CareerSuccess

for administrative & office professionals

Volume 31 Issue 1

TIPS on how to STAND OUT

Office of the FUTURE and YOU

Are you sabotaging yourself!

MIND over MATTER

PLUS

PA of the Year Nomination Form

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Test your wits. Have some fun!

Ed's memo

This Autumn edition is filled with

A cornucopia of goodies for you

A cornucopia represents abundance! That is what this edition of CareerSuccess brings you!

We have sourced the best writers and the most useful articles to inspire and revitalise you.

We have also inserted two invitations: One to nominate a candidate for this year's edition of the PA of the Year Award (See page 10) and the other for you to join us on Secretaries Day See page 18).

Wishes for a great read!

Sunny regards
Ana-Maria

We welcome this year's Assistant Editor: Mastoora Ramiah.

Mastoora is President of PAFSA

Mastoora Ramiah is PA to Thabo Mosololi, Chief Operating Officer, and Tristan Kaatze, Director Casinos SA at Sun International's Central Office.

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Website: www.pafsa.co.za
PAFSA is on Facebook

5 CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS TO IMPROVE MEETINGS

With just a few questions, you could easily recover 25% of meeting times, probably more, and at the very least, you'll get a lot more done (which translates into saving time).

Use these five simple critical thinking questions that should be asked as you setup a meeting (or get invited to one).

Before the meeting:
1. What is the purpose of the meeting and what is the expected outcome?

This is the "why" of the meeting. Is the purpose to solve a problem, is it informational, is it to have a general discussion? Is the outcome a list of discoveries, a solved problem, knowledge that's shared?

2. Who should be invited to the meeting and why?

Before you send an invite out to a meeting, ask why each person should be there and what their contribution should be. Tell them that in the invite. If you get invited to a meeting ask, what your expected contribution is. Knowing why you're invited to a meeting allows you to prepare for the meeting. Imagine if everyone came to a meeting prepared? Even if you're the one calling a meeting, you should know why you're at the meeting, what you need to do to prepare for the meeting and your role in the meeting.

3. Can I accomplish the purpose of the meeting without having a meeting?

Once you figure out the purpose (#1) and the who (#2), you might realize that a simple email might do.

Before the end of the meeting:

4. What action items are there, who owns them, are they clear, when will they be accomplished, and what the follow-up is?

After the meeting:
5. With what metric will I measure the success of the meeting?

If you measure your meetings, you're more apt to focus on the goal of the meeting. Measurements might include; Did you accomplish the goal? Were the right people at the meeting? Was the meeting necessary? Is there a clear follow up to the meeting (action items, etc.)?

Source: http://headscratchers.com/Post_October_2017.html

Looking for ways to ensure that your event is 'green'? Yes, you say – then look at the 10 questions to ask when booking accommodation for events today! by Martin Hiller

WHEN BOOKING ACCOMMODATION OR YOUR NEXT EVENT 10 'GREEN' QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK

1	DO YOU HAVE a recycling programme for major waste like glass, tins, plastic, paper and organic waste?
2	DO YOU PROVIDE toiletries in bulk refillable dispensers? If individual bathroom products are provided, ensure that they are not replaced before they are empty and that containers can be reused.
3	DO YOU IMPLEMENT a towel re-use policy for guests and is this clearly indicated in all of the rooms?
4	DO YOU HAVE low-flow showers and aerators on taps for guest rooms?
5	ARE ALL toilets water efficient?
6	DO YOU HAVE energy-efficient lighting?
7	DO YOU PROVIDE a paperless check-in, check-out and billing process?
8	DO YOU USE water-wise plants in your garden area?
9	DO YOU PROMOTE the use of 'green' taxi operators?
10	ARE YOU WITHIN walking distance from the conference centre?

NB. **Did you see this year's toolkit from Green Office Week (GOW) on water saving in your company? Click here for your copy http://nebula.wsimg.com/4938eb7d940688c71a87fb411a84db87?AccessKeyId=6C04BE2931CEF8865925&disposition=0&alloworigin=1**

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7 SMART WAYS TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE YOUR BOSS

Being the best we can be at work is largely a matter of successfully managing our relationships - including our relationship with the boss.

Here are some smart non-manipulative ways to effectively manage not only your boss but those you lead:

1. Be a problem solver, not a problem creator! A good problem solver is someone who doesn't create drama or adds to the crisis. Work to never bring a problem to your boss without at least one good strategy for dealing with it.

2. Stay calm even when everything around you is in a state of chaos. When everybody else is losing their temper or showing their irritation, the smartest thing to do is to keep your reaction level-headed and reasonable.

3. Don't blame others but always hold yourself accountable. Don't blame others if you mess up or fail. Accountability is increasingly rare, which makes it even more valuable.

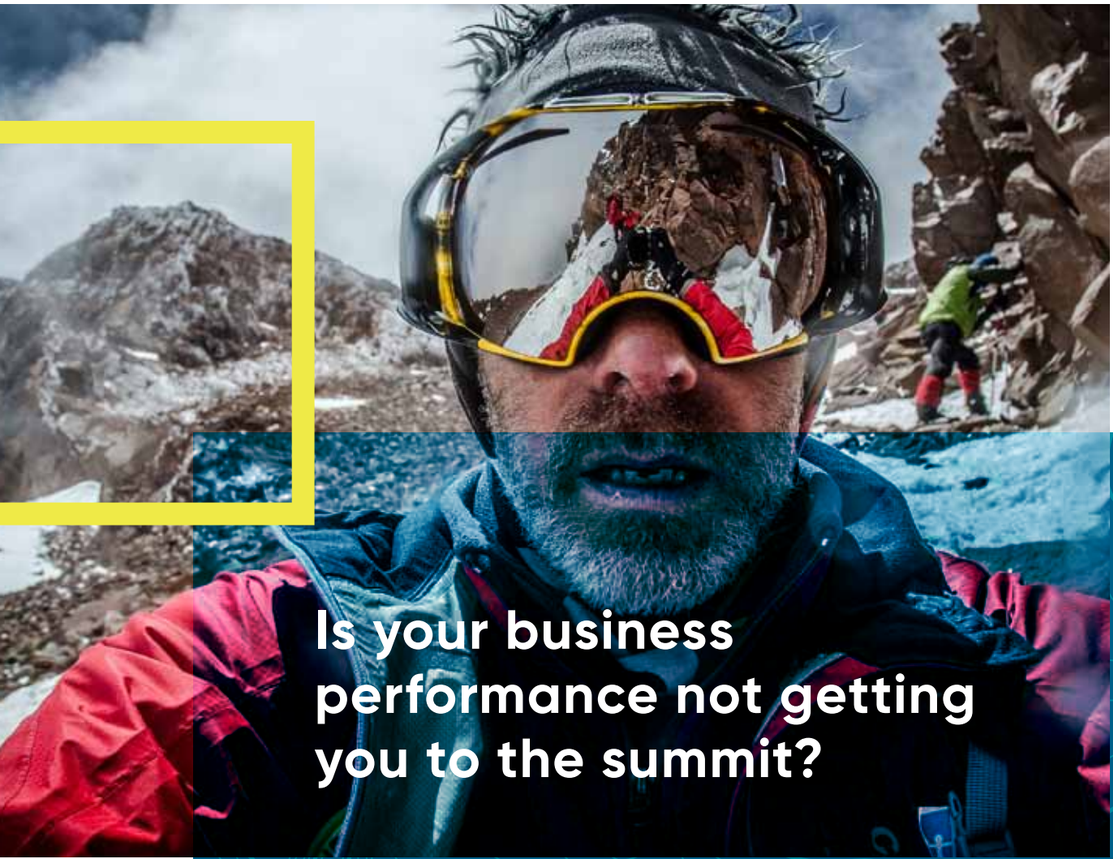
4. Set up healthy boundaries. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that your boss wants 100 percent of your every waking moment, but setting up reasonable boundaries shows that you're smart. Don't justify or apologise--just set your boundaries calmly, firmly and respectfully.

5. Never make excuses. At the end of the day, nobody cares about excuses. Minimize your damage by being responsible and owning your own problems as you work to do better.

6. Make your boss look good. No one has ever made themselves great by putting someone else down. Especially if your boss is doing badly, do what you can to help shore things up. When you make them look good, you invest in a critical relationship and make yourself look even better in the process.

7. Be a consistently positive force. Think, speak, and act with positivity. When everyone else is complaining about an unreasonable restriction, find the work-around. It makes you a valuable team member and sets you apart.

Source: https://www.inc.com/lolly-daskal/7-smart-ways-to-effectively-manage-your-boss.html



Is your business performance not getting you to the summit?

Erik Vermeulen leads Ridgeline – a boutique consultancy that helps companies explore and build their brands from the inside out.

"Strateteering" Workshops
Corporate Culture Interventions and Re-engineering
Keynote Presentations and MC / Conference Moderation
Team Performance Programmes
Behavioural Insights

RIDGELINE

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RIDGELINE

We all know that ONE PA who stands out for her/his personality, dedication to service and committment to excellence

Let PAFSA know who she or he is!

