



FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity & You!

BluePrint for Health® Employee Assistance Program 651-662-0900 or 1-800-432-5155

Project Management for Fun and Profit

Do you enjoy organizing, planning, and gathering all the necessary parts of a project together, then watching the fruits of your efforts come to life? If you have planned and organized a wedding or complex family vacation, you have participated in the discipline called “project management.” Every business must participate in project management, and some organizations struggle with it. Learning this discipline can make you worth your weight in gold and could add significantly to your marketability. Here’s how to have some fun with project management and plan or organize something like your vacation this summer. Visit a Web site called www.bubbl.us where you’ll find an easy-to-use project management tool. This “mind mapping” software is free to use and will give you a taste of more sophisticated tools used by project managers. Have fun planning your deserved getaway.



Tackling the Thief of Time

It’s been said, “Procrastination is the thief of time.” But it’s not the task you are avoiding; it’s the magnitude, size, or pain linked to the task. Reduce the pain and you will start moving forward. Divide any task into three to five steps. Make the first step small and no longer than five minutes in duration. Begin. Subsequent steps will probably follow immediately or shortly after. If you procrastinate at step two, apply the formula again beginning with that step.



Walk for Your Health and Your Wallet

Walk for your health’s sake and your wallet’s too, especially if you are financially responsible for any of your own health care costs such as co-pays for doctor office visits, medications, etc. Research from the HealthPartners Research Foundation (reported primarily to business organizations, not consumers) demonstrated that adults, especially those older than 50, who remain active and exercise regularly will significantly reduce health care costs to employers. Logically, if employers are saving money so are you!

Source: *Preventative Medicine (Journal)*, Oct. 2003.



What Your Employer Really Wants

The “goals” section of a job description is often the shortest part. You know the many duties, but do you know what the organization expects and hopes you will accomplish? Sometimes this is not clearly written and it can change throughout the year. You have to pay attention. Every job description includes powerful but often untapped leverage to help the organization meet its goals—which can also be the secret to your success. Learn to see beyond the black and white of the printed job description, and instead understand its scope. Also, pay attention to two things: what issues concern your boss and those issues that concern your boss’s boss.



Intervene Early with Coworker Conflicts



When conflict with a coworker begins, act early to intervene.

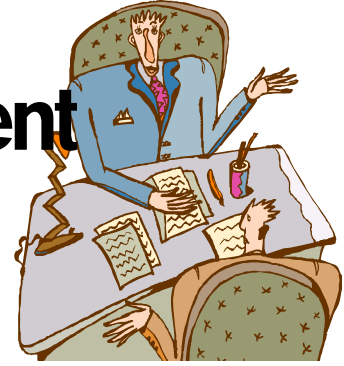
You could save yourself years of anguish, and potentially turn the relationship into a beneficial one. Avoid denying or suppressing your feelings of anger as a coping strategy. As conflict worsens, the risk that you will act irrationally in response to a provocative moment increases. When this happens, management will often hold each of you equally accountable in the conflict and equally responsible for its resolution. You will feel frustrated if you see yourself as the victim. Managing conflict is a life skill; so avoid the mad dash for a book on “dealing with difficult people” once it’s too late to rediscover harmony with your coworker. To head problems off at the pass, 1) let your coworker know you are sensing conflict at the time it occurs; 2) share your feelings in response to an issue or concern and which “rights” you feel are being ignored; and 3) ask for the change you need. Important: Success comes by getting the change in behavior that works for you, not by making a coworker feel punished or blamed.

Add “Value” to Your Job Interview



If you have a great résumé and the ability to discuss your skills, experiences, abilities, and what you can bring to a position, add one more element—the ability to discuss your *work values*. You will be especially remembered after the job interview. The ability to communicate enthusiasm, what “moves” you, and how your purpose in life relates to the position can make all the difference in a job interview. It takes some deeper thinking, but a fast way to organize your thoughts (or perhaps get clarity on whether you are in the right career) is to explore the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT), produced and updated annually by the federal government. This book contains thousands of job descriptions and related functions, but also much more. Each description includes a discussion of the work values that are satisfied by that job. Do your values match? You can quickly find out, and if they do, you will be better prepared to talk about yourself in an interview—about the job and about your passion. Find the DOT at www.occupationalinfo.org.

Your First Appointment with a Professional Counselor



If you have made a decision to see a professional counselor (psychotherapist), you may be wondering what to say when you get to your first appointment. After completing the necessary paperwork, your counselor will help guide the interview. If you think about the following issues before arrival, you can maximize the time you spend in your first session. (Don’t worry—you won’t have to share your deepest thoughts, fears, hopes, and dreams with a stranger in the first session.) Your counselor wants to listen a lot at first because **you** are the expert on your life. The main concern is determining if he or she has the skills that are a good match for your needs. Knowing what prompted you to come, what difficulties you are facing, what you think caused the problem, and what you think might help resolve it are very important. Include what you are currently experiencing, what’s bothering you, and what things you want to be different in your life. Now you are ready for a great learning experience through professional counseling.

Hazards Around the House



Accidental death in the workplace is the key concern of safety professionals. However, did you know that the next most dangerous place for unintentional fatal accidents is the home? Household members older than 70 and younger than five are at the highest risk. People over 80 years of age are twenty times more at risk. The biggest killer are falls—about 42 percent. June is National Home Safety Month, sponsored by the Home Safety Council. A lot is going on at this time of year—lawn mowing, barbecuing, swimming, gardening, and more—so the number of accidents increase accordingly.