

*She knew that executives would be more open to gaining the skills and confidence they needed to succeed if she were an external consultant as opposed to an internal employee.*

# MELISSA DELAY MESSENGER

➤ Early in her career, Melissa DeLay worked for an uncoachable CEO who was adamant that what, how and when he said or wrote things wasn't a big deal. He preferred to wing it. Inevitably, his poorly chosen and ill-timed words devastated employee morale, resulting in poor productivity and profit losses.

His verbal and written blunders also presented her with a case study in the dos and don'ts of effective communications. Then it hit her. Unless you're naturally gifted, someone really does have to show even smart and accomplished CEOs how to communicate well.

When they do, people work harder and are more loyal to the company and its brand.

- Favorite song? *I could no sooner choose a favorite star in the Heavens, but if I must narrow it down, anything by the Eagles.*
- One word descriptor? *Magnetic*
- Wishes she would have tried? *I always wanted to live in a big city, right downtown in the heart of the chaos, working for a high-powered consultancy firm, traveling internationally.*
- Like to meet in an elevator? *Hands down Colin Powell.*
- Introvert, extrovert or ambivert? *I've always considered myself an extrovert, but given I barely speak to my neighbors there has to be a bit of introvert in me.*
- Birth order? *I am the third oldest of six total children...two step-siblings, two half-siblings and one biological sibling*
- Saying? *Bless your heart. I use it when coaching executives to soften my you're-not-doing-it-right message.*

In the 18 years since that experience, she's helped salespeople, managers and executives at Carlson, Maytag, 3M and the State of Minnesota communicate effectively and boost productivity.

Melissa's corporate years presented countless opportunities to craft strategic messages that helped drive change, manage crises, boost engagement and build brand awareness. The best practices gleaned from this experience are the lifeblood of the services and tools of TruPerception she founded in 2011.

DeLay knew that executives would be more open to gaining the confidence and skills they needed to succeed if she were an external consultant as opposed to an internal employee.

She decided to fund her startup by securing a contract position at a Fortune 500 company that paid significantly higher than her previous "day job".



TruPerception [truperception.com](http://truperception.com)  
melissa@truperception.com 763-670-6701



Melissa funneled all the extra income into the business. After eight months, she was cut and experienced the reality of new business ownership...prior to that the phrase "cash flow" had never entered her mind. After that, it was all she thought about every minute of every day.

The best part of being a microbusiness? Being her own boss. Getting to work when she wants with whom she wants.

What's the hardest part of being a microbusiness? Being her own boss. She goes too easy on herself one day and too hard the next. She's learning how to better manage herself!

What's Melissa's wish for the generation that came before? More peace, less fear and a greater sense of adventure.

**PRIOR TO THAT THE PHRASE "CASH FLOW" HAD NEVER ENTERED HER MIND. AFTER THAT, IT WAS ALL SHE THOUGHT ABOUT EVERY MINUTE OF EVERY DAY.**

She struggles to be productive during the day hours when she should work the hardest. "I'm like a baby who has her days and nights mixed up. When I wake up, I prolong my run or

workout, stare aimlessly out the window and finally settle in to work around noon. By then I'm hungry and need a lunch break. Then I realize I'm out of milk, so I run up to the store quick. And when I finally get back to work, my kids are coming home on the bus, which is a distraction that never ends. So, around 7 p.m. I'm frantic, highly motivated and ready to dive into work without breaks until 1 or 2 a.m. By the time my head finally hits the pillow, I'm satisfied with my day and rededicated to getting an early start with the new day only to find myself struggling to get out of bed and again prolonging my run, staring out the window. You get the idea.