



WOODBIDGE GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Editor's Choice: Career Development

Check your "ethical pulse": 4 indicators of a bad decision.

Issue: People often make decisions by the seat of their pants.

Risk: You can easily walk into ethical dilemmas by not thinking through tough decisions.

Action: Be aware of four red flags that could indicate you're on a slippery ethical slope.

Most people aren't conscience of how they make tough decisions in the workplace. They often go with what feels most expedient at the moment, an approach that can get them into trouble.

Instead, it's useful to be aware of these four common clues that can warn you if you're heading in the wrong direction ethically. Reconsider a decision if you're:

1. **Wondering if it's legal.** If you find yourself scrambling to learn whether an action is legal, chances are it isn't ethical. "Decisions should never tiptoe up to the legal line; they shouldn't even come near it," says Robert Rosell, president of QMR, an ethics-training company.
2. **Trying to keep it a secret.** If you're concerned what will happen if your decision becomes widely known, reconsider the choice you're making.
3. **Making rationalizations.** You shouldn't have to rationalize your decisions to yourself. Phrases like "I deserve this" or "They owe me" are signs of trouble.
4. **Feeling in your gut that it's wrong.** "Most of us instinctively know when we've crossed an ethical or moral line," says Rosell.

Spreading the ethics gospel: Laws and regulations keep people from overstepping ethical boundaries at work, according to a new American Management Association (AMA) study. But the threat of legal action can't keep everyone in line; employers must also emphasize the importance of ethics.

"Legislation is no substitute for the presence of leaders who support and model ethical behavior," says AMA President Edward Reilly. "Corporate leaders need to communicate ethical values throughout the organization, but they must do more than talk the talk."

Reilly says employers should integrate ethics into company goals, performance-management systems and the employee selection process.

The AMA study says the single most important ethical leadership behavior is keeping promises, followed by encouraging open communication, keeping employees informed and supporting employees who uphold ethical standards.

Top factors that cause unethical behavior at work:

1. **Pressure to meet unrealistic business objectives/deadlines.**
2. **Desire to further one's career.**
3. **Desire to protect one's livelihood.**
4. **Working in an environment with cynicism or diminished morale.**
5. **Improper training or ignorance that the act was unethical.**

Source: American Management Assoc. Ethics Survey

The HR Specialist—May 2006

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From the Desk of Woodbridge Group's Executive Director...

10 Things You Should Know About Charter Schools

(NAPS)--The number of charter schools continues to grow. Today, more than a million children attend over 3,600 charter schools in 40 states and the District of Columbia. While such schools can serve a real need in the community, many people are still unsure what a charter school really is.

Here are the facts:

1. Charter schools are independent public schools that are open to all students, regardless of income, gender, race or religion.
2. Charter schools are schools of choice that provides a high-quality option to families who are dissatisfied with their traditional district

3. Charter schools exist under a contract with an authoritative public body, such as a state or local school board, that holds the charter school accountable for results. The "charter" is a legal contract that outlines the school's mission, program, goals, students served and ways to measure success.

4. Charter schools run independently of traditional school districts, yet since they are public schools they are funded by taxpayer money. Charter schools have their own school boards.

5. As self-governing entities, charter school have the autonomy to make quick, effective changes to meet students' specific needs, which helps improve student achievement.

6. Charter schools hold students, teachers and parents accountable for improving student achievement.

7. Charter schools have the freedom to reward teachers with higher pay when the teachers have met the needs of their students. They also have the freedom to release those who do not.

8. Fifty-eight (58) percent of charter schools are minority and 52 percent are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

9. Charter schools can be created by parents, a team of teachers, a community organization or a university.

10. Many charter schools are helping to close the achievement gap for low-income and minority students.

For many students and parents, charter schools are providing quality options and raising the bar in public education. To learn more about charter schools, you can visit: www.publiccharters.org. ■



On the Lighter side...

A first grade teacher collected well known proverbs. She had twenty-five students in her class and she presented each child in her class the first half of a proverb and asked them to come up with the remainder of it. Their insight may surprise you. Keep in mind that these are first graders..... 6-year-olds, because the last one is a classic!