To nominate please click here

Closing date for nominations: Tuesday 10 July 2018

If you have difficulty nominating online, please request a nomination form by emailing us on: headoffice@pafsa.co.za or call us on 011 616 7401

It's our responsibility to get people recognised for their efforts of going the extra mile. Our nation needs role-models where they may be found.

Together we can celebrate the new titlebearer for 2018

continued on next page

Why you're not finding FLOW AT WORK

and what to do about it!

Why do some days drag on, every minute feeling like an hour while our to-do list remains intact. While others seem to fly by with task after tasking being ticked off without breaking a sweat? Jory Mackay says the answer is FLOW.

Flow - the state of mind where we're so focused, so disciplined, and so in tune with our abilities, that the world around us disappears and the work feels like it's doing itself.

Artists call it a visit from the muse. Athletes call it being in the zone. Whatever you want to name it, I'm sure you want more of it in your life. Yet Flow is elusive. It's not like we can schedule slipping into a transcendental state of effortless work.

But by understanding the conditions and qualities necessary to find Flow, we can give ourselves a better chance of slipping into it every single day.

WHAT IS FLOW?

The idea of Flow was first proposed by positive psychologist Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi who noted that Flow is not just being good at a task. It's pushing your skills just beyond their breaking point while receiving and reacting to continuous feedback.

Flow is "high-speed problem solving; it's being swept away by the river of ultimate performance." Steven Kotler in Rise of the Superman.

Think of a skier flying down a difficult run. Their technique and training is being pushed to the limit while they react to the changing situation around them. It's not the strenuous hit-your-head-against-the-wall kind of problem solving, but an effortless connection between skill and challenge.

WHY YOU'RE NOT FINDING FLOW AT WORK

For most of us, this sounds like a dream: Walk into your workplace, put your well-honed skills to the test and complete good work without even realising it. But in reality there are snags:

- Most jobs today don't have a clear goal. Unlike a championship skier whose goal it is to make it down a run as fast as possible, you probably don't walk into your workspace every day with a clear, single-minded goal.
- Feedback can be elusive, unhelpful, and inadequate. This is not necessarily an individual's fault. The person you're waiting for feedback from might be waiting for their own feedback, or is so busy with other work they can't take the time to put it together.
- Your skills aren't well matched to the available challenges of the job. Either you're mismatched, or you're not given the freedom to take on challenges that would put you in a state of Flow.
- There's a lack of control over when and how you work. And even worse, the rhythm of the day is dictated by others, leaving you always on the edge of interruption.
- Your job is too stable (i.e. boring). There's no challenge or opportunity to step out of your comfort zone.

> "Flow isn't just about doing more work. When we enter a state of Flow, we're more likely to be happier, feel more accomplished, and get better at our jobs.
>
> Flow is not a shortcut to hitting a deadline, but a path towards truly meaningful work."

HERE'S HOW TO FIND MORE FLOW AT WORK

Flow is still possible even in the busiest of workplaces.

By understanding what triggers our states of Flow, we can find ways to bring more of it into our workday.

Here are a few good places to start:

1. Take more risks to push your mind beyond its comfort zone

Flow only happens when we get out of our comfort zone. But this is where it gets a bit tricky - you need to know your limitations and consciously push past them.

Speak up at a meeting. Share creative ideas. Push yourself beyond your emotional comfort zone.

2. Use deliberate practice to get better and battle boredom

Flow is dependent on having a certain level of mastery over your skills. At least enough to understand when things are going well and be able to adjust on the fly when they're not.

However, when we do the same task over and over, it becomes monotonous, leaving us unable to push and develop our skills and find Flow in the process.

One answer to this is to engage in what's called "deliberate practice." How this works:

- Take an activity you do regularly.
- Break it down into segments.
- Go through each segment systematically and look for ways to get better.

3. Use job crafting to connect your work to a clear purpose or intention

In its basic form, job crafting consists of looking at your job at multiple

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levels:

- **Task** - Adjust your daily tasks to include more challenging ones.
- **Relationships** - Deepen your relationships with people inside or outside your department.
- **Identity** - Change your job title to be more aligned with what you see as your most important work.

4. Get your self-control in check and block Flow-killing distractions

Flow depends on being able to do focussed work for long periods of time without interruption. Which is pretty much impossible in a lot of workplaces.

To find Flow, you need to be able to exercise control over your focus and attention!

There's no shortcut to this ability. You simply need to practice, be aware of where your mind is going, and try to limit your vulnerability to distraction.

5. Push yourself to learn new skills and get feedback

Actively seek out feedback on the work you're doing and use a tool like RescueTime to track your time spent on challenging tasks to make sure you're putting in the kind of difficult work that triggers states of Flow.

Jory MacKay is a writer, content marketer, and editor of the RescueTime blog.

A Hidden Gem in the Heart of Centurion

Leriba Hotel is a 4- and 5-star hotel, nestled on 13 hectares of indigenous forest on the banks of the Hennops River in Centurion.

An award-winning hotel, it boasts 73 elegant, spacious en suite rooms, business and presidential suites, blending style with comfort. The luxury en suite room offers a splendid view of the lavish landscaped gardens, displaying an abundance of home-grown plants and birdlife.

Boasting two restaurants on the premises, the hotel provides an elegant and memorable dining experience.

Hemingway's restaurant and wine cellar is a French-inspired restaurant with splashes of contemporary Provencal style. The carefully selected wine collection offers a wide range of tastes and flavours to complement the scrumptious culinary journey with excellent paring suggestions.

Chapters Restaurant, on the other hand, is tucked away in the lush gardens with unparalleled garden vistas from the sun-drenched terrace. The ever-evolving menu offers exciting, simple and honest food influenced by fresh, local, seasonal produce.

The 22 fully-equipped conference venues provide perfect setting for conferences, weddings, exhibitions, product and car launches.

Other entertainment facilities include a gymnasium, physiotherapist on site, complimentary internet connection and shuttle services.

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Mastoora Ramiah interviews

Anneli Petrowski

and we get to know her better

1 Can we start with a little background information? Where are you from?

I was born in Pretoria and grew up in Nylstroom (better known as Modimolle) in Limpopo. I am one of four siblings - I have two sisters and one brother of which I am the youngest. I attended Primary and High school in Nylstroom. where I completed grades 11 and 12 in one year. This was followed by an NCS and N4 in Small Business Management & Secretarial at Pretoria College. I always wanted to become a Veterinarian but city life changed all of that very quickly.

2 How and why did you become a PA/EA/ Administrative professional?

I worked for various companies at the outset of my career and then my husband was transferred to Sun City and I joined him 6 months later. I was employed in the Sun City Finance Department as Project Accountant. After a brief period in Finance I transferred Food and Beverage and the position of more specifically the position of Executive Secretary to the Hotel Manager of the Sun City Main Hotel (Soho Hotel). This is where my passion for my career in this field really started.

3 Briefly, describe a typical day at your office?

"Sometimes, hectic always fulfilling and certainly never a dull moment" It's almost impossible to plan a perfect day. You can plan everything to the best of your ability however in our industry all can change in a split second. A normal day for me would be to be prepared for whatever comes my way. My daily motto is, stay neutral, own your space, be yourself and have fun while doing so, and no matter what happens, stay professional, always smile and make sure your hair looks good!

4 What inspires and motivates you?

To grow within myself and continually improve my skillset; expanding my vision, horizons and knowledge. If one can learn only one new thing every day there is no limit to what you may eventually achieve.

5 What have been the highlights of your career so far and why?

Just to be part of the dynamic organisation that is Sun International makes me proud. As a company we have faced a number of changes and challenges and have achieved a lot as a result. I am really proud to have been part of all the successes along the way.

The biggest career highlight so far has been my position at Time Square. I am proud to say I am part of the extraordinary opening team of Sun Time Square, this will stay with me for the rest of my life. Secondly, I would say becoming an Executive PA to the General Manger of Palace of the Lost City was where my love for Hospitality started. On the very first day I stepped onto those marble tiles and I could hear the echo of my shoes on the floor, and the smell of fresh flowers in the entrance hall I knew I was home.

6 What industry are you in?

Leisure, Hospitality and Casino – the industry of people, excitement and relentless pace!!

7 Who has had the most influence in your life? Mentor?

I always say, be your own mentor. For me there is not just one mentor. Every day there is a mentor on your path, we must just learn to see it and take the opportunity to learn. Some people guide without knowing, some have high standards and values.

We all make mistakes and so will they - as long as we learn them. My most valued mentors have great interpersonal skills, are good listeners, are open and honest and actually give you valuable feedback. One should value learning so you can stretch higher and further in life. Always dream big, so your dreams can become your reality.

8 How do you relax and de-stress?

I love the bushveld and when it's possible and I do get the opportunity to break away I like spending time with my family. When at home I like to do gardening and some small DIY projects in and around the house… and then of course it's been proven that a little bit of retail therapy has never hurt anyone!

