

HULL &  
ASSOCIATES

# The Corporate Communicator

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## Consider This ...



"Swimming against the stream is natural ....not just for Salmon."

-Julia James

## Declutter, Delete, De-Stress

Springtime is about renewal. Too much stuff and too many distractions equate to too much stress. As the saying goes, we can't receive anything if our arms are full. By tidying up our workspaces, and decluttering our lives, we can clear a path for renewal and revitalization.

**Start with yourself.** Freshen your look both inside and out. The way you look affects the way you feel. Face spring with a fresh look to go with your renewed positive outlook. Actively smile and stay positive.

**Clean off your desk.** You may first have to find it beneath all the piles of "important" papers that need to be tossed or filed. Banish all those sticky notes and use a PDA, electronic

calendar or journal to record your to-dos and reminders. If you plow through the piles and organize your files, you'll have fewer distractions and be more focused.

**Clear out your "reading file."** Pile of books, magazines and newspapers tend to grow. Sell old books online or donate them. Recycle or reduce your piles. Get rid of unused coupons, take-out menus, flyers, junk mail, bill stuffers, event schedules and calendars.

**Clean up your life.** Are you doing too much? Learn to say no, diplomatically and politely. If you do, you'll have more time to spend on your most enjoyable activities and with the people who give you the greatest pleasure.

(From Managing Stress Workshop - Dr. Mimi Hull)



## How DISC Types Celebrate St. Patrick's Day

Celebrating holidays can be fun. Here are some thoughts on how various DISC types celebrate St. Patrick's Day!

### A High "D"

- Is the first to celebrate St. Patrick's Day ... holds several spontaneous celebrations.
- Offers to bring the Irish whiskey.
- Has the papers to prove a link to Irish royalty but can't find them now.

### A High "I"

- Holds St. Pat's Day Parties and keeps inviting "one more person."

- Is known year-round for their gift of Blarney.
- Insists on singing Irish songs on St. Pat's Day.

### A High "S"

- Celebrates St. Pat's Day in Ireland - has never left the country!
- Has the original Irish recipes and still uses them.
- Has the "Luck of the Irish" when it comes to getting things done.

### A High "C"

- Doesn't believe in leprechauns because they haven't seen one yet.
- Knows the words to most Irish songs but prefers not to lead them.
- Has very complete family papers - with footnotes!

Hope this makes you smile!

**Contact us** to learn your DISC type!

# HULL & ASSOCIATES

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## On the Bright Side

March is Optimism Month.



### Are You Swimming Upstream?

It is interesting to find that the expression “to swim upstream” is a metaphor for going against prevailing opinion. When we think of salmon swimming upstream back to their place of birth, we see it as an enormous undertaking but they just do it naturally.

Often we take our greatest gifts for granted and think that there is nothing special or worthwhile about what comes naturally to us. Our challenge is to get back in touch with those activities that come naturally and invigorate us, as opposed to activities that tend to drain us.

#### How to reconnect with the salmon



### Do You Have a Bossy Boss?

Do you go out of your way to avoid your boss? Do you ask what kind of mood he or she is in before going to their office to ask a question? Do you only hear what’s wrong when you get feedback? If you answered “yes” to these questions, you probably have a bossy boss.

Having an assertive supervisor is often necessary in a workplace so things get accomplished. But when a boss steps over the line toward bullying and aggressiveness, here are some steps to address the issue.

1. Plan in advance and address the boss’s predictable concerns. For example, if you know the boss likes to examine the credit card bill, don’t wait until he asks to see it. Send a memo monthly that

#### within you:

1. Look back in your life and write down the activities that you enjoyed most as a child. They may provide important clues for the kinds of activities that may energize you today.

2. For each job, hobby and volunteer activity you have done, identify the ones that energized you the most and add these to your list.

3. Look at your list of insights and decide what small step you will take today to increase the time you spend doing things that energize you.

4. When you get stuck on your path of exploration, remind yourself that you are not the only salmon in the river and seek support.

The energy you gain from engaging in these activities will fuel you to continue exploring your natural strengths.

summarizes usage.

2. Try to get your boss to be concrete about expectations. When you get an assignment, make sure you understand all the components.

3. When a confrontation begins, ask questions to clarify what is causing the anger. Stay calm, but not condescending. Do not get argumentative in return.

4. Discuss behaviors not personality. Be honest, but only discuss how the situation affects you.

5. Have patience. Some bosses are so immature that they shout at their subordinates to conceal their own mistakes, and if that’s the case, never take such a foolish supervisor’s comments seriously.

6. If inappropriate behavior happens repeatedly, and/or you feel so stressed that it is interfering with your work or well being, go to your HR department and complain.

7. If all else fails, start looking for a new job and consider asking your interviewer, “How do you handle conflict in the workplace?”

(From Dr. Mimi’s Seminar on Dealing with Difficult People)

## Change Your Reaction to Stress

Stress has both a psychological and physiological effect. Psychologically it affects our emotions causing such things as anger, frustration, fear, burnout, anxiety and depression. Physiologically, stress increases the risk of everything from warts to cancer.

