

Personal Excellence

Part of Your Plan and Performance System

ESSENTIALS

» 03.2014

Vol. 19 Issue 03

Essentials
of Life Leadership

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Play and Full
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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FUN, PLAY AND FULL ENGAGEMENT

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Every issue of Personal Excellence is unique with myriad ideas and discussions based on the journey to become a better leader and person. This issue of the magazine resonates the intellectual aspects of personal excellence at professional and emotional level. As once said by Aristotle – “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit”, thus, the question is “what” to do repeatedly to achieve personal excellence. This issue brings out the best of articles together that brilliantly narrates the techniques to attain fineness at a personal and professional level.

Our author James Mapes believes in the saying “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”. He depicts the physiological notion of how staying mentally healthy can inspire you to do great things in life. He describes playing as “staying in the zone” that helps you to be more productive and achieve things in life.

In the article “Masters in our Midst,” author Alen Cohen asks us “What if the genius in your midst is you? What if your passion and unique talent has the potential to change many lives, including your own? What if you own a gift no one else can give, and your purpose on earth is to deliver it? What if the master you seek lives within you, and is calling for expression?” and explains telling the importance of recognizing the hidden talents and skills of people around us and to celebrate the genius in one and all.

Barry Eisen in his article “Shoot for the Moon” illustrates the larger picture on the connotation of the mantra “You think big, you get big” and how playing small with your dreams can land you nowhere. Barry explains the significance of maintaining a to-do list and sticking to it religiously.

Sandra Ford has always supported and spoke for the importance of courageous leadership in your workplace. In her article “Being Courageous,” she explains the 3 mind blocks that keep women stuck at work and how to get over it.

This issue of Personal Excellence will offer you plenty of options to improve your learning skills to a whole new level. We hope you enjoy this month’s issue of Personal Excellence Essentials and we look forward to your feedback!



Regards,
Debbie McGrath
HR.com

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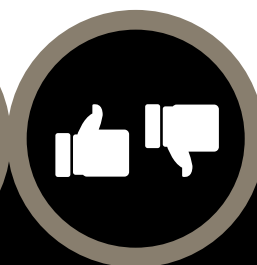
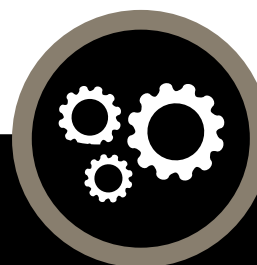


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Build Your Future

5 keys to creating your best tomorrow, today.

 By Bruce Rosenstein



One-third of all Americans are dissatisfied with the future facing themselves and their families, according to a recent Gallup survey. And even among those who are satisfied, their optimism about the future is the lowest it's been in 40 years.

The good news: you can create your own future. Better yet, you can do it simply and systematically as part of your everyday life, inside and outside the workplace.

Peter Drucker, the legendary father of modern management, approached the future with a forward-focused mindset, as something to be created and nurtured in the present moment. The takeaway for today: make choices and commitments, and take action, with tomorrow in mind.

Don't leave your future to fate, or to the whims of others. Instead, unlock and live your best future, beginning in from here and now. Start with these five keys, inspired by Drucker and imagined for today's fast-moving, uneasy times:

1. Make friends with uncertainty and change.

Nonstop uncertainties and changes are the new normal. From disruptive new technologies to breakout businesses, turbulence abounds. But as Drucker said, "The most effective way to manage change successfully is to create it." This requires seeing change as an opportunity, not a threat.

Quick tip: Identify three to five role models—people you know or who are in the public eye—who seem to be adept at navigating the future.

2. Look for and find the future.

Be mindful of what Drucker called "the future that has already happened." That is, anticipate the effects of actions and events that have already taken place but have yet to be fully unfolded. Tap into the work of future-related thought leaders, think tanks, and business and academic organizations.

Quick tip: Form a specialized book club or discussion group dedicated to finding the future.

3. Practice relentless self-development.

Diversify your interests, remain relevant, develop a powerful personal brand, maintain a global outlook, and create work that benefits others.

Quick tip: Self-development, said Drucker, requires "learning new skills, new knowledge, and new manners."

4. Remove and improve.

Odds are that in your career or company there are activities, practices, products, or services that have outlived their value. Take control by intentionally removing what no longer makes sense, something Drucker referred to as systematic abandonment. Then, with what remains, apply kaizen: steady and incremental improvement.

Quick tip: Ask yourself, "If a particular practice in my work weren't already in place, would I start doing it now?"

5. Determine your goals beyond the workplace.

Besides writing, teaching, and consulting about management, Drucker also talked about spirituality and the importance of having what he termed existential goals. He proposed asking yourself the big questions of life, such as: Who am I? What am I? What do I want to be? What do I want to put into life, and what do I want to get out of it? And what do I want to be remembered for?


Quick tip: What are your answers to these questions? Think about how they're most relevant for creating your future. **PE**



Bruce Rosenstein is the Managing Editor of *Leader to Leader* and worked as a researcher and writer for *USA Today* for more than two decades. Visit www.bruce Rosenstein.com

The Psychology of Fun, Play and Full Engagement

“Creativity is intelligence having fun.” -Albert Einstein, Physicist.

 By James Mapes



Do you think fun is frivolous? If so, perhaps you should think again.

Pause at the end of this paragraph – just for a few seconds - to recall a very happy, joyful, engaging moment from your life. Please stop and reflect now.

Odds are that you just remembered a time that involved some sort of play. There's a good chance that memory was from your childhood. If so, how do you compare that feeling with your adult self?

What does play mean? It might be a sport or a game of charades or playing a musical instrument. It can be gaming or going to an amusement park. There are no limitations. When I was a child, our family played board games and card games, along with physical games, like baseball, horseshoes, Ping-Pong and badminton. We flew kites (still do), camped out (still do), built model airplanes and

acted out our fantasies pretending to be knights and soldiers. We improvised and invented, often packing knapsacks with snacks to go hiking and exploring in the woods.

In this hectic, fast-paced world, you want to learn not only to control negative stress but, even more importantly, how to renew and recharge. Play is the answer. In fact, it should be considered as integral to every organization as innovation, productivity and – work. While we have the imagination, creativity and flexibility to play throughout life, we often shut down our playfulness because, as motivational speaker Zig Ziglar called it, “stinkin thinkin.” As adults, we seem to need proof that having fun helps us maintain a well-balanced and healthy life, along with the willingness and commitment to play.

Having fun might just save your sanity, improve your health and

explode your creativity. Indeed, the benefits of having fun are just beginning to be discovered by brain science. And, if you need a personal tutor, you can learn a lot about having fun from children. Play is how children prepare for adulthood. It's how they acquire the skills to cooperate, solve problems and express their feelings in a responsible way.

Strong evidence suggests that play contributes heavily to a child's physical and mental health. Play can influence a child's resilience – his or her ability to handle challenges, overcome adversity and manage stress. For example, the fundamentals of play, such as make-believe, risk, uncertainty and problem-solving, can boost the development of a child's emotional range while developing strategies for courage, teamwork, and sociability.

In both children and adults, nothing makes the brain spark like play. Research demonstrates that play lights up the brain in the areas of clarity and memory.

Dr. Stuart Brown, a psychiatrist and pioneer clinical researcher on the importance of play, states:

“

Humor, games, roughhousing, flirtation and fantasy are more than just fun. Plenty of play in childhood makes for happy, smart adults -- and keeping it up can make us smarter at any age.”

Brown's studies through the National Institute for Play show that play is not just joyful and energizing - it's deeply involved with human development and intelligence.

Researchers have also found that the happiest couples have a great deal of fun together. Drs. John & Julie Gottman of the Gottman Institute stipulate that people are much happier in their relationships if - for every one disagreement or hurt feeling – they create five loving, positive and fun interactions to counter it.

Psychiatrist /writer Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes play as “a flow state” - that requires just the right balance of challenge and opportunity. If the game is too hard or too easy, it loses its sense of pleasure and fun. You want to feel challenged but not overwhelmed.

Play is NOT an inconsequential luxury. It's an absolute necessity for living an exceptional life. Why?

1. **Play increases high performance and productivity.**

In athletics, play is called – “being in the zone.” This mental laser-like focus happens when you are fully engaged to the exclusion of everything else. One of the greatest misconceptions is that working longer and harder increases performance and productivity, but those behaviors only result in feeling stressed and chronically overwhelmed. Without some recreation, we eventually burn out.

Taking the time to recharge is one of the best things you can do for your career. It refreshes the mind and body, gives you distance from problems and perspective for solving them. Research has shown that being in a state of total engagement makes people 50% more productive, creates inner clarity, confidence and motivation, resulting in success in the workplace and in life.

2. **Play gives you a natural high.**

When you're having fun, you smile. When you smile, you change your emotional state and release endorphins. Endorphins are mood enhancers which send messages of satisfaction and confidence to the brain. Smiling immediately reduces stress levels and improves tolerance for pain. Amazingly, this physiological reaction takes place even when the smile you put on is 'fake.'

3. **Play improves health.**

When you're stressed, your immune system weakens, increasing your chances of getting sick. Being in a stressful situation triggers the body's natural 'fight-or-flight' response, causing physical changes -from a rapid heartbeat to an increase in blood pressure. While this response helps you to successfully cope with the situation at hand, prolonged anxiety overextends the stress response, eventually causing the body harm.

When you approach life with the attitude of having fun and a sense of playfulness - even in tough situations - you lower your stress levels, think more clearly and make better decisions. Choosing to have fun, laugh and play in the face of adversity is not about being naïve or in denial. It's about emotional maturity. Choosing an attitude of fun and playfulness is like wearing a bubble of protection that wards off negativity, isolation, loneliness, depression and fear.