9 What gives 'light 'to your life? To your being?

Most definitely my two adopted daughters, Gia - 5 and Jennalee - 1. No matter how hard or busy my day was, just to hold them and see those smiles is priceless. Their unconditional love is just incredibly inspiring and that can brighten up anyone's day.

To me, making a difference in someone else's life is so fulfilling and I try to transfer that to my children. It's important that they know and understand that hard work pays off and the more you put in, the more you will get out. Never give to receive and always try and see the best in others before you judge

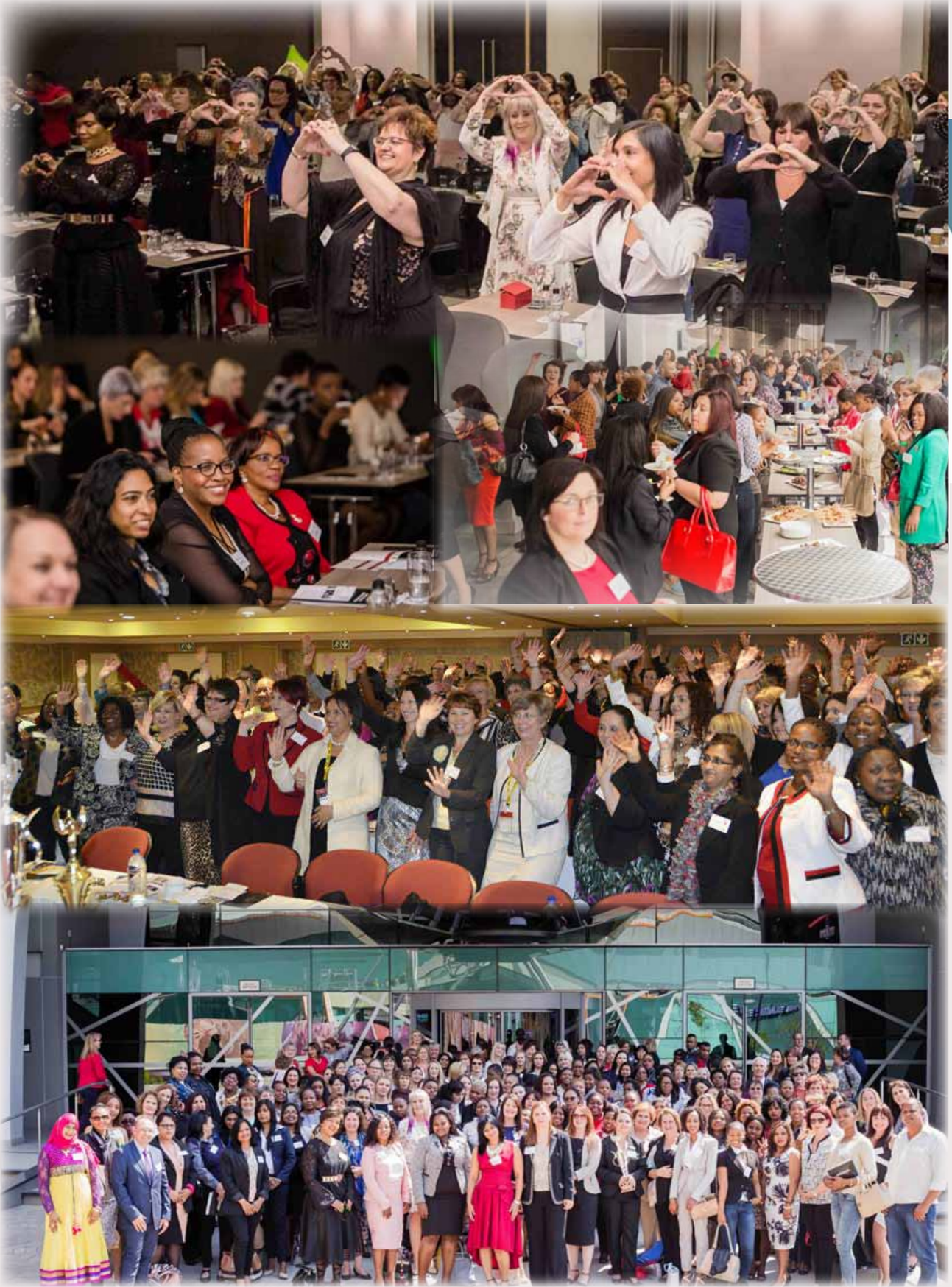
10 What is the most challenging or daring thing you have ever done? Why?

On a more personal level, I cannot have children of my own, and have made the decision 6 years ago to adopt. I wanted to make a difference in someone's life…

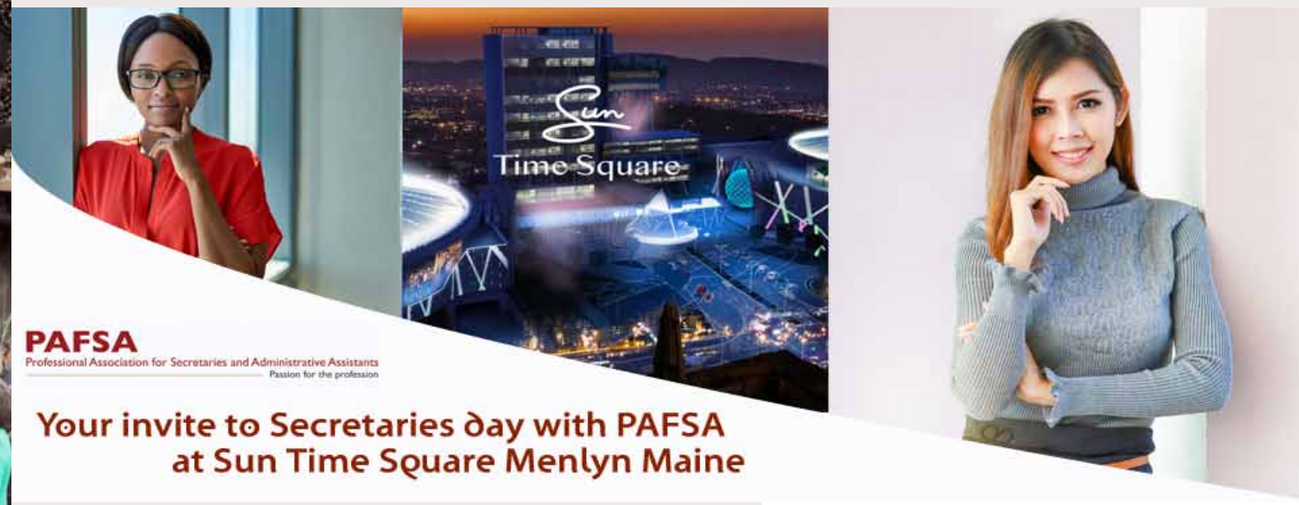
The biggest challenge for me was the acceptance due to the adoption being a "cross-culture adoption". People still judge me and some encounters are difficult. I had to learn to stand up for myself and my two children.

I think that has also helped me overcome my introversion in some way. I have had to learn to believe in myself and to take that first step. My two girls fill my life with so much love and happiness, to see them grow up with their own different personalities makes me a very proud mommy. I teach them that we are all different, we don't always have to agree but we can listen. We all make mistakes and so should they as by making them we learn. Treat each other with respect and live every day as if it was your last, I like to practice that philosophy in the workplace as well.

Anneli Petrowski is the Executive Personal Assistant to Brett Hoppe GM at Sun International's Sun Time Square Menlyn Maine .



PAFSA's Secretaries Day 2018



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Our Secretaries Day event offers you a unique programme annually

- A morning of learning (PA Summit)
- A glamorous and entertaining lunch
- An afternoon being part of the announcement of the PA of the Year

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and an opportunity to celebrate
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Where?
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When?
Wednesday 5 September

Why?
Because you deserve it!

If you want to know more and be kept personally informed contact us on headoffice@pafsa.co.za

Tel: 011 616 7401

5 Behaviours that Make You Seem Inferior and Why You Do It

Are you inferior to your colleagues or your supervisors? We all have insecurities, but when our insecurities and weaknesses overwhelm our thinking and change our behaviour, we may actually be highlighting them rather than working through them. *Terina Allen advises.*

One thing is for sure, if you do the five things listed below, I can tell you that your colleagues and supervisors believe you are inferior (less important and smaller than they are), and as a result, you will not be the first person they consider for special projects, career opportunities or promotions.

There are many different ways you can undermine, stall or kill your career, and having an inferiority complex tops the list because it causes you to think and behave in ways that are completely contrary to the kind of thoughts and behaviors that lead to career success.

Just as we don't enjoy working with those who have a superiority complex, we also don't enjoy working with those who have an inferiority complex.

Both complexes have something to do with feeling less than worthy or less valuable than others. It is a lose/lose proposition for you and your career.

1 YOU DON'T EVER ASK FOR HELP BUT YOU OFFER IT

WHY? You are convinced that this makes you look weak and are afraid of being vulnerable! Or, you believe that you are put here to help others but no one can really help you. You are too self-sufficient.

The irony is that the exact opposite is true. Asking for help shows strength, confidence and courage. When you reach out to others, you express a willingness to learn, and you are acknowledging that you are not mentally or intellectually superior.

