

Working With EASE

EASE, your employee assistance program, is a free and confidential counseling service which provides:

- 24 hour a day access to licensed counselors at: 800.654.9778.
- Free individual, couples or family counseling for employees and their dependents.
- Information and resources on our Web site: www.easecap.com.



The Value of Checklists

If you've used a grocery list, then you know the value of a checklist and the relief that comes from not having to remember details. Apply this stress-reducing tactic to other areas in your life and watch relief flow. What to do, what to bring, how to do it—whether it's planning a party or social event, fishing, camping, boating, cleaning a house, repairing an engine, or baby-proofing a house—your checklist can be about almost anything. To make a checklist, track and record each step as you plan any event that has details associated with it. Use a well-developed checklist to stop the old “Are we forgetting anything?” routine and U-turns. Get started with the book *Checklists for Life: 104 Lists to Help You Get Organized, Save Time, and Unclutter Your Life*, available through online bookstores.

Fastest Way to Improve Writing Skills

How well you write can make or break your business career. For some people, good writing comes naturally, but for others it's a lifelong struggle. Don't stress about this issue any longer. The fastest way to learn is to have what you write corrected by pros and then to keep the corrections handy. Study the corrections for revelations. Without even trying, you will slowly but surely absorb better writing skills. Cost? About \$25 for 1,000 words. Best way to go: surf the Internet for “proofreading services online.”

Pool Safety Tips

The American Academy of Pediatrics has some important tips for pool owners to prevent summer tragedies, including those with small “blow-up pools” for toddlers. You already know to keep kids from running on wet pool decks, but here are a few you may not have heard, each of which has made the list of recommendations the hard way: 1) Don't allow electrical appliances or extension cords near pools, especially if you are doing yard chores while the kids play. 2) After using a blow-up pool, drain it to prevent toddlers who wander back from falling in. 3) Keep toddlers on tricycles or riding toys away from pools, so they don't fall in. See the complete list and consider a family/friends orientation and reminder about pool rules.

Men and Preventive Health

Many preventable illnesses take a toll on the longevity of men's lives, unfortunately contributing to the unattractive statistic that men do not generally live as long as women do. Most are lifestyle-related. Although men are less proactive than women when it comes to preventive health care—undoubtedly also part of the reason men lead shorter lives—men's attitudes are changing for the better according to experts. It's good timing, because many of the illnesses that target men in their middle age are becoming more prevalent. They include heart disease, diabetes, bowel cancer, gallstones, prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and arthritis. If you're a man, check out the "blueprint" for men's health at www.menshealthnetwork.org. You will find a comprehensive tally of the things you need to be targeting for prevention before they target you first.

Fake It Till You Make It

It sounds sneaky and dishonest, but the catchphrase "Fake It Till You Make It" (FITYMI) is one of the most useful pieces of advice in the business world. The goal of faking it until you make it is not about acting as an imposter. It's about imitating confidence and energizing yourself to be successful while you wait for real confidence and know-how to arrive. Fear of not measuring up to expectations can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. The most famous study of FITYMI asked 50 students to act like they were extroverts, even though none of them had the desire to do so. The more these students faked it, the happier they became. And the more extroverted they *actually* became. Another variation on this same strategy is "bring your body and the mind will follow." These tactics are well-known for helping alcoholics stay involved in programs like Alcoholics Anonymous until a level of self-motivation to stay involved is achieved.

Getting Your Point Across

You may never take a job in "sales," but you are nonetheless "selling" throughout your career. Getting hired, asking for a raise, persuading others to accept your ideas, or positioning your employer for success—these things all benefit from organizing your thoughts and preparing your pitch like a sales pro. Most people hope for the best without knowing tested "templates" exist for a persuasive presentation. Here's one approach (notice how the solution you're "selling" comes last): (1) State the problem and the background information clearly—present the unanswered need or the dilemma at hand. (2) Identify the key consequences of the unresolved problem or need—be general. (3) Share your personal account of the negative consequences. (4) Provide more details, actual specifics, and evidence to support your view and to convince the listener of the seriousness of the problem. Use facts, specifics, and the testimony of others. Also, provide opinions of experts and use anecdotes. (5) Restate the problem one more time, and offer your solution, an action, or an answer to the problem. Prior to your meeting—to sound like a champ—rehearse your presentation aloud and ask a co-worker to critique it. Keep the above "formula" handy and advance your career with it.



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