4. **Fun-loving, optimistic people live longer.**

In *Play, Creativity and Lifelong Learning: Why Play Matters for both Kids and Adults*, game designer/theorist Bernie DeKoven and psychologist Dr. Jeanne Segal reference the discovery that positive thinkers live 7.5 years longer than pessimists. Constant worrying puts a burden on the heart, increasing one's chances of giving in to the negative effects of stress.

Dr. Becca Levy, director of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Division of Yale University, says, “Having an optimistic attitude towards aging is better than having low blood pressure and cholesterol levels. In other words, staying positive is better than dropping the butter and chicken liver from your diet!”

I hope I've convinced you of the value of fun and play. Now, it is your turn: **GIVE YOURSELF THE PERMISSION TO PLAY. PE**



James Mapes is a life coach and the creator of “The Transformational Coach program and the Patient Pre-Op/Post -Op Healing Therapy” program. He is the author of *Quantum Leap Thinking: An Owner's Guide to the Mind*. Call 203-762-1200
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Why You Lack Integrity?



Honor yourself as your word.

By Eric Papp

Yes...that is correct. You and your organization both lack Integrity. Ok, calm down before you get upset. Let me define Integrity; what it is and what it is not.

If your natural reaction was to get defensive, then you probably define it as honesty, trust, or “doing the right thing.” As a graduate of the “University Of Notre Dame” and an Eagle Scout, I too once thought that it was “doing the right thing,” but I was wrong.

Integrity is in no way connected to morality or being a good person. Integrity simply means: workability.

Integrity comes from the Latin word integer meaning “whole and complete.” For example, if the chair you’re sitting on is missing a leg, and has three instead of four, that chair would be lacking integrity. In other words, the chair lacks workability.

I invite you to try thinking in terms of “that works” or “that doesn’t work.”



Another example can be with your finances. If you are past due on your credit card payments, your finances lack integrity. If your bedroom at home is a mess with clothes on the floor, your bedroom lacks integrity. I can relate to this personally, as this is an area where I fluctuate in and out of integrity, aka “workability.”

So are you clear on what integrity means? Understand there is no reason to cringe or react defensively when people bring up this word.

Integrity as human beings

So how do we have integrity as human beings? The answer is simple.

Honor Yourself as Your Word.

You may have heard this before but never truly understood the impact this has on your life and of you being powerful. As human beings, we are constantly in a dance with integrity. We never possess 100% of it.

Here are some examples where you may be lacking integrity:

- » You promised a friend you’d call him back and never did.
- » You promised a work colleague you’d email him the notes of the meeting and never did.
- » You show up late and deflect the blame on traffic or a train.
- » You made a promise to your spouse or kids you didn’t fulfill.

In order for you to be the most powerful person you can be, you must be looking daily for where you lack integrity.

If you said you were going to do something and didn’t do it, the

only way to regain your power is to restore it.

For example, I was scheduled to be speaking to an organization in Tampa, FL. I thought if I left an hour early, I’d be on time. It turned out that there was a broken down vehicle on Interstate 75 and I had to stop and go to the restroom. I was 12-min late from my promised arrival time of 9:00 am. The person organizing the event was glad I came and didn’t ask me, “Would you like to restore your Integrity?” Shortly after I began my presentation, I spoke to the audience about restoring Integrity. I asked them if I could restore mine. Still not really knowing what I was talking about, they allowed me to do so. Restoring your Integrity is a simple 3-step process:

1. Acknowledge what took place (i.e. 12 min late, forgot to send an email)
2. Ask what the impact was (i.e. What was the impact of me being late or not sending the email?)
3. Make a new Promise and how you will fulfill it (i.e. I promise in the future I will be on time and I will leave 1.30hrs in advance)

In regards to my previous example, I acknowledged I was 12 min. late. I asked for the impact I had on the individuals, and one of the participants namely, Ashley said, “I wasn’t sure if you were gonna make it.” I said, “Is that an anxious and disappointing feeling?” She said, “Yes.” I got the impact I had on Ashley. Then I made a new promise to the group of being there on time, if asked to present again, by leaving 1.30hrs earlier.

There is power in restoring your word. However, most individuals choose to be sorry. They never understand the impact their actions have on others, and they don’t promise anything. “Sorry, I’m late. There was a bad accident.” This is language of a person who has limited power. Notice how the responsibility shifts to the traffic.

You can either be the cause (i.e. be responsible) for being on time or you can find a reason not to be on time (i.e. “because of...”). Choose to Be the Cause.

Reasonable lives and organizations have reasons for limited success and power.

What human beings don’t realize is that every time you say something and don’t do it, you diminish your integrity. When you diminish your integrity, you lose some of your power. When you lose your power, you use force.

Power vs Force

Power is the ability to manifest something in reality without using force. Simply put, you speak and you create. People follow you because of you. Your title, wealth, and accomplishments are just an added bonus.

Force is to impose your will. People that use force get things done because of favors, manipulation, monetary/social status, or title. Powerful people and organizations take 100% responsibility and view responsibility as a privilege and honor. They choose to be the cause or the source that makes things happen.

When you are late and just say “sorry”, you never get to restore your integrity. If you want to build a powerful organization, you must have Integrity and Responsibility as the two core principles.

Stop wasting your time and efforts managing people. Start managing

their promises and empowering them! This is why I believe the future of leadership is “leadership through self-management”.

- How effective is it to train your sales people if they don’t “honor themselves as their word?”
- How effective is it to have leadership training if your employees don’t understand responsibility to be a privilege?

I have dedicated my life to empower people and organizations to make sure they understand and implement three core principles.

- Integrity (i.e. workability)
- Responsibility (i.e. Being the Cause)
- Generosity (i.e. Giving without expectation) **PE**



Eric Papp works with organizations who believe in Integrity, Responsibility, and Generosity. He is the author of “*Leadership by Choice*”
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Masters in Our Midst

Recognize and celebrate them.

 By Alan Cohen

As commuters hustled through the Washington, D.C. metro station on a cold winter morning, a musician stood next to a wall playing his violin, the case at his feet open for tips. He played six Bach pieces for 43 minutes. A few people stopped and listened for a moment, then hurried on their way. Some threw some change or a dollar into the violin case. The musician’s most attentive audience was a three-year-old boy holding his mother’s hand. He wanted to stay and listen, but his mother tugged him along. Finally the violinist retrieved \$32 from the case, put his instrument away, and disappeared into the crowd. No one applauded or thanked him.

Not one of the 1,036 passersby realized that the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the world’s greatest violin virtuosos. The pieces he played were extraordinarily demanding, performed on a violin borrowed from the Smithsonian, worth three and a half million dollars. Days earlier Bell had played to a sold-out crowd in Boston, tickets at \$100.

Bell’s impromptu concert was sponsored by *The Washington Post* as a social experiment to determine if people would perceive greatness in their midst if they were not told about the talent before them. The commuters did not expect genius, so they overlooked the rare gift offered. They were busy. They had jobs to get to, kids to get to school. Who has time to stop and listen to music on the way to work?

Might we all have moments in our life when we are in the midst of genius without recognizing it? What if you smoked pot with Barack Obama in a Hawaiian high school? Or the band rehearsing in the garage next door was the Beatles? Or you performed in a local community play with young Meryl Streep? Chances are that at the time you would have had no idea of the skill and fame your peer would achieve. The seeds of greatness lie latent in many places we do not expect them, to sprout and flower at a time destiny claims.

Every Somebody was a nobody at sometime. Every nobody could become a Somebody anytime. We would be wise to keep our antennae raised for divinity masquerading as humanity—to find God showing up as people. Grace and divine intervention rarely appear as a big golden hand descending from the clouds. That’s Hollywood. God’s gifts to humanity are delivered through people—sometimes those you would never expect.

I saw an inspiring documentary called Bōtso (www.botsomovie.com),

about a boy who grew up in the Soviet Union during the Stalin regime. Botso’s father was arrested as an enemy of the state and sentenced to death. On the eve of his execution he was allowed twenty final minutes with his son. That precious time proved to be a defining moment in Botso’s life. He went on to endure many hardships, including fighting in the Russian army, being captured by the Nazis, and never seeing his mother again. Yet in spite of his challenges Botso remained true to his love of life and music. He eventually came to the United States where he became a beloved music teacher and changed the lives of thousands of students. At age 91 he is spry, healthy, creative, and more vital than ever. He celebrates every moment and transmits his passion to all.

While Botso would not be considered a spiritual teacher, his huge spirit teaches by example. He has chosen happiness. Is there any better teaching? Many books and seminars tell how to be happy. One man modeling happiness is more powerful than all the words that point to it.

Let’s take the greatness vision one step further: What if the genius in your midst is *you*? What if *your* passion and unique talent has the potential to change many lives, including your own? What if you own a gift no one else can give, and your purpose on earth is to deliver it? What if the master you seek lives within you, and is calling for expression?

While overconfidence can be a drawback, underconfidence is a killer. The enemy of humanity is not bloated ego. Often people with bloated egos deliver talent to the world that less confident egos would hide. The real enemy of humanity is deflated ego. Humility does not imply self-diminishment. Real humility recognizes the gifts that Great Spirit has given you, and you humbly go about delivering them.