You also create an opportunity to develop another by letting him/her do something for you and attempt to problem solve with you.

2 YOU DON'T ASK QUESTIONS

WHY? You are convinced that you are supposed to know everything and work hard to be the smartest person in the room. You think this will make you look strong and endear others to you. Or, you are convinced that you will look stupid because it will confirm that you don't know something.

The irony is that the exact opposite is true. By not asking questions and eliciting guidance and advice from others, you isolate yourself from the team and limit opportunities to network and build professional bonds and support systems.

When you ask questions, you invite others in and send the message that you value what others think. You also show that their contributions are important. As a result, you will usually get much more meaningful feedback.

3 YOU DON'T SPEAK UP

WHY? You are convinced that no one really wants to hear what you have to say. Or – your fear that you don't actually have anything of value to add that anyone will care about.

The irony is that the more often you

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remain silent and don't contribute to the conversation, the more people will come to believe that you actually don't add any value or don't want to add any. Or worse, they come to believe that you are not interested to engage on the issue at all. Either way, you come off as distant, uninterested and not a team player.

People begin to overlook you more and more for career opportunities or project work.

4 YOU EXCESSIVELY AVOID CONFLICT

WHY? You are convinced that your needs can and/or should be the ones that take a back seat to others and overly avoid or accommodate in deference to the needs of others. You do this even when the issue at hand is important to you and even after you have communicated your needs.

There are five different conflict styles:

- collaborating
- compromising
- competing
- accommodating, and
- avoiding.

Each style is suitable for application during different circumstances.The problem is that even when you should seek to apply a different, more appropriate conflict approach such as collaboration, compromise, or even competing, you don't.

The irony is that when you choose avoidance or accommodating too often, you cause others to take less and less interest in meeting your needs. By always placing so little value on your own needs, you teach everyone else to do the same, and those around you respect you less and less.

5 YOU FEAR FAILURE SO MUCH IT CAUSES YOU TO RESIST CHANGE AND/OR APPEAR INFLEXIBLE

WHY? You are convinced that change means that you will have to learn new and different methods, approaches, processes and behaviours, and you lack confidence to adjust or learn what you need in order to be successful.

After you master something, you are not as flexible to change because secretly you are not so confident that you can master the "new" something.

You advocate for things staying the same because you don't want to be found out. In your head you are thinking, "What if I can't do it? What if I become less relevant? What if I fail?"

Terina Allen serves as chief executive for ARVis Institute, a strategy and management consulting firm that she founded in 2008.

She has committed her research, education, and professional talents to transforming governments, corporations, nonprofits, and educational institutions and ensures today's professionals, leaders and managers have the capacity to create high-performing organizations and the competence to affect meaningful change.

Terina has helped to define, elevate, and advance the goals of organizations and individuals within nearly every industry and has focused a significant amount of her efforts on developing strategic leaders. https://www.linkedin.com/in/terinaallen/

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Our very own message in the bottle!

Back in 2014 Michele Thwaits and Eleanore Jannetti were tasked by PAFSA to write an article regarding PAs and what would be expected in the 21st Century. That article was kept in a time-bubble ***(like a message in a bottle that reaches the shore after many years)*** and we would like you to see it now!

Why?

Because in a couple of weeks' time, PAFSA will be revealing the future of the profession as we head for 2025.

Read this...dwell on it...and prepare yourself for the next chapter coming your way soon!

Four years ago this is what Michele Thwaits & Eleanore Jannetti predicted

With the transformation of the workplace, the role of the PA has been transformed. Following a trajectory that began within the last 20 years as secretaries turned into Office Professionals, careers within this field will become increasingly complex and specialised.

Many positions will require sophisticated skill sets and experience in specific areas such as technology, human resources and business processes

Several key trends for Office Professionals

1. Entrepreneurial approach

Office Professionals will take an increasingly entrepreneurial approach to their jobs and careers. Those most successful will possess knowledge of business management principles, technical aptitude, sophisticated interpersonal skills (or "emotional intelligence") and an almost intuitive understanding of the needs of an organisation. As more functions become automated, the importance of using interpersonal skills to anticipate needs, respond to concerns and provide a "human touch" that computers lack will be paramount.

2. New skill sets and responsibilities

To advance their careers, Office Professionals will pursue business-focused training that emphasises negotiation, delegation, budgeting, supervision and planning skills. Other useful knowledge areas include library science, for organising and storing text and data used by groups; desktop publishing, for the creation of newsletters, presentation materials and other corporate documents; and electronic communications, an emerging field concerned with ensuring the security and integrity of electronically transmitted information.

3. Specialised roles

The Office Professional will need to be both a specialist and a generalist, with job descriptions focusing on the relevant needs of the executive and the company.

Specialised roles

Specialist: Communication skills are some of the most important skills that you need to succeed in the workplace.

If you want to be an expert communicator, you need to be effective at all points in the communication process – from "sender" through to "receiver", and be comfortable with the different channels of communication – face to face, voice to voice, written, and so on.

Poor communicators usually struggle to develop their careers beyond a certain point.

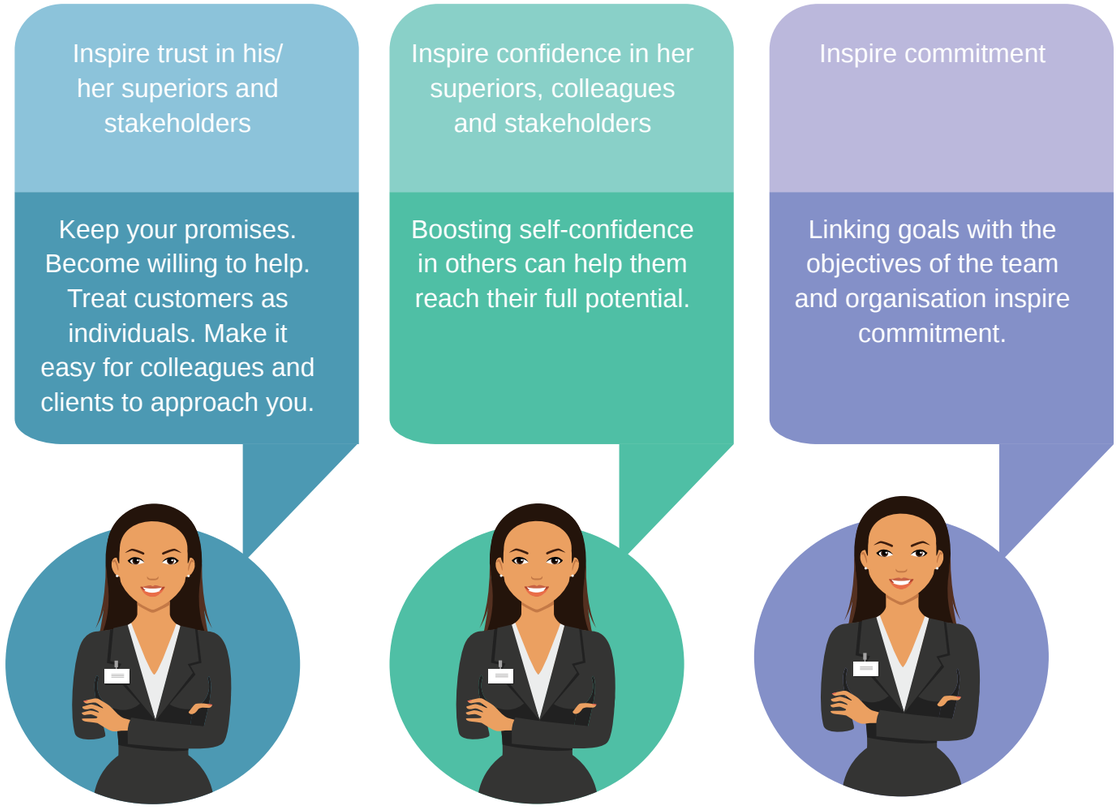
Generalist: If you want to change roles or get ahead in your career, it's important that you know how to identify and pursue opportunities that are a good match for your interests, skills, and circumstances.

This takes time. You can think of the process of finding opportunities as a journey that will eventually lead you to an exciting but unknown destination. You need to be patient, and persist in your efforts. Work that you put in now will pay off in the future. Not only will you end up in a role that's right for you, but you'll have a good understanding of your options. You'll also have a better understanding of where you need to build new skills – and develop existing ones – to be successful in your career.

4. Demonstrated experience

Office Professionals will need to demonstrate to potential employers concrete evidence of specialised skills and abilities, such as technical expertise and industry experience.

