

WISDOM SESSION

The Power of the Word

“A committee is a group of people who individually can do nothing, but collectively meet and decide that nothing can be done.”

Frequently, we become so pragmatic that we fail to be effective. Years ago, the editor of The Dallas Morning News pointed out to the sports writers that “Bill” was not a suitable substitute for “William” and “Charlie” was not a suitable substitute for “Charles.” Taking him literally, one of the sports writers, in the heyday of Doak Walker of SMU, wrote about an important game. In his story, he pointed out that in the 3rd quarter, Doak Walker had left the game with a “Charles Horse”. I think you’ll agree that the story lost some meaning with the use of “Charles.”

Perhaps the ultimate absurdity occurred in an article in a national publication when the writer setup the computer to analyze Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. That address contains 362 words and 302 of them are one syllable. It’s simple and direct, but powerful and effective.

The computer made recommendations about how the speech really should have been given. For example, instead of saying “Four Score and Seven Years”, the computer deemed that approach too wordy and suggested “eighty-seven years”. The efficiency in the reduction is obvious, but the loss of effectiveness, power, drama, and passion is even more obvious. When Lincoln said “We are engaged in a great civil war,” the computer questioned whether the word great was justified. This despite the fact that our nation suffered 646,392 casualties, including 364,511 deaths.

I think you’ll agree that eloquence and drama, combined with passion, logic, and common sense, are far more effective in inspiring people to do great things than technical correctness. Think about it, knowing their power, use your words carefully.

- Something to Smile About

“The wise in heart are called discerning, and gracious words promote instruction.”

— Psalm 16.21

BAME- Be the Architect of My Enviroment

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David Trent believes that wisdom comes from continually seeking to learn and grow through relationships and reading, which leads to personal development. In an effort to inspire learning in others, David Trent sends out weekly Wisdom Sessions. He recommends purchasing and reading any book source used in these Wisdom Sessions.