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Hull & Associates

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Laugh Out Loud! Literally!!!!

Is laughter really the best medicine? Many medical experts report that laughing produces major health benefits.

Easy exercise. Think about what happens when you get the giggles: Your heart rate increases, you can't catch your breath, and your facial muscles are sore. That's right, laughing is like a mild workout, burning up to 50 calories in just 10 minutes.

A happy heart. In addition to aerobic benefits, laughing heartily can improve circulation and help balance blood pressure levels, boosting cardiovascular health.

A stress-free smile. While some stress is good, too much can cause both mental and physical health problems.

Laughter relieves stress by reducing stress hormones and releasing endorphins, the feel-good chemicals in the body. People usually feel more relaxed and happier after laughing, even during trying situations.

Rest and relief. Laughter is considered a natural pain reliever, since the action releases endorphins and provides a temporary distraction from physical or emotional pain. Watching a comedy before bedtime can ease aches and relax your muscles and your mind so that sleep comes easier.

Fun friendships. People love having someone to laugh with. Connect with friends by sharing a joke or two. The result is an active social life, which is a crucial component of good health and happiness.

Maintaining Boundaries at Work

Having and making friends at work is important for a successful career, but it can be hard to walk the line between being too personal and staying professional. Maintaining boundaries at work is critical. You need to **be aware of your emotions, assess your personal limits, and allow yourself to create boundaries.**

Don't be afraid to set limits! Once boundaries are set you may not receive all positive reactions and that's ok. Should negative reactions occur, it is important that you prepare for them and respond rationally.

Clearly communicate these limits to your co-workers. For example, politely let your co-worker know when you do and don't respond to emails. By taking the time to communicate upfront, you

are proactively preventing future miscommunication.

Don't discuss issues that could make you or someone else feel uncomfortable, such as politics, race, and religion. It is important to keep conversations work related.

Don't engage in office gossip. If a problem arises, talk directly to the co-worker involved as soon as possible. Waiting or talking about them to someone else can cause additional problems.

Remember that your work friend may become your boss, or vice versa. Without boundaries, this could cause difficulties should you become too friendly.

Above all, **treat those around you with respect and trust,** and your business relationships will positively contribute to your success in the workplace.

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Unconventional Leadership Strategies!

Leaders are found at every level in the organization, so no matter where you are, you can be a leader. Here are some nontraditional ideas on how to develop your leadership potential.

Appreciate who you are. There always will be someone that you see as better than you. Stop wishing you were them. Embrace your own strengths.

Accept failure and learn from it. You are going to make mistakes. Recognize them. Correct them and move forward. You can't control the past, only the future.

Build relationships with people early. Don't wait until you need something to build friendships. Get to know people and what they do. Offer to help them. This is what a leader does.

Ask questions. Leaders must be willing to ask hard questions not just of others but to themselves as well. You don't learn if

you don't ask! The organization won't grow if nothing is ever questioned. You won't grow if you don't question yourself.

Ask for what you want. Don't wait to be asked. If you see an opportunity, embrace it. Ask to attend trainings. Ask to take on new assignments. Ask to be on committees. When you take initiative, people see you as someone who can be that leader.

Seek out people who are different from you. Yes, it is comfortable to be with people who are similar to you, have the same interests, seek the same solutions. However, you will be challenged and will grow if you build relationships with people who have a different perspective.

Exploring new and different perspectives will widen your own!

Believe it or not, leadership opportunities are available to anyone who is willing to step up and take them!

Healthy Habits Even Now

It's been over a year! Covid has affected our personal lives and created a new "normal" as we live through these unprecedented times. Even as numbers improve, **there is still a chance that you will be infected and affected.** When working from home, it's easy to sit at your computer all day and not properly take care of yourself. This encourages unhealthy habits. Therefore, it is time to take stock and **take care of both your mental and physical health.**

To help your mental health **take time to relax and refresh before and/or after you work.** Dedicate at least 60-90 minutes to do something you enjoy, whether it's a hobby, reading a book, calling a friend, or taking a walk around the block. Make sure it's something that you truly enjoy so that it will help relieve your stress or anxieties. **Meditating, exercising or just being outside promotes good mental and physical health.**

Communicate openly with the people you live with and continue to stay in touch with friends or family to check in and talk about your world. It will relieve your mind of some of your negative feelings and will help you and them feel better and

stronger.

