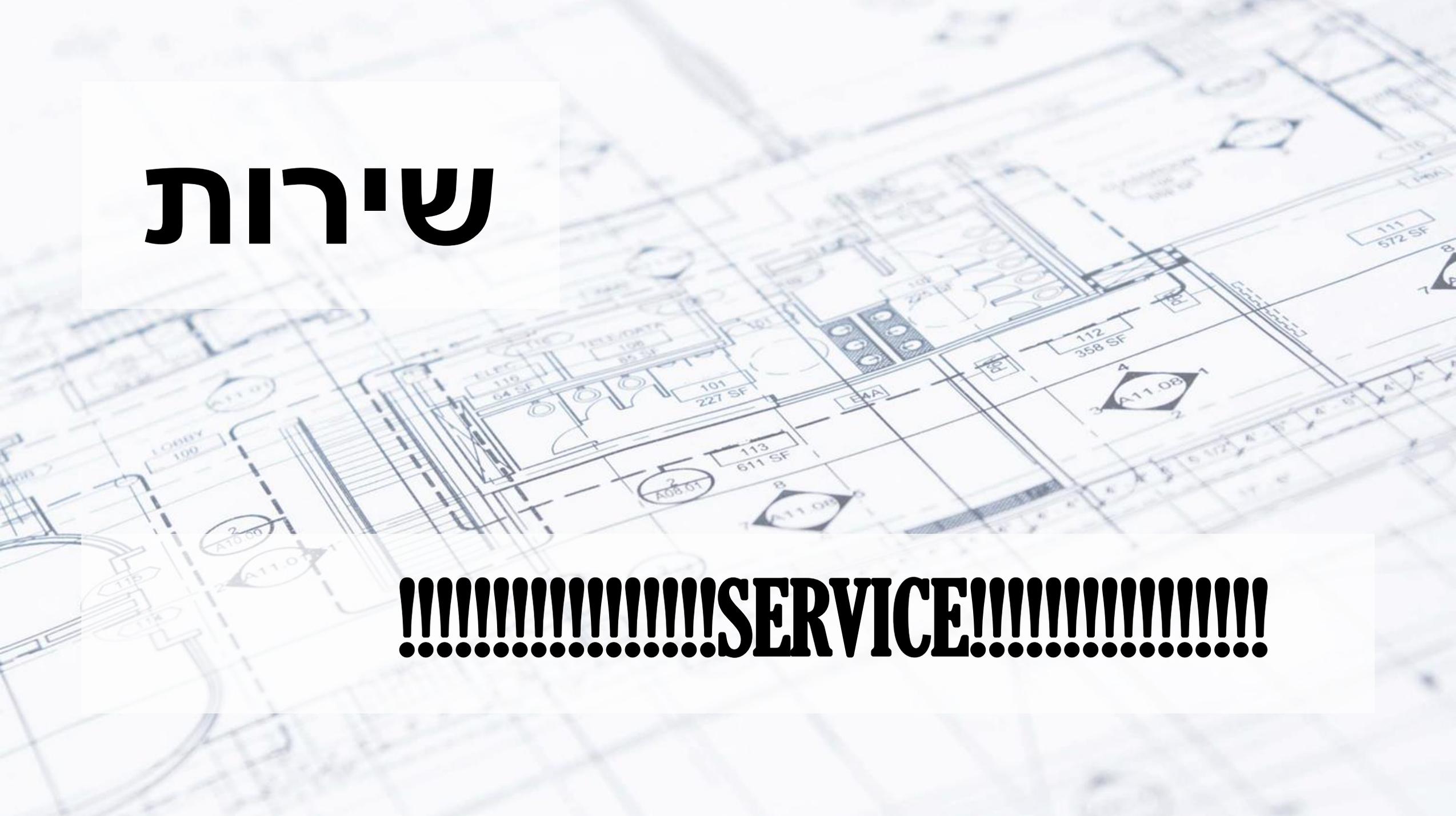
## What would you do?

- You inspect poor quality work by a local contractor. So you call the homeowner, report an unusual number of deficiencies, tell the owner that you've had problems with this contractor in the past. Is this appropriate?
- You have a side business unrelated to your job as a CEO. You occasionally need copies made, so you use the copier at work. Is this ethical?
- During a housing inspection for some rental units you find violations. You present the building owner your personal business card and let them know that you do work on the side. Is there an issue?
- Your County is divided into areas for different inspectors. Your Brother-in-law is building his own house. Even though it's not in your area, you make it a point to swing by and "catch" his inspections.
- A licensed contractor that you occasionally work with, in jurisdictions other than your own, now begins doing work in your county. What do you do the next time he asks you to work for him in another jurisdiction. By the way, you have to make your car payment next week.
- You are performing a framing inspection for a tract builder and notice a roll of housewrap and two windows (they were the wrong size) in the dumpster. You're getting ready to build a detached garage this fall. So you...