Demonstrated attributes



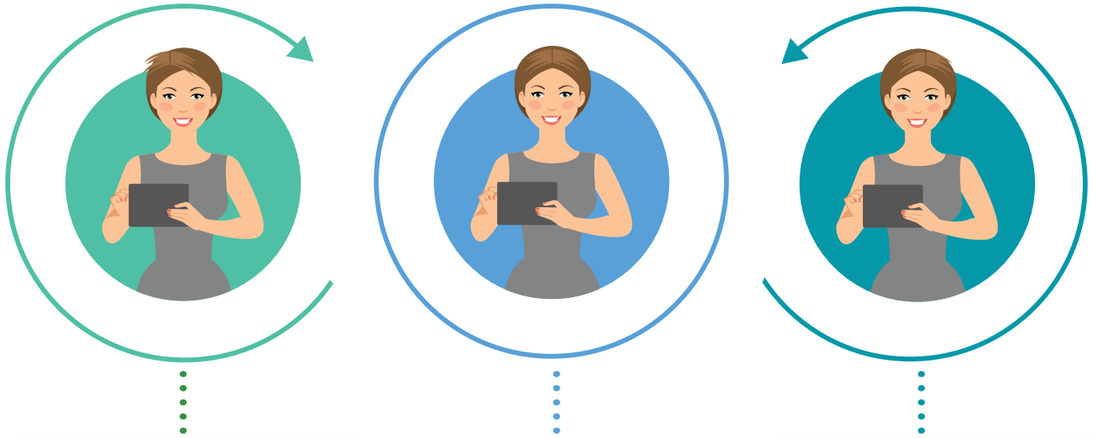
Our research for this article sees us identify three key aspects which we believe is what we need to know in order to better prepare ourselves for the future:

- √ **Action Skills for Success**
- √ **New Administrative Roles**
- √ **A More Enabled You**

√ Action Skills for Success

To prepare for success, Office Professionals should focus on six key areas that form the acronym ***ACTION:***

1. Analysis - 3-C Thinking



Critical

Evaluating information and making recommendations based on an understanding of a company's strategic objectives

Creative

Taking initiative to develop innovative solutions to challenges and problems

Collaborative

Perceiving links among people, data and ideas, and using these ties to work more effectively

2. Collaboration

Quickly establishing rapport and facilitating team-building with people onsite and off. Managing relationships by accurately identifying and responding to preferred work styles and personality traits.

3. Technical aptitude

Using the most effective tools for a variety of tasks. Willingness to be an early adopter of new devices, researching the best technology solutions for an organisation and training teams how to use them.

4. Intuition

Proactively identifying the best ways to provide support based on the goals and processes of the business, as well as the needs and work styles of colleagues.

5. Ongoing education

Actively seeking information sources and utilising multiple modes of learning from traditional classroom seminars to online workshops. Constantly expanding knowledge base and pursuing any subject that enhances productivity.

6. Negotiation

Using tact, diplomacy, empathy and business savvy to engage in productive discussions with vendors and employees that result in positive outcomes.

√ New Administrative Roles

The role an administrative assistant is changing. This work is morphing from a support role to a creative collaborative profession. The title of “administrative” and “assistant” doubly fails to capture the work that these professionals do. “Administrative” is too narrow a term for colleagues who daily juggle project management, resource planning, communications, scheduling, finances, and logistics. “Assistant” is not well specified, as all of our work is collaborative. We need to constantly be assisting each other if we are to be effective and productive.

According to Office of the Future: 2020, a research study released by OfficeTeam:

“Technology will continue to reshape the workplace, changing how and where we conduct business,” said Diane Domeyer, executive director of OfficeTeam. “As a result, flexibility and adaptability will be sought-after attributes in employees at all levels.” Below is an excerpt of the findings.

“Given the multifaceted roles Office Professionals will play in the next decade, the current designation, "administrative assistant," may not be sufficient to convey the scope and depth of their skills and expertise. As a result, new titles that reflect greater specialisation will emerge. By 2020, administrative personnel will likely fulfil many of the functions identified below:

1. **Resource Coordinator** - Virtual offices that employ numerous contract workers will rely heavily on individuals adept at bringing together the right human resources for a given project - much like movie producers assembling a cast, camera crew and production team.
2. **Workflow Controller** - This individual will serve as "mission control" for an organisation. Whereas the Resource Coordinator will assemble project teams, the Workflow Controller will ensure these professionals have the support and resources required to do their jobs..
3. **Knowledge Manager** - In the more fluid and project–based office of the future, this central figure will serve as a repository of institutional information, history and best practices. The Knowledge Manager will ensure continuity and consistency, and help new employees and project professionals adapt to the organisation's culture.
4. **Telecommuting Liaison** - As the number of off–site workers increases, companies will designate a Telecommuting Liaison to connect remote workers with each other and management. Day–to–day responsibilities will include managing telecommuting schedules and providing technical support and updates to telecommuters regarding changes in operational procedures and company policies.
5. **Virtual–meetings Organiser** - The Virtual–meetings Organiser will be technically proficient and trained in the use of cameras, projection systems, electronic whiteboards, meeting software, audio equipment and related tools.”

√ A More Enabled You

Office Professionals will enjoy increasing autonomy and make more decisions by the year 2020. While collaboration will still be key, supervisors and colleagues may spend more time off–site. As a result, employers will rely on self-directed individuals who demonstrate sharp abstract reasoning abilities, excellent judgment and strong ethics.

1. Bolster your decision–making aptitude

Follow these steps:

- **Learn about your organization and its overall goals and philosophies**

You can’t make choices that are in step with your employer’s mission unless you first understand the objective. Your firm’s website and training materials may contain useful information. Your manager can also keep you apprised of company priorities.

- **Embark on a fact-finding excursion**

Good choices require that you have all the relevant details. Develop a broad base of information-gathering resources to increase efficiency and minimise anxiety during the decision–making process.

2. Develop your Emotional Intelligence

- **View the glass as half–full.** Manage your moods - don't let them control you. If you experience a setback at work, accept it, learn from it and then move on. Dwelling on negative experiences can adversely affect your ability to focus, retain information and think creatively. Studies show that optimists outperform pessimists in almost all areas of professional and personal life.
- **Monitor moods.** Staying attuned to the dispositions of your manager and colleagues is just as important as being in touch with your own emotions. By paying close attention and being sensitive to your co-workers' states of mind, you can develop better tact and timing.
- **Get to the point.** As personal communication devices grow in popularity, professionals will receive data around the clock. The key to preventing information overload will be the ability to quickly extrapolate and process only the most important items. Being able to do this for yourself and others will significantly enhance your value to your company.

- **Be the conversation quarterback.** Office Professionals increasingly will be called upon to collaborate with diverse work teams. In these situations, the ability to build consensus and resolve conflicts will be critical. Look for common ground when working with a group, and steer conversations toward productive solutions.
- **Play nice.** Your future livelihood will depend on your ability to work with others. Consistently complimenting co-workers and sharing credit for a job well done will help you develop a reputation as a team player. Humility, a sense of humour and a ready smile will also go a long way to helping you build rapport with colleagues.
- **Adopt an elastic attitude.** Adaptability is a hallmark of emotional intelligence. Try to embrace change rather than feeling threatened by it, and be willing to bend to accommodate colleagues' preferred work styles. People who exhibit flexibility will thrive in the fast-paced world of tomorrow.

3. Improve your communication skills

- **Think logically.** What is the goal of each communication you transmit? Your objective should be immediately obvious. For example, if you need an executive's approval on a report, state your request early in the message.
- **Open your ears.** Be an active listener and give others your undivided attention. Don't interrupt or formulate responses in your head until a person has finished expressing his or her thoughts. After someone shares an idea or gives direction, ask questions to clarify ambiguities.
- **Assert your needs calmly and confidently.** If you're making a request, explain why you need the information you're seeking, and always provide reasonable deadlines when appropriate.
- **Avoid jargon, slang or obscure acronyms.** Nearly every organisation uses corporate lingo. But too much "shop talk" with clients or contract workers can cause confusion. For example, referring to "HD" can leave people scratching their heads. Did that mean hard drive, help desk or high-definition? When writing, spell out acronyms on the first mention.
- **Organise your thoughts**. Before making an important phone call, think about what you're going to say to avoid rambling. When leaving a voice mail be sure to give your phone number slowly, once at the start of the message, and once at the end.
- **Smile.** Your co-workers will appreciate your positive attitude and approach to work. As a result, they may be more willing to help you, increasing your chances of generating positive results. When speaking on the phone, it pays to smile, too. Although people cannot see you, a grin will add warmth to your voice.
- **Practice impeccable grammar**. If you're unsure of the basic rules of grammar or punctuation, embark on a self–improvement campaign. Invest in a business-composition book or take a writing course. Mastering the rules of grammar will ensure your communications appear polished and professional — you will also be better-equipped to proofread your colleagues' work.

