

The Ring in the Pocket

We may never know what really happened. But when it was over, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft was short one 4.94-carat, diamond-encrusted Super Bowl ring – and Russian President Vladimir Putin had pocketed one heckuva goodwill gift.

The *Boston Globe* reported on a meeting in St. Petersburg between Putin and several American business executives. At one point, witnesses saw Kraft remove his 2005 Super Bowl ring – awarded to him after his team's victory – and show it to Putin.

The Russian president examined the ring, tried it on, then put it in his pocket and left the gathering, leading some to speculate about whether he had commandeered the ring.



When contacted about the incident, a Patriots spokesman said Kraft could not be reached for comment. Later, Kraft issued a statement saying the ring was a gift to the Russian president.

Did Kraft really intend to give up his ring only to have his goodwill gesture misinterpreted by those nearby? Or did Putin misunderstand Kraft's offer for him to try on the ring and assume it was a gift?

Either way, the incident is a reminder of how easily simple exchanges can become complicated affairs.

Good communication, of course, is helpful in any situation, be it involving church, politics, marriage, education – or even showing off a ring.

– Beecher Hunter