

Human Resources Department
400 East University Way
Bouillon 140 MS 7425
Ellensburg, WA 98926
Phone: (509) 963-1202
Fax: (509) 963-1733

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.

HR UPDATE

The Legislature has approved an across-the-board 2% pay increase for civil service (who did not receive the increase on July 1) and exempt employees effective September 1, 2008. The increase will be reflected in the September 25 pay check. If you have questions, please contact your HR Representative.



Get Your Priorities Straight

Once at a workshop, a time management expert stood in front of the group he was presenting to and said, "Okay, time for a quiz." He pulled out a one-gallon, wide mouthed mason jar and set it on a table in front of him. Then he produced a dozen large rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the group answered, "Yes." He replied, "Really?"

He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he proceeded to pour the gravel into the jar. He shook the jar, causing the pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the rocks. He continued to do this until no more gravel could fit. Then he asked once more, "Is the jar full?" By this time, the group was onto him. "Probably not," one of them answered. "Good!" he replied.

He reached under the table, brought out a bucket of sand and started dumping the sand in. It went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more, he asked the question, "Is this jar full?" "No!" the group shouted. Once again he said, "Good!"

Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. He looked up at the group and asked, "All right, what is the point of this illustration?"

One business professional raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit more things into it!"



"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The point is that if you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."

What are the big rocks in your life? More time with your loved ones? Advancement in your education? Business growth? Greater wealth? Something else that you've always wanted to accomplish? If you don't take the time to prioritize--put your major goals in first-- then all your time will be used up by less important things.

Make an appointment with yourself today to think about and reflect on this story. Ask yourself the question: What are the major goals in my life? Then, remember to put these major goals in first, or you'll never get them in at all.

By Maria Gracia in *Give to Get Marketing Solution*

September Q & A

QUESTION: Are there certain procedures that can be followed to help new employees adjust more quickly?

ANSWER: Everyone has experienced the uncertainties surrounding a new job. Of course, seeing that a new employee is taught the job properly is a primary concern of any supervisor. Yet, aside from that, it's beneficial to navigate new hires through the nonfunctional aspects of their first days and weeks at work.

In fact, doing this effectively indirectly contributes to the worker learning his/her job at a faster pace. The more preoccupied a new employee is with nonworking aspects of his/her employment, the lower will be his/her concentration on the job itself. There's real value in easing the anxieties of new hires. The following suggestions are useful in accomplishing this goal:

1. Make certain that new employees learn all of the little things that go with their new surroundings. This includes when and where to eat lunch, breaks, where to park their cars, and all of the other minor matters that will make their transition easier.

2. Until you are certain that novices are feeling at home in their new job, meet regularly with them to discuss their concerns.

3. Offer encouragement as people learn their job. This gives them assurance that they're meeting expectations.

4. Be patient. It's easy to get annoyed with what seem like simplistic questions, but remember that everything is of consequence when you're a stranger in new surroundings.

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 Vacation Leave Use

Civil service and exempt employees accrue vacation leave on a monthly basis. The rate at which they accrue varies depending on a number of factors such as the numbers of years they have been employed, the percent that their assignment bears to full-time, and the amount of leave without pay (if any) in the previous month.

Here are just a few tips to remember as you request use of your vacation leave:

- Hours accrue at the end of the month and may not be used before accrual.
- An employee may accrue more than 240 hours but the balance (including the previous month's accruals) must be at or below 240 as of their anniversary date. It is the employee's responsibility to monitor leave balances to ensure that leave is not lost.
- Accrued compensatory time must be used before vacation leave; exceptions may be made such as in cases where an employee would otherwise lose vacation leave hours. The supervisor should consult with the assigned HR rep in such cases.

If you have any questions about the use or accrual of vacation leave, you may reach any of the HR Reps by calling the HR Department at 509-963-1202.

Meet the Staff



Kirk Eslinger recently joined the CWU Human Resource team as the Director of Labor & Employment Relations after working nine years as the HR Director for

Kittitas County. In that capacity he managed the full range of HR services for a growing department, including recruitment, employee relations, compensation, benefits, and labor relations. Born and raised on a farm in the Denmark area of the Kittitas Valley, Kirk graduated from CWU in 1984 with a BA in Education. Ten years working for Equifax instilled a passion for human resource issues as well as providing the opportunity to live in five states. The final assignment was in the home office of Atlanta, Georgia where he was part of the team that created Equifax's national service center. In 1995, Kirk and his wife, Tammra, returned to Ellensburg to raise their two children. Please join HR in welcoming Kirk to the University.

SEPTEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMS

New Employee Orientation

September 4th 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
SURC Rm 135
Michael Horne

Preventing Discrimination in the Workplace

September 9th 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
SURC Rm 135
Staci Sleigh-Layman

Labor Relations: Practices and Process

September 18th 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
SURC Rm 135
Brenda Reagan

CWU Mentoring Program Orientation

September 23rd 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
SURC Rm 135
Michael Horne

Recruitment and Selection Process

September 25th 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
SURC Rm 135
Brenda Reagan

Compensation Practices

September 30th 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
SURC Rm 135
Joy Corbett

Workforce Enrichment Program **Coming Soon!**

As a manager, you want to **Recruit** the best people, incorporate effective **Performance Management** techniques, including clear expectations and appropriate feedback, along with good employee **Training** and **Mentoring** programs. Through careful **Succession Planning**, you want to retain the best employees and provide them with opportunity for growth, while ensuring that you have appropriate staff to meet future departmental needs.

Look for more information in the October issue of HR Quick Tips to find out how the **Workforce Enrichment Program** can help you accomplish these goals.

Benefits Brief

How to Achieve the Retirement of Your Dreams

We all dream of a perfect retirement, whether it's traveling, starting a business, or rocking on the porch while drinking lemonade. Unfortunately, perfection has a price tag – and sometimes a hefty one. Can you afford it?

[Read more>>](#)

Also see

www.cwu.edu/~hr/benefits/index.html