- **Craft specific subject lines in your emails.** In a world of carbon copies and spam, meaningful subject lines help recipients prioritise their messages. A generic title such as "meeting" means little and may be difficult for recipients to track later. A better subject line would be: "Agenda for May 22 Marketing meeting."
- **Deliver gracious greetings.** Include proper salutations and closings in your correspondence. If you don't, your memo, letter or email may be construed as too informal.
- **Limit stream–of–consciousness conversations.** Consider the points you want to make before you start speaking with someone. Limit impulsive "I'm-just–talking–out–loud" moments to brainstorming sessions. This often is the one time when free-floating dialogue is useful, expected and encouraged.
- **Check and check again.** Always proofread your letters or email before sending them. If you're constructing a particularly important document, ask a colleague to review it first. It's easy to overlook small errors, especially if you're familiar with the material.
- **Don't just sound it out.** Go out of your way to correctly pronounce and spell people's names. It demonstrates courtesy and professionalism.
- **Write with flourish.** Savvy word choices can make your correspondence more compelling. Use vibrant, powerful language to articulate your points and attract the reader's attention.
- **Avoid sarcasm or criticism in email.** It can easily appear harsher than intended. If you find yourself using a lot of emoticons in a message, you may want to have a personal conversation.
- **Don't delay.** Respond quickly to messages, even if it's only to say that you received the communication and will need more time before you're able to act.

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MICHELE THWAITS

Michele is the owner of Empowered 4 Success - an experienced and a sought after international facilitator and trainer. Michele has over 36 years' experience in the PA profession and worked in some of the big corporates for senior management and CEOs. Michele was a finalist in the Office Professional of South Africa competition in 2006/2007, recipient of the PA Summit Crystal Award in 2011 and finalist in the PA of the Year 2013, member of the IYOTSA 2014 task team, member of Academy of Excellence, President of PAFSA 2015/2016.

ELEANORE JANNETTI

Eleanore Jannetti started her career at the tender age of 17 years in 1978. She passed Standard 8 and left school to assist her family financially. It was only much later in life that she realised the importance of a good education. To this end she studied at UNISA and completed a National Higher Diploma in Public Relations (2010). She progressed from being a Filing Clerk to an Executive PA. In 2006 she was elected Finalist in the PA of the Year Award by PAFSA (Professional Association for Secretaries and Admin Assistants).

MIND OVER matter

In June of 2017, I had a bit of a health issue that caused me to change what I was eating as well as the way I was eating it. My eating habits were good, I ate well-balanced meals and generally didn't eat too much sugar. While my weight was a little heavier than it should be, I was a healthy eater.

Then my body decided to react to what I was eating and cause me pain and discomfort. Who knows why, but it did! The only choice I had was to change my eating and stay away from anything that caused me pain and discomfort.

The difference it has made in my life!

I've dropped several pounds (because I'm listening to my body), and I feel amazing. I'm rarely hungry and feel that I can eat whatever I want because what I want is different now. I no longer want the things that my body was reacting to.

That made my significant changes in eating very easy for me to stick to. I didn't want what I had before because the consequence of eating those things was too high (pain is a strong motivator change your ways).

We need to do the same thing with our jobs and work habits!

We need to recognise that when we change our habits and we get success, then we create new routines.

For instance:
Let's assume that your workplace has flexible hours, and you can start as early as 7:00 am. Go to work as early as you can (assuming your schedule allows it), and convince yourself you love getting to work that early because you get a couple of hours to concentrate and get things done before the interruptions start.

If you start telling yourself that, then you start believing it (words lead to action, and action leads to words). If something happens and you don't get to work until 9:00, you'll feel that day wasn't as productive because you missed those first two hours. That will cause you to look forward to starting work at 7:00 the next morning.

I know that for some of you this was clear years ago, and you would hate having to start work at 9:00 now. However, some of you are focused on how tired you would be, how early you would have to get up, and how inconvenient a 7:00 start time would be.

Change your thinking and focus on the positives of this new behaviour so you can adapt quickly.

Reached a plateau?

Maybe you've reached a plateau in your career, and the only way you will earn more money and responsibility is to work at a different company. This situation can go one of two ways:

1. **Decide that:** You do want to look for more money and responsibility and start networking. Don't focus on the fact that your company won't promote you, or don't appreciate you, but focus on all the things you've learned while working there, and how helpful that will be at another company. Don't regret your choice to work there, appreciate all that it offered you. OR
2. **Decide that:** Finding a new company is not what you want, and focus on all that your current company offers you. Focus on the great coworkers you have, what an amazing boss you are lucky to work with, or the fact that the commute, pension, benefits are so important that they compensate for the fact you cannot climb the corporate ladder anymore. Focus on what you do get, not what you don't get.

It is all about attitude. Once you switch your attitude on how you work, where you work, what you do etc., you will be in a position to happily change your behaviours.

One of the food items I had to give up was red meat. For the most part, I didn't mind in the slightest as I wasn't a big beef eater anyway. My one exception would be a high-end steak. Just the thought of it would make me hungry.

This year I was Convention Chair for the annual convention of an association to which I belong. One of the highlights of this role is picking the menu for the four-day event. On menu tasting day we tasted the gala ball dinners, and it was to a combination stead/seafood dinner. We had to choose which steak we would serve. Since I considered this part of my job, I justified that one bite of steak was not going to kill me (or cause me any pain). I hadn't eaten red meat in almost six months at this point.

The perfect tenderloin was placed in front of me, and I didn't want to taste it (this surprised me), but I took a small bite. I hated it. My body wanted me to spit it out. It felt like a big ball of sawdust in my mouth. It didn't feel that way because it was a bad steak (the rest of the committee raved about how tender and tasty it was), but because my brain said "no!"

Mind over matter really does work!

Convince yourself to start work early, and leave work on time. Focus on the benefits of taking a lunch break (even if it is only 15 minutes), or going to the gym immediately after work (if you start work at 7 am, it leaves lots of gym time before we need to get dinner on the table).

Focus on the benefits your employer offers you, or the boss you support.

Don't make it a resolution, make it a lifestyle choice. Once you do, you'll realise there really is no other way.

Rhonda Scharf is a well-recognized Professional Speaker, Trainer, Consultant and Author based both in Ottawa Canada and Fort Myers Florida. Since 1993 she has worked with tens of thousands of people in 13 different countries.

She has earned the highest speaking designation in the world, the "Certified Speaking Professional" (CSP) and was recently inducted into the Speaking Hall of Fame (HoF).). .

7 PHRASES THAT SABOTAGE YOUR CREDIBILITY

There are phrases you want to banish from your vocabulary (or at least use sparingly) in order to keep your credibility intact. Do you know which they are? Jennifer Holloway gives us the answer.

I love my job. Know why? Because I help people understand how others are picking up clues to their personal brand - and in particular, where they might be inadvertently sabotaging it.

Here's what I'm talking about…

A woman arrived at one of my workshops in plenty of time, but apologised as she walked into the room. (Not for anything in particular – she just said the word "sorry".) We then shook hands and she introduced herself, part of which involved her apologising again. As we chatted about this and that, a few more apologies appeared. In the end I had to say, "What are you apologising for?" Because every time that word popped out of her mouth, it weakened her brand.

So why did she do it?

- A lot of it was habit – she said it so often it had become part of her brain's flow of vocabulary.
- Some of it was feeling nervous – about who else would be in the room and what we'd be doing.
- Part of it was down to our culture of courtesy – saying sorry for things that aren't even our fault.

It's not just "Sorry" that's the problem!

According to a recent blog post by Melody Wilding, a coach who helps high-achieving women to be successful, there are seven other phrases you want to banish from your vocabulary (or at least use sparingly) in order to keep your credibility intact.

1. JUST

It 'minimises the power of your statements and can make you seem defensive or apologetic'. One example I've heard a lot is people on the phone who announce, "It's just me".

2. I'M NO EXPERT, BUT…

Often used to avoid seeming arrogant. There's no need because, as I've learnt from experience, being a non-expert can be exactly the reason you're adding value, by giving an alternative view.

3. WHAT IF WE TRIED…?

This is often used in an effort to remain collaborative, but as Melody says, 'Masking your opinions as questions invites rebuttal and can lead to you feel criticised.' I think this is less of a problem than the other phrases, but I agree it's not as strong as simply stating the case.

4. I CAN'T

As part of my work I teach people how to phrase what they can't do in terms of what they can do. For example, don't say, "I can't get you that report by Friday" instead say "I can get you the report on Monday". It's subtle, but it makes a difference.

Jennifer Holloway, author of 'Personal Branding For Brits' speaker, trainer, speaker and coach. https://www.jennifer-holloway.co.uk/

5. THAT IS, LIKE, SO GREAT!

This is definitely something I'm noticing more – people misusing, and overusing, the word "Like"; just last week I flagged it for a young workshop attendee. (It can also seriously hack off those having to listen to it.)

6. EXCLAMATION MARKS OR EMOJIS

Another suggestion from Melody is to avoid 'using exclamation marks or emojis [as they] can suggest you feel insecure in your message'. I'm at odds with her on this, in that, used sparingly (and I can't stress that last word enough) emojis and exclamation marks can add to your message where you need to be clear about the emotion behind it, for instance, when using irony.

7. AM I MAKING SENSE?

This is an interesting one, as it can be good practice to check your communication is hitting home. However, it doesn't sound as strong as it might though. My alternative, often used at the end of an email setting out a lot of information, is, "I hope that's clear – it is to me, but then I know what I'm on about! Feel free to come back with any questions."

So next time you find yourself uttering these words and phrases, take a second to consider the impression it's creating of your personal brand – and how a few simple changes could stop you shooting yourself in the foot.