The story is told about a group of old monks who lived in a monastery dying due to lack of passion. One night a mysterious stranger showed up and stayed with the monks for several days. “One of you is the messiah,” he told them, and departed. Soon a new air of excitement filled the monastery. All the monks treated each other as a potential messiah. Many wondered, “Could it be me?” Their vocation was renewed, and in the light of their newfound inspiration many spiritual seekers visited for inspiration and upliftment. Ultimately no one monk became the messiah. In a way, they all did. There are masters in our midst. Let us recognize and celebrate them. **PE**



Alan Cohen is the author of 24 inspirational books in 24 languages. He is a contributing writer for the NY Times bestselling series Chicken Soup for the Soul. His work has been featured on Oprah.com, USA Today, Washington Post, and 101 Top Experts. Alan is also the founder of the Foundation for Holistic Coaching.
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From Me to We

Principles of enlightened leadership.

By Jim Jensen

In the world of business, much has been written about corporate cultures and the impact they can have (positive or negative) on a company's success. I have been blessed to have been part of the management of companies where the leadership was trained to "catch an employee" doing something **right** (rather than wrong), and then reinforcing such behavior with praise and positive reinforcement.

These are fun companies to work for where management is constantly acknowledging the members in their work unit for all their positive, successful results. It doesn't mean that mistakes don't occur and there is an absence of constructive criticism. And, in some cases an employee may need to be replaced. It simply means the general atmosphere within the work place is very positive. In these environments, "work" becomes fun.

The best leaders I know have excellent human relations skills. They genuinely like people. It is their attitude, and attitudes are all a matter of personal choice. So, why wouldn't we choose to value high human relations skills? Life becomes so much more fun and things come together more effortlessly because good teams are the result of shared visions with each team member embracing both their individual goals as well as the goals of their fellow teammates.

In today's successful organizations who have transcended the old style management paradigm, there is an almost inverted pyramid where enlightened leaders understand the **value** and importance of "working **for**" those who "report to" **them**. They are constantly receiving input and feedback from their employees, so they can better understand the problems and issues one might be challenged with to be more productive in his work. The leader sees his/her role as helping to eliminate barriers and obstacles to heightened performance.

Let me share a model that differentiates why people may have sought positions of leadership in the past compared to what is evolving in 21st century leadership.

<u>Old Paradigm</u>	<u>New Paradigm</u>
• Personal Power	• Empower Others
• To Control	• To Influence
• To Be Served	• To Serve Others

The primary motivations for people to become leaders in the old management paradigm were to have personal power, to control others, and to be served by the workforce. Communication was strictly top down. Titles were very important, and god forbids you should question a person of higher authority.

The primary mood within the company was fear-based. Fear that you might do or say the wrong thing that could lead to your getting fired. The environment was suppressive. Beneath the external veneer of the macho boss was a person also driven by fear and doubt; fear of failure, and fear of others learning of his own insecurities and doubts as to whether he really had the "right stuff" to succeed.

These kinds of environments attracted workers with a predominantly low self-concept. They literally felt "worth-less" and since

their primary motivation was survival, they just kept their mouths shut and did what they were told to do.

As time progressed, more and more people were able to attend college and the general education level increased. In the 1950s, there became an emergence of seminars, books, and teachings that dealt with the subject of self-discovery and the importance of developing one's self concept and self-esteem.

We began to see the emergence of more and more enlightened leaders: leaders who truly recognized the ingenuity of the human spirit in **all** people. Leaders whose self-concepts were well intact and appreciated and valued that creative ideas and solutions could come from anywhere within the organization. They created environments that fostered openness and developed reward and recognition systems for such valued contributions.

More and more leaders began to perceive themselves as teachers and mentors. Instead of seeking personal power, they recognized the value of empowering others. Rather than controlling their employees, they were inspired to influence them. They realized when you control someone you no longer influence him. As a parent, for example, would you rather control your children or influence them? I hope the answer is obvious.

And lastly, the enlightened leader was not into being served by others but rather being of service to his or her fellow workers.

Which work environment would you choose to work in? Another question that I presume the answer is obvious.

When leaders clearly embrace these values and principles, they don't possess their employees. They may take ownership in helping facilitate the success of others (another value), but they know they don't own them. Promotions and advancements, even when it results in the employee leaving the company to go elsewhere or start his/her own company, are greeted with praise and congratulations.

I am reminded of a quote from the book, "Flow",* where the author writes,

“

Ideal teachers (i.e., managers) act as bridges over which they invite their students to cross. Once having facilitated the crossing, they joyfully collapse allowing their students to build bridges of their own.”



C. James Jensen is the author of the book *Beyond the Power of Your Subconscious Mind*. He provides executive coaching, consulting, and advisory services to emerging growth and mid-size companies. Jim is an active member of the World Presidents' Organization, and serves on the board of directors of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, Aspen University, and EZ Grill, Inc. Visit www.beyondthepower.com
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Shoot For the Moon

And you'll never end up with a handful of mud.

By Barry Eisen

Over the years, I've asked office brokers and managers about strategies they've used to help agents, especially newer agents, to become successful faster and establish momentum. An answer I got from some very successful office leaders was this advice to a new licensee when asked, "What do I do now?" Answer: "Go out and buy or lease a Cadillac Eldorado or Continental Mark III" (in the 70's) and Mercedes and BMWs (from the 80's on). After the dazed newbie agent had taken a deep breath, they usually responded with their reality, "I can hardly afford Board dues and business cards, how am I supposed to buy an expensive luxury car?" The manager's response, in essence, used the comparison about people being like tea bags. That being, "You don't

usually more positive results.

Set business goals high enough that when you attain them you feel you've done something worthwhile. Playing it safe and going for secondary goals will produce secondary satisfaction, like having an itch you can't quite scratch. There are lots of itchy people out there. You go where you look.

Create a killer to-do list just before you go to sleep so that the following day is not a chaotic accident, but lived by choice. Know what you're waking up to every day. Prioritize your list A, B, C so you don't confuse activity with productivity.

Execute. Go to work every day. Most don't. It's why the 80/20 concept is true. Showing up is half the process of success. As your business grows, learn to delegate. Oversee those to whom you delegate, and hold them accountable, but don't micro manage. Respect them and manage your time. Treat your business like a business.

Spend at least 30 minutes each day reading or listening to personal development. Other people have done the research and have already been down the road you're on. Take notes on good ideas and implement them immediately. Waste less time. Copy success.

Get a coach. This could be an office buddy or manager who is willing to actively listen and be honest in their feedback on a weekly basis. To go to the next level, don't be cheap in hiring a coach. The cynic is the person who knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing. Do trial coaching sessions with a few coaches so you'll know how you work together sooner than later. Styles are different. Commit to a coach with whom you feel comfortable and respect. Accountability is a part of good coaching, but creating systems that move you forward is where the real value in coaching is. Don't go for the rah! rah! cheerleader type. If you want a warm feeling, take a hot shower instead.

Get healthy. You can't carry an active mind on a physically fatigued body. Make the time to exercise. Eat right. Get enough quality sleep. It doesn't take much time to put together a great plan that will give you more vitality. Put these commitments on your to-do list and keep the appointment with yourself like you would honor and keep an appointment for business with others. "Don't think-just do!" (Yoda, 1980).

My list would not be complete without a mention about learning mental techniques that can help you learn, focus and achieve quicker and easier. The neuro-science concept of brain plasticity is about exercising the mind as you do the body to improve its functions. Self-hypnosis is a mental exercise/discipline that will help de-stress, improve, energy, sleep patterns, decision making, goal achieving, assertiveness, self-confidence, memory and also speed up learning (computer skills, language, presentation scripts, etc.), 2-5 times faster. As the book title says, "Think and Grow Rich." **PE**



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know how strong you are until you're in a little bit of hot water."

While I'm not suggesting financial irresponsibility, I am suggesting that if you see your business opportunity through the eyes of a small-minded person, you will automatically play a smaller game with those self-imposed restrictions. Myopia, a lack of bigger vision, can have you play it safe, use less of your talents, justify your fears rather than face them, be less generous and cause you to spend more time justifying your lack of progress, rather than being proactive and moving forward. Small mindedness causes you to TRY and trying is like being half pregnant. DO is better.

Your business will never grow more than you do. In order for it to grow, you need to grow. Changing your mindset, changing your habits, changing your attitudes, changing how you learn and perhaps changing your friends and those you draw on for support are some of the possibilities.

Here's a checklist of good ideas. The goal is not perfection, but with these thoughts in mind, you'll find yourself making better decisions. Goals are simply gauges to tell you if you're on the right track. Enough good decisions during the day guarantee feelings of well-being and

The Fallacy of Empowerment

Being a servant leader.

By Dwight Frindt



At a [Vistage](#) International, All City meeting in Orange County, [David Marquet](#), retired fast attack submarine captain and recent author of the acclaimed leadership book, “Turn The Ship Around,” asked a very powerful and provocative question – *“If you are telling people that you are going to have an empowerment program, what are you telling them about their condition up until now?”*

While the insult to the people involved is obvious, disempowerment is also a rather normal experience in adult life. **From a leadership perspective this insight calls for a fundamental shift in your mindset.** If you think that your people require empowerment that creates a particular set of conversations and resulting actions that are essentially coming from an outside-in and generally top down approach.

If your mindset is that people, or at least the ones you surround yourself with, are naturally passionate, want to make a difference, want to do a good job, and care deeply, you will most likely design a very different approach that is more inside-out and can be seen as grass roots or bottom-up. (A few organizations have even drawn their organization charts upside down in an attempt to display this thinking.) **Leadership in this paradigm is often characterized as ‘servant leadership.’**

In Captain Marquet’s submarine, he did not issue orders. **He expected his subordinates to get clear about what was to be done and communicate with him in the form of “sir, I intend to...”** This kept him aware of what was going on and allowed him to add information that he might have to the subordinate’s decision-making process. In making this fundamental change in the way the crew and officers communicated, **the team was able to move from**

the worst performing sub in the fleet to the best in one year. ([Read his book](#) to learn the full story and to get valuable lessons on how to implement his approach successfully in your organization.)