## CHARACTER AND ETHICS

The background is a detailed architectural floor plan of a building, showing various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. The plan is rendered in a light blue and grey color scheme. Key features include a 'LOBBY 100' on the left, several rooms with area labels like '112 358 SF' and '111 572 SF', and circular symbols with alphanumeric codes such as 'A10.00' and 'A11.08'. The overall layout is complex and technical.

# **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

The background is a detailed architectural floor plan of a building. It shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. Labels include 'LOBBY 100', 'ELEC 116 64 SF', 'TELE/DATA 108 85 SF', '101 227 SF', '112 358 SF', '113 611 SF', and '111 572 SF'. There are also circular callouts like 'A11.01' and 'A11.08'. The drawing is in blue lines on a light background.

שירות

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!SERVICE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

# **CUSTOMER SERVICE: WHO IS “YOUR” CUSTOMER?**

**Co-Workers, Property owners, Homeowners, Associates,  
Installers, Designers, Contractors, Homebuilders,  
Technicians, Council members, Commissioners, City and  
County Managers, Everybody you know, Everybody you  
don't know, ME!!!!!! I am your Customer!**

**Every Citizen Who Uses a Private or Public Building, or who  
wants to use a private or public building, or who knows  
someone who wants to use..... get it?**

# CUSTOMER SERVICE

As a representative of the jurisdiction, do you come across as a strict rule enforcer of the codes or as an ambassador?

- Have you gained their trust?
- Are you taken seriously when you explain the details of a violation.
- Are you the first point of contact? Do you have the ability to correct the problems?

**The key is to come across more as a facilitator rather than regulator!**



**Customer Service**

Excellent

Good

Average

Poor

## **Safety, Health and Well-being in the built environment!**

- Public safety advocacy – community risk reduction
- *Enforcement and Administration* of building and fire safety codes
- A thorough knowledge of the codes – both the letter and the *intent* of the code
- Always fair and always consistent application of the codes
- Effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders
- Prioritization of risks based on community needs and available resources, an effective work plan to meet those needs (personnel and equipment needs vs. the budget)
- Code compliance attained by communication, education and by changing behaviors of our customers and ourselves

***Risk reduction, Response, Recovery, Mitigation***

**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE BUILDING SAFETY OFFICIAL?**

In an environment where the politics seem to indicate there is a:

- Public desire for “less government”
- Public desire for “less regulation”
- “Cost” versus “Investment” narrative on every project
- Public apathy about safety codes
- Elected officials have absolutely no idea about the value code officials bring to the community.

**We have to Raise Our Profile and tell our story!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

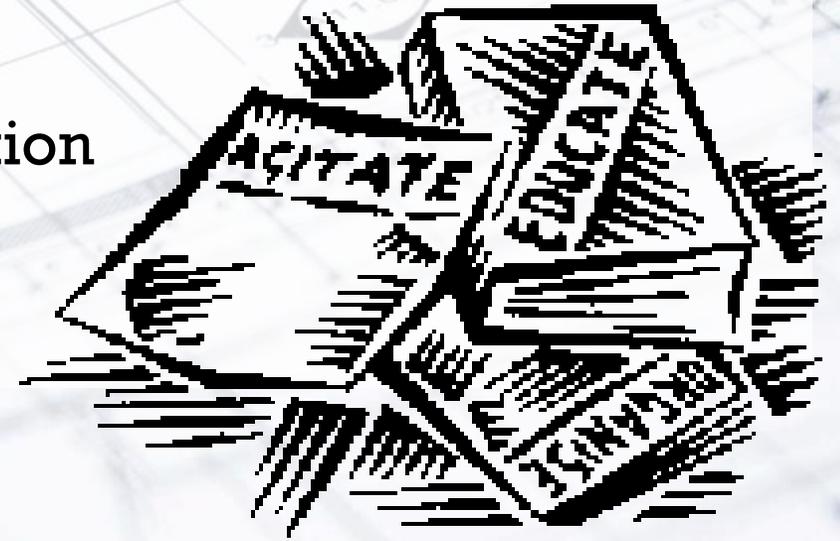


**CUSTOMER  
SERVICE**

# Every interaction can be used as a chance to educate.

Does your jurisdiction have;

