**Inspector Skills**

**Introduction**
- My background
- International Code Council (ICC)
- Your background
- Codes, Standards and Specifications
- Skills are transferable

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

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 – Purpose

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

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
Foundation

- Solid technical knowledge
  - Construction methods and materials
  - Code provisions

- The codes serve as the basis for the decisions and actions of the inspector.

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”?)*

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
Support from

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

Methods of Support

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

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
Minimum Requirements

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

Interpretation (Continued)

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

Interpretation

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

Alternatives

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

Approaches to Inspection

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

Attitude

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

– Winston Churchill
Attitude (continued)

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

ATTITUDE

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

Roles of Inspector

- What roles do you see the inspector filling?

Roles of Inspector

- Ambassador
- Educator
- Facilitator
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

Facilitator
Facilitate:
To make easier, to help bring about.

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

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
Public Trust and Acceptance

- Promotes adoption of codes
- Improves public safety

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

Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flexibility</th>
<th>Boundaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Explores alternatives  
  • Intent of the code  
  • Meets minimum standards  
  • Open mind | • What is required?  
  • Where does the code end?  
  • Don’t ask for more than code requires |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem or Issue</th>
<th>Consistency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Level of precision varies  
  • Not an exact science | • Consistent and fair |
Is 3.75 inches close enough for a house number? The code says ≥ 4 inches.

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

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

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
**Time Management Tips**

- Turn off email notification
- Handling paperwork
- Identify roadblocks
  - Procrastination
  - Indecision
  - Processes

**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

**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?)

**Professionalism (continued)**

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

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

Barriers to Getting Along

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

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**

### Rules without reason

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remarks to avoid</th>
<th>I don’t write the code, I just enforce it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative message sent</td>
<td>I’m not very interested in learning the reasons for code requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct action</td>
<td>Support the code and give reasons for the rules. Emphasize minimum requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Authoritative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remarks to avoid</th>
<th>There’s a new sheriff in town. It’s my way or the highway. Not in my town.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative message sent</td>
<td>I’m in charge, I decide ... just do what I say. Don’t cross me or there will be consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct action</td>
<td>Encourage a collaborative working relationship .... Avoid “I,” “me” or “my”. Be respectful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Correction without cause

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remarks to avoid</th>
<th>That’s the way we like to see it done.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative message sent</td>
<td>We make up rules based on our personal preferences because we think it’s better that way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct action</td>
<td>Require only what the code requires. Avoid the perception of enforcing rules based on personal preferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fortune telling

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

- Marcie’s grocery list
  - hamb.
  - tapioca
  - wh. cr.

Communication

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

- Sender
- Receiver
- Message/Feedback
- Channel
- Feedback

**Plan Your Communication**

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

**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

**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
Four truisms of communications

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

Telephone Communication Tips

• Answering
• Making
• Voicemail

Communication

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

Telephone Communication Tips

• Answering Phone
  • Friendly, cheerful, professional
  • Focus on caller
  • Patient and helpful
  • Clear and concise
  • Verify message received correctly
Telephone Communication Tips

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

Voicemail

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

Communication

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

Types of Written Communication

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

Written Communication
- Respectful tone
- Helpful intent
- Clear and concise message

The Stages of Report Writing
- Preparation
- Drafting
- Revising
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.

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.

Effective Word Choices

1. Sarah Wilson advised me that she left for work at 7:45 that morning.

  - Is this correct?

  - She told you. Save advise for actual advice.

  - Does NOT meet the requirements
Effective Word Choices

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

Effective Word 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

Effective Word Choices

5. Sawyer cursed and swore when he saw my identification.
   - Is this correct?

Effective Word Choices

- 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
Inspector Skills

Inspection Notices

- Don’t be a critic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incorrect</th>
<th>Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is the worst framing job I’ve seen in 20 years! Need lots of truss bracing. Rest of framing approved—reluctantly.</td>
<td>Framing corrections required: Lateral bracing on trusses … Call for reinspection before covering.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incorrect</th>
<th>Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Framing violations: Nail plates for plumbing Fireblocking Exterior wall blocking | Framing corrections—install the following:  
  • List  
  Okay to insulate, but leave these areas visible for reinspection. Please call for inspection. |

- Stick to the code requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incorrect</th>
<th>Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>The … meets the minimum clearance requirements and is approved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication

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

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.

