

West Side Story

May 2009

Message from the President of West Houston Chapter Chapter of Excellence 2008-2009



“The Road to Remarkable Never Ends,” the theme for this year’s Texas-Louisiana Annual Meeting and Education Forum, will be hosted by the Amarillo Chapter, at the Ambassador Hotel in Amarillo, Texas May 14-16, 2010. It’s going to be a great event!!! See you there!

The new replacement banner for Chapter of Excellence has been received. I hope that you are all striving to become 2009-2010 Members of Excellence. The deadline is June 30, 2010.

Throughout history, mothers have not only been dear to their children but some of them played an important role in transforming the lives of many women and other people around the world. In this male dominated society, they have carved a special place for themselves by the strength of their resolve and determination. These mothers have made huge contributions towards numerous causes affecting the lives of millions of people. Here, we will have a quick look at some of the mothers, who have created history in their own way.

▪ **Anna Jarvis**, the Founder of Mother's Day, dedicated her life to her mother's cause and lifework and to establish Mother's Day to "honor mothers, living and dead...."

▪ **Mother Teresa** is certainly one of the most famous mothers, who worked on behalf of Calcutta's poor, lepers and downtrodden for decades.

▪ **Marie Curie Biography**

Polish by birth and French by citizenship, Marie Curie was a pioneer in the field of radioactivity. A physicist and chemist by profession, Marie Curie made remarkable contribution to science, along with her husband.

▪ **Mary Wollstonecraft Biography**

Popularly known as the 'Mother of Feminism' or the 'First Feminist', Mary Wollstonecraft is the founder of bringing the concept of equality among men and women to the world.

I wish you and yours a very Happy Mother's Day on May 9th.

Dianne Darlin CPS/CAP, President

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My Mother's Garden

*My mother kept a garden,
A garden of the heart,
She planted all the good things
That gave my life its start.*

*She turned me to the sunshine
And encouraged me to dream,
Fostering and nurturing
The seeds of self-esteem.*

*And when the winds and rains came,
She protected me enough,
But not too much because she knew
I'd need to stand up strong and tough.*

*Her constant good example
Always taught me right from wrong...
Markers for my pathway
That will last a lifetime long.*

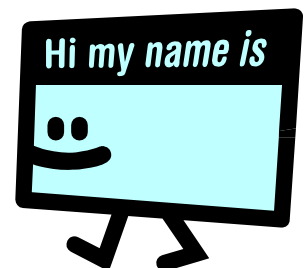
*I am my Mother's garden,
I am her legacy...
And I hope today she feels the love
Reflected back from me.*

News, Information, and Special Notes of Interest!

West Houston Chapter Name Badge

Have you gotten your West Houston Chapter Gold Name Badge? If not and you would like one, we have a new vendor.

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The badges are \$10 + tax and shipping.

Respectfully Submitted by Marilyn Simms

Is your Company Looking for a Great Administrative Professional?

Your assistance is greatly needed and appreciated!!!

When your company is seeking to hire a new employee, will you send the position posting to me for distribution to those in our chapter and Texas-Louisiana Division who are seeking employment? This is a great service both to the company and our members and friends.

Thank you very much!!!

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth B. Berney CPS, WHC IAAP Employment Liaison

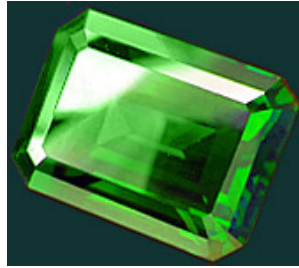


The May Birth Flower is the Lilly of the Valley.



The meaning of the May Birth Flower, the Lilly of the Valley is Sweetness and Humility.

May Birthstone: The Emerald



May is National Stroke Awareness month

May is Mental Health month

May is Physical Fitness month

May is National Foster Care month

Keeping Your Job in Uncertain Times
Submitted by Sarah Murphy CPS
Fugro Gravity & Magnetic Services Inc.

