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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](mailto:hrtraining@cwu.edu).

## HR UPDATE

The contract for CWU's participation in the Washington State Department of Personnel's E-Learning Network will expire on June 30<sup>th</sup> and will not be renewed. Those employees who are currently enrolled will continue and have full support for the duration of their one-year subscription period. HR is currently researching other online and e-learning vendors that will meet CWU employee training and development needs and will keep the campus community advised of any developments. Contact Mike Horne at x2196 for more information.

## Tips for Conducting Employee Performance Reviews



No organization can function for very long without a team of productive employees supporting it. It's important not only that your employees feel appreciated, but also that they feel they're progressing steadily in their careers. To make your performance reviews as productive and as painless as possible, follow these tried-and-true suggestions:

1. **Be prepared.** First of all, make sure you are fully prepared *before* sitting down with the employee. Decide both what you're going to say and how you're going to say it.
2. **Lead with the positive.** It's important to reaffirm the employee's strengths at the beginning of the review.
3. **Don't be confrontational.** It's also important not to criticize the employee in general terms. The goal is to evaluate job performance and not the person. A performance review that turns into a gripe session misses the opportunity to raise employee morale.
4. **Make it a two-way conversation.** An effective performance review requires an interactive discussion with an open agenda. Try to formulate questions that seek the employee's ideas and input. Remember, this will help the employee feel you value his or her opinions.

5. **Address what's important to the employee.** Since job satisfaction is the most important factor affecting an employee's attitude (and therefore his or her level of performance and value to the University), an effective review should delve into areas that include issues most important to that employee.
6. **Discuss work/life balance.** The performance review is a good opportunity to show your concern for the employee's work/life balance, and to jointly discuss solutions to improve that balance. It's also a good time to create a plan for the employee's career advancement and discuss what future opportunities might exist for him or her.



7. **Review regularly.** Reviews should be done proactively with the purpose of improving employee morale and productivity. When you conduct them on a regular basis, you avoid reviews prompted solely by the need to document an employee's poor performance.

The sign of a successful performance review is an employee who leaves the meeting feeling motivated and excited about his or her job. If the employee's job satisfaction needs are unmet, it's less likely they will be motivated to focus on your goals for the University. But if an employee feels acknowledged, appreciated, and fairly rewarded for past efforts, he or she will indeed become a valuable asset to the future success of the University.

## July Q & A

**QUESTION:** I'm from the old school that says people are getting paid for doing their work, and all they need to know is how to do their job. Why should I waste time trying to be a great communicator?

**ANSWER:**

Establishing good lines of communication is time well spent. In fact, it can be a time saver for a supervisor in the long run. Keeping people informed builds both trust and teamwork. It also improves morale, can reduce turnover, and increase productivity.

Effective communication is critical for success.

Effective communication skills are an important element for the development of strong working relationships. Poor communications starve a relationship while good communications nourish it.

This is true regardless of whether you are a member of a committee or a member of a work team. So improving communication skills is important for success. But this doesn't just happen. All employees must work at developing listening and verbal communication skills.

To receive additional information on training offered by the HR Department please call **(509) 963-1202** or refer to:

<http://www.cwu.edu/~training/>

## NEWS and UPDATES

### Changes to Training and Development Policy

The President's Advisory Council has approved several changes to the Training and Development Policy. This policy applies to all staff which includes non-represented classified and exempt employees, and faculty, when applicable. To the extent that the policy addresses terms not covered under collective bargaining agreements for represented employees, the terms of the policy prevail. Highlights of the changes include the following:

**1. Scheduled training:**

Staff employees shall remain in pay status according to university procedures, civil service rules, collective bargaining agreements and FLSA guidelines, when assigned or scheduled by supervisors to attend training.

**2. Supervisory Training**

Employees, including faculty members, appointed to supervisor or management positions must successfully complete entry-level supervisory/managerial training within six (6) months of the date of appointment to a supervisor or manager position unless granted an exception in accordance with the WAC and/or the university's training and development plan. The Supervisory Enrichment Program provides the training classes that meet this requirement.

**3. Mandatory Training**

The following training is required for all employees to attend:

- a. New Employee Orientation (all civil service and exempt employees) – normally within 30 days of initial employment
- b. Supervisory Enrichment Program – normally within 6 months of moving into a supervisory or management position
- c. Emergency Preparedness – at least biannually
- d. Appropriate Workplace Behavior - annually

### Meet the Staff

**Stephen Sarchet** is the HR Representative for Business and Financial Affairs. A native of Dayton, Ohio, he grew up in the Fairborn and Springfield areas, and graduated from Tecumseh High School and the Clark County Joint Vocational School. In 1982 he enlisted in the Air Force and was stationed at Whiteman AFB in Knob Noster, Missouri, where he married his wife, Joanie, in 1984. Over the course of his military career, he was stationed in Missouri, Germany (where his son was born), Montana, and Kansas, and served as a Security Policeman, a Personnel Specialist, and as a First Sergeant. In 2003, Stephen earned his Bachelor's degree in Human Resource Development from Southwestern College and retired from the Air Force. He began working at CWU in December, 2003.



## Recruitment Tips

**Did you know?** As of July 1, 2008 Background Checks are required on persons hired for initial employment at the university. This includes faculty (both tenure and non-tenure track), exempt, civil service and temporary hourly employees. This is a change from our past practice. Please work with the Recruitment Specialist, Joy Carlson at [carlsonj@cwu.edu](mailto:carlsonj@cwu.edu) or ext. 1260 if you have questions concerning this new CWU Policy.

### JULY TRAINING PROGRAMS

New Employee Orientation

July 3<sup>rd</sup> 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
SURC Rm 202

Communicating Effectively in the Workplace

July 9<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
SURC Rm 202

DRS Retirement Planning Seminar

July 19<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
SURC Rms 210 & 215

To view the training and development catalog, and register for classes, please go to: <http://www.cwu.edu/~training/> or call **(509) 963-1202** for more information.

### COMING IN AUGUST 2008- 2009 TRAINING CALENDAR

## Benefits Brief

### Clearing Retirement Savings Hurdles

The good news is you have an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Not having access to one is a significant obstacle to retirement security, a government study has found.

The bad news is not enough of us save sufficiently, according to the November 2007 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. As a result, many workers could have far less money than they need in retirement. [Read more](#)  
Also see [www.cwu.edu/~hr/benefits](http://www.cwu.edu/~hr/benefits)