In a very different environment, [The Hunger Project](#), a global non-profit organization committed to empowering men and women to end their own hunger, has successfully developed a network of 300,000 committed volunteers, and 20 million engaged villagers, who are working to end hunger in the world. The Hunger Project stands with the hungry by taking the approach that **people are the solution, not the problem**, just as Captain Marquet did with his crew. The Hunger Project does not prescribe solutions, for example teaching people to fish; it unleashes the power of each individual inside a shared commitment to ending their own hunger. When they mobilize, **these villagers then determine their own path to end hunger** and take on learning what they will need to know to get the job done.

What is your leadership perspective? Are you willing to work with your associates to create a shared vision and then support them in fulfilling that vision? Are you ready for your team to take on a greater role in developing solutions for your business issues? **Are you prepared to live with your own issues around what may seem like giving up control?** What results might be possible if you take this new approach? **PE**



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How Email-Communication Matters?

Writing lucid emails, a trait of successful personality.

 By Lalit Wankhade

Some people write obscure emails. They write emails in the least possible time by using all the possible short forms. Many people write emails carelessly, with almost the whole stuff dumped in a single and bizarre paragraph. The way email is composed, represents your personality to an email receiver. The words, style, and tone that are used in any email make your immediate reflection on the other side. Perhaps, nears and dears, like parents, may not have much concern while reading your improvised email. But to the others, especially, unknown and professionals, such emails stir irritation. It also defeats the purpose of sending an email. Thus, incomprehensible email not only spoils the precious time but may also upset the mood of a person reading that email.



Email-communication has become the necessity of the modern world. From personal appointments to business deals to social endeavor to official work, everywhere, emails are accepted as a faster mode of communication. Whatever be the purpose of email writing, you should compose a keen and precise email so that the content and intent of the email should be apparent to a receiver. And as part of a successful personality, you have to cultivate a trait of writing lucid

emails. Writing a good email needs conscious efforts and writing it in plain English makes it comprehensible to a larger section of the society.

People in communication may belong to different nations, bearing different cultural outlook, however, an email that is meant for clear communication is bereft of cultural molds. I am lured to evoke your attention to the book, *Outliers*, written by Malcolm Gladwell. In one of the chapters, he finely described how language variations obtained due to the cultural differences had developed miscommunication between an aircraft crew and the staff at the airport, which eventually lead to the crashing of an aircraft. Though, bad emails will not cause such deadly mishaps, standard practices in email-communication will definitely yield better outcomes.

To realize the quality of email writing, you may ask any writer – “What is a good email?” The answer lies in the fact that a writer is very keen, frugal while using words, and polished when she writes a query letter. Her email is free from grammatical errors. Else, the editor may not read the query letter. The writer, although with an interesting article idea but with fractured content of the email, will not get the writing assignment.

Conversely, the outcomes of writing impeccable emails are noticeable in every walk of life. A party receives a contract and signs a project. A multifunctional team performs in unison. A job is outsourced to a right person. Student receives a post-doctoral opportunity. Many similar successes are seen due to the professional communication through emails. Thus, email communication is gaining more prominence than earlier days. The following guidelines are useful while you write an email.

Precise and clear subject: Subject is a kernel of any email. The subject identifies the issue of an email. It communicates the content of any email in few words. Hence, subject should abstractly represent the body of an email. It must be precise enough, so that, the person receiving it should be able to judge the priority of the email in a mailbox. You should make the subject attractive by using a few fitting words.

Body of an email: Time is precious to everybody. One must write a smart email so that it should take minimal time of a person reading that email. You must write an email clearly. Start any email by suitable greeting. Avoid using abbreviation for any word. Words can't be replaced by short forms. The paragraphs should be smaller and structured. Every word used in an email should be unequivocal. Conclude any email by offering regards.

Editing: Grammatical errors in email indicate casual attitude of a person. Though, email is a short piece of writing, editing for grammar embeds a pleasant tone to an email. An email becomes tidy by doing careful editing to the content. Thus, in the process of editing, your email also becomes beautiful. **PE**



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The Ultimate in Personal Development

Naturally rise up by letting go.

 By Gary Bate

Recent global events show us that our World is finely balanced and the leadership in the West has a somewhat different set of values to the leadership in the East. These values aren't necessarily shared by the respective peoples because the strong options available really only sing from the same hymn sheet. So we have a situation where somebody's ideal is imposed on a whole country's population and where a collective of the same ideal is trying to gain in power by defeating all opposing ideals.

Clearly there are always two sides to every story and never are both correct and sometimes neither are! These days it's just a matter of who wins the propaganda war – that's where the real war is.

Get it all I say – BBC, CNN, RT News, Press TV, TPV etc., and be guided by your own intuition as to who is telling the truth.

Leaving aside the power games of the so-called elite and their representatives, we the people try to survive and prosper within the framework we call home and it's natural for us to want the best for ourselves and our families. We must never forget that we are really brothers and sisters in a much bigger family – the whole human race.

When I was a younger man, I was well trained in the Insurance industry and I studied under the World's top platform speakers, guys like Zig Ziglar, Dennis Waitley and Tom Hopkins to name a few; so I know a bit about Personal Development. When I retired from the Insurance industry, I pursued a personal interest of mine, which led me into a deeper aspect of Personal Development. The 2 aspects I mention here are very different but also very relevant to every individual who is interested in their own growth and wellbeing.

1. Personality development to help one become a success in this image-conscious World. 2. Personality development to help one evolve beyond the desires of this World. Both paths are necessary in our personal growth because without doing both journeys we are unable to discern and make a conscious choice.

Path 1 is almost self-explanatory and there's countless seminars, webinars and courses that one can engage in and some great web resources that provide their member with free stuff eg. www.hr.com. Learning success aspects like goal setting, time management, resource planning, sales techniques, marketing strategies, HR management and so on, is all great stuff for executives, creatives and budding entrepreneurs.

Path 2 is a very different path yet it can run alongside path 1 to a point in consciousness.

To understand what I mean by the above you must firstly accept that EVERYTHING is energy (consciousness in motion), both what you see and what you don't see in the space between things.

Think of the whole of consciousness like a pyramid with the most basic consciousness at the base and the loftiest at the apex. The former is 'body consciousness' and the latter is known as 'Christ consciousness'. There are several steps up to the top of the pyramid but to get higher than the third step one has to let go of the first 3 steps. Said another way, you can get an insight philosophically into the qualities of consciousness from the King's chamber upwards, but you can only 'know' by experiencing and that requires you to let go of the lower consciousness.

The Ultimate in Personal Development is the natural evolution towards Ascension. It's natural because it is allowing your personal energy vibration to rise in your body. Ascension then is a journey in consciousness, a journey in your own mind to the apex of the pyramid.

There's nobody to die for; just aspects of consciousness to die from. Most men start out at the very bottom of the pyramid, well and truly anchored in the fire of their loins. When a man finally admits that most of his conquests were nothing more to him than bodies to ejaculate in, then you have a man with an advancing consciousness. I say most men because there are a minority of men who are more advanced by virtue of their emotional make up and they start out on the second step, where most women are firmly anchored and stuck (family matters).

I say most women because some are almost totally body focused, which is either competition amongst themselves or to get a man they can lay claim to, without which they would be a nobody (in their minds). So these first 2 steps are closely related and in the context of the consciousness pyramid they represent physical and emotional body consciousness.

Step 3 is an increased conscious awareness and it moves one into the consciousness of control dramas of every description – in personal relationships, the workplace, the global power game etc. You can step up and down on the first 3 steps because they pretty much offer different aspects of the same general consciousness, which is all about me me me eg. sex can be nothing more than a power (energy) grab, which is copulation on the third step between the victim and the tyrannical energy.

Climbing to step 4 is like throwing the sandbags out of the balloon basket, the heavy bags being ditched represent all the polarized aspects of consciousness hitherto mentioned. Until the balance or bias changes we don't take flight and we can only know the higher echelons of consciousness philosophically. We must naturally rise up by letting go in order to reach the fourth step. What's interesting is once we take off, it's normally only upwards and onwards because the consciousness is so radically different from the lower 3 steps so we never want to come back down to Earth.

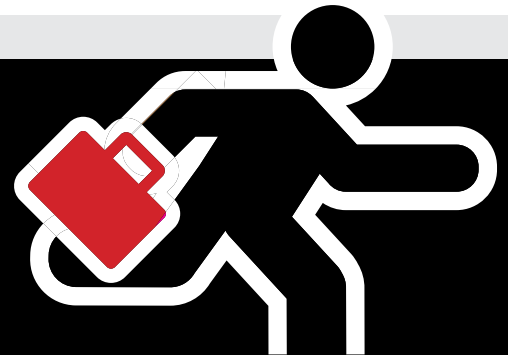
I feel it is important to understand this analogy because this kind of knowledge is difficult to find and many souls are being misguided by new age fraudsters with promises of cosmic DNA upgrades and all that trash.

