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Hull & Associates

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Table of Contents

Are You a Poor or ... Pg. 1
Great Leader?
Switch up Your ... Pg. 1
Work Routine
Never Say These ... Pg. 2
to Your Boss!
Nature: the Secret for ... 2
Job Satisfaction
The Power of ... Pg. 3
Icebreakers!
Dear Dr. Mimi: ... Pg. 4
Exiting Quietly
Dear Dr. Mimi: ... Pg. 4
Colleague "Enhancing"
Time Sheet

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"It is easier to tone down a wild
idea than to think up a new
one!"

Are You a Poor or Great Leader?

Being a great leader is important because you give the organization direction and inspire people to work toward a common vision. Here are some of the things that separate great leaders from poor ones.

1.) **Poor leaders blame others for their mistakes and enjoy seeing others make mistakes. Great leaders focus on what others do right, own their own mistakes and don't make excuses.** They recognize their own weaknesses and work to rise above them. Great leaders recognize the good things that others bring to the organization and give people praise.

2.) **Poor leaders are negative. Great leaders are positive.** Constant negativity and criticism are counterproductive; an

important thing that a leader can do is be solution-oriented instead of problem-oriented. If you look for and focus on the good, you will see more of it!

3.) **Poor leaders take credit for what others have done.** Great leaders recognize others. They share and offer recognition and rewards. Everyone desires to feel acknowledged and appreciated, and receiving a great leader's acknowledgement can be one of the very best rewards your people can get.

These three steps can put you on the path to becoming a great leader. You will know that you have become a great leader when people follow you because they want to, not because they have to!!!

Switch Up Your Work Routine!

Lethargy and dissatisfaction develop when your work routine never changes. **This does not have to happen!** Use these tips to make your work more satisfying.

Take breaks. Even if you only have one actual break, be sure to use it along with stopping periodically to do something simple like deep breathing.

Bring a book, audio book or magazine and start reading on your breaks or at lunch. Even if you only read two pages, those are two pages that you have treated yourself to.

Do something different weekly. If you usually stay and sit indoors, you can switch it up by taking a walk and going outside. Experiencing fresh air will give you energy.

Use your vacation time. You do not need a huge trip. Just taking time off will

help. Do at least one thing monthly that you haven't experienced in a while.

Get away from work...really! Having a day with no work worries is healing. Put an "away message" on your phone and e-mail. Being "off the chain" will refresh you. It allows your mind and body to rejuvenate.

Eat lunch. Working all day and starving is a recipe for mistakes and failure. Eating gives you energy and choosing the right foods will keep you focused.

Have a different meal or snack. Experiencing new meals and snacks will invigorate your daily routine. Create new recipes or try a different takeout.

While it may sound counter-intuitive, taking breaks and putting variety into your schedule will actually make you MORE PRODUCTIVE...AND LESS STRESSED. Who doesn't want that???

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Never Say These to Your Boss!

If you want to be considered a superstar, here are some things that you should never say to your boss:

That is above my pay grade! Saying this indicates that you are not able or willing to do more complex or difficult assignments. It also indicates you are not suitable for a promotion. If you want to be promoted, learn and do more of what is being done “above your pay grade.”

They didn't get back to me. This indicates that you are waiting to hear about something rather than being proactive and checking it yourself. It is better to say that you have contacted them and plan to again.

How should I know? This sounds like you work in your own bubble, oblivious to what else is going on. It is better to ask whom you should contact to learn more about it.

Nature: The Secret to Boosting Job Satisfaction

Albert Einstein once said, “Look deep into nature and you will understand everything better.” A study conducted by Central Michigan University examined nature to better understand employees' attitudes. The researchers concluded that **windowless cubicles and airless open-plan floors kill motivation while workplace exposure to natural elements (such as greenery, woods and sunlight) were closely related to greater organizational commitment and job satisfaction.**

Why are these findings important and how can you implement them?

Nature positively affects our mental health. Exposure to “natural elements” is associated with lower employee depression and anxiety. If the goal is more satisfied employees and greater organizational commitment, an easy and relatively inexpensive way to improve mental health is through exposure to a variety of natural elements.