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)

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
Things to Avoid

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

Written Communication Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unprofessional</th>
<th>Professional, courteous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jason - not receiving truss dwg so I can check trusses but not at job either :-( r u sending over soon???? ;-</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Written Communication Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shouting, condescending</th>
<th>Respectful, sticks to facts and reason.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EGRESS WINDOWS ARE REQUIRED IN <strong>ALL</strong> BASEMENTS, <strong>NOT</strong> JUST BASEMENTS WITH HABITABLE SPACE!!!!!!</td>
<td>… 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 …</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Written Communication Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical, judgmental, imposing personal preference, fortune telling.</th>
<th>Accurate, respectful, helpful.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, the code says you can do it that way, but everybody gets this wrong and so will you. …</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Communication**

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

**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

**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

**Body Language-Informal Feedback**

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

- **Touching, rubbing nose**: Rejection, doubt, lying
- **Hands on hips**: Aggression, readiness
- **Rubbing with eyes closed**: Negative evaluation

**Non-verbal communication/ body language**:
- Sounds (e.g., laughing)
- Posture (e.g., slouching)
- Closeness (e.g., 'invading someone's space')
- Appearance (e.g., untidiness)
- Body contact (e.g., shaking hands)
- Eye movements (e.g., winking)
- Hand movements (e.g., nodding)
- Facial expression (e.g., frowning)
Inspector Skills 101
Hands clasp behind head/back
Anger, frustration, apprehension

Inspector Skills 102
Head resting on hand
Boredom

Inspector Skills 103
Biting nails
Insecurity, nervousness

Inspector Skills 104
Smiling, expressive, open arms
Excited
Arms crossed on chest

Defensiveness

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

Peter Drucker

Formal Feedback
- Ask questions
- Repeat in your own words

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

Angry People

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

Difficult Conversations

- Deliver focused and clear instruction

- Invite comment

- Listen

- Thank the customer for listening

Avoid “I” and “You”

- I want you to do this.

- The code requires this.
Avoid “I” and “You”

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

This department handout will be helpful in understanding the code requirements.

Communications Recap

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

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.

Communications Recap

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

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

Who are our Customers?

- Associates
- Installers
- Designers
- Home owners
- Technicians
- Property owners
- Coworkers
- Homebuilders
- Contractors
- Those in other departments

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
First Impressions

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

Customer Service

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

Expectations

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

Customer Service

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

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

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
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.

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.

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

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

Choose Word Carefully

- Frequently
- Often
- Seldom
- Never
Customer Service
- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
  - Complaints
- Dealing with difficult people

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

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

Customer Service
- First Impressions
- Expectations
- Listening
- Choosing words carefully
- Obstacles
- Complaints
- Dealing with difficult people
Why are People Difficult?

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

A Difficult Person can be

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

Conversations with Difficult People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON'T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defuse</td>
<td>Escalate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay calm</td>
<td>Argue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>interrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let them vent</td>
<td>Blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak quietly</td>
<td>Raise your voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be objective</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain confident and positive</td>
<td>Take it personally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hostile aka “The Tank”

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

Dealing with the Know-It-All
- Know your facts….be prepared
- Listen carefully and paraphrase the main points
- Use questions to raise issues

The Know-It-All
- Controls people and events by dominating
- Tries to find flaws in everything

Yes Person
- Answers “yes” to everything
- Seeks approval and avoids disapproval
Dealing with the Yes Person
- Work to get to the underlying issue
- Tell how much you value their opinion
- Listen for hidden messages

Dealing with the Whiner
- Don’t respond if they are blaming you
- Make sure facts are correct
- Ask them to propose solutions

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

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
Dealing with the Clam

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

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.

No Person

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

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?
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?

Coping (continued)

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

Doing the Right Thing

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

- Thomas Jefferson

OTHER WAYS?
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

Slander

- October 25, 2014
- Jury: Council member slandered builder
- $100,000 in damages
- City will appeal
- Councilmember's reputation damaged
- Inspectors must avoid situations where they benefit personally from a decision.
- Regulations must be applied consistently and equitably.

Grabbing Headlines

- ‘Enforcer’ vs. ‘educator’
- Marshall: Inspector ‘overly aggressive’

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.
Ethical Decisions

- Butterfly Test
- Authority Test
- Public Scrutiny Test

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?

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?

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?
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?

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.

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

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.
Fact or Myth?

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

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.

Thoughts?

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

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