In times of economic uncertainty, unemployment, layoffs and restructuring are widespread. At some point in our careers, losing a job is something each of us could potentially face.

The key to staying employed is to take control and learn what you can do to make your job more secure. Developing certain skills, attitudes and attributes will make you more valuable to your company. No matter what your situation, follow the advice below. People will be impressed with your work ethic and want to keep you as a part of their team.

- Show a positive attitude. No one wants to be around someone who is a “downer” or complains all the time.
- Draw the line between personal life and work. Don't talk constantly about your life outside work. If you're having trouble in your personal life, keep it to one or two confidants. No one else at work needs or wants to know.
- Avoid backstabbing, office gossip and spreading rumors. Joining in the office gossip may seem like the easy thing to do; however, almost everyone has much more respect and trust for people who do not spread stories around.
- Avoid the impulse to criticize your boss or the company. It is easy to find things wrong with others, but it is more rewarding to find constructive ways to deal with problems. Employees who are known for their good attitude and helpful suggestions are valued more.
- Be on time. Whether it's being on time for work, returning from breaks, going to meetings or turning in assignments. Call in if you know you will be tardy or absent. Most companies treat absences or tardiness without prior notice much more seriously.
- Anticipate problems and needs of management. Be proactive and not reactive.
- Follow the rules. Don't be a “maverick.” Rules are there to give the greatest number of people the best chance of working together well and getting the job done.
- Be a good team player. Employers want staff to work together. They want employees that will put team goals and the team accountability ahead of their own individual situations.
- Look for opportunities to serve customers and help co-workers. Remember, those who would be leaders must first learn how to serve.
- Volunteer for training and new assignments. Take a close look at people in your organization who are “moving up.” Chances are they are the ones who have shown themselves to be willing to do undesirable assignments or take on new duties.
- Boost your value by boosting your profile. Raise your profile within the company. Employees can raise their profiles when they make the effort to join special committees or help organize company-wide social events. Also, make sure your boss knows what you're doing for the company. After all, if you don't “blow your own horn,” chances are no one else will. Also, the chance is good that someone else may take credit for your successes.

- Distinguish yourself. Become known as the “go-to” person by picking out one or more things in your job to do better than anyone else. That will help managers remember you favorably at times when you really need to be remembered. Build what experts refer to as a “personal brand,” creating a set of strengths and attributes that are unique to you.
- Avoid ever saying “that’s not my job.” Many, if not most, managers earned their positions by doing work turned down by co-workers who were in the habit of saying that. They appreciate employees who help get the job done, whatever it is.
- Show pride in yourself. Never let yourself be heard muttering derogatory terms in reference to yourself or others. This tends to make others doubt your maturity and competence. The best way to get respect is to show respect toward yourself and others.
- Seek certifications and update your skills. There are certifications that administrative professionals can acquire such as the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), Certified Professional Secretary (CPS) or Certified Administrative Professional (CAP). However, you don’t need to go through a lengthy, costly certification process to learn important job skills such as becoming an expert in Excel. You can learn through user groups that meet regularly. Look at low-cost opportunities to attend seminars that many professional groups such as the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) provide. Take a class at a local community college, read a book, keep up with trade publications.
- Network and volunteer outside your organization. Some experts recommend volunteering outside of the workplace as a job-preservation skill. It can expose you to new ways to use your skills. Volunteering can also be a way to increase public awareness of the company’s name and brand.

Competence alone isn't enough to succeed. Be passionate about your work and take pride in it. Be the employee that brings value to the company and remember, a “high maintenance” employee is the endangered employee.