Zippy profile

10 fast questions

Tracy Dardis

Your designation: Executive Assistant to CEO: Wealth, Investment Management Insurance

Where are you employed? Barclays Africa Group

1 *What is the most challenging task you have ever tackled as a PA?*

I was approached by a family member of a prior Executive and was requested to support a legal action which did not adhere to my business and personal morals. The challenge was to professionally manage and decline the request while keeping the matter out of the public eye and ensuring my legal rights were not encroached.

2 *What do you do when you don't know what to do?*

I reach out to my large network of fellow EAs and mentors for guidance and collaboration.

3 *What is the most daring thing you have ever done? Why?*

Shark cage diving off the North Coast of South Africa. It was one of my husbands bucket-list items which I purchased for him as a Christmas present and naturally I was not going to let him have all the fun by himself.

4 *When the day gets rough, what do you do? Pray? Scream? Hide in the WC? Have endless cups of coffee? Cry? Write on Facebook?*

Take a deep breath, step back from the current tasks at hand / situation, reassess and re-prioritize (this always brings me clarity and direction), put my game face back on and finally tackle the rest of the day with renewed vigour.

5 *Which world figure (sports person/author/entertainer/politician/celebrity) would you like to be a PA to? Why?*

Michelle Obama. Michelle has been the epitome of pure dignity and poise in all that she did. Her professionalism and business acumen in a male dominated world was a force to be reckoned with. Each day working for Michelle would be a day of learning, growth and empowerment on both the professional and personal front.

Tracy Dardis

10 swift answers

6 *What kind of music/song invigorates you? Which relaxes you?*

Music that invigorates me would be anything by my favourite artist: Pink. Music that relaxes me would be the ballads by John Legend and Sam Smith.

7 *Where would you choose to go for a week's sponsored vacation? Why?*

Summer would be Bora Bora for the peace and tranquillity of island life accompanied by the crystal clear ocean and the plethora of sea life. Winter would be the Highlands of Scotland for the sheer beauty of the countryside, the magnificence of the historical sites and the abundance of mythical folk lore

8 *What is your favourite fragrance? Where does it take your mind?*

Narciso Rodriguez for Women; the scent brings images of sitting at a café in Paris sampling the local cuisine and wine while watching the sun set.

9 *If you could have any company perk, what would it be?*

A fully paid international trip for my family and myself at least once a year.

10 *In one sentence, why would the world collapse if there were no PAs?*

EA's are quickly evolving from the historical administrative support function into strategic business partners who assist in executing the organisation's strategy, Without this function and support the execution and deliverables would not be met as timeously and meticulously as the business required.

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Zippy profile

10 fast questions

Modisane Moeletsi

Your designation: Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer

Where are you employed? National Nuclear Regulator (NNR)

1 *What is the most challenging task you have ever tackled as a PA?*

Organising my first international forum for 20 executives who were in different countries across the world, for Square Kilometre Array Project in 2010; the biggest project that South Africa was preparing to bid for. The planning of the forum took me 4 weeks to complete, which was very challenging as different time zones in responding to my request for proposed dates and finally we agreed to host the forum in Australia, which was a great success. And South Africa was awarded a share in the project.

2 *What do you do when you don't know what to do?*

First thing is not to panic, and to remain focussed on the task at hand.

3 *What is the most daring thing you have ever done? Why?*

As a Personal Assistant you have to be in charge all the time! An example would be at meetings. As a Minute Taker, I once had to rein a meeting back to order, as executives were going on about how great the golf day had been with a client, as it was getting difficult for me to take minutes. To date, that was the best committee I ever served!

4 *When the day gets rough, what do you do? Pray? Scream? Hide in the WC? Have endless cups of coffee? Cry? Write on Facebook?*

This happens all the time. If it's not your Manager coming back from a Board meeting highly stressed, then it's others around you. As a Personal Assistant you always have to remain calm. Coffee helps a lot of people. For me personally I find that meditating even for 5min helps me keeps me grounded.

10 swift answers

5 *Which world figure (sports person/author/entertainer/politician/celebrity) would you like to be a PA to? Why?*

I have learned so much from all the people I have worked for! I have worked with phenomenal and powerful individuals who taught me the importance of empowering other women regardless what level you are on.

6 *What kind of music/song invigorates you? Which relaxes you?*

Gospel and classic music – Gospel relaxes me spiritually and I get to be in touch with my inner self.

7 *Where would you choose to go for a week's sponsored vacation? Why?*

Bali - Indonesian Island – I will stay at Kayumanis Jimbaran Private Estate and Spa where I will enjoy the pure serenity, the utmost privacy, and unrivalled luxury - its location is just meters away from the beach where I will have the great element of nature to relax my body, mind and soul.

8 *What is your favourite fragrance? Where does it take your mind?*

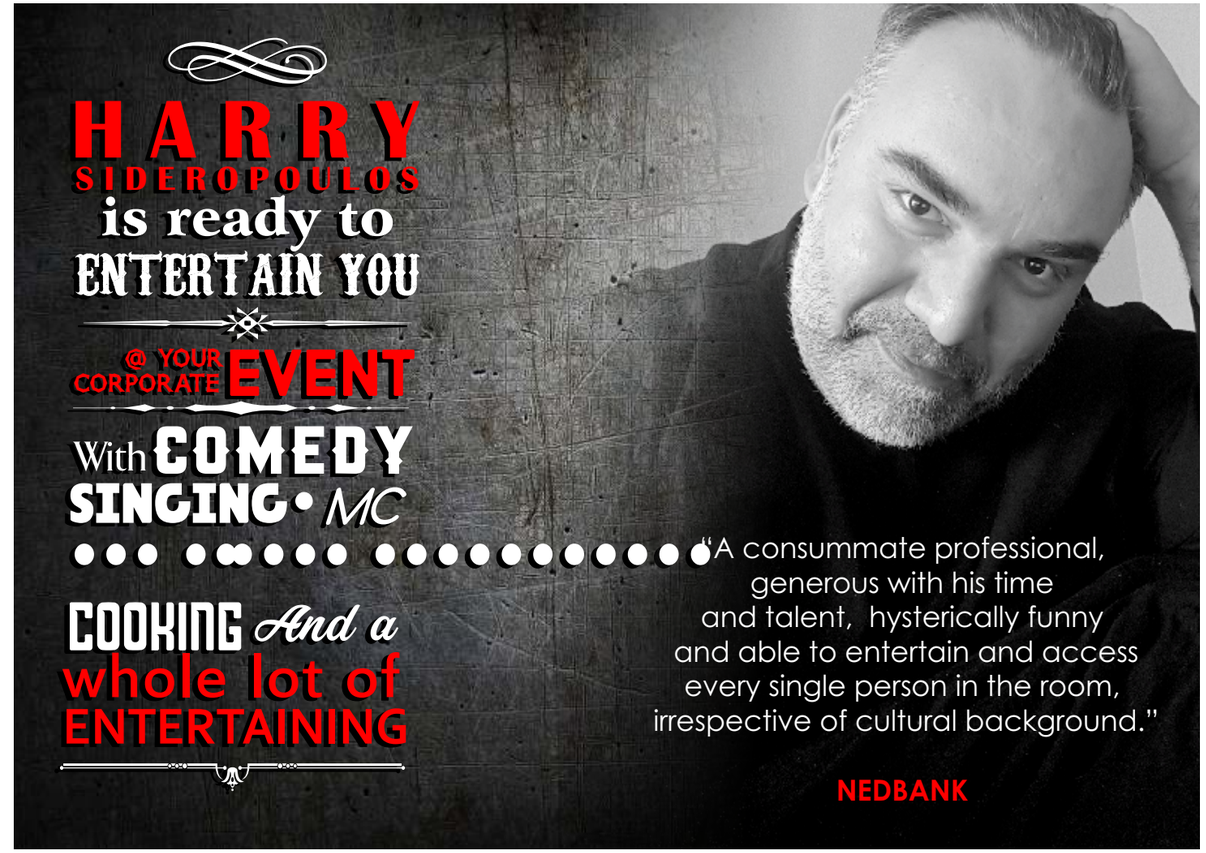
Bvlgari Rose Essentielle and Black Opium by Yves Saint Laurent – both the scents make me powerful. .

9 *If you could have any company perk, what would it be?*

An annual international trip of my choice and a monthly spa allowance.

10 *In one sentence, why would the world collapse if there were no PAs?*

No one would know what to do, because PAs network and are very good organisers, PAs always have a Plan B, so everything works out even if there is chaos, there is always a solution to every problem.



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Zippy profile

10 fast questions

Marianne Myburgh
Your designation: Executive PA to Head: RMB Corporate Bank
Where are you employed? Rand Merchant Bank

1 *What is the most challenging task you have ever tackled as a PA?*

The most challenging task I have ever tackled was in a previous position when I had to take on the additional responsibility of managing the Executive kitchen with my Executive Assistant role. Although challenging I enjoyed it immensely to plan the Executive dining room menus and assist preparing the food from time to time.