Maintain your physical health. It's easy to get stuck staring at your computer and phone screen all day. Again, it's good to get outdoors and go for a walk or a run.

Focus on different things as you walk. Consider noticing the different front doors people have. Try being aware of the foliage, or keep track of the makes of cars that you see. This keeps your mind active while you are activating your body! Avoid eating junk food and eat more fresh food. It's easy to eat too much or too little at this time.

If you have returned to work physically, continue to take care of yourself. While things are opening up, there is still a lot of anxiety and stress that can increase unhealthy habits. Stay socially distanced and continue to wear a mask. Get your needed amount of sleep, communicate with friends and family remotely, and take time to do something just for you.

If you feel sick and have symptoms of Covid, get tested, quarantine and notify your friends, coworkers, neighbors and boss. Do your work AND take charge of both your physical and mental health. It will pay off!

Promoting Collaboration Among Remote Employees

Teamwork and collaboration are important skills, but how do you promote collaboration among remote workers in the midst of a pandemic ... especially when they are experiencing additional anxiety. Below are 7 tips on how to do just that.

Maintain a strong company culture.

Ensure that employees understand the company lingo, values, and "who to go to for what". This helps people feel more comfortable, reduces anxiety and work better together.

Don't force collaboration. Encourage and provide the tools and opportunities that will allow people to want to collaborate.

Meet in person when possible. Though it is difficult to meet in person due to COVID, it is always a nice reminder for remote employees to know that they are communicating with real people during their Zoom calls and emails.

Create fun virtual events for employees to socialize. Ask your employees to create

and lead virtual events. Hold activities like cooking together, doing a craft and using productive ice breakers.

Show off people's human side. When we work remotely, we forget that our coworkers are people and not just robots behind a screen. To keep the human aspect alive, create news sheets and/or share accomplishments both work related and not. Celebrate birthdays, work anniversaries, or events in the lives of your employees.

Invest in communication and workflow apps. The easier it is to directly communicate with coworkers and supervisors, the easier collaboration will be. **Create a digital "water cooler"**, where employees can gather virtually to socialize about work and non-work topics.

Gamify teamwork. Encourage employees to collaborate by making a game out of it. Give points and encourage healthy competition. Offer small rewards once a goal is achieved.

Try these and it will help your organization thrive in a way that is safe and beneficial for everyone.

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 by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch

**Dear Dr. Mimi:**

I work hard. I do good work. My coworkers even let me know that they value what I do ... and my boss never says a word. In fact, he rarely even thanks me. We don't even get annual reviews. It is so frustrating. Is there anything that I can do?

—*Unrecognized*

Dear Unrecognized:

You are not alone. Many managers underestimate the power of a pat on the back, especially with top performers who are intrinsically motivated. Ask for a review and come prepared to let him know all that you do and how well you do it. Be specific, pointing out particular projects and accomplishments. In addition, let him know that while you are motivated from within, it would be good to hear some positive words and a thank-you periodically.

—*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 work for a very small organization. I don't want to quit, but have realized that there is nowhere to go or grow here. Yes, I may get a small annual raise, but that is about it. I am starting to feel stifled. Any suggestions?

—*Stuck*

Dear Stuck:

Use this time to make sure that you don't stop growing. Keep learning and adding skills, even if they are not being used currently. Consider volunteering and doing things that are different from what you do at work. Start to network with friends and former co-workers to learn about what may be some other opportunities. You'll increase the chances that the right position will appear, and also you will be prepared when it does.

—*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.