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The Corporate Communicator

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"Every new idea looks crazy at first."

Developing Curiosity: The Driving Force Behind Workplace Creativity and Innovation

Curiosity plays a significant role in the workplace. It can be the driving force behind many significant breakthroughs and discoveries. Curious people think deeply and creatively, allowing themselves to develop new ideas, innovations, solutions, and more. So, how can we cultivate curiosity? Consider the following:

Resist relying on technology for one-click answers. Explore on your own and seek a diversity of information. Solicit rich information instead of simple answers.

Develop a curious mindset - Let go of any fixed beliefs or biases. Step away from familiar. Allow yourself to question

the "We've always done it that way" attitude.

Be humble enough to learn from others. You don't have to have the answers—just the questions!

Develop a new strategy- Approach any challenge with an open mind. Brainstorm different resolutions and write them down—even the ones that sound ridiculous at first. Then consider what steps are needed to make these suggested strategies a reality.

Ditch the "Comfort Zone" - This one is the ultimate game-changer. Nothing monumental ever started in the comfort zone. Remember, anything new can feel a bit scary. Don't let fear steer you away from taking risks. Embrace your fears and let them drive you to more knowledge and understanding.

Overcoming the Fear of Failure

Have you ever personally or professionally doubted your own capabilities? Did you fail to try because you thought you couldn't succeed? If so, you may be struggling with a fear of failure. Fear of failure is one of the greatest detriments in the workplace because it makes individuals reluctant to take action and keeps them from progressing professionally. **Let's take a look at our favorite tips for combating fear of failure:**

Redefine Failure - If you are viewing your failures as deterrents to reaching your goals, you have a fixed mindset of viewing failure as a limitation rather than an opportunity to grow. Adjusting your definition of failure to one of possible opportunity is crucial if you want to ditch this fear. *You can fail*

many times without being a failure!

Set Realistic Goals - If you notice that you are consistently not meeting your expectations, you may need to reevaluate your goals. View them from an outsider's perspective. Consider whether the goals are really attainable. Did you give yourself a reasonable amount of time to reach them? Do you have the needed resources? If you've bitten off more than you could chew, don't abandon them. Take a step back and readjust.

Focus on What You Can Control - There are always going to be external forces working against you. It is not your responsibility to try to change these things. In fact, you can't! Put your effort into those endeavors where you have control rather than wasting time trying to control the things you can't.

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Working With an “S” Boss

You have done the DiSC Profiles and your boss is a Strong S – Steady, Sincere, Systematic and likes Security. Managers with an S style want to make plans, be accommodating and be very dependable. However, they don’t like change and avoid conflict. **What can you do to work better with an “S” Boss?**

Prioritize collaboration – S bosses want people to get along, pool resources and work harmoniously as a team. When you share ideas, let them know that you have checked it out with others and have received input from a variety of sources; and together you have reached the proposed conclusion.

Be systematic – Organize your thoughts before you meet. Have an outline and a plan of action. If you can lay out your plan in a step-by-step manner, they will appreciate it and are

more likely to approve it.

Be patient – An S boss wants to take time to consider various options before they respond. They weigh both sides of a decision so they can be sure that your ideas will work and not cause much disruption.

Be positive but not overzealous – An S boss is friendly but not overenthusiastic. They don’t like exaggerations. An S boss wants to know how your ideas will help people and/or bring them together.

Deal with conflict – Your boss may avoid conflict, gloss over differences and deny that there is a problem. However, that does not mean they have forgotten it. You may need to take a more direct approach to clear up disagreements. Express your concern about their feelings and share your desire to work through the conflict. If you don’t, resentments could build and be worse later.

10 Ways YOU Can Build a Positive Work Environment!

1. Be dependable. Keep your word, meet deadlines and don’t make excuses!

2. Communicate. Have open communication lines in addition to e-mail and texts. Use simple, clear and precise language and listen to feedback and ideas provided by others.

3. Show respect. *Don’t treat others how you want to be treated.* Treat others how **they** want to be treated. Listen to their preferences and, if possible, adjust your behavior to suit their likings.

4. Express gratitude. Even if you are not their supervisor, recognize small achievements so others will feel valued. Sincerely thank at least one person a day for something that they did.