1. Better to be safe thanpunch a 5th grader.
2. Strike while thebug is close.
3. It's always darkest beforeDaylight Saving Time.
4. Never underestimate the power oftermites.
5. You can lead a horse to water buthow?
6. Don't bite the hand thatlooks dirty.
7. No news isimpossible.
8. A miss is as good as aMr..
9. You can't teach an old dog newmath.
10. If you lie down with dogs, you'llstink in the morning.
11. Love all, trustme.
12. The pen is mightier than thepigs.
13. An idle mind isthe best way to relax.
14. Where there's smoke there'spollution.
15. Happy the bride whogets all the presents.
16. A penny saved isnot much.
17. Two's company, three's the Musketeers.
18. Don't put off till tomorrow whatyou put on to go to bed.
19. Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry andyou have to blow your nose.
20. There are none so blind asStevie Wonder.
21. Children should be seen and notspanked or grounded.
22. If at first you don't succeed get new batteries.
23. You get out of something only what you see in the picture on the box.
24. When the blind lead the blindget out of the way.
25. Better late thanpregnant.

Take Responsibility For Yourself

~A Walk the Talk Resouce~

If you were like most teenagers, you couldn't wait to grow up. Betcha you wanted the freedom and privileges that come with adulthood just as fast as you could get them. "Treat me like an adult," "Let me come and go as I please," and "You need to let me make my own decisions" were probably just a few of your rallying cries. Right? Sure! That's natural. But then here's what undoubtedly happened: You grew up (age wise, at least) and found that attached to those freedoms and privileges were a ton of responsibilities. There were *more* rules to follow, not less. Suddenly, the rest of the world was holding **YOU** accountable for your behavior and decisions (instead of those who raised you) - AND STILL IS.

Here's the straight scoop: Unless someone is holding a gun to your head, everything you do in life is your choice. And that's especially true at work. You choose how you conduct yourself; you choose how you treat others; you choose your "attitude," and how you respond to stress and adversity; you choose the levels of honesty and integrity that you display. Ultimately, you choose whether to take your personal responsibility seriously or to shirk it like some "deadbeat."

The kicker to remember here is that there are consequences to each choice you (we) make. Bad choices usually have bad ramifications. And blaming others for your poor choices is a waste of time. The "It's someone else's fault!" victim mentality is a sure path to nowhere.

Want to be truly successful? Take responsibility for yourself and your choices. And choose well. You are what you choose to be ! ■

JUST 4 FUN

"MINDBENDERS"

This exercise in mental health uses words, letters, symbols (and their positions) to represent common words, phrases, expressions, people, places, and events.

Example:

SOMEWHERE

RAINBOW

"SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW"

S	T
I	U
T	H
	S

1. _____

T	W	O
---	---	---

2. _____

				Y
			L	
			L	
			A	
			C	
		I		
	S			
U				
M				

3. _____

F	E	W	F	E	W	
M	E	N	T	I	O	N
M	E	N	T	I	O	N

4. _____

R				
O				
R	O	A	D	S
D				
S				



Inside the Mind of Tina Miller Administrative Services Manager

Skills Check: BRUSH UP YOUR BUSINESS VOCABULARY

Every field has its own jargon, but here are a few standard business and accounting terms to test your vocabulary. Match these words with the definitions below.

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Accounts payable | 6. Capital | 11. Cost accounting | 16. Journal |
| 2. Accounts receivable | 7. Capital gains | 12. De minimis benefits | 17. Ledger |
| 3. Accrual accounting | 8. Cash accounting | 13. Depreciation | 18. Pro forma statement |
| 4. Amortization | 9. Cash-flow statement | 14. Fiscal year | 19. Return on investment |
| 5. Benchmarking | 10. Charge off | 15. Income statement | 20. Zero-based budgeting |

