

This monthly newsletter is intended to provide down-to-earth ideas and techniques you can put into action to improve communication, enhance performance, motivate staff, and influence peers. Your suggestions and ideas are encouraged. E-mail your **HR Quick Tips** newsletter submissions by **Friday, Sept 28, 2007** to **Michael Horne** at **hrtraining@cwu.edu**.



## Beat Stress by Becoming More Resilient



*Even if you can't reduce the amount of stress, you can lessen the chance of a snap—by becoming more resilient.*

Imagine yourself as a rubber band. Now imagine the band being pulled tighter. And tighter. It's only a matter of time until it snaps. That's how it feels to be overwhelmed by stress. But don't worry. Even if you can't reduce the amount of stress in your life, you can still lessen the chance of a snap—by becoming

more resilient. Just remember the “6 Ps”—

**Play.** Take at least a five-minute break every few hours. Do some stretches. Go outside for a breath of fresh air. Go for a quick “energizer” walk.

**Partner.** If you can't find a mentor within your organization, join a professional association. Make connections with people who have different strengths that will complement yours.

**Protect.** Identify any saboteurs in your life—individuals or activities that demand too much of your time and energy and give too little in return. You may not be able to eliminate every saboteur, but you can set limits to lessen the drain on your resources. And don't forget to focus inward. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies.

**Pay.** We all have to do things we don't like—and the more

we struggle against those tasks, the more damage we do to ourselves. Instead of constantly reminding yourself how much you hate what you're doing, find ways to reward yourself for each step completed.

**Pass.** Why is the simple two-letter word *no* so hard to say? Of course, you want to be accommodating, but it's better to pass on a project or activity than to give it slipshod attention. And if you can't pass, swallow your pride—and ask for help.

**Pep.** It's an old but true cliché: You wouldn't expect your car to run on an empty tank of gas. Keep your body in good working order by eating healthful meals at reasonable intervals and getting regular exercise.

—Adapted from *Seven ways to achieve and maintain resilience*,” by Joanne Sujansky, on the EXPERT Magazine Web site.

## Not Sure Which “Road” to Take?

Have you ever gone on a journey and arrived at a location where you were uncertain about which road to take? You made a decision to take one road and realized that maybe you should have taken the other.

Supervising also involves having to make various decisions. These poor decisions often result from a combination of things: lack of familiarity with appropriate policies and procedures governing supervisor responsibilities, and uncertainty about how to effectively manage through employee-



related issues. The Human Resources Department is here to help. Our HR Consultants are available to partner with you to effectively address these challenges. In the upcoming October “HR Quick Tips” Newsletter, CWU's HR Consultants will be featured to highlight their diverse experience and to educate you on many of the support services they can provide. But remember, you don't have to wait until October. Call the Human Resources Department at x1202 anytime you need assistance.

# How to keep workers' morale high even when criticizing them

The next time you're about to offer a worker some constructive criticism—*stop!* Yes, as a manager, it's important for you to help employees see what they're doing wrong and learn from their mistakes. But before you point out their misstep, consider the details of the problem and incorporate the positive elements into your critique. Here's how:

- **Praise problem-solving.** Did the employee try to figure out a solution and fall short? Before listing the shouldas, give the worker a hand for taking the initiative and trying to resolve the situation. Then offer guidance on how to do better next time.
- **Praise ideas.** Did the employee have a good idea that went bust? The next one might be a winner—unless you discourage workers from thinking outside the box. Congratulate the worker for coming up with the suggestion before discussing why it didn't work.
- **Praise effort.** So the employee simply tripped up and there was nothing special about it? You can't trip unless you're moving. If nothing else, thank workers for their efforts before telling them they did something wrong. Next time, maybe they'll try harder. --Adapted from "Can you say appreciation?" by Roxanne Emmerich on the Emmerich Group Web site



## September HR Mailbag

Each month HR Quick Tips will feature a question for you to ponder and answer. The appropriate answer will be published in the following issue.

**QUESTION:** I'm getting a new boss who was hired from outside the University. How can I ensure that I start off on the right foot in this relationship?

## August HR Mailbag

**QUESTION:** What are the advantages of cross-training people in other jobs?

**ANSWER:**

1. **You have someone trained to fill in for absent workers.**
2. **Trained people are available to meet workload peaks when they have idle time on their own job.**
3. **It encourages teamwork as workers get to know the details of other people's jobs.**
4. **Training new employees is easier when your workers are multi-skilled.**
5. **You eliminate the "expert" excuse. The one that goes, "Gee, I don't know how to do that. Joe's the expert."**



You can receive additional information or training through the **E-Learning Network** or in the **Foundations of Effective Supervision** workshop offered by the Human Resources Department. Please call (509) 963-1202 for more information or refer to <http://www.cwu.edu/~training/>.