2 *What do you do when you don't know what to do?*

When I don't know what to do I take time out and re-think the entire situation. If I don't get a solution I will reach out to one of my peers.

3 *What is the most daring thing you have ever done? Why?*

This might sound very boring, but I've never done anything extremely daring.

4 *When the day gets rough, what do you do? Pray? Scream? Hide in the WC? Have endless cups of coffee? Cry? Write on Facebook?*

When the day gets rough I become quiet and pray. Prayer gives me strength.

5 *Which world figure (sports person/author/entertainer/politician/celebrity) would you like to be a PA to? Why?*

To be honest I don't have one specific person whom I admire. I've been very blessed throughout my career as an Executive Assistant that I've always assisted a head or CEO of a company whom I respected and could learn a lot from. .

10 swift answers

6 *What kind of music/song invigorates you? Which relaxes you?*

Music plays a huge part in my life. I love music. I enjoy listening to a variety of genres from Leonard Cohen to Mozart to the most beautiful tango in the world "Por Una Cabeza" the tango from the movie "Scent of a woman"

7 *Where would you choose to go for a week's sponsored vacation? Why?*

I love Europe and have been to a couple of countries, but for a sponsored vacation I would choose to go to Croatia. Croatia is one of the most beautiful countries with amazing historic buildings and an interesting history.

8 *What is your favourite fragrance? Where does it take your mind?*

My favourite fragrance will always have undertones of spices like vanilla but to name my favourite fragrance it would be "Midnight Rain" from La Prairie. It's a beautiful unique fragrance which is not easily identifiable. I just enjoy the smell of it.

9 *If you could have any company perk, what would it be?*

International travel for two. Travelling is an enriching experience.

10 *In one sentence, why would the world collapse if there were no PAs?*

PAs are miracle workers behind the scenes.

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Coaching CLASS

by Jeff Haden

Please advise me on how I can become indispensable at my workplace. My Performance Appraisal is coming up in three month's time, and I really want a promotion and get the position of EA to the CEO which is also coming up before the end of the year as the current EA is relocating.

Answer: Follow these 7 tips if you really want to stand out!

Nearly every performance appraisal evaluates qualities like teamwork, attention to detail, dependability, creativity, -- those skills and attributes are basically a given. Every solid employee possesses those important -- and relatively easy to define -- qualities.

In fact, some employees are even exceptional. Yet some employees are even more valuable -- not just exceptional, they're indispensable. That's what you want to be, and here's how:

1. Always think before you speak and act

Ever seen someone:

- Throw a chair because he thought his instructions had not been followed? I have.
- Tear someone to pieces for a mistake it turns out that person didn't make? I have.
- Speak or act without thinking -- and forever revised your opinion of her? I have.

Indispensable people react instantly to good news. They react instantly to offer recognition, congratulations, and praise.

BUT they take a long time to think, reflect, and decide the best way to speak and act when problems arise or when mistakes are made. They know their words and actions will leave a lasting impact, so they do everything possible to get it right.

2. Make others feel even smarter than they are

Indispensable people have a knack for making their ideas feel like our ideas. When that happens we all work harder. We all work with a greater sense of purpose. We all feel like we're part of something bigger.

And we're all more likely to succeed.

3. Never find something to take personally

The only things indispensable people take personally are the things they can do to make life better for other people -- because they feel a personal obligation to improve the lives of the people around them.

4. Always find a silver lining

Victories, in business and life, are few and far between. Achieving something awesome (or even just a tiny bit cool) takes time and effort, so reasons to celebrate can be rare.

Indispensable people realise that every huge goal is accomplished one small step at a time and rightly feel every step is cause for celebration. They have a knack for finding the silver lining in every dark cloud because they know there is always a silver lining -- you just have to be willing to look.

And by looking, they spread a sense of optimism and enthusiasm -- something that is often in short supply.

5. Listen way more than you talk

Interrupting isn't just rude. When you interrupt someone what you're really saying is, "I'm not listening to you so I can understand what you are saying; I'm only listening to find a place to jump in and say what I want say."

Indispensable people listen more than they talk. They focus on what others say. They ask questions not to seem smart but to better understand.

They make us feel wise and respected. And we love them for it.

6. Never gossip

It's hard for any of us to resist learning inside scoop. Finding out the reasons behind someone's decisions, the motivations behind someone's actions, what's behind someone's hidden agenda - much less whether Marcy from shipping is really dating Juan in accounting. Those conversations are hard to resist.

Unfortunately, the people who gossip about other people are also gossiping about us, and suddenly the idea of gossip isn't so much fun.

Indispensable people excuse themselves from gossip, and walk away. They don't worry that they'll lose a gossiper's respect -- they know anyone willing to gossip doesn't respect other people anyway.

7. Never jump on a soapbox.

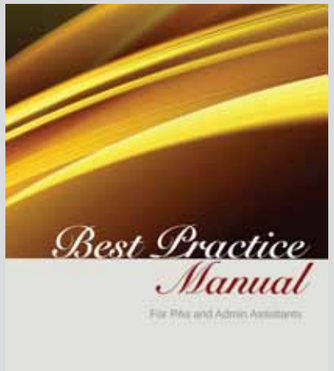
The higher you rise and the more you accomplish, the more likely you are to think you know everything, and the more likely you are to think you need to tell other people everything you know.

Some people speak with much more finality than foundation. Some people think a position or "status" automatically confers wisdom. And that means other people hear but don't listen.

Indispensable people share their thoughts in a humble and unpretentious way. They already know what they know.

Jeff Haden is a keynote speaker, contributing editor of Inc. Magazine, and author of The Motivation Myth: How High Achievers Really Set Themselves Up to Win. (https://www.jeffhaden.com/)k/

Best Practice for you!



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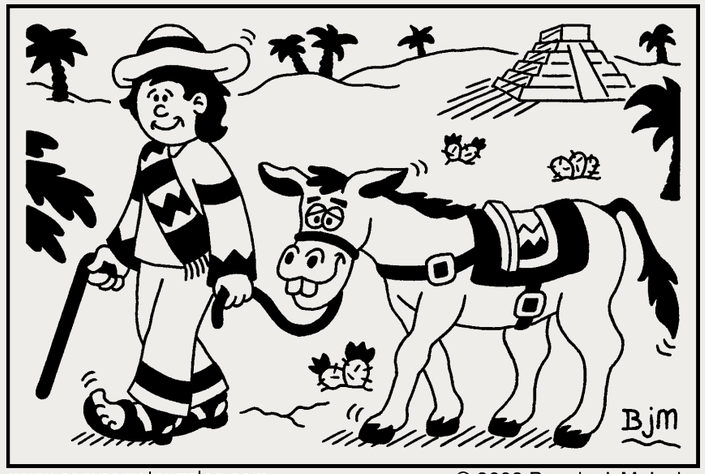
ComParrot by Bonnie J. Malcolm

Can you spot 12 differences between these pictures?



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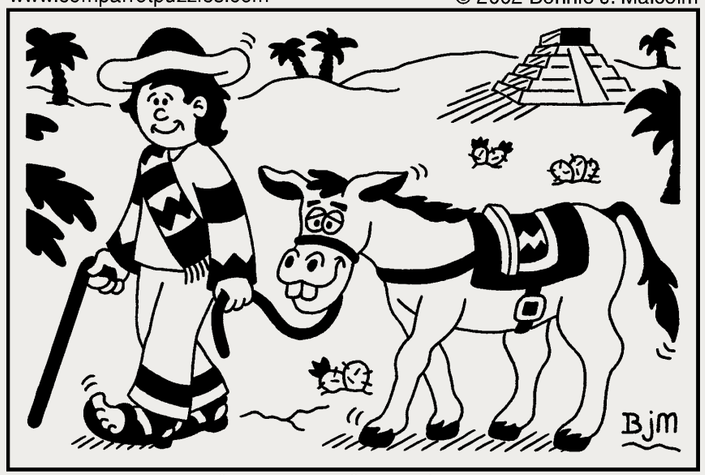

Solution: 1. Buckle on saddle is missing. 2. Tree on horizon is missing. 3. Flower on cactus is missing. 4. Top of sombrero is colored in. 5. Top of saddle pattern is colored in. 6. Top of pyramid is colored in. 7. Cactus has moved. 8. Top leaf on branch at left has moved. 9. Brim on sombrero is wider. 10. Stripe on shirt sleeve is taller. 11. Rope is longer. 12. Walking cane is taller.

Just for laughs

I just read that 4,153,237 people got married last year.
Not to cause any trouble but shouldn't that be an even number?

Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool.
I gave him a glass of water.

When wearing a bikini, women reveal 90 % of their body.
Men are so polite they only look at the covered parts.

A recent study has found that women, who carry a little extra weight, live longer than the men who mention it.

Relationships are a lot like algebra.
Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?

You know that tingly little feeling you get when you like someone?
That's your common sense leaving your body.

My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance.
We'll just see about that.

Money talks ...
But all mine ever says is 'good-bye'.

You're not fat!
You're just... easier to see.

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