

CAREER HEALTH

Office Politics

By Fred Sarkari

"Integrity is putting your values into action."
-Robin Siemens

In almost every working environment we are confronted with office politics. It seems to find a way of involving us and usually not by choice. The key to coping with these circumstances without crossing any ethical boundaries is to first and foremost decide what is of importance to you - the short term chance of promotion or the long term value of your professional development, which can take a life time to build but can serve as inspiration for lifetimes to come.

Some people think that they should avoid office politics all together, but statistics have shown that those who understand and use these politics are more likely to succeed than those who dismiss it all together.

As Andrew DuBrin once said "To ignore office politics is to ignore those underlining forces that account for the differences in success between equally talented people."

There are two different types of office politics, good and bad. Which ever one you choose to participate in is solely up to you. First, you must distinguish between the two.

Bad politics can consist of:

- Withholding or delaying information that may be needed
- Deliberately holding meetings or making decisions without all parties necessary
- Arranging scenarios that make others look bad or set them up for failure
- Discrediting the efforts of others or taking credit when it is not deserved
- Not delivering on promises made or denying the legitimate requests of others for your benefit
- Giving false support or advice in order to serve your own agenda

- Complaining, criticizing, wasting time on gossiping or harassing others

Good politics can consist of:

- Going out of your way to insure the success of others even when it serves no purpose or benefit to you
- Building trust, the key to building trust is through consistency and understanding
- Your peers feeling comfortable to come to you with their questions and or issues
- Creating a lighter environment in times of stress
- Seeing things through to the end, not abandoning people midway

To show leadership you must first of all understand office politics as well as the times to participate in it:

1. Pinpoint what you want and why
2. Identify who controls what you need
3. Find out who can get you what you need
4. Figure out what you need to do or what you want to do
5. Go for it with determination and resolve
6. Watch out for the harmful politics of others as you go (ethical)
7. Protect yourself along the way

Circumstances we face in life can take away everything we have worked hard to acquire; everything except our name, for it is the essence of who we are. The only way we can lose this is if we make the conscious decision and are willing to give it up.

So in the end you must ask yourself, is a promotion worth your name?

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No More Excuses

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obstacles will be easier. After a few successes, your confidence will grow and it will be even easier to commit to your health and fitness goals. Just remember that in any area of life you have either excuses or experiences, reasons or results. You either have what you want or you have airtight reasons why it was not possible to achieve it. Just remember "No More Excuses"!

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"It takes but one positive thought when given a chance to survive and thrive to overpower an entire army of negative thoughts."

-Robert Schuller



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VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money.

These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

No More Excuses

By Deborah L. Mullen, C.S.C.S.

Success in any endeavor--including health and fitness--begins with the desire to attain something. If the desire is defined and strong enough, it will lead you to act. If you act properly and consistently, you will succeed.

DESIRE =====> ACTION =====> SUCCESS

If it were that simple, then all of us would be living the lives we desire. If we have a realistic, specific and measurable goal, what really keeps us from reaching it? The break in the link usually occurs between desire and action. What prevents us from acting properly and consistently? I'll wager you already know. It's excuses. Things we have labeled obstacles, roadblocks--things out of our control.

EXCUSES DESIRE ==/==> ACTION =====> SUCCESS

"If I just had more time, I would be exercising regularly". "I tried to eat low-fat today but my spouse brought home pizza". "Every time I plan to exercise/eat healthy, something always comes up!" We know what we need to do but aren't doing it. Typically we blame outside factors. We truly believe that something out of

our control is preventing us from reaching our goals. Someone or something is responsible for our situation.

Become Proactive

Proactivity is a popular buzzword in management speak. It means more than merely taking initiative. It means that we have responsibility (response-ability) for our own lives. Highly proactive people do not blame circumstances, conditions, or conditioning for their behavior. Their behavior is a product of their own conscious choice. If we empower conditions and conditioning to control us, then we become reactive.

Our language reveals whether we see ourselves as proactive or reactive. "I just don't have the time". Something outside me--limited time--is controlling me. "I can't resist pizza". My willpower is governed by something outside my control. The reactive person uses the phrases "I can't, I must, if only". The proactive person says "I choose, I prefer, I will". Once you realize the power you really have, overcoming

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

Trust Rules: The Most Important Secret about Trust

By: Susan M. Heathfield

What Is Trust?

Trust: You know when you have trust; you know when you don't have trust. Yet, what is trust, and how is trust usefully defined for the workplace? Can you build trust when it doesn't exist? How do you maintain and build upon the trust you may currently have in your workplace? These are important questions for today's rapidly changing world.

Trust forms the foundation for effective communication, employee retention, and employee motivation and contribution of discretionary energy, the extra effort that people voluntarily invest in work.

When trust exists in an organization or in a relationship, almost everything else is easier and more comfortable to achieve.

In reading about trust, I was struck by the number of definitions that purportedly describe trust in understandable ways - but don't. According to Dr. Duane C. Tway, Jr. in his 1993 dissertation, *A Construct of Trust*, "There exists today, no practical construct of Trust that allows us to design and implement organizational interventions to significantly increase trust levels between people. We all think we know what trust is from our own experience, but we don't know much about how to improve it. Why? I believe it is because we have been taught to look at trust as if it were a single entity."

The Three Constructs of Trust

Tway defines trust as, "the state of readiness for unguarded interaction with someone or something." He developed

a model of trust that includes three components. He calls trust a construct because it is "constructed" from these three components: "the capacity for trusting, the perception of competence, and the perception of intentions."