- Outreach efforts for the department
- Informational handouts/application guides
- Website
- Plan review and constructive feedback
- At the jobsite, do you have non-enforcement interaction with the Designer, the GC, the sub-contractors



CUSTOMER SERVICE

## **Choose your ways and your words carefully**

**Avoid** – You can't do that. Avoid constantly saying “NO”!

**Better** – You know there are several ways to accomplish this and still meet the code requirements.

**Comment** – Be open minded, flexible and look at alternatives and solutions. Make suggestions from your knowledge, expertise and experience. Turn a negative situation into a positive one.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

**These efforts will result in;**

- Improved Public's perception
- Become a resource rather than adversary
- Be known as a person who works on finding solutions

**Being a Building Safety Official goes far beyond the simple duty of inspections and enforcing rigid rules. Sometimes a smile and kindness can resolve or prevent unnecessary heartache.**



**CUSTOMER SERVICE**



# CUSTOMER SERVICE

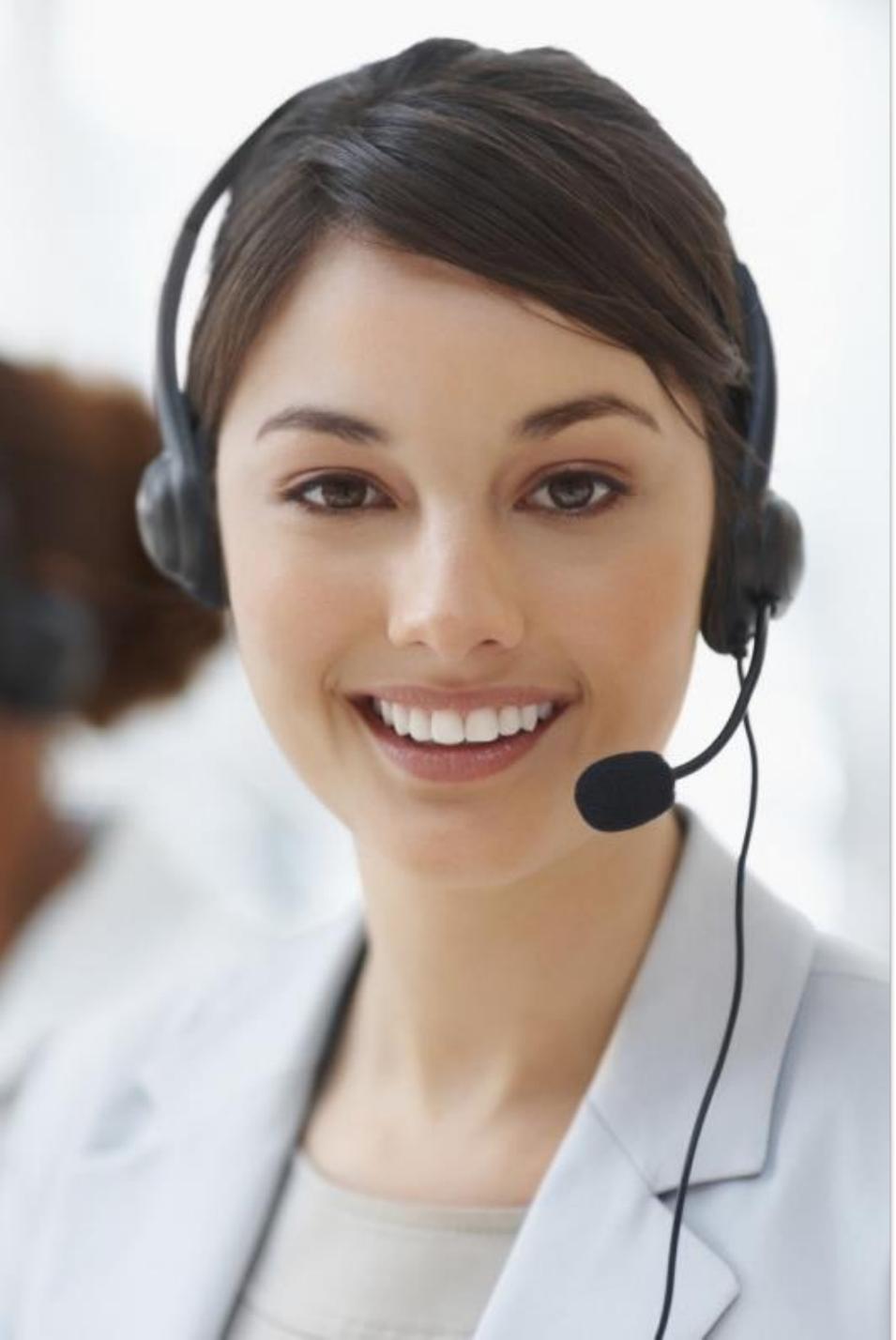
Why are People Difficult?

