

Your Life and Business is Affected by How You Communicate

Until it is brought forcefully to our attention, we forget the power of effective communications. Maybe it's because we usually think of communicating as something done by others — television reporters or newspaper and magazine writers. But it is so much more.

Let me give you a couple of examples.

Our son sent a card this past Easter to his 92-year-old grandmother. At the end of a short note he wrote, "I love you more than words can express."

I know this for a fact because the card so moved his grandmother that she sent it to her daughter, my wife. It was thoughtful of her to share because we hadn't received a similar card so it was comforting to see our son's hand writing and signature.

But seriously, that sentence, though simple, brought immeasurable joy to the people who read it. More joy and pride than the young man who wrote it could imagine, blinded as he is by youth and the prospect of a long and fruitful life.

Unfortunately, too few young people, as well as their parents, are capable of writing simple sentences that express feelings or ideas, or that communicate information or even ask direct, simple questions.

This was brought home to me by another letter that we received recently at the Association. I don't believe the young writer is a member of an Angus family. But if he is, and recognizes his words, I apologize for any embarrassment it may cause him. Even more I hope that seeing his letter in print spurs him to learn to write a proper letter to the American An-

gus Association or to his mother or grandmother.

Here is the letter just as he wrote it:

Dear american angus association

I am writing a term paper for college and was wondering if could send me some materials on these questions or tell me more about them?



*What is the performance of angus?
How many angus cattle is there
around the United States?*

*Where does angus rank in the rest of
the beef cattle in the world?*

*Is the angus association growing every
year?*

*Who found the Angus cow and how
did it come back?*

*I sure would appreciate it if could an-
swer these questions or send me some ma-
terial on it...*

It is hard to imagine how a person with these limited skills could end up in college writing a term paper. But evidently it happens all the time because we receive let-

ters similar to this one far too often.

It has been fashionable recently to blame our school system for nearly every ill that affects our country, and maybe the schools are at fault. But it has been my experience that parents get the kind of education for their children that they demand of the school system and of their children.

If this is indeed the case then we must demand that our students be able to write and speak effectively by the time they reach high school, let alone college. We must demand that our students write grammatically correct letters to relatives when they are at home and that at school they write sentences and paragraphs every week that are graded and then corrected by the student. We must demand that students read good books, newspapers and magazines at home and study and read good literature and poetry at school, even memorize and recite poetry from time to time.

People who have never learned a poem or memorized a passage from a book, or been moved emotionally by the written word are less likely to ever develop the skills to communicate with others.

This failure puts most people at a disadvantage all their life. They suffer from the inability to make a simple written request for information or help, can't tell their grandmothers what they think or feel, and lack the ability to communicate to potential customers the benefits of buying their registered Angus cattle.