

EMPLOYEE COUNSELING PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Daytime: 410-366-1980 x 278/279



Eve./Holidays: 1-800-285-1537

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR'S Home Page



The U.S. Small Business Administration sponsors a web site to help young aspiring entrepreneurs. It's called "The Teen Entrepreneur Guide to Owning a Small Business" and is at <http://www.sba.gov/teens>. It can jump-start any ambitious teen on his or her way to successful business ownership. The web site includes information on finding and developing a business idea, operating a business, legal issues, finding a mentor, joining a youth support group, understanding business terms, success stories, and more. The site also has helpful links to other relevant information and resource web sites.

Three Thieves of Productivity



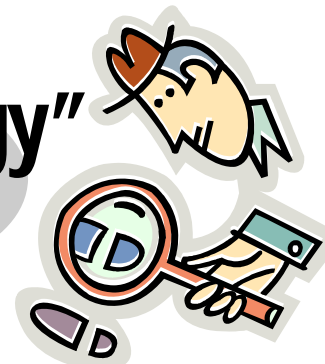
Have you been robbed by the three thieves of productivity—distraction, perfectionism, and procrastination? If you are task and achievement oriented, you've struggled to keep these villains out of your life. Quick tips: 1) Spend a few moments when you get to work getting organized and creating a to-do list to reduce the risk of distraction. 2) Is perfection getting in the way? That speech, project, or report is probably ready to go now. So let it fly. 3) Always waiting for tomorrow? Learn how to produce a sense of urgency to ward off procrastination so you can act and avoid delays. Do it by focusing on the consequences of not completing a task and the rewards of getting it done.

Bullied by the Customer?



Good employees can be hard to find, so to reduce turnover, more employers are intervening to prevent abuse of their employees by customers. The saying "the customer is always right" only goes so far. Tolerating customers who are verbally abusive and who demonstrate other inappropriate behavior is likely not part of your job description. Your employer wants you to have a safe and productive work environment, so reporting these incidents makes support for you and intervention with customers possible.

Boss-"ology" 101



Do you pay attention to subtle clues when interacting with your supervisor that can lead to an improved relationship and reduced stress on the job? Become a boss-"ologist" by discovering your boss's priorities, goals, and objectives that he or she has not openly voiced. Who does your boss respect or model? How much communication does he or she want from employees? What employee work practices are valued? Is he or she a consensus builder or emphatic and decisive? A risk taker or more cautious? Work toward making your performance match your boss's priorities and values, and you may be more productive, reduce stress, and enjoy work more.

2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans



The federal government's "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005" has been published. Here are a few excerpts, including what's new:

- Consume a sufficient amount of fruits and vegetables while staying within energy needs. Two cups of fruit and two and a half cups of vegetables per day are recommended for a reference 2,000-calorie intake, with higher or lower amounts depending on the calorie level. Select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables) several times a week.
- Consume at least three ounces of whole-grain products per day. At least half of all grains you consume should come from whole grains.
- Consume three cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.
- *People over age 50.* Consume vitamin B₁₂ in fortified foods or in supplements.
- *Older adults, people with dark skin, and people exposed to insufficient ultraviolet band radiation (i.e., sunlight).* Consume extra vitamin D from vitamin D-fortified foods and/or supplements.
- *Women of childbearing age who may become pregnant and those in the first trimester of pregnancy.* Consume adequate synthetic folic acid daily (from fortified foods or supplements) in addition to food forms of folate from a varied diet.

Source: <http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines>

Alcohol Awareness Month



April is National Alcohol Awareness Month in recognition of the serious problem of alcohol abuse. In 2002, 14.9 million Americans were classified as alcohol abusers or alcohol dependent. Although denial often keeps people with alcohol problems from seeking an evaluation, motivation to do so increases after an unpleasant experience related to drinking. Consider a confidential evaluation from the EAP if you have experienced one or more of the following key signs or symptoms. Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad? Does your drinking contribute to making you late for work? Have you been arrested for driving under the influence? Does your drinking worry your family? Do you ever drink after promising yourself you won't? Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?

Time to Stop Smoking



Within 20 minutes after you smoke that last cigarette, your body begins a series of changes that continue for years.

- 1) Twenty minutes after quitting, your heart rate drops. Twelve hours after quitting, the level of carbon monoxide in your blood drops to normal.
- 2) Two weeks to three months after quitting, your heart attack risk begins to drop. Your lung functioning begins to improve.
- 3) One to nine months after quitting, coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- 4) One year after quitting, your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.
- 5) Five to 15 years after quitting, your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker's.
- 6) Ten years after quitting, your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's. Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.
- 7) Fifteen years after quitting, your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

Victory over Verbal Violence



Verbal violence (or verbal abuse) is aggressive speech intended to produce psychological harm. Victims are often someone the perpetrator knows well, like a spouse or elderly parent. Although one may feel attacked or unappreciated by unfair criticism in a domestic or couple's squabble, verbal violence is much more. Often verbal violence is not accompanied by physical abuse, and frequently occurs out of public view. It can be perpetrated indirectly, and therefore appear benign to others. As a result, victims often believe there is no help. If you are a victim of verbal violence, consider contacting the EAP for help, intervention strategies, and steps toward a happier life.