

# COMS 361

## BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

### OUR THING 03: "Mister Tibbs"

"They call me *Mister Tibbs*!"

Virgil Tibbs (Sidney Poitier), *In the Heat of the Night*

For your **fourth individual/group project**, your team is to create an **instructional package** to be used in **training people** how to **be better leaders** through development of **personal ethics**, using the **required and suggested reading** materials for **Units 1, 2, 3, and 4** (although the **focus** here is obviously on **Unit 4**, for this **assignment** I will **look kindly** upon efforts to **incorporate material** from **previous units**—thus, a good program for leader **ethical development (Unit 4)** should involve considerations of **etiquette** and **good behavior** (material from **Unit 1**); the communication **climate** of an organization (material from **Unit 2**); and being a good **group participant** (material from **Unit 3**).

In constructing your **instructional package**, try to take the perspective of a person in a **leadership position** in an organization. Everyone suspects that **what the leader does** is according to a **set of rules different** from those followed **by subordinates**, and research from the area of **rhetorical studies** tends to confirm this, focusing, rather than on **routine procedures**, on **higher-order concerns** (such as **ethics**, especially as these relate to the "long game" of **organizational survival**). As with group participants (and probably even **more so**) leaders are given **almost no instruction**, often **thrown into positions** where they are required to **learn as they go**, or else **fail**.

As with the previous projects, on the **World Wide Web** you could find **thousands of examples** of how-to **tips for leading** but of course that's not what we are looking for. As **before**, you are to use the material in your **assigned readings**, backed up (if necessary) by material from the **suggested readings**, to create your own **considerations** concerning what one should take into account in order to **develop into an effective—but ethical—leader**. Just as a **warning**, this is going to be a **bit more demanding** than the previous OUR THINGS assignments. You will not just be functioning according to a **higher order** of **mental analysis**, you will also be exploring a **job (leader)** that **few people occupy** and many will **never hold**.

The parameters of the assignment are as before. You are to find at least **seven specific lenses** from among the required readings. You may use **any of the readings**, but there must be **at least two lenses** from **each** of the readings. Be sure to identify **exactly which lenses** you are using, and **where** in the readings I can **find them**. In this **first production** of your training manual, you should include this **bibliographic information**, though obviously as we work toward the final product (the **compiled training manual**), this information **would not** be included.

As to **contents**, you should include: (1) your **training manual** (which should be formatted as a **high-quality item** you'd be **proud to provide** trainees as your organization's **product**); (2) a **PowerPoint presentation**; (3) **handouts** you want your audience to have (you just need to turn in **one copy**, not enough to **hand out to everyone!**); and (4) any other form of communication you need to get your message across (e.g., **role plays**). Your presentation should take no **fewer than eight, nor more than twelve, minutes**.

The **results** of your project will be presented on the day **indicated in the syllabus**. It will be graded on the basis of **completeness**, use of **reading material**, **originality**, and **coherence**. You might also want to be dressed in **business casual attire** and to conduct your presentation, **not as a classroom exercise**, but insofar as possible, as a "**real-life**" **business performance**.

For this OUR THING assignment, there'll be sessions **set aside** where your group can prepare. Hand in a **hard copy** of your documents (with **attachments**) **prior to presenting** (this is primarily to aid me in **taking notes** during your performance), as well as sending an **electronic version** via email attachment (an **attachment** to an **Outlook email**, no **third-party** stuff like Google Docs!). **Your results** will be presented on the **day indicated** in the syllabus. Everything will be graded on the basis of **completeness**, use of **reading material**, **originality**, and **coherence**.