- A) The annual period that an organization selects to report on its operations. This may coincide with the calendar year.
- B) A general term describing a group of ratios that measures an organization's profitability.
- C) Money, equipment or property used in business.
- D) The increase in value between the amount paid for an asset and its later selling price.
- E) A loan written off as bad debt because it isn't expected to be repaid.
- F) A summary of revenues and expenses for an accounting period.
- G) Money that customers owe an organization.
- H) Fringe benefits whose value is so minimal that accounting for them would be impractical.
- I) The loss in value of goods over time, which may be deducted from income.
- J) Using a standard to measure value or quality.
- K) A process requiring managers to justify all expense plans and rank them based on their overall contribution to the organization.
- L) A projected or budgeted financial statement.
- M) A record of financial transactions kept in chronological order.
- N) A presentation of cash receipts and payments over a given period.
- O) A record of financial transactions as they affect each account.
- P) Amassing information for reporting the costs of producing products or services.
- Q) Money an organization owes to vendors and suppliers.
- R) Recognizes revenues and expense transactions when they occur, rather than when cash is received or paid out. *Example:* An annual payment would be divided up with 1/12 of the amount appearing each month.
- S) Records transactions when cash is received or paid out.
- T) Paying off debt or depreciating the value of an asset over time.

Answers: 1q, 2g, 3r, 4t, 5i, 6c, 7d, 8s, 9m, 10e, 11p, 12h, 13i, 14a, 15f, 16m, 17a, 18l, 19b, 20k

Knowledge—like the sky—is never private property...

Teaching is the art of sharing.

Abraham Joshua Heschel
(1907-72)

Polish Theologian, &
Educator

DO/DID YOU KNOW?

The Internet hasn't replaced the telephone yet, but it can help you locate a phone number. You can search by business name or category at:

www.superpages.com

or

www.switchboard.com.

*

MINDBENDER ANSWERS:

1. Sit Down & Shut up
2. Split In Two
3. Musically inclined
4. 2 Few-2 Mention
5. Crossroads

HR Corner:

Manager's self-test: Are you an effective delegator?

Successful delegation means much more than passing along work to your employees and hoping for the best. It requires good communication and managerial skills, which must be developed and practiced.

Audit your delegating skills by answering the following 10 questions:

1. Yes__ No__ When I assign a task or project to my employees, I expect them to do it with minimum input from me.
2. Yes__ No__ The only person I can really trust to get a job done right is myself.
3. Yes__ No__ It's important for a manager to know all details of what's happening in his/her department.
4. Yes__ No__ I have very few subordinates who I usually count on to get results.
5. Yes__ No__ My staff knows what needs to be done without any direction from me.
6. Yes__ No__ Most employees don't really care how their jobs fit into the "big picture".
7. Yes__ No__ A key part of every manager's job is to tell employees the best way to do their jobs.
8. Yes__ No__ My employees don't need me to set deadlines.
9. Yes__ No__ Employees who make dumb mistakes should be punished for them.
10. Yes__ No__ If an employee can't handle an assigned task, it's best to take it back and do it yourself.

Note: If you've answered "Yes" to three or more questions, you need to find the balance of confidence, communication and control necessary to delegate more successfully.

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What's in the Future for:

CCA - Crossroads Charter Academy
WMAAA - W MI Academy of Arts & Academics
BCCS - The Byron Center Charter School
TMCS - The Morey Charter School

November 2006:

23-24th – Woodbridge Group Offices Closed
for the Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2006:

4th—All AFLAC and Flex Spending Account
Sign-up or Sign-off forms must be return to
Woodbridge for 2007 Open Enrollment
22nd, 25th & 29th—Woodbridge Group Offices
closed for the Christmas/New Years Holidays

January 2007:

1st—Woodbridge Group offices closed for
the New Years Holiday

JUST SMILE

**Smiling is infectious;
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me
today, I started smiling too.**

**I passed around the corner,
and someone saw my grin -
When "he" smiled - and
I realized,
I'd passed it on to him.**

**I thought about that smile,
then I realized its worth,
A single smile, just like mine,
could travel round the
earth.**

**So, if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected -
Let's start an epidemic -**

QUICK!

**and get the
world ... infected!!**

