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The Corporate Communicator

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Hull & Associates

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Consider This ...



Increase Your Happiness

Happiness and gratitude are linked. Gratitude is an underrated and powerful emotion. Studies show that writing a gratitude journal 3 times a week more greatly impacts your happiness than journaling daily and it has physical health benefits as well. *Here are 5 tips to get you started:*

1. Splurge on a new notebook: Find a notebook that fits you and your day-to-day lifestyle. If the notebook is unappealing, you won't follow through with writing.

2. Be specific. Nothing is too big or too small. Whether you're thankful for a morning cup of coffee or a new job promotion, write it down. Not every day has big events but every day has something that we can appreciate.

3. Accept your emotions. Don't be modest or ashamed to express yourself. Anything that makes you feel better is a good thing.

4. Be positive about yourself. Having gratitude reduces negative emotions. You are more likely to take care of your physical health when you are happy.

5. Be consistent. The more often you express your gratitude, the happier you will be. You don't have to write a lot or even edit your work. Just be sure to write something regularly.

Writing and turning the negatives into positives can help you focus on what matters. Even though it may seem unnatural or time-consuming at first, it will create a better overall outlook on your life and ...**You will be happier!**

Take a Vacation!!!

You need to take a vacation. It is important for you to escape work related tasks to avoid burnout and be even more productive.

Here are some benefits of taking a vacation:

Stress reduction - Research shows that people who take time off have fewer stress-related issues such as headaches, vision problems, high blood pressure, anxiety and heart irregularities. In fact, if you are already experiencing any of these, a vacation may be the best prescription!

Heart disease prevention - Studies have found skipping even one year's vacation can lead to a higher risk of heart disease. Coronary-related issues can increase 30% when you fail to take a break from work.

Improved productivity - Vacations give you a chance to rest, relax and realign priorities. When vacationers return to work, they work at an even higher performance level. The time away replenishes your resources and provides a greater opportunity to focus on your work when you return.

It's your right and reward - Consider your vacation time as a reward for your hard work. Yes, it may be part of your compensation package but it's also something you have earned and should be enjoyed.

Creates a positive environment - When people take a vacation, they usually come back feeling restored and content. This reduces negativity and grumpiness. No one wants to work in a negative environment. **Take your vacation and know that you are helping both your colleagues and yourself!**

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How to Make Friends on the Job

Starting a job that is new to you has perks, but being the new person can also be lonely. In some scenarios, your new colleagues will welcome you with open arms. But in many cases, building relationships within the workplace isn't that simple. Whether it feels as if everybody at the office has been friends forever or you are not the most social person, follow these steps to break the ice with your coworkers.

Be the person you would want to be friends with. Don't take yourself too seriously, it is easy to be funny without being snarky or mean and still seem like a genuinely nice person. Next time you walk into the office feeling grumpy, ask yourself, "Would I want to hang out with myself right now?" If the answer to your question is no, there is a chance that your coworkers are feeling the same way.

Why Boards Fail!

Dr. Mimi is often called in to work with various Boards and sometimes it is because the Board is just not working. The members may attend meetings but that's about it. Why is that? Why do Boards fail? Here are some reasons.

1. Reactive rather than proactive -

Failing Boards tend to respond rather than plan. They don't anticipate what is happening either in their organization or their community. Instead of having and revisiting a viable strategic plan, they go day to day and/or crisis to crisis.

2. Ineffective time allocation -

We often hear that we "don't have enough time." In reality, too much time is spent greeting and eating and listening to reports rather than discussing real issues.

3. Non-participative members -

Board members start to lose interest when a Board is not run well or they don't have a defined role. Their attendance drops off and their desire to help wanes. They arrive late, leave early and eventually stop attending.

4. A few do most of the work - It is great to have hardworking Board members but if only a small percentage are doing most of what needs to be done, the others will

Take the initiative. Once you and your coworkers have gotten to know each other, even a little bit, do not be afraid to invite them to go out to lunch or take a break together. Don't wait to be asked. There are probably people that would love to ask you to lunch but are too shy or introverted. Reach out and they will be most appreciative.