5. Be open to differences. When someone disagrees with you, think “how interesting” instead of immediately getting defensive and/or giving a rebuttal. Consider their perspective and be mindful of how you phrase your feedback. Showing this type of behavior helps you become more open to diverse opinions and helps others feel that they are in a safe and positive environment.

6. Do not gossip. If there is an issue, talk

to the person directly and address the issue. Talking about a colleague behind their back causes animosity and creates mistrust.

7. Own your mistakes. Hold yourself accountable for any mistakes you’ve done. People will understand if you’re honest about a misstep and help you get back on track. An apology can go a long way to creating a positive environment.

8. Collaborate. When you ask for something, give your reason. A workplace is like a machine; it needs all of its parts to work. A project needs a team that is on the same page. Everyone should know how their role and responsibilities affect others and why and how they are interdependent.

9. Have fun. Yes, this is work AND work can be fun. Start by smiling and saying “Hi” to people. You can also post a positive quote or do a random act of kindness.

10. Be positive yourself. Moods are contagious. If you are down, it will bring others down. If you see things optimistically, so will others. Yes, you really do have control. All you have to do is exercise it!

Making Good Decisions

Making a decision can be hard. Decisions can seem so definitive and final and that can keep you from wanting to make them. Some things that prevent good decision making are overthinking, in-group favoritism and wanting to have it all. Don't get mired in the "what ifs" of a decision when you should be moving forward because, in fact, not making a decision is making one! Here are some more helpful hints for making good decisions.

Identify your purpose. It is important to know what your priorities are and how this decision will move you closer to your goal.

Listen to your gut. Your intuition is often a source of information you should consider.

Avoid making decisions when your emotions are high and your reasoning is low. Strong, unbiased decisions should be made with a clear head. Creating a list of pros and cons can be an effective way to evaluate and weigh the choices you have in a decision.

Thinking ahead can help you explore

your options better. Evaluate and write down the risks and rewards associated with the decision. Don't let unreasonable fears stop you from making a decision. If the decision is well thought out and there are reasonable rewards, go with it.

The decision should be feasible. You should ask yourself the question "Is it realistic?" If something seems too good to be true, it probably is!

Ask yourself, "Who will be affected and how?" Look at the risks and rewards not only for yourself, but also for others as well.

Consider who else should you consult. Is there anyone whose advice would be helpful? If so, communicate with them in an engaging way and get them involved. Others may recognize flaws you don't see in a decision and/or can help you to reconcile them.

Recognize that it's okay to ask for advice, and still make your own choice.

Don't make a decision because you simply want to please others.

(Excerpted from Dr. Mimi Hull's Program on Leadership)

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THE corporate couch



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.

Dear Dr. Mimi:

I am looking into ways to understand individual members of my organization to help create a unified team. It would be great if they could understand each other as well. What do you think about using personality profiles? I was hoping you could give me some insight into this method and how it can help my organization.

—*Searching*

Dear Searching:

Every individual has different strengths and opportunities for development. When working with clients, we have found that when employees know more about their own personalities and behaviors, they are better prepared to deal with the workings of a group and function better as a team. We have found that personality profiles are a great way to discover this. The ones that we use most often are the Wiley DiSC, followed by the Myers-Briggs (MBTI).

—*Dr. Mimi*

CC by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



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.

Dear Dr. Mimi:

In the past, we have put on really great events after business hours to keep our employees, as well as their families, involved and interacting. These special events gave our employees something to look forward to and they incorporated fun into the job. Our firm has suffered some financial setbacks, and we were told to tighten our belts, so no special events are happening. Our staff has been asking me about them. I am concerned that not having these events will lower the morale of a staff that is already feeling low. What should I do?

—*No Fun*

Dear No Fun:

Have you expressed your concerns to higher management? If not, you should start there. Let them know that these events build good rapport and that they do not have to be expensive. Think in terms of a picnic in a park, a pizza party, an ice cream social, a potluck luncheon or a walk for charity. The events give employees and their families something to look forward to, as well as a chance for camaraderie. By the way, you might want to consider including some team-building exercises to increase morale.

—*Dr. Mimi*