**Don't be tyrannized by your emotions.** Use these tips to help you work through stress in a more clearheaded way.

**Record your emotions.** Keep a list of everything that causes you stress. You can't eliminate the stimulus, but you can learn to calm your mind. Is there something new or different in your work life? Are certain colleagues difficult? For every item on the list ask yourself, "Is my reaction appropriate or over the top?" This step is key to understanding your emotions and finding healthier ways to deal with them.

**Recognize your stressors:** Don't avoid problems. That will make them worse. Failing to deal with a stressor increases the possibility of it getting out of your control.

**Rethink your standards:** Are you less

than perfect and feeling guilty and frustrated? It may be time to redefine what success means. For example, if you always feel inundated with work, ask yourself if you're spending more time on tasks than they require. Good enough may be good enough!

**Reframe your situation:** If weather delays your flight to an important meeting, instead of stewing about the disruption, which you can't control anyway, use the extra time to prepare for your presentation, read a book or catch up on sleep.

**Reassess the significance of the problem:** Will it matter tomorrow? Next week? A year from now? Emotion magnifies the difficulty of a problem in the moment; perspective shrinks it in the long term. So give yourself some perspective.

Stress is all around us and we can control the way we respond. Think before you react and make a choice that will not only relieve some stress in the short run, but in the long term as well.

(From Reducing your Stress Workshop by Dr. Mimi Hull.)

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# HULL & ASSOCIATES

## Call Dr. Mimi!

Are you feeling stressed? Could your organization use some revitalization?

Call Dr. Mimi!!!

Dr. Mimi Hull is a fully licensed psychologist who has a doctoral minor in management, and a master's in counseling and personnel services from U of Florida. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse University. She holds many assessment certifications and licenses including MBTI (Myers Briggs) and DiSC® as well as the Optimal Feedback survey system.

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

**Call her for a FREE consultation!**



DrMimi



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## So Long, Winter

Get ready to enjoy spring.



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## DISC!! - Info and Certification

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you need to do it now.

**Next DISC Certification is Friday, MARCH 25!**

### Contact us:

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E-mail us at:

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by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



### Dear Dr. Mimi:

Lately, everyone in my office seems stressed out. How can I help my employees maintain a better balance between their workloads and personal lives?

—Balancing

### Dear Balancing:

Programs can be executed to give employees more flexibility and help them balance their lives. Before you start, be sure to get input from your employees to see what would make the most impact. Not only will implementing some of these create happier employees, but it will also boost productivity by decreasing absenteeism and turnover.

**Flex schedule.** Give employees a set number of hours to be at work each day. However, allow them flexibility by creating a flex schedule wherein they come to work at any time within a two- or three-hour window and leave once their set number of hours is

up. To maintain cohesion, mandate that all employees be at work between certain times. That way, employees can effectively work together while attending to their personal lives at their convenience.

**Work from home.** While not all jobs can be done away from the office, allowing some employees to do some work from home is an easy way to increase employee satisfaction and boost productivity. Employees are more productive, partially because not commuting saves time. In addition, the extra hours of sleep and reduced stress may decrease sick days.

**Alternative schedule.** Monday to Friday “9 to 5” is not for everyone. Consider alternatives, such as 4/10 or 9/80 workweeks. A 4/10 workweek involves employees working 10 hours a day, four days a week. A 9/80 workweek gives employees a three-day weekend every other week, by allowing employees to spread 80 hours over nine days. Having a weekday off allows employees to schedule personal and family commitments outside their work schedules.

—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](http://www.HullOnline.com) or [DrMimi@HullOnline.com](mailto:DrMimi@HullOnline.com).

by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



### 3 Ts for Leading Today's Virtual or Remote Workforce

Virtual or remote teams are composed of geographically dispersed employees who interact through various channels of technology. Virtual teams can provide a business benefit because they reduce costs, helping establish a competitive advantage within the global marketplace. Here are three tips for leading today's virtual workforce:

**Time:** Establish a specified day and time when you will check in, whether on a daily or weekly basis. This ensures that both parties are connected. Remember: The more you communicate, the less likely your employees will feel they are “out of sight, out of mind.” Respond to your employees with follow-up phone calls and emails. In doing so, you will

build trust and demonstrate that you are responsive and available.

**Trust:** Remind employees that you hired them because of their specific talents and that you have faith in their work ethic and autonomy. Set standards, goals and deadlines with specific milestones and check-in points. Champion their freedom to work when they want, where they want and how they want, as long as they perform and produce quality results in a timely manner.

**Training:** Ensure that your virtual team members have the necessary training to be effective, such as training on cultural norms. For example, an enduring silence is perceived as comfortable in India, Indonesia and Japan, and being unnecessarily talkative is considered rude.

—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](http://www.HullOnline.com) or [DrMimi@HullOnline.com](mailto:DrMimi@HullOnline.com).