

From: Paul Gardner
To: All DFL Representatives; All GOP Representatives
Date: 5/13/2009 11:12 AM
Subject: Colleagues: How not to communicate with each other
Attachments: gardner letter.docx

Dear colleagues,

At this time in the session, the pressure builds, the deadlines loom, and the differences among us start to magnify. We're tired and a little cranky. That said, we still need to maintain high standards in our communications to each other, either with the opposite caucus or within our own.

I recently failed to maintain those high standards in some electronic communications regarding two of our members. I have attached a letter that I shared with Rep. Emmer and Rep. Buesgens.

Members, this is one of the strangest workplaces that you can be in. We are co-equals rather than members of a top-down hierarchy. We pledge to do our best for the state and to work together. And yet, it is our mission when we are not in this building to bring upon the demise of our colleagues from across the aisle! Somehow we usually keep it together, but I hope that we can renew and maintain high standards and then focus on differences in policy and not in personality, particularly in this difficult week to come. Perhaps in the interim, we can take heed of the words of former Rep. Ozment, who said in his retirement speech last year that we need to get to know each other better, so that we can do the people's work in a mature and thoughtful way. I regret that after two years I do not know many of you well, and I hope to rectify this in the months to come.

It is a pleasure and honor to serve with all of you. Have a great day.

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