Be open to new friendships along with inviting. Look for people who are different from you and strike up a conversation. Ask an open-ended question. Give sincere compliments. Ask how they spent their weekend, or where they like to eat. Be sincere while asking these questions and be sure to listen to their answers. Show that you are interested in them, their hobbies or their family life. The more you learn things about a colleague, the easier future conversations will be.

lose interest and even drop out. You then can get an "in crowd" and an "out crowd." This not only limits involvement but also sends a message that the Board is run by a clique.

5. Focus on the minutia - Your Board should be looking at the big picture and making sure that the mission, vision and values are being developed and enhanced. The Board meeting is not the place to talk about "the color of napkins." That is committee and/or staff work.

6. Live in the past - The good old days were great then and now it is time to look forward. Are the organization's programs and fundraising relevant today? What updating needs to be done? When was the last time you really looked at what you are doing and why and who is doing it?

7. Lack of ongoing training - This is often the biggest issue. Board members need to be trained. Handing them a manual when they join is not enough.

Many Boards would exceed expectations if their members simply knew their roles and responsibilities and that needs to be updated at least annually. Before it is too late get your Board members trained!!!

How to Stay Positive at Work

It is easy for anybody to feel down after dealing with the daily grind at work. Even if your boss doesn't commend your hard work, here are 5 tips that will help you stay positive at work.

Reward yourself for accomplishments. Every time you finish a task, give yourself a pat on the back. When you finish a large project, don't hesitate to take yourself out and have a celebratory meal. You will be more proud of yourself and want to accomplish even more next time.

Concentrate on one thing at a time. There could be a lot of things on your to-do list, but attempting to get everything done at once will not help things get finished. Concentrate on one thing at a time, this will help you to be more motivated and focused. By focusing on one task at a time, you are more likely to complete tasks fully instead of doing bits and pieces of different things.

Continue to learn. Being done with school, does not mean that you have to stop learning. Learning new things while working is a great way to build up your

experience. Don't hesitate to ask a coworker, or even your boss, if you can shadow them while they do their duties so that you can learn more about what they do.

Refrain from beating yourself up over mistakes. Should you make a typo in an email or have a verbal slip-up during a presentation, learn to let it go. Everybody makes mistakes and you should not beat yourself up over a one-time event. You don't have to forget what you've done wrong, but rather learn from it and move on. Coworkers won't remember it as long as you do. Use the mistake to push yourself to do better next time.

Simply smile more often. Smile when you greet coworkers or clients. Smile when you walk down the hallway into your office. Smile even when you've had a bad day and don't want to smile and see how much it can improve your day. Smiling even if you are feeling down will make you feel better. Seeing a smile on your face can make others feel better as well.

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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.

Contact her for a **FREE consultation!**

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Our Contact Information.

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 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:

Today, I began a new role at my workplace, and I have found that my lack of experience in the role has left me lacking confidence as well. I am afraid my lack of confidence will be noticed by my employer and co-workers. What can I do to gain confidence without the experience to back it up?

—*Scared*

Dear Scared:

Confidence is a big deal in the workplace, and a lack of it could wreak havoc on your performance and self-image.

Establish and keep in mind the unique skills that you bring to the task at hand, including the ability to learn. It is OK to ask others to train or help you in your new role, and literally take notes on the improvements you make in your performance.

Look in a mirror and congratulate yourself on jobs well-done. If you begin to feel overwhelmed, stop to reflect on what approach will enable you to use your assets and reduce current weaknesses. Spend more time thinking about your gifts rather than your shortcomings.

—*Dr. Mimi*

 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:

I have been working at my current position for several years and feel as if I am being passed by for promotions. I don't want to be rude, but how can I make it clear to my employer that I am interested in moving forward with the company?

—*Stuck*

Dear Stuck:

The first step is to observe the traits and skills your employer seeks in promotable employees. Then, observe the value you add and make them known to your employer. Ask your employer to discuss your goals and seek guidance on how to accomplish them. This will make it clear to your employer that you are interested in advancement without directly asking for a promotion.

—*Dr. Mimi*