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The Corporate Communicator

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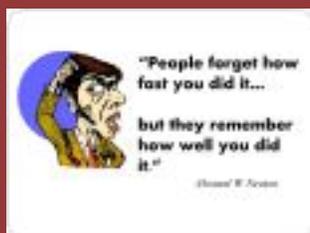
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Consider This ...



Be Entrepreneurial!

Here are a few "entrepreneurial" habits we can all adopt!

Embrace Change. Entrepreneurs are touted as highly motivated and flexible, but flexibility is important for any job!

Recognize that you won't always be in control of what happens, and ensure that you're prepared to adjust as circumstances change around you.

Foster your creativity. Creativity is an overlooked skill that most individuals have in grade school, let dwindle until retirement... at which time they pick up creative hobbies! Creativity benefits you and your organization no matter where you work or what you do! Take time to foster your creativity and add value to your life and to your organization!

Network. Networking and building a

group of peers and contacts that you trust can propel you to success and prepare you to have connections that you may not have otherwise seen—entrepreneur or not! Value the unique individuality of each person you meet and the relationships you build.

Take time for you. A little-known trait of successful entrepreneurs is their ability to balance the changing demands of their work and ensure they take time for themselves. This trait is important for anyone's happiness and success, so be sure that even in the busiest of times, you take time to do what you enjoy and relax!

These are just a few of the "entrepreneurial" traits we can all adopt to build to a more fulfilling and successful work experience and life!

Why We Love Cancelled Plans!

When you make plans with someone, you both commit to doing something and being somewhere at a specific date and time. This means that you both have blocked out time and had to say "no" to other plans or invitations. Canceling plans, especially last minute, can be very inconsiderate unless there is an emergency or something out of our hands that forces us to do this.

Having said that...Has there been a time when you were getting ready for a meeting, an event, or even just to meet up with friends and you received an email, phone call, or text cancelling or postponing your plans and you were pleased? Probably so! *Even if we were looking forward to what we had scheduled, we may feel relief—and*

even happiness—at the cancellation of these plans.

So the question is: why do we love cancelled plans? It could be because **we did not want to go through with them in the first place.** You may have said "Yes" to something you didn't have a real interest in, but you hated to say "No." When this type of plan is cancelled, it can certainly produce a feeling of relief.

Or maybe you cancelled because **you accidentally double-booked yourself**, or had a **last-minute invitation to something better.**

But the number one reason is: You suddenly get a gift of time! Time to do what you want. Time to not do anything. Time to waste! What a luxury that is and for that we are typically grateful!

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Communication “Don’ts” And How to Avoid Them!

When we talk about communication, we often focus on best practices that foster engagement—from active listening to body language. Equally important are some clear “don’ts” for communication. Here are some don’ts and how to avoid them:

Don’t assume. Assuming that the other party understands is a common pitfall in communication. Take care to ensure you’re being understood. Ask for feedback and check-ins for clarification during the conversation without being abrasive. A way to do that is to “own” a possible miscommunication by saying, “I may not have been clear. Please let me know what you think, I meant ...”

Don’t ignore issues. If you recognize that the communication is not going well, pause to better understand why this is the

case and what could be lacking. Stop and regroup. This will allow you to move forward and correct the issues.

Don’t underestimate clarity. Though not always immediately noticeable, a lack of clarity can ruin your communication and create problems later. Take the time to be clear. Use simple terms and give your explanations and instructions more than once, even if it seems redundant!

Don’t rely too heavily on electronics. Electronics are great tools for quick-and-to-the-point memos. However, keep the context in mind. For more emotional conversations, or ones that might be misconstrued, face-to-face interactions are better!

If you’re able to keep in mind not only some powerful best practices, but also the key mistakes to avoid, you’ll be an even better communicator!

7 Tips to Combat Loneliness at Work!

Loneliness in the workplace is an epidemic.

Why are leaders unaware of this?

Because the lonely individual often thinks that they are the only ones feeling this way and they don’t express their concerns.

Workplace loneliness needs to be taken seriously. Feelings of loneliness and isolation leads to lower productivity, lack of motivation, depression, poor team performance, as well as mistakes and accidents.

Leaders complain about lack of engagement. Meanwhile, their people feel like no one is paying attention, nor cares, about their human side. In other words, the lonely individual feels like the organization is neither engaging nor caring and they feel lonely and isolated even if there are people around.

