

LIFE ASSISTANCE NEWS

WELLNESS & PROACTIVE LIFE TIPS

November 2009

*"The bow too tensely strung is easily broken.
Laugh, love and live life."*

- Rich Jensen

Work Life Tips

⇒ Say 'NO' Without Feeling Guilty...

Would you be more assertive and not take on other people's work if only you could say "no" without feeling guilty? The missing pieces of your motivation might be the following: Remember that every time you don't say 'no' to people asking you to do their job or task, you're really saying that what you would otherwise be doing is not as important as what they want you to do. You are also saying that their time is more valuable than yours. To complete the assertive approach, also be prepared to offer them alternatives.

⇒ More Productive Meetings...

If you have been annoyed by the nonproductive nature of your team meetings, you should know that psychology researchers have been listening. A recent study—one that spanned the existing research on teams over a 22-year period—found that most teams tend to drone on in meetings, discussing things everybody on the team already knows. The "talkier" teams bond better but get less accomplished. The most productive teams share new and unique information with members and are structured to get this process and function down pat. *(Team meetings need to be shorter and punchier.) American Psychological Assoc.*

Be an Expert at Using Wasted Time...

How many months or years do we spend waiting? From DMV lines to doctor office waiting rooms — some social scientists figure it could be up to three years. You can't get your time back, so get even. Start with a new attitude about waiting time. View



it as a gift or unexpected opportunity to get something or a lot of things done to increase your personal productivity. Decide what types of tasks you want to do or complete while waiting. From adding phone numbers to your cell phone address book to creating a grocery list to listening to a self-development course on your iPod, waiting time can be your secret friend. To find the best activities, consider which tasks you are most likely putting off right now. They may be the best time-gap fillers with the highest returns, and may produce the best feelings when you finally get them knocked off your to-do list.

Zap Your Stress Away in Five Minutes...



This stress zapper takes only minutes to do, but once completed will keep giving relief for days, possibly weeks. *As you sit at your desk, look around the room.* Look for things in your environment that add to your stress — trash can too far away; boxes taking up the space under your desk; a burnt-out light bulb; the lack of a suitable bulletin board for notes, Post-its, and stray to-dos; dust; your path blocked by things on the floor that need to be stacked, tossed, or taken up off the floor; clutter on your desk taking up elbow room; no green plant(s); a squeaky chair; a clock you have to twist your neck to see. What's needling you? These micro-stressors swell in their combined impact. **Zap them and feel the difference.**

Working Smarter to Counteract Normal Mental Aging...

As we get older, cognitive decline sets in. But recent research reported by the American Psychological Association suggests that older employees in many occupations may be able to perform as well as young workers because they rely upon their experience to boost their overall performance, even while younger employees demonstrate faster thinking. The research study measured the performance of older air traffic controllers compared with that of their younger counterparts. Both groups performed experimental tests equally well, with the average age of older air traffic controllers being 57 and the average age of young air traffic controllers being 24. *Significance:* Look for more research in the future to support older workers getting and keeping their jobs based on ability, not their age. *Source:* APA Press Release, April 5, 2009.



Outside the Counseling Office...



Your Employee or Life Assistance Program (EAP) is a trusted resource in the organization and its staff is skilled in working with individuals and groups. The EAP has a reputation for neutrality, unbiased honesty, and the ability to build relationships. It also has a unique understanding of the work culture and knowledge of emerging needs. With these strengths, can the EAP help the organization outside of the one-an-one counseling setting? Yes — if you are part of a team, a manager who leads others, a policy maker who must influence organizational change, or an employee with a productivity idea you'd like to discuss confidentially, consider talking to the EAP. EAP's are not just for "reacting" to problems or helping "solve problems brought to them. They are untapped sources for consulting help that can offer powerful insights concerning workforce trends and emerging needs, morale, strategies for effective communication, and guidance for groups, departments, or the whole organization.

H1N1 Self Evaluation...

During flu season this year, you might have to wait a long time in a crowded waiting room before you can see your doctor or be seen in an Emergency Room. Some people with the flu need to be seen right away. Other people can often take care of themselves at home just fine. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has established a self evaluation form on their website. (<http://www.flu.gov/evaluation/>). Included are answers to dozens of common and not-so-common questions: facts and figures: reported cases and deaths: state-by-state information; action steps to prevent the spread of the virus in schools, workplaces, and households; and much more.



Flu fact: Those most vulnerable to H1N1 are younger people, pregnant women, health care personnel, and people who have underlying health conditions. *Source:* www.flu.gov

Information in the Employee Assistance News is not intended to replace counsel or advice of qualified health professionals. For help with personal concerns or for a referral to community resources, consult with a physician, a qualified health care provider or with Blomquist Hale as your Employee Assistance Professional 800-926-9619. For a complete list of Blomquist Hale office locations or phone numbers to these locations visit www.blomquisthale.com.