

Keep It Short, Simple

Some people believe that important messages and decisions must be conveyed with much verbiage and fanfare. A humble and wise President Abraham Lincoln was not one of those individuals.

On April 7, 1865, with the Civil War raging, Lincoln needed to communicate with one of his generals on the front lines. His credibility as president – and the country's future – hung in the balance. He wanted his message to inspire, but also to be clear. Here's what he wrote:

Lieut. Gen. Grant,

Gen. Sheridan says, "If the thing is pressed, I think Lee will surrender." Let the thing be pressed.

Lincoln

Lincoln was a brilliant, concise communicator. He knew that few things are as effective as simplicity and directness. His famous *Gettysburg Address* is another example of succinct communication. Too many words can take up more of one's time than is necessary and often serve the deliverer of the message rather than the receiver. What's more, lengthy messages can become confusing and diluted, losing the original intent altogether.

In Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, as well as in your personal life, follow Lincoln's example. There is no need to complicate your message with needless jargon or equivocation. Say what you mean. Then send that e-mail, issue that memo or end that phone call.

Keep it short and simple.

And already, I've said too much on the subject.

--Beecher Hunter