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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 to **Michael Horne** at: hrtraining@cwu.edu.

Don't Take Yourself Too Seriously!



Almost nothing is more helpful in dealing with people than a sense of humor. Now, a sense of humor doesn't necessarily mean a knack for telling jokes. Rather, it means the ability to take some setbacks and still see that the world has not come to an end.

If you can keep from taking a situation or yourself too seriously, you'll get much better results. If you don't take yourself too seriously, you will be able to see the humor in nearly every situation. There are always things in any situation that are still amusing, that you can still smile about. And a smiling, cheerful leader invariably wins more cooperation than a grim or gloomy one.



If all you do in a crisis is add to the heat and confusion, people will soon lose confidence in your ability to work under pressure. But if you can maintain your sense of proportion and humor when the world seems to be falling apart, people who rely on you will show their loyalty.



Yes, some problems are serious—but there's nothing to be gained by exaggerating their importance. Get in the habit of taking yourself and your problems less seriously. Learn to smile at yourself and the world as well. You'll get better results—and actually have more good things to smile about—when you do.



Did You Know?

The history books are full of stories of gifted persons whose talents were overlooked by a procession of people until someone believed in them. Albert Einstein was four years old before he could speak and seven before he could read. Isaac Newton did poorly in grade school. A newspaper editor fired Walt Disney because he had "no good ideas." Werner von Braun failed ninth-grade algebra. Haydn gave up on making a musician of Beethoven, who seemed a "slow and plodding man with no apparent talent."



There is a lesson in such stories: Different people develop at different rates, and the best motivators are always on the lookout for hidden capacities.

December HR Mailbag

QUESTION: It's much easier to run my department if I can make assignments without people objecting that, "It's not my job." How can I work around this attitude?

ANSWER:

A good working relationship within a department will encourage the kind of cooperation you need for people to do jobs that aren't normally their responsibility. However, this is an atmosphere that's developed over a period of time as workers learn to know and respect your judgment as a supervisor. Even then, you may have one or two people who resist any request to help out in other areas.

From a more immediate standpoint, it's useful to tell employees the benefits of being able to perform a variety of jobs. These include improving their chances for future advancement, as well as greater job security. In this regard, it helps to emphasize that an employee skilled at performing a variety of duties is a more valuable worker to the organization.

Perhaps the most effective tool for preventing a "That's not my job," atmosphere is to practice a "team" concept within your group. Where practicable, rotate assignments, and when this is feasible, regularly have people fill-in for absent workers. If employees are frequently asked to help out—no matter what the task—this develops into an expectation. On the other hand, if workers are rarely asked to do other duties, they tend to treat such a request as an exception to what's expected of them, and that in itself leads to resistance.

You can receive additional information or training through the programs offered on campus or through the **E-Learning Network** offered by the HR Department. Please call **(509) 963-1202** for more information or refer to: <http://www.cwu.edu/~training/>.

February HR Mailbag I've just been made supervisor in my department. The previous supervisor, who was very popular, just retired. How should I act toward the people I now supervise, after working with them for two years?



The **January – June 2008 Training Calendar** has been posted. Check it out at: <http://www.cwu.edu/~training/>
Call HR at x1205 for more information.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Central Washington University is committed to the safety and security of its faculty, staff, and students through comprehensive emergency management. Emergency management is the systematic approach to preparing for, responding to, and recovering from major emergencies. The three components to emergency management are prevention, incident management, and recovery and continuity. CWU plans for all three.

While all emergencies cannot be avoided all the time, especially in a place as big and complex as the CWU campus, some can be prevented, and most can be managed in ways that minimize their impact. CWU's Public Safety and Police Services Department is committed to partnering with the campus community to protect life, property, prevent crime and resolve problems. Every opportunity is taken to educate members of the community in all aspects of crime prevention, personal safety and potential law violations.

In general, emergency management takes an "all hazards" approach to planning. This means that plans are intended to be applicable to virtually all emergencies, even though each situation may vary widely. It is important to think about your response before an emergency occurs, so please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the Public Safety and Police Services Department website at:

<http://www.cwu.edu/~police/fullcrimeinfo.html#protection>. You can also receive additional information or training through the programs offered on campus or through the **E-Learning Network** offered by the HR Department. Please call **(509) 963-1202** for more information or refer to: <http://www.cwu.edu/~training/>.