*Let's hope it's not quite this bad out there!*

But:

People

- Are rushed – not enough time
- Feel insecure
- Feel angry
- Have some need or interest
- Are stressed
- And they just don't understand buildings



## **“CUSTOMER SERVICE” MEANS MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

- We are Building Safety Officials!
- We are professionals and we are committed to excellence through service.
- We “expect” positive results from our efforts, and we “inspect” to ensure those results.
- We do not just “make” inspections.
- We perform inspections, and expect our efforts to “MAKE A DIFFERENCE”!

### **Flexibility**

- **Explores alternatives**
- **Intent of the code**
- **Meets minimum standards**
- **Open mind**

### **Boundaries**

- **What are the requirements**
- **Where does the code end?**
- **Don't ask for more than code requires**

### **Precision**

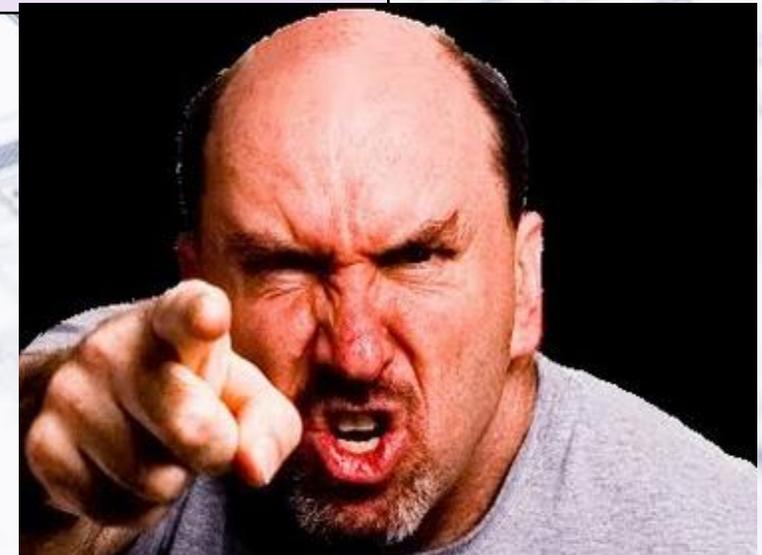
- **Level of precision varies**
- **Not an exact science**

### **Consistency**

- **Consistent and fair**

### **Problem or Issue?**

**Is 3.75 inches good enough for a house number...the code requires 4 inches.**



**CUSTOMER SERVICE**

# **THE SERVANT IS CALM, CONFIDENT, POSITIVE AND PROFESSIONAL; AND DOESN'T TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY.**

<b>Always</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Defuse</b>	<b>Escalate</b>
<b>Stay Calm</b>	<b>Argue</b>
<b>Listen</b>	<b>Interrupt</b>
<b>Let Them Vent</b>	<b>Don't Blame</b>
<b>Speak Quietly</b>	<b>Don't Raise Your Voice</b>
<b>Be Objective</b>	<b>Don't Criticize</b>

# ***EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE:***

**PEOPLE CAN BE DIFFICULT, AND WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH ALL OF THEM. DO YOU RECOGNIZE ANY OF THESE PERSONALITIES?**