What we all need to conquer in our lives is what we are wearing. We are riding a physical garment that is nothing more than the combined emotional bodies of our parents at the time of conception. The way we unconsciously create cellular decay and the way we consciously create cellular repair and rejuvenation, is through consciousness. Most chronically ill people do not want to get well. **PE**



Gary Bate is a self-development author and has written / published 2 books, namely, *We are here to know ourselves* (2009) and more recently *The Question Is* (Dec 13). He works at the Aurveda Holistic Center in Kinver, Stourbridge (England) and is busy counseling people 7 days a week. Visit www.whatstress.com Email gary@whatstress.com

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What is Real Success - to You?

Connecting to your true source of supply

 By Marilyn Jenett



I've had decades to ponder this idea of success and what it really means, and I have arrived at the following conclusion...

To me, success means being connected to your Universal Source of Supply — Invisible Substance — or whatever you conceive that creative intelligence to be. You know that with your connection in place, this source energy will provide you with whatever you require for your health, wealth and happiness. Success is becoming open and receptive to receive your supply from the Universal parent through the umbilical cord of your thoughts and feelings — through your belief.

Now, money, for example, can come and go. Someone can have a million dollars one day and lose it the next day in the stock market or in business. But the million dollars does not represent success. If a person is connected to their Source of supply, they know that Substance is unlimited and even though it may retreat, they know it will flow again towards them just like the tides. They know that Substance in any form — not just financial — is always available according to their ability to receive — according to their heartfelt, deep inner conviction and connection to the Source.

The late producer Mike Todd, one of Elizabeth Taylor's husbands, said, "Being broke is a temporary situation. Being poor is a state of mind." Although I strongly suggest that you never use those 'b' and 'p' words, I have to say that this man truly had a success consciousness. He knew at some level, consciously or unconsciously, that appearances meant nothing and that he could always receive again because he was connected to his Source.

I have experienced outer success and accomplishment. I have also had my dark nights of the soul. But it was during one dark night of the soul — the final one — that I finally got it. I knew — really knew — that no matter what the appearance was at that moment that my supply was at hand because I was connected. Not just paying lip service, but really connected. My supply arrived, and it arrived

faster than I could have ever imagined.

From that moment on, I have considered myself a success, no matter what the current condition of the «tides» is.

Years ago, one of my great teachers gave me this affirmation:

All my wants and needs are filled now.

All my wants and needs are filled now. Perfect.

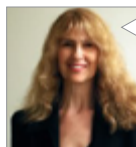
Knowing that whatever your need or want is — that you have the ability to open your mind and heart to the Universe and receive it... without limitation...knowing that you are connected, tapped into the Source of every good thing, a Source that wants to give to you, not withhold from you...what could be more successful than that?

“

Success is not to be measured by how much material wealth is possessed, but whether you are able to create at will what you need. - Paramahansa Yogananda

The above is a chapter from my upcoming book, *Feel Free to Prosper - Two Weeks to Unexpected Income with the Simplest Prosperity Laws Available*.

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Marilyn Jenett is a renowned prosperity mentor and accomplished entrepreneur. She founded the Feel Free to Prosper Program® to mentor and teach others to become aligned with Universal laws and accept their right to prosper. Visit www.FeelFreetoProsper.com

Stand Guard At The Door Of Your Mind

3 powerful steps to ward off negativity.



By Dr. Sheila Murray Bethel

One of the most important strategies you can use to protect yourself from negativity is to consider where the input is coming from and how to quite literally, *stand guard at the door of your mind*.

Remember the old acronym GIGO, *garbage in garbage out*. It means that you cannot have a happy life, do good work, and produce good results if you are letting all kinds of garbage...negativity, into your head and your thinking processes.

A few proven facts about what negative input does to your health:

- Negative people and their caustic language raise your blood pressure.
- Anger and hostility makes your heart beat faster and your stomach gets tight producing all sort of toxic acids that your liver has to deal with.
- When you watch or listen to negative things before going to bed you sleep less well, you can even have nightmares.

In our current culture anger, hostility and negativity sell. As they say in journalism “if it bleeds it leads.” Television, radio and movie producers take advantage of your inability to withstand negative input. Go to the movies and sit through 20 minutes of trailers for upcoming releases. Notice how the sound is ramped up, the violence is featured, either the basest sex or dysfunctional parts of relationships are featured. This is no accident. It causes you to react, whether you want to or not. After a while you become accustomed to all the violence and negative input. You begin to think it is a normal part of life, which of course, it is not.

So what choice do you have? How can you control what goes into your head?

Here are 3 powerful steps you can take immediately:

1. Get a better perspective.

It is so easy to become caught in the problems of today and forget that people have overcome worse times and situations. One of the best ways to get a better perspective on where you are now and where you are going is to become a student of the past.

Here is a gem of a book to do just that. I discovered *The Lessons of History* by Will and Ariel Durant at the beginning of my business career. At that point, I was a sponge. I had a huge list of books to read. However, something about the title intrigued me. I read it immediately, and it has been my constant companion for 25 years. This little gem teaches us that as people we have survived and overcome hyper negative times before. Though written more than 60 years ago, it will awaken your positive instincts and help balance your emotions and intellect. You will be a better person and have a better perspective about our turbulent times. There is no volume that's had such an impact on my view of the past, the present and the future. I guarantee it will do the same for you.

2. Replace negativity.

One of the best ways to counteract negativity is to purposely go in pursuit of neutral and pleasant things that calm your mind and give you relief from all the negativity.

First, look for people who have the ability to see the glass half-full, rather than half empty. You may find them at work, among your friends or in some community activity in which you are involved. A

way to find these folks is to simply ask them for their opinion on any situation. Don't set the tone by giving your opinion, let them talk. In a short time you will know if this is someone you want in your life.

Second, seek out various forms of music and literature that are interesting, stimulating, entertaining and informative but not controversial. It can be hard to break the habit of constantly letting other people control your emotions with negative input. But it is worth the effort to break the habit.

When you take these two steps to replace negativity you are not putting your head in the sand or playing Pollyanna, you are making sure you get a respite from the everyday negativity that floods our daily life.

3. Turn off toxic radio and television and internet.

When you are caught in hard times it is easy to be sucked into the echo chamber of talk radio, cable television and internet sites that have nothing constructive to add to your life. Remember the only goal of these toxic outlets is to make money by increasing ratings/clicks through purposely extreme and frightening rhetoric. They do not bring people together or ask good questions so important issues can be solved. Nor are they concerned about the aftermath and consequences of what their conflict creates. These noise outlets are over run by “opinionators” who are usually not qualified to be commenting.

If you are looking for unfiltered unbiased information there are many place you can go to get both sides of an issue so that you can make an informed decision or form your own opinion.

Here is a quick diagnostic test to run in your mind when looking for unfiltered information:

- Is this person, outlet or site using language that is clear, and not partisan, or filled with code words masking bias?
- Are they loud, discourteous or so filled with their own importance that they will not allow others to express their ideas?
- Is their approach and language aimed at solving problems?
- Is your life made better by what they are saying?
- How do you feel as you listen or read; informed or manipulated, better or worse, angry or hopeful?

“You are what you think about.”

It is all about your mental attitude. Attitude is the engine that drives your life and attitude is most affected by what you think about. The axiom “You are what you think about,” is often viewed as a platitude when it should be taken as a tremendous piece of wisdom that can change your life. When you stand guard at the door of your mind with fresh input, a better perspective and positive situations and people your thinking will change. Your body will respond and you will be better able to chart your own course through the negative waters in which we are sailing. **PE**



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Dr. Sheila Blog

7 Phrases That Sabotage Your Success

And how to overcome them.

By Nancy Stampahar



Here we go into a new year! Have you been feeling re-energized and determined to improve your well-being or career? I hope so! But I am really wondering if you are still staying as focused and committed to your resolutions as you were over the past couple of weeks? Or, are the demands of our fast-paced society starting to take over and pushing your resolutions aside? Now is the time to throw caution! It has been proven year after year, that by the end of January, many people tend to sabotage their success and fall back into old habits.

It takes 30 days to three months to change a habit. **DO NOT GET SABOTAGED THIS YEAR! GET STRONG and STAY FOCUSED on YOU!** To do this you must realize that you and no one else are holding you back from success and happiness. You are the only person responsible for the way you think and act towards people and situations. The saddest fact is that most of the negative things we hear do not come from others, but come from the voice inside our heads. If you keep listening to your negative, sabotaging thoughts, you will become a victim to a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure.

Here are 7 Common Sabotaging Phrases:

1) "I do not have time."

Positive Spin: "This is important for me. I will make time."

2) "He, she or they need me."

Positive Spin: "I need to take care of myself now. He, she or they need to grow and learn."

3) "I am (afraid, stupid, fat, a failure, too old, etc.)."

Positive Spin: "I am (courageous, smart, beautiful, successful, young and spry, etc.)."

4) "I am not (smart, interesting, strong, etc.) enough."

Positive Spin: "I am (smart, interesting, strong, etc.) enough."

5) "I will be happy when X happens."

Positive Spin: "I can no longer delay my happiness."

6) "My life is getting out of control again."

Positive Spin: "I am in control of my life, and I can handle it."

7) "It is too hard."

Positive Spin: "It will get easier."

Start right now, by filling your mind with one of these positive thoughts. Write down the thought that is most relative to you and place it near your desk, bed, mirrors, cabinets, etc. Keep repeating your positive spin until it becomes a new habit of thought. Naturally, you will watch your self-fulfilling prophecy of success evolve. Repeat the steps for each new thought you want to master.