Thinking about trust as made up of the interaction and existence of these three components makes "trust" easier

"If you tell the truth you don't have to remember anything."

-Mark Twain

to understand. The capacity for trusting means that your total life experiences have developed your current capacity and willingness to risk trusting others.

The perception of competence is made from your perception of your ability, and the ability of others with whom you work, to perform competently at whatever is needed in your current situation. The perception of intentions, as defined by Tway, is your perception that the actions, words, direction, mission, or decisions are motivated by mutually-serving rather than self-serving motives.

Why Trust Is Critical in a Healthy Organization?

How important is building a trusting work environment? According to Tway, people have been interested in trust since

Aristotle. Tway states, "Aristotle (384-322 BC), writing in the *Rhetoric*, suggested that Ethos, the Trust of a speaker by the listener, was based on the listener's perception of three characteristics of the speaker."

"Aristotle believed these three characteristics to be the intelligence of the speaker (correctness of opinions, or competence), the character of the speaker (reliability - a competence factor, and honesty - a measure of intentions), and the goodwill of the speaker (favorable intentions toward the listener)." I don't think this has changed much even today.

Additional research by Tway and others shows that trust is the basis for much of the environment you want to create in your work place. Trust is the necessary precursor for:

- Feeling able to rely upon a person
- Cooperating with and experiencing teamwork with a group
- Taking thoughtful risks
- Experiencing believable communication

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INNER HEALTH

How to Meditate - A Beginner's Guide

By Laura Turner

Ever wonder how people live to be 100 with a great quality of life? In his book, *Aging Well*, Harvard researcher, George Vaillant, M.D., found out just what centenarians do. They cultivate a sense of peace, well-being and maintain a positive attitude. How? Here's one of their biggest secrets: meditation. What's ironic about meditation is, it has just become known in the West as a healing technique, but it has been practiced for ages in the East.

Therefore, in my quest to give you easy, sensible ways to live a long healthy life, I'll begin by showing you why you should make meditation a priority. Next, I'll give you some easy exercises to help get you started.

Meditation Defined

Meditational exercises primarily use the experience of the body and thought as a means to reconnect with the environment and its healing power. Meditation, when practiced frequently, has been proven to promote inner peace and wellness. Meditation is also a mental practice in which the mind is directed to one area, often the breath. It draws its energy from the human connection to nature and creates a sense of unity or oneness with it.

This unity has been shown to increase communication with the spirit of the body. It has also been known to allow positive thoughts in and to stimulate positive physiological and psychological effects. Meditation techniques are easy to learn and can easily be incorporated into any lifestyle. If practiced regularly, meditation will bring balance to your body and mind.

General benefits of meditation and breathing exercises include:

- Deep inner peace
- Improved self-esteem
- Increased creativity
- Physical health/healing
- Reduced medical care
- Slowing/reversal of aging
- Reversing of heart disease
- Stimulation of the body's immune system
- Reduced stress

I have found there is really no one right way to meditate. Here are a couple of my favorite meditational exercises to get you started. Remember, there is no wrong path here. Try these, or simply sit in silence for 20 minutes, daily. You'll be glad you did.

Meditative Grounding Exercise

- Sit with your legs crossed in a comfortable (Indian-style) position with your hands relaxed on your lap. Close your eyes and imagine a beam of light dropping from the base of your spine through the earth and connecting you to its center.
- Allow this beam of light to expand in width until it is wider than your own body and envelops it. This is your personal space.

"To have a quiet mind is to possess one's mind wholly; to have a calm spirit is to possess one's self."

-Hamilton Wright Mabie

This exercise places you totally in your body and reminds you that you are anchored to the earth. Remember, the more grounded you are, the more aware you are. Sense the presence of your higher self: listen to its voice.

Energy Cleaning Exercise

Now that you are grounded, it's important that you cleanse this personal space. Often we collect other people's energies and are not aware of it. We do this both through interaction with others and basic activities of daily living.

- To remove all foreign energies from your space, imagine holding a brush and sweeping away the debris.

- Allow the debris to fall to the ground and become washed away. Let the light from the previous exercise envelop your body and spread its healing energy to the edge of your space, forming a protective force field around you.

Cleaning out the area surrounding your body will keep you grounded, define your personal boundaries and declare your space. Then choose who and what you wish to enter your space, keeping disease and illness out.

Breathing Exercise

- Follow your breath as you slowly inhale through your nose and exhale through your nose. Count with each exhale until you reach 10 then begin again at one.
- If you find yourself past 10, acknowledge this and begin again at one from wherever you are.

- Imagine your body's cells being replaced with fresh, pure oxygen and positive healing energy from this power source. Picture yourself exhaling old cells, stress, illness and worries.

- Let your thoughts pass through your mind like drifting clouds. Let them in and gently let them pass through. If the mind should harbor a negative thought, refocus on the breath.

- Thank any persistent negative thoughts for coming into your mind then gently let them go.

- Listen only for the positive, pronounced voice; the voice of your body.

Retrieve Your Energy Exercise

Since foreign energy often resides in your space, let's also assume that you leave energy in other places. After completing the preceding exercises it is necessary to re-energize and call energy back.

- Imagine you have an energy magnet used to attract your energy back to you. Visualize energy flowing back to you, filling your body with light, health and empowerment.

- Allow a few minutes for the process.

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