Hostile or Aggressive

Know-it-all

The Yes person

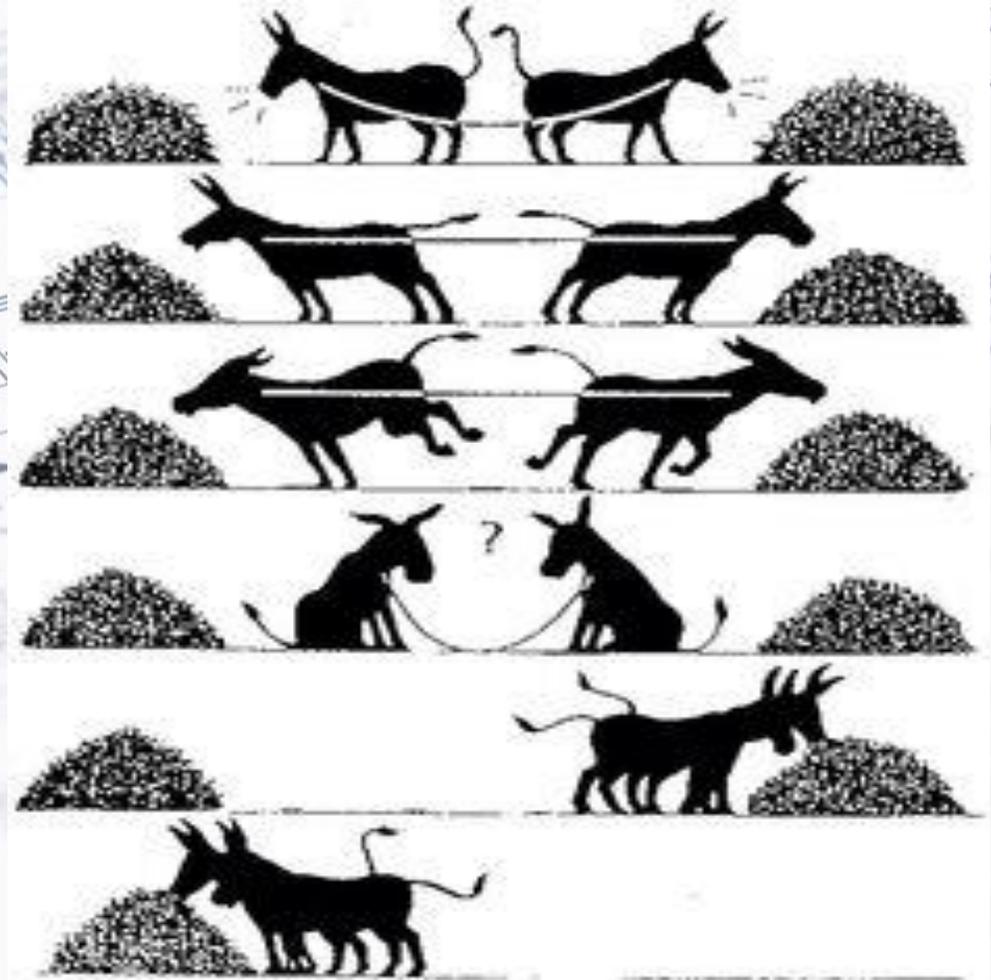
Whiner

Never says a word

Indecision

No Answer Whatsoever

***You know them all; your job is to find a unified way to get both of you to a common goal.***



**The Bully tries to belittle you....."I Pay Your Salary"!, "You don't have a clue what you're doing, I've been in business for 30 years." "I'll just call your boss, I know her." "I've never had to do this in \_\_\_\_\_'s County"**