In addition, remember to surround yourself with positive people. When you surround yourself with positive people, you up your game. When you surround yourself with miserable, "oh-whoa-is-me", negative people, there is a high probability you will turn out to be just like them. **DO NOT SETTLE** for less than you deserve. You only have so much time left on this earth, enjoy the success and happiness you deserve before you no longer can. **PE**



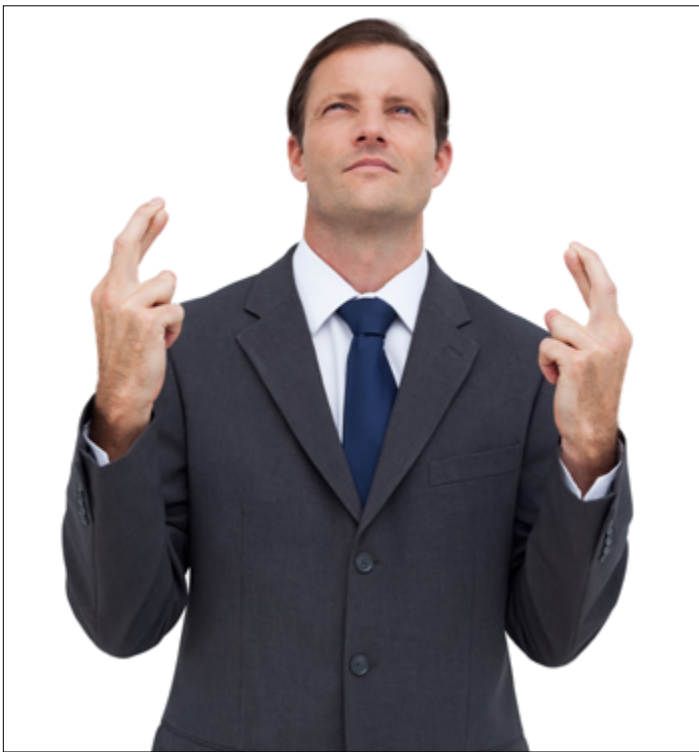
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It's Time for Optimism and Leadership

Today is a good time to start.

By Oliver DeMille

It's time for optimism in America. Right now! I'm convinced that the best era of America is still ahead. And it's time to start building it, even if Washington won't, and even if the politicians are going to bring us both ups and downs in the years ahead. When we turn on the news, we hear of debts ceilings, a \$17 trillion national debt, deficits, credit rating downgrades, inflationary money, layoffs, political party anger and name-calling, leaders who won't negotiate, government shutdowns, sequesters, defaults, international unrest and conflicts, and on and on.



It's a bit overwhelming, and most people are either deeply frustrated or have decided not to follow the news too closely. But this is only part of the story.

While those in Washington argue, over and over, about their latest "Crisis of the Month", a lot of regular citizens have done something very important. They've realized that the future is up to them, and not to the politicians.

And the numbers of such people are growing. Some are getting more involved than ever before at the local level, and others are spending more time strengthening their families. Some are studying current events with real passion, and others are tackling history and the great classics in order to learn a lot more.

Still others are focusing on community projects, service, teaching the youth, and supporting charities that really need more support, and quite a few are increasing their entrepreneurship — building the economy for themselves and others instead of waiting for politicians to get their act together.

And make no mistake, when the regular people in America,

Canada, and other nations realize that it's up to them and then take action, it's like rousing a sleeping giant. When the average citizen stands up and gets involved, like after Pearl Harbor or during the American Revolution, big things really happen.

Right now, the giant is just starting to stir. The signs are faint, but they are growing: Tea Partiers, Occupiers, protestors, bloggers, radio-show callers, "social medi-ers," and above all, lots of newly-focused volunteers and entrepreneurs.

The people are beginning to feel the need to take their nation back, especially their economy. The future is bright.

Whatever Washington does, the leadership spirit in our homes will determine the years and decades ahead. Many experts have dubbed the 21st century "the China Century," but in truth the reason China is growing is because of their widespread entrepreneurship. That's the real story.

And up until now, most freedom-lovers have argued that American entrepreneurs will bring back our economy — if Washington will just get out of the way. This message is now changing.

As the problems in politics keep increasing, more and more people are looking around, taking stock, and saying, "You know what? Washington might never get its act together. So, I guess it's up to me."

This is the spirit of enterprise, and there is almost no power in the world as strong as a people fully committed to free enterprise.

This is an exciting time. Instead of waiting for the politicians to free up the economy, we're now making the great "**FreedomShift**": *Regardless of what Congresses and Presidents and Justices do, let's build our families, communities, and the economy to a whole new level — and show Washington what to do. We're the leaders now. When we lead, the politicians will have to follow.*

If you haven't joined this movement yet, today is a good time to start.

- » Build a business.
- » Or read a great classic.
- » Start a class for kids in your area.
- » Or begin attending all your city council meetings.
- » Make and follow a plan to double your savings rate.
- » Brainstorm. Identify where your passions are, and then take action to genuinely improve your life and the world around you.
- » Get started. The economy and society needs you. It's up to us.

What the media and politicians don't realize is that this is happening. The worse Washington gets, the more people are taking personal action. It's real. And it's growing. Whatever Washington does, this is the movement that will make or break our future.

Smile. Laugh with a friend. Tell your kids a joke and giggle together. Tell them that the future is bright. And take action to make it true. Now is a time for real optimism. **PE**



Oliver DeMille is the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and USA Today bestselling co-author of [LeaderShift: A Call for Americans to Finally Stand Up and Lead](#), the co-founder of the Center for Social Leadership, and a co-creator of [TJEd](#). Visit oliverdemille.com

Being Courageous

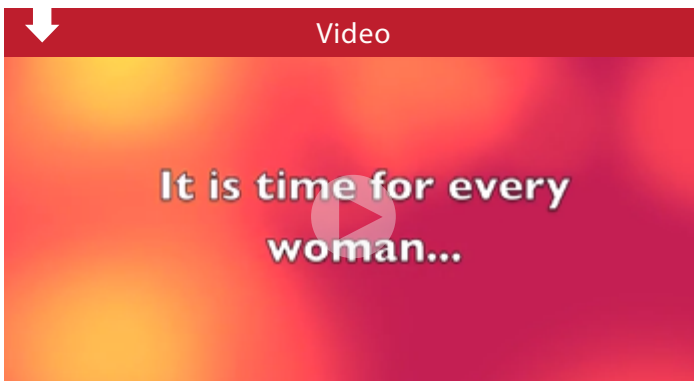


3 scripts that keep women stuck at work.

By Sandra Ford Walston

Curious about women and courage, everyday courage or how to apply courageous leadership—this is the article for you. No sensational stories, heroism or drama, just the understanding of how to apply courage at work or in your personal life. There is a direct correlation between your success quotient and your courage quotient. What would you do right now if you had “unlimited courage?”

A woman who noticed that a high-ranking position would soon be vacated said, “I thought about it and thought about it. So I did the somewhat brazen thing and went over and asked, “Can I have Vicki’s job?”



What’s wrong with asking, and why is it “brazen” to ask?

This is a perfect example of “scripts” or inner dialogues that multiply over time and define who we are. Left unchecked, they can prevent us from achieving what we want.

When you understand your scripts or inner dialogue, you realize how they have limited an honest and clear vision of who you really are and can now take action from that knowledge.

If you respond to obstacles from the lower levels of courage consciousness, you invariably get stuck. Even if you manage to get “unstuck,” you will find yourself repeating the same patterns and getting stuck at the same obstacles (like a bad version of the movie Groundhog Day) until you respond from a higher level of courage consciousness.

Once you begin to recognize the B-movie script for the obstacle that it is, the inner power of personal courage enables you to be able to grasp significant opportunities in the workplace and in life. Simply put, getting unstuck and staying unstuck requires the spirit of courage. Regardless of your unique circumstances, courage elevates your consciousness into the realm of truth, enabling you to advance your life’s purpose.

1. Step Up!

Returning to our initial example, if you’re too intimidated to ask, you don’t get the opportunity to step up! Perceiving her action as brazen versus courageous exemplifies a feminine need to rework her inner script.

Do you see yourself as brazen, bold, brash, blatant or forward at work? Or are you a courageous woman overcoming invisibility to achieve success intertwined with happiness in your job? Courageously forthright action does not undermine a woman’s femininity. It does, however, reveal a woman’s willingness to “showcase her talents” (one

of 12 courage actions).

2. The Desire to Be Perfect

Are you able to recognize the difference between your potential and your experience? For example, if you move to another division, can you gain experience, develop new skills and broaden your business horizons? If so, try not to match your style or skills to fit a “perfect” checklist. Best not to be overwhelmed by perfection, but instead apply candor (one of twelve cousins to courage) to express your expectations and cultivate new abilities.

Like any other ability, we all have courage to varying degrees, one size does not fit all, but to exercise it requires living in conscious choice. Are you more inclined toward caution to keep a “perfect” image? Does a script in your head perpetuate a fear that you won’t perform well enough or you are not “fully” qualified for the job? Rather than strive for perfection, feminine courage actions such as work without regrets, showcase your talents and reveal your vulnerability free you! Do you have the courageous will to try it?

3. Respond to First Red Flags

First red flag warnings are everywhere. A woman I will call Deb was preparing to speak at a conference when she got a big red flag in the form of a disturbing email from the association’s education director. Meant for a staff member, the email was filled with sniping remarks about her! Believing she had a good relationship with the client, Deb was surprised by the unprofessional comments. Deb surmised that a rude conversation had taken place between the two co-workers at her expense. “Why would I want to speak at a conference when I’m being undermined behind the scene?” Deb asked. With courage, she replied to the director’s email: “Did I miss a cue or is something wrong?” The director quickly discounted the errant email by writing: “That email was one that people tell stories about in business magazines... It was meant for...” Deb wanted to forget the incident but struggled for weeks with the nagging “first red flag” warning. In business for over ten years, she had learned the hard way that one red flag usually follows another, indicating a situation in danger of spiraling out of control. With the insight of her own past mistakes, Deb hoped she would be wrong but grew increasingly concerned.