Incorporate nature into the workplace. At first, the concept of providing more natural elements in the workplace may seem daunting. However, there are a

I don't have time for this. It is better to let your boss know what else you are doing and ask for their priorities.

But we've always done it this way. The only thing constant is change and you need to adapt. It is better to say that this seems to be a change and that you look forward to learning more about it.

I'm bored! This sounds like you can't find productive ways to use your time. Ask your boss if they have anything that they would like you to do or learn, since you have completed your assigned tasks.

I hate working with ____. Bad-mouthing a coworker never wins you points. Address the situation with your coworker and work things out. If their behavior is negatively impacting your performance and they refuse to change, you can then go to your boss, about their lack of response. Having made an effort, it is fine to ask for suggestions.

variety of relatively inexpensive ways to do this.

Have natural sunlight. Open the blinds and allow more light. If you don't have windows, install a mural or have a wall with projected images of the great outdoors.

Add more greenery to the workspace. Simply adding real plants to desks and/or around the office improves the mentality of employees.

Hang large photos of natural scenes such as forests, the beach, or waterfalls. Vary them periodically to have a positive mental effect.

Choose and/or construct offices that allow for more natural light and open air. Natural elements are inherently more pleasant in the workplace. Incorporate elements like stone floors and wood trusses.

Encourage employees to go outside and get fresh air during lunch and breaks. This provides your people with a necessary chance to receive their daily dose of Vitamin D and reduces the likelihood of fatigue and burnout.

By embracing nature's influence, you can create workplaces where satisfaction blooms and success thrives.

The Power of Icebreakers

People say that they hate icebreakers and that is because the chosen icebreaker is silly, embarrassing, and/or a seemingly waste of time. However, icebreakers, when used correctly and appropriately, can help navigate and strengthen your team.

Icebreakers open up conversations and allow people to express themselves. They create a healthy, open space for the team to show and share other sides of their personalities. They strengthen communication and create more interactions within the team.

Icebreakers are a great way to introduce and integrate new team members and can create a warmer, more welcoming environment. People will make connections early, which is key to making them feel a part of the team, sooner than later.

Icebreakers strengthen relationships. Icebreakers allow people to open up and build stronger bonds because they learn more about each other's personalities, backgrounds, interests, and values. It is

essential to get to know people and feel comfortable with them.

Icebreakers build community. They show your people that the organization works to foster and build relationships. Icebreakers give people the opportunity to express a different side of themselves rather than their usual everyday working personality. They open doors and allow everyone to discover connections that they may not have realized existed.

Icebreakers liven up the organizational atmosphere. Most workers experience the same day over and over again throughout their week at work. Whether an organization decides to engage in icebreakers every week, month, or even sporadically, they create a day that is different from the others. Dedicating time to engage in an icebreaker creates a more lively and positive environment.

Choose your icebreakers carefully. Don't even call them icebreakers! Simply say that you are going to have an activity that will hopefully build positive connections and then proceed with the activity!!

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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:

I am not happy at work. In fact, I am bored and am ready to leave my company. Typically, they conduct exit interviews. I don't want to "burn any bridges," so I am hesitant to talk with anyone about my leaving. Do I have to attend an exit interview?

—*Exiting Quietly*

Dear Exiting,

You are correct that you don't want to burn any bridges. Having said that, not having the interview may, in fact, burn a bridge! I would suggest that you go through the process. Let people know that you are looking for a challenge and an opportunity to grow. No one will question that because it will be seen as a positive step forward.

—*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:

My co-worker is lying about how many hours they are working. We work remotely, and often self-report how long and what we work on. My co-worker told me in confidence that they turn on the computer, which shows that they are online and working, but sits back and does not work. What do I do? It is unfair to me and the rest of the hardworking team.

—*Concerned*

Dear Concerned,

It is difficult to navigate a situation where a co-worker is not pulling their weight, but it is important to address the issue to ensure that your team is meeting its goals. Have an honest conversation with your co-worker and express your concerns without attacking them. Let them know how their behavior is negatively impacting the team's productivity. Suggest ways that they can improve their work habits and offer your support to help them achieve their goals. If this does not result in any changes, tell them that you will need to let people know about their behavior.

—*Dr. Mimi*