Misc. Sources: Texas Business Today – Summer 2009
Forbes.com
Money.com

Spring Seminar – March 13, 2010





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Tips for making travel fun and productive

As I travel, I write down the “small” items that make a trip easy on my body and mind. Here are several hints for the highway you may want to remember:

- 1) Always leave a hotel phone number with your family so you can turn off your cell in your room.
- 2) Take change or bills out of your wallet or purse when you get into a rental car if you will have to pay any tolls. This small suggestion could save you thousands of dollars if you cause an accident while digging for the cash.
- 3) On your way up to your room in a hotel, stop in the restaurant or breakfast bar area and grab a few of those small coffee creamers. If you use cream in your morning coffee the liquid creamers are a much better choice than the packets of dry something (contents are always a mystery) the in-room coffee service provides.
- 4) Never put anything that belongs to you in the seat pocket in front of you on an airliner. You will forget it and whatever that special something was will never be found again.
- 5) When getting into a cab always ask the driver if there will be additional charges other than the ones that appear on the meter. This is a classic way for the driver to pocket some extra cash. If the driver tries this tactic, write down his name on the receipt and send a letter to the cab company. They do not know what to fix unless they know what is broken!
- 6) Ask for a high floor in a hotel if you will be using your cell phone. You will always get better reception and have fewer dropped calls.

THE LEMONTREE

Interpersonal communication skills for difficult conversations

How do you verbally and emotionally respond when you have been criticized unfairly?

Before I provide definitive responses, there are two assumptions about criticism which must be established. First, criticism, regardless of how it is presented, never “feels” good. The very act of finding fault with either performance or attitude is

emotionally problematic.

Second, criticism is often not remedial. When the conversation is concluded, both parties want to take a shower. It just seems like nothing positive took place.

With those assumptions in mind, here are three responses you can use when the criticism is, in your opinion, not founded in anything factual.

The first stage of your response would be to reply, "I do not see myself that way. Can you be more specific?" Stating your disagreement with the observation is legitimate but it must be followed with a request for factual information.

The second stage, assuming the "factual" information was not supplied or valid, would be, "I am convinced there is a basic misunderstanding about both my motives and performance in this situation." The "I" statement is important because you have to own these words.

The third stage is collaborative. You would say, "Now that we both have clearly expressed ourselves, what can the two of us do to move past this disagreement and work effectively together?" The "do" in that question is now the task in front of the two of you. You can disagree with each other's perception of one another, but if you have to work together, the past has to be willfully ignored.

– everyone SMILES in the same language -

submitted by Marilyn Simms

Did you know it takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 muscles to smile? It has been my intent to write an article on how effective and infectious a *Smile* is and can be. However I received a full article on the subject in my inbox today which is well worth sharing. Enjoy!

Are You Smiling?

(excerpts from article written by Rhonda Scharf, CSP)

Are you smiling now? Why not? Your face says so much about you, so why aren't you smiling? It makes you feel better and it makes those around you feel better.

You don't need to have a stupid grin, but a welcoming smile, eyes that not just look, but see others around them, and a willingness to be friendly with a co-worker or even a stranger.

We communicate every minute of every day. Even when we say nothing we are communicating. Regardless of how you feel about body language, you have to be aware that everyone else interprets based on what they see. It's not about whether they're right or wrong, it's about how they treat you based on the message they're getting from you.

Smile! It is not hard, and it makes all the difference in the world in terms of how others treat you.

Rhonda Scharf, CSP is a Certified Professional Speaker, Trainer, Author and President of ON THE RIGHT TRACK – Training & Consulting, Inc.,

SAVE THE DATES:

May 12, 2010 – City of Houston 2010 Administrative Professionals Conference “Imagination: Awakening the Power Within You”, George R. Brown Convention Center.

May 14-16, 2010 – The 2010 Annual Meeting and Education Forum hosted by the Amarillo Chapter, “The Road to Remarkable Never Ends”, at the Ambassador Hotel in Amarillo, Texas.

July 18-21, 2010 – International Education Forum and Annual Meeting, in Boston, Massachusetts, at the Hynes Convention Center. This year’s theme is “Passion & Purpose”.

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Our Newsletter Mission is to provide a monthly publication designed to keep West Houston Chapter members and potential new members informed of chapter activities, events and associated news, with emphasis on career development resources and professional trends.

Editor and Chair: Barbara Haralson CPS/CAP

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