Needless to say, she was not surprised when her presentation did not go well, and she now has a stronger resolve to honor the first red flag. Ultimately, Deb learned a hard lesson: respond directly to the ambiguity represented by that first red flag warning by implementing a courage action called “confront uncomfortable truths.”

The concepts of courage-centered living are deceptively simple. The mind (ego) will want to undermine them. After all, how could something so easy work? We become courageous by being courageous. It’s that simple! All you have to do is decide whether this forgotten virtue is worth learning and claiming in your life.

Leadership qualities are defined by courage, such as asking for the tough project or staying focused on the results. What would motivate you to explore where this ancient virtue fits into your work life? **PE**



Sandra Ford Walston, The Courage Expert, is an international speaker and author. Featured on the speaker circuit as witty, provocative, concrete and insightful, she has sparked positive change in the lives of thousands of leaders each year.
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The Leaders Role in Engagement	Apr 1 2014	2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Register
Lead Positive: What Highly Effective Leaders See, Say, and Do	Apr 1 2014	3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	Register
Redefining the Fundamentals of Leadership – Creating Great Business Teams	Apr 2 2014	12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Register
The Top 5 Game Changers in Elearning and What They Can Do for You	Apr 2 2014	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Register
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Emotional Intelligence: Boosting Positive Brain Power	Apr 2 2014	2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Register

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Fear of Failure

Overcome the self-limiting fear.

 By Enrique Ruiz



What is failure? To many it is a loss, a show of weakness, and a rejection of our persona so the world perceives an underachiever, or perhaps even a flop. Failure in this context can amplify personal insecurities that can be humiliating in our respective social circles. Not succeeding in something opens the door for criticism, mockery and even “I told you so” remarks. Failure is an emotional fear that strikes at our very core.

Are we born with this fear of failure or do we acquire it somewhere along the way in life’s journey by osmosis, lecture or learning as we interact in our daily social circles? Who have we given the right to have a say in our life?

Babies fail hundreds of times when they learn to walk. Intuitively they know that they can walk so they try, and fall down. They get up and try again only to feel the hard floor again. These babies know they have not succeeded but they also don’t let their unsuccessful attempt deter them from trying to stand up and walk again, and again, and

again. As parents, we look on, watching their progress with delight, even encouraging them to persist until their equilibrium and all of their tiny muscles are synchronized to maintain balance for forward movement on just two feet. Failure is not an option. These babies don’t have any fear in this process either. Why not?

Failure is a man-made concept. It is engrained as a personal evil in our social talk as we mature, so we create barriers and self-imposed limitations to prevent any perceived failures. I often heard in my upbringing:

- You lost
- You can’t do that
- That’s a silly idea
- That was dumb
- That will never work
- You’re not that smart

These remarks can be self-fulfilling prophecies with terminal

consequences for our dreams that should be choose to take to heart. Unfortunately, many people that we look up to convey these thoughts upon the impressionable young minds that cannot put them into proper context. In time, these remarks begin to shape our thoughts, our motivation and our tolerance for risk. The world tells us that risk is bad yet for the few who embrace it responsibly it can mean the difference between ordinary and achieving the “EXTRA” ordinary.

In our youth, we believe that we can conquer the world. We don't know what we want to do but we feel as though we are invincible. Someday we will break loose and become somebody special. As time progresses though, our schools mirror back to us a portrait of how smart we are with our grades in comparison to others, our friends tell us what we can or cannot do and our family attempts to steer us clear into the tried & true patterns of their own experience.

Outside of our social circle, the media portrays successful people who appear to have achieved success overnight. With this imagery, we begin to question ourselves, as we don't seem to have that magic formula for instant success. We yearn for stardom and acceptance yet our rhythm is not polished and our strengths are not yet honed.

Others seem to DO what we want to do so much better and no one is laughing at them. We therefore wait for the right moment, the right idea or the right person who can make our dreams come true.

strengths. After all, it is a good day when you have invested all of yourself for the pursuit of your goal. We need to answer to ourselves first since we are, after all, our own boss forging the life we want to live. Failure is nothing more than a False Evidence Appearing Real (FEAR). Our success rate will be the inverse of our failure rate. Increasing our failure rate invariably increases our success potential.

Einstein failed a math class yet created one of the most recognizable equations of our century, $E=mc^2$; Edison failed ten thousand times to make the light bulb but you and I use his invention every day; Walt Disney went bankrupt several times but his imagination continues to delight families worldwide; Colonel Sanders (in his 60's) endured more than a thousand NO's before someone said yes to his chicken recipe which now feeds millions worldwide. Can you consistently push the limits over time to become the next success?

Leave the naysayers behind who subconsciously try to keep you at “their level.” Hold your head up high and be proud of your accomplishments every day so that in the years to come you never look back with regret, whispering to yourself... *“I wish I had.”* Business and society need progressive leaders who are responsible, thoughtful and persistent risk takers. Don't let people stand in your way and tell you what you can, or cannot do. You are the one who has the say on what you can, and will, achieve! **PE**

“

Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will.

- Karim Seddikiseem”

Social acceptance is often a personal goal. Being a maverick in pursuit of our dreams and freedoms is considered risky that limits our popularity. Consequently, we invariably extract self-worth by being ‘normal’ within the social circle, without pushing the bounds. We are afraid of the risk involved and we fall short. Killing time and being cool are temporal rewards that do not threaten anyone. Yet, we will truly fail if we do not try.

“

I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I cannot accept NOT trying.

- Michael Jordan”



Enrique ‘Rick’ Ruiz is President of a management consulting and training firm in the Washington DC area. He earned an MBA in the UK and has worked in Canada, Mexico, United Kingdom and across the US. Visit www.positivepsyche.biz

“

It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all -- in which case, you fail by default.”

- JK Rowling, Harry Potter Author and Billionaire

Failure is nothing more than a stepping-stone to mark where we are and where we are going. Each stepping stone gives us a new vantage point, a new perspective, a new learning and perhaps even a greater strength than we had before. Succession means getting in the arena to DO something. Are we willing to forge a new road, can we wash away the obstacles we encounter along the way and persist to reach our own desired promised land?

We can build-up our own self-worth by committing to our own dreams. We stand tall in at least a circle of one while we hone our

Are You Losing The Human Touch?

Use technology as a tool not a crutch.

 By Tim Connor

I’ll wager that today you will send and receive more texts and emails than you have conversations with your – customers, employees, friends and/or loved ones! Am I right?

OK, so I’ll accept that that’s one of the primary ways we communicate today and it’s one of the primary advantages of technology – sharing information. But I ask you to consider. The good life isn’t about exclusively the exchange of information, but developing trusting, compassionate and enduring human relationships grounded in understanding, thoughtfulness, appreciation and being present. Yes, you can tell me what you had for lunch on Face Book but I’d much rather hear from you now and then – in person.



I’m not talking here about that quick text or email from your iPad or iPhone that – “I’m on my way.” – “Your order has been shipped.” “The meeting has been cancelled.” What I’m talking about here is – well here are a few recent statistics you might find interesting.

The average couple spends less than 27 minutes a week in shared intimate (not sexual) conversation and on average over 36 hours per week individually scrolling/searching the internet.

The average salesperson sends out over 50 emails/texts a day and talks with fewer than 10 customers/prospects during the same time frame. I’m not including here sales folks who are involved in tele-sales

or tele-marking activities.

The average parent spends less than 20 minutes a week talking to each of their children one-on-one in important child rearing conversations.

The average manager sends more emails to employees in a week than they have conversations with them in a month.

Guilty of any of the above? If so is it because you believe;

It’s easier, more convenient or gives you a paper trail? It takes less time, avoids confrontation or allows you to send messages 24 hours a day? People are too busy today to talk? People would rather use technology than have face to face or voice to voice conversations? My personal opinion regarding these and other excuses or rationales is – you’re wrong.

The one thing that separates humans from all other species on Earth is the ability and need to share fears, desires, frustrations, feelings, hopes, worries, dreams and yes your opinions and information. Humanity is about the ability to create enduring one-on-one and one-to-group relationships based on knowing the other person’s or group’s uniqueness and those special traits that make them human.

I am not against technology, but the evidence is overwhelming – we are losing the human touch with those in our lives both personal and career or business. Don’t believe me! How many times have you gotten a “technology message” rather than a human when you have called any organization? I know . . . that’s just the way it is today. OK, so we agree that that’s the way it is, but I have to tell you last week it took me fifteen minutes and pushing multiple buttons on my phone before I could reach a live person. Frustrating? Well, yes, and then the person I finally reached wasn’t the right person. So, back to punching numbers on my phone and waiting and listening to their nine “telephone options” before I finally gave up and decided to no longer purchase from that organization, but find a new supplier. Ever had this experience or am I the only one with this frustration? I seriously doubt it!

A question – do you think you might be losing business because of your overuse of technology? Do you think one of your relationships might be in jeopardy because you are relying too heavily on technology? Are you losing touch/connection with others in your life in a real and human way?

Don’t risk it. The answer – use technology as a tool and not a crutch if you want to develop, build and maintain positive relationships with others in your life. Disagree? Go ahead and send me an email. But only 15 people have my cell phone number so you can’t send me a text.

