

## Coach's Corner

by Sharon Pahlka, kidney patient and life coach



### Underpromise...overdeliver

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I just drives me NUTS when people make commitments to friends, business associates, or customers and then they are either: unable to meet, unwilling to meet, or don't follow through.

If you develop the habit of *promising less while delivering more*, you will fulfill more of your potential, and people will value you more. So, learn to underpromise and overdeliver.

When I first heard this principle it did not take me long to figure out that I make promises to others because I want to be valued and liked. Okay, I am a "people pleaser." So I would make promises and then hustle to carry out those promises. I would often run out of time or end up doing them poorly. Have you ever been there?

But my life changed when I realized I was focused on making and keeping promises rather than on the natural gifts I had to give. I found I could live without promises and give value to my clients by still helping them find solutions and resources. It was wonderful to give to my clients and know it would be a surprise. I realized that my friends and family care about me just as much, promise-free.

The key is to promise far less than you know you can deliver which allows you wiggle room. You can deliver something different and better than the person was expecting because the pressure to perform is off. I think you will enjoy the space and freedom that comes from the underpromising and overdelivering.

**Coaching Question:** Why do you need to make promises at all? Are there other options...a better way?

**Coaching Tip:** Be serious and careful when giving your word. Most of us are too quick to give our word and forget the cost of keeping it.

**Homework:** Commit to making absolutely no promises for one week or longer. Explore the question "Why ARE you making promises?" While promising less, be creative in delivering value to others.

**Quote:** "Do-so' is more important than 'say-so'."

—Pete Seeger

Sharon is a life coach specializing in helping those with chronic health challenges live well and meaningfully. She spent 19 years on dialysis, and for the last 13 years has had a kidney transplant. To learn more and read other Coach's Corner articles, visit her Web site: <http://www.lifeisagift.com>.