

CLAREMONT EAP IMPACT

January - March 2012

Employee Newsletter

DID YOU KNOW?

- Free "Simple Will" Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, convenience and wellness services

800.834.3773
www.claremonteap.com

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Communicating in Conversation

Some people are born conversationalists. But others can learn to excel at the art of conversation by mastering a few simple techniques. The secret to good conversation is simple: a sincere and lively interest in other people and their concerns. You can use your conversation skills at work to get to know people.

Small Talk

Small talk is the lubrication of social interaction. It helps people to relax and open up. The best small talk is about non-controversial subjects such as the weather, food, sports and leisure activities. You can't go wrong with small talk that focuses on the other person. People love to talk about themselves. Ask about their jobs, their families, their vacation, their hobbies, etc.



Preparation

Think of conversation starters and topics for small talk before you're faced with a new



acquaintance. The weather and sports are old standbys. Here are some others:

- "This group looks like it's having fun. Mind if I join in?"
- "What a gorgeous scarf. Is it handmade?"
- "I noticed you drive a classic car."
- "What do you do when you're not working?"
- "Did you see that new show on TV last night?"

Starting a Conversation

- Introduce yourself.
- Ask easy questions at first to relax people.
- Ask people about themselves.
- Ask for opinions.
- Steer clear of controversial conversation starters: religion, politics, race, etc.

Use positive statements.
Avoid moralizing or patronizing.

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Simple Steps for Getting and Staying Organized

Your ability to accomplish any task or reach any desired goal is directly related to your ability to find the right thing at the right time.



To determine your level of organization, Barbara Hemphill, CEO of Hemphill Productivity Institute in Raleigh, N.C., and author of "The Paper Tiger at Work," recommends you ask yourself these questions:

- Can I find what I need?
- Does my office work?
- Does it work for other people on my staff?

"If the answer to any of these questions is no, your lack of organization is costing you time, productivity and money," says Ms. Hemphill. She offers the following suggestions on how to get and stay organized.

Make decisions

Recognize that clutter indicates postponed decisions. Desks and filing cabinets become inundated with paper -- and computers with files -- because we don't make decisions. In reality, you have only three choices.

"I call it The FAT System: File, Act or Toss. File means 'I don't know if I'll ever need it, but I don't have the nerve to throw it out!' Act means 'The ball is in my court to do it or delegate it.' And Toss speaks for itself," says Ms. Hemphill.

Toss it

Practice the art of waste-basketry on an ongoing basis.

According to Ms. Hemphill, research shows that people never use 80 percent of what they keep. But how do you decide what you really need?

For each piece of information, whether paper or electronic, ask these questions:

- Does this require action?
- Does it exist elsewhere?
- Would it be difficult to get again?
- Is it recent enough to be useful?

If the answers are "No," toss it.

Keep contacts

Implement a fail-safe system for contact information. Many of the pieces of paper that clutter up your desk are deemed valuable because of a name, address or phone number. Choose a system for tracking this information and use it consistently.

Find it

Turn your filing system into a "Finding System." If your filing system isn't working, ignore it and start over.

Clean out your most accessible file space, and put unused files into less accessible space if you're not comfortable tossing them. Begin your new system and as you need information from the old files, incorporate it into the new system.

"The key to the continuing success of your filing system is a File Index -- a list of your file titles," says Ms. Hemphill. "You can create a File Index with a word-processing or spreadsheet program."

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Top 10 New Year's Resolutions

Claremont EAP Can Help!

I Resolve To:

1. Get out of debt.
2. Complete that Simple Will Kit (finally).
3. Explore elder care options for my aging relatives.
4. Find answers to my tax questions (before April 15th).
5. Talk to a therapist to improve my stress management.
6. Find a pet sitter for my pet.
7. Review my credit report with a financial consultant.
8. Research new summer programs for my kids.
9. Consult an attorney about that traffic violation.
10. Learn something new—investigate continuing education classes.

Claremont EAP
can help address
all of these issues!

Call
800-834-3773

Simple Steps for Getting and Staying Organized

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On the road

Manage your paper on the road as well as you do in the office. Turn your briefcase into a "mini office." Carry file folders labeled by specific action.

"Act," for example, is for papers you'll work on while you travel. A "Call" file makes it easy for you to spend the 15 minutes before a flight to make one or two quick calls.

"Discuss with your assistant" contains papers to be handled when you return.

"Be sure to include 'File' -- with a copy of your File Index. As you collect papers along the way that you want to file, check the File Index for the keyword or number and write it in the upper-right-hand corner of the paper," says Ms. Hemphill. "When you return, filing will be easy."

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Communicating in Conversation

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Steering a Conversation

Decide what you want from the conversation: information, opinions, a response to a decision, agreement to a plan, support for a strategy, etc. Then structure your message to get that response.

Ask a question related to what you want to achieve. Then ask other questions based on the person's response. Use "I" messages and a problem-solving orientation. The conversation should be cooperative, not competitive.

Using Body language

- Eye contact
- A relaxed posture
- A firm but non bone-crushing handshake
- Facial response: raised eyebrows, smiling, laughing, nodding, puzzled frown, etc.

Improve Your Skills

- Be involved in the world around you.
- Read a daily newspaper.
- Read professional newsletters and journals.
- Write down funny stories you've heard.

CLAREMONT EAP

Claremont distributes this newsletter to provide employees with general behavioral health information. If you have concerns about these or other behavioral health issues, you can call Claremont to arrange for assistance.

You will be directed to an appropriate, experienced professional who can offer guidance in a variety of work and family matters.

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TAKE THE CLAREMONT CHALLENGE

How much do you know about the free and confidential services you can access through Claremont EAP? Put your knowledge to the test:

True or False?

1. You can receive one free credit report every 12 months through Claremont EAP—and that includes your credit score.
2. Claremont can help find resources for your dependents—including your dog.
3. Counseling is available for individuals, couples and families.
4. You can do a Simple Will for free.
5. Free 30-minute consultations with an attorney are available.
6. Financial specialists are available to assist with budgeting, debt consolidation, financial planning and auto and real estate purchasing.
7. Claremont can solve all my problems.

All items are True except #7, although we try our best!