By the way if you think this issue is a problem with relationships today – stick around – it’s just getting worse. **PE**



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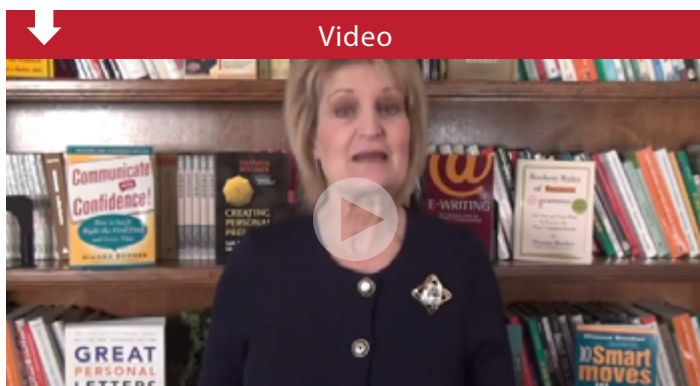
Dynamic Presentation



3 easy steps to solid prep for your seminar.

By Dianna Booher

Has late-night cramming for the old college exam turned into a lifelong habit? Do you find yourself tweaking a client presentation an hour before you're due to deliver it? Are you still racking your brain for that perfect analogy the day before you walk into the board room with the big recommendation? Do you frequently find yourself still Googling stats minutes before you need to use them at your industry meeting?



If you answered yes to any of the previous questions and you'd like a little more breathing room and a bigger safety net in your planning system. Consider these three steps to prepare for a new presentation—or to update a current presentation for a new audience:

1. Feed your brain a healthy diet of organic ingredients. No, I'm not talking about real foodstuffs here (although eating healthy is a good idea as well). The ingredients I'm referring to include books, self-development recordings, training products, biographies, documentaries, quotations, proverbs, and inspirational messages. Of course, feeding your brain new information is not a new idea. But I'm talking about what, why, when, and how to feed it. If you feel yourself going stale, choose fresh organic ingredients to broaden and deepen your knowledge base. Read, listen, or think, "What new perspective does this give me about X topic?" Look for links across industries. What truths in the financial industry apply to engineering? What principles in human relations apply to technology? What was true in the 18th century that's still true today?

2. Consider questions rather than answers. As you think about a new audience, rather than starting with what information you have to *give* them, begin by considering what questions they'd *ask* you if your presentation were an interview. How are their interests related to your topic? What's a "day in the life of" for them? What's their biggest challenge? Why should they care about what you have to say? How does what you have to say solve a problem for them? Knowing their questions leads you to the pile of information you now need to shape, put in perspective, and interpret for your own ultimate purpose in the presentation.

3. Simmer well in your subconscious. Years ago, Chiffon Margarine produced a popular TV commercial with the line: "It's not nice to fool Mother Nature." My sentiments exactly. Although I'm not a neuroscientist, I do know you can't rush the brain's inner working

at the subconscious level. Once you provide the input about your audience, their interests, their everyday tasks or problems to solve, your subconscious mind will go to work looking for answers among all the data you've stored from your diet of other resources to combine with your own expertise.



Given enough time for all this information to "simmer" together, usable ideas will pop to your conscious mind. But clearly, the success of this third step depends on the first two: fresh inputs and time. It's much like making a baby. The process takes about nine months, give or take a few weeks.


As a result of this three-prong preparation process, "all of a sudden" you'll become conscious of a core message, a suitable structure, and appropriate illustrations. Take the time. You can't fool Mother Nature. **PE**



Dianna Booher works with organizations to increase their productivity and effectiveness through better communication: writing skills, presentation skills, interpersonal communication, and client communication. An expert in executive communication and keynote speaker, she is the author of 46 books, published in 23 languages. Call- 1-800-342-6621
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The New Frontier of Financial Wellness

What it means to be financially fit.

 By Dr. Ann D. Clark



A new year means a new crowd at the gym. Soon after the 1st of January, fitness centers everywhere were teeming with New Year's resolutionists spinning, lifting and flexing their way to good health. While physical fitness will always rank high on the resolution list, 2014 is all about getting finances in shape. When compared side by side, both are vital in improving the quality of life, reducing stress, and feeling more motivated at work.

According to a survey conducted by Charles Schwab, 52 per cent of young adults consider «making smarter choices about managing expenses» the single most important issue for Americans today, a sharp increase from 35 percent in 2009. Why is it becoming the mainstream to tone one's financial physique? In part, because it is easier to fulfill a resolution when there are specific, measurable goals set. Not to mention, this is now an era where the average employee is living paycheck-to-paycheck with hefty debt responsibilities and little wiggle room to save. And with the fragile, yet steadily improv-

ing economy, now is a better time than ever to mend the money managing process.

Financial benefit trends of 2014

With the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, 2014 is going to see some big changes. Benefits experts, including brokers and carriers, are exploring new methods of driving business and increasing sales. Not only are the value of brokers expected to increase exponentially, nontraditional voluntary benefits will play a significant role this year in allowing employees to customize benefits packages to suit specific needs. Nontraditional voluntary benefits include group legal plans, employee purchase programs and most notably, financial planning. There will be a growing trend with employers integrating financial components into existing employee assistance and wellness programs. ACI Specialty Benefits had reported 4,958 cases of clients utilizing their financial services in 2012, more than doubled from 2,269 in 2011. These financial-support resources will

be utilized more than ever in 2014.

How financial health affects student performance

Navigating through the murky waters of financial stability can be challenging, particularly for students. After all, students often take out loans to offset the lack of income while attending school. According to a study conducted by TICAS (The Institute for College Access & Success), 71 percent of college graduates that obtained a degree in 2012 are in debt, with the average cost equating to \$29,400. Even more striking, a non-profit financial education advocate called “Inceptia” found that four of the top five areas causing stress among college students were money related. “Inceptia” explored 11 common sources of stress, including family life, work, academics, and time management. Results from their May 2012 survey reveal the top five reasons that contribute to stress among the student population included paying off loans, the cost of education, borrowing money for college, finding a job post-graduation and the weight of the academic workload. The financial burdens are so heavy that many students resort to abandoning their college careers altogether in order to support themselves.

Freshmen students are perhaps the most vulnerable to dropping out of college, with 30 percent dropping out after their first year. A staggering 50 percent never make it to graduation. Money challenges are a major cause of increased drop-out rates, especially amongst nontraditional adult learners who are juggling numerous work, family, and personal responsibilities in addition to attending school. ACI has served this underrepresented student population through its SOAR student assistance program, offering access to counselors, life coaches and financial experts to help students overcome personal challenges and succeed to graduation. Since 2010, there have been over 4,400 cases of students using SOAR’s financial consultation services to address and mitigate their money problems. Job search assistance often tops the list of most requested services. These students are looking to reduce student loan debt, and earn income while attending school, but ultimately need help finding a job that accommodates their schedule and lifestyle.

ACI’s SOAR student assistance program has also seen a spike in requests for low-cost community-based resources. Students are looking for anything from low-cost laptops to free diapers, and ACI’s network of global community resources provides students with referrals for affordable housing, child care, transportation, and personal services. By helping students proactively address financial challenges, student assistance programs reduce risk for drop-out and increase retention and graduation rates.

How financial health affects employee performance

This year, employers are ready to give their benefits packages a financial facelift with stronger and more effective financial wellness offerings. Employers notice when a member of their staff is unable to check money problems at the door. The weight of personal financial challenges often manifests into workplace stress, anger, lost productivity or the inability to focus. While everyone has different stress triggers, financial stress tops the list these days. It has become a widespread epidemic and is quickly translating into health-related and corporate productivity costs for employers everywhere.

Scientific research and countless studies suggest that stress leads to illnesses such as ulcers, migraines, back pain, anxiety, depression, and heart attacks. Various other health problems like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, weight gain, diabetes and even heart disease

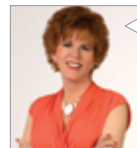
are also likely to arise under extreme stress. A staggering 75-90 per cent of doctor visits are related to stress, with workers citing monetary issues as the primary source.

What expenses are burdening employees to the point where company health care costs are skyrocketing? According to a study conducted by the Society for Human Resources Management, 49 per cent of HR professionals stated that employees are stressed by an overall lack of income to cover essential needs. The monetary woes range from reducing school and credit card debt to paying off medical bills.

As for the impact of financial stress on corporate productivity, an estimated 80 per cent of employees try to deal with their financial worries at work, resulting in a wasted 12-20 hours per month. A study by Financial Literacy Partners estimates the cost at \$7,000 per employee per year.

In order to ensure a happier, more efficient workforce, employers should revisit financial wellness offerings through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or workplace wellness. Employers should look for unlimited financial consultation services for employees and family members, financial wellness training and webinars, and easy-to-use online tools and resources to increase financial awareness and success.

Whether an employee is stressed about monthly budgeting or long-term retirement goals, professional support is available for all issues. Not to mention, the EAP is a prepaid service and is of no cost to the employee seeking help. Employees receive personalized financial action plans to improve financial health at their own pace. In fact, effective financial wellness programs have shown ROI of over 3 to 1. By reducing the number one cause of stress for employees utilizing services like EAP, companies will be able to dramatically reduce health care costs associated with stress-caused illnesses and boost productivity, leading to happier, healthier, fiscally fit employees. **PE**



Founder and CEO of ACI Specialty Benefits, **Dr. Ann D. Clark** was awarded the 2013 Women Who Mean Business Award, Most Admired CEO, and Innovative Excellence. Visit acieap.com