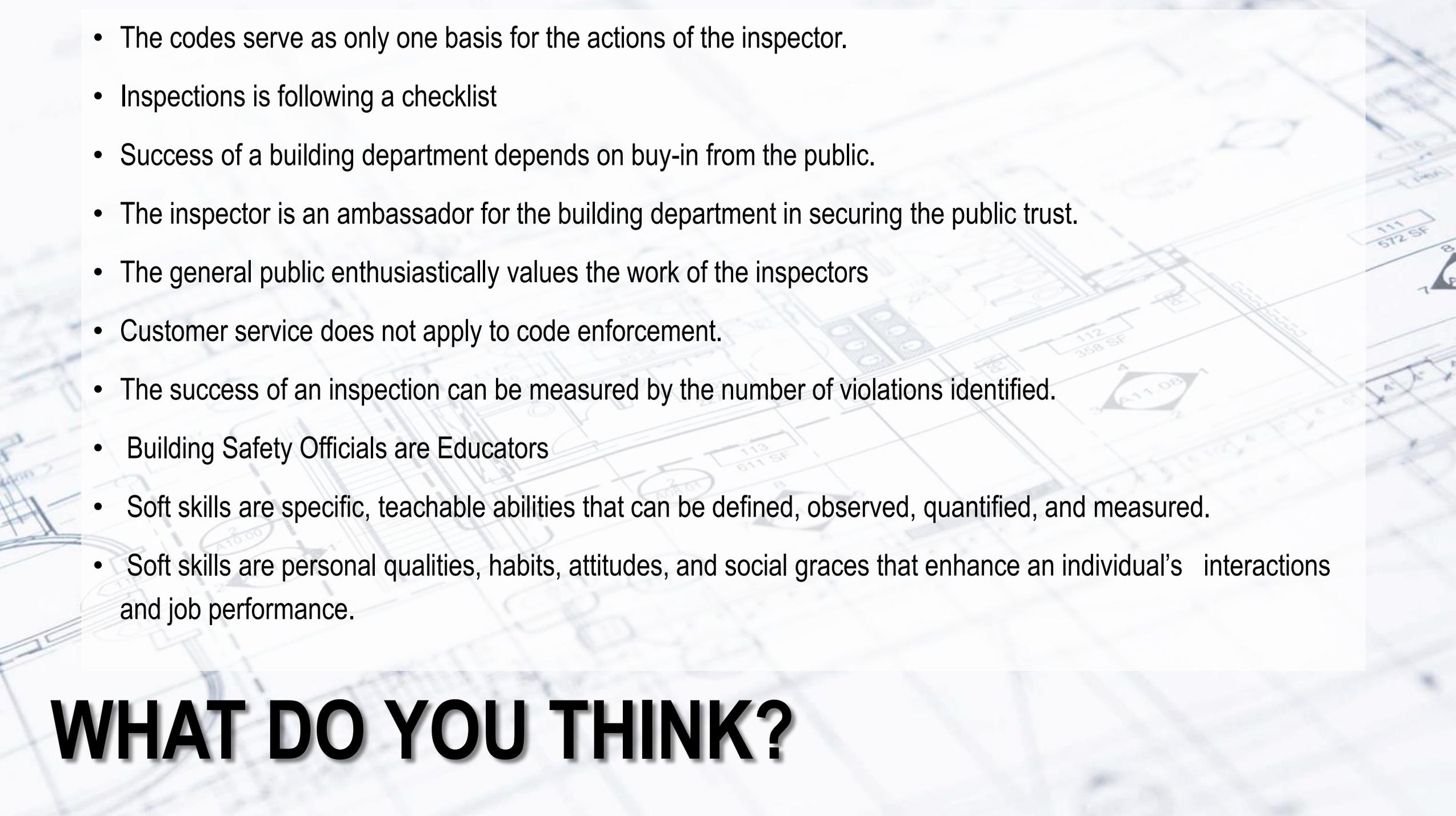
**How to handle them.....Let them vent.... let them save face..... don't back down, and gently make sure they know the "FACTS"..... Explain to them the benefit of doing things the right way.....appeal to their professionalism AND to their pocketbook.**

**Service!**

- The know-it-all tries to dominate the situation and the people in it; often by finding fault with everything and everyone?
- You can help the know-it-all by listening carefully, repeating the main points he/she says, and then pointing out the facts (be prepared to reinforce them). Use further questions to raise issues that will help their performance in the future.



**SERVICE!**

- 
- The codes serve as only one basis for the actions of the inspector.
  - Inspections is following a checklist
  - Success of a building department depends on buy-in from the public.
  - The inspector is an ambassador for the building department in securing the public trust.
  - The general public enthusiastically values the work of the inspectors
  - Customer service does not apply to code enforcement.
  - The success of an inspection can be measured by the number of violations identified.
  - Building Safety Officials are Educators
  - 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.

# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

# ■ So, Overall, Do You...

- have an agency or department *Mission Statement*?
- have a personal *Mission Statement*?
- perform periodic self-assessments and situation assessments (lessons learned)?
- value your impact on “your” community?
- feel like safety in the built environment is your job?
- know your jurisdictions strategic plan and how you fit in to it?



**SO, WHAT DO WE DO  
NOW?**

Use opportunities like Building Safety Month to raise awareness in your jurisdiction. Management's trust in you will:

- Build confidence in your decision making abilities
- Enable you to work more independently
- Send a signal to the public that the Building Safety Official's work is:
  - Not just worthwhile, but essential.
  - A valuable outreach between municipality and the public.

This makes it easier to get the needed support from your  
Department Director,  
City/County Manager,  
Elected officials



**WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR JURISDICTION?**

# SOURCES

- Inspector Skills – Steven A. Van Note
- Dan Dockery – Chief Building Official, WS/FC Planning & Development Services
- Hundreds of Inspectors Everywhere
- Builders, Designers, Tradespeople Everywhere
- **CITIZENS!!!!!!!!!!**

# Thank You For Attending

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