If a person is **shy and introverted**, it may be harder for them to bond with others, but with appropriate actions they can build positive relationships.

A common cause of loneliness is the **age gaps** in the workplace. We have four generations working together. What are you doing to get them to relate to

each other?

Another cause is the **reliance on electronics.** More talk and less phone can help here!

Working from home is great but there needs to be efforts to build relationships.

Here are 7 tips to combat loneliness:

1. Be kind to yourself first so you can be kind to others. See yourself as a person, not just a “boss” or “coworker.”

2. Make sure your actions speak louder than your words. Don’t just tell someone you are there for them; be there when they need you. Offer to help or train them.

3. Show gratitude and give recognition often and sincerely.

4. Invite people to sit with you at lunch. Engage in positive conversations.

5. Conduct team building activities and use warm-ups at meetings.

6. Make your meetings and training upbeat and interactive.

7. Have team outings or mini-celebrations a few times a year so everyone has a chance to bond and build relationships in a more relaxed environment.

If you work to combat loneliness, the results will pay off many times over!!!

Leading Nonprofits: Understanding the Unique Challenges

Leading a nonprofit can be an incredibly rewarding experience. Working with others who are passionate about the mission seems like it should make for smooth sailing. However, sometimes the waters get rough. It's important to be aware of the challenges that are unique to the nonprofit sector.

Same goals - different visions. When I consult with not-for-profit organizations we talk about working toward the same mission, vision and goals. In truth, while we hope everyone is on the same page, people, in reality, can have vastly different ideas on how to achieve the mission. And because people are so passionate, rational thinking may not always occur. By harnessing and reconciling these differences, a well-managed facilitated discussion can open a dialogue for sharing ideas to find the best alternative.

Keep the long-term in view. In many not-for-profit organizations, when time gets short, it's easy to focus on the

immediate without thinking about the future. Strategic planning is postponed and there are no long-term goals. This is unfortunate. No matter what, take time to think ahead and be prepared for the future! Your organization will be much more effective and efficient!

Think like a business. It's easy to get lost in one's passion for the mission, but it's important to use good business practices! Make hard decisions as objectively as possible and that includes staff changes. Don't keep people who are not advancing your mission.

Donors and Board members are your customers. It is common to not think of your donors until it is time to ask them for more. Likewise, Board members only get an orientation when they first come on. Nonprofits need to keep donors and Board members engaged and trained to ensure they're being an important part of the team.

There are many challenges nonprofits face and as leaders, you must actively seek ways to improve both effectiveness and cohesiveness.

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Have you ever said, "but I told them ..." You probably did, but the message you sent was not the message they received. Call Dr. Mimi to help improve communications!!!

Dr. Mimi Hull is a fully licensed psychologist who has helped many organizations improve communication, leadership and team building. She can help you, your organization, your board and/or your staff.

Her most requested programs are in the areas of Communication, including Team Building, Leadership, Conflict Management, and Board Development.

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 by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I recently started a new job, but have found that despite being more than qualified (and perhaps more qualified than most of them), my co-workers seem to look down on me because I am much younger than many of them. How can I help them to understand that I am qualified and ready to add value and expertise to the organization?

—*Young and Able*

Dear Young:

A lack of understanding between generations is common. You each bring value to the table and can harness the advantage of different perspectives. Try to establish co-mentoring relationships with your co-workers to share knowledge and ideas.

Additionally, reflect and make sure you aren't looking down on your older co-workers as their experiences could add perspective and success to your career. Assert yourself in a confident and respectful way when you have value to add to the conversation, but be sure to spend time listening.

Bridging the gap with communication and co-mentorship can benefit everyone involved and the organization as a whole.

—*Dr. Mimi*

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

 by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I am thinking of taking a position with a competitor similar to my current job. I signed a yearlong noncompete agreement when I started with my current employer. I am working primarily on commission. How enforceable is the agreement? I would really like to bring my contacts with me.

—*Tempted*

Dear Tempted:

An agreement is an agreement. If you are good at what you do, you will be successful without violating the agreement. Also, a year is a relatively short length of time and will go by quickly if you keep busy. If you violate your agreement, not only are you looking at a possible lawsuit but also at possibly being blackballed in your industry. And, you may even have to live with a guilty conscience. If you are afraid that you will "starve," stay with your current employer or ask for a higher base rate from your new one.

—*Dr. Mimi*

Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.