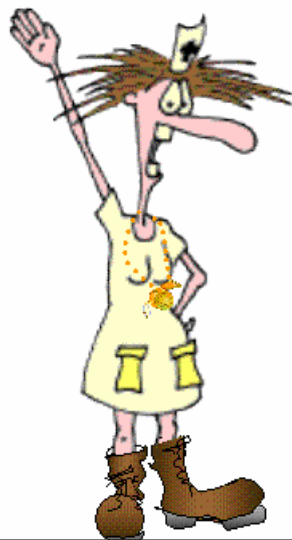


The Nurse Manager Boot Camp E-zine...

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JCAHO is Certifying Health Care Staffing Companies

The Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) started certifying health care staffing companies in September 2004 to help insure safe care to patients through assuring high standards and greater consistency among health care staffing companies. And for good reason. In 2001, the American Hospital Association surveyed its accredited organizations and found that 56% of them spent \$71 million a year for supplemental staffing. In 2003, the Joint Commission again surveyed 1200 of its accredited organizations to ascertain whether or not they wanted and would support a program of certification for health care staffing companies: 80% said that there was a need for quality and standards in the industry, and 79% said that they would give preference to a JCAHO certified health care staffing companies.

Moreover, the health care staffing industry itself supported JCAHO certification: when JCAHO surveyed 504 health care staffing companies, ranging from small local organizations to large, multi-site organizations, 58% said they would be interested in seeking JCAHO certification if it was offered. So, before you decide to use a specific staffing company, be sure to check and see whether or not it is accredited by the Joint Commission.

The Human Element in the Electronic Age

These days, with e-mail, voicemail and fax, you can probably avoid interaction with a real human in the vast majority of business situations. Where would we be without our laptops, cell phones, fax machines, e-mail and voicemail? Why, wasting time in, or in route to, meetings and face-to-face encounters — and who needs that in these get-more-done-with-less times in which we live? Well, as research has started to show, we all do.

Edward M. Hallowell calls it “the human moment”, an “authentic psychological encounter that can happen only when two people share the same physical space.” According to Hallowell, the human moment requires two things: One, that people be physically present, and two, that they pay attention emotionally and intellectually.

Who knows better than nursing the power of human interaction? Indeed, caring, high touch as opposed to high tech is at the very root of our viability, the very foundation of patient care. And yet, how often do we as administrators forget that power when it comes to dealing with co-workers, both our superiors and those who report to us. The solution, of course, is not to do away with technology, but rather to figure out when and how to use it. A couple of suggestions:

1. Rediscover the meeting: Schedule regular meetings with your staff or your superiors — old fashioned brainstorming meetings, “play” time, even dumping sessions if that’s what’s needed. Meetings can be straightforward, planned, and brief. The important thing is to have them in person and to engage in them fully.
2. Use e-mail and voicemail judiciously: Use e-mail and voicemail to schedule, reinforce, recap and extend what happens in your meetings. But try to imagine the real human being that will be on the other end of your message and talk to that person.
3. Manage by walking around: Electronic communications make it possible for us to do more work than ever, but it’s good if you occasionally get up from your desk and see what’s going on. Just a simple walk around to say ‘hello’ or ‘what’s happening?’ can make a world of difference.

If you need to, schedule it. We must embrace high tech for what it can do to make us more human, for what it can do to make high touch more possible. And that’s not so difficult. We simply must pay attention, take the time and make the effort.

Source: Hallowell, Edward M., The Human Moment at Work, Harvard Business Review, January-February 1999, page 3-8.

Time Management Secrets...

Who doesn't have too much to do with too little time to do it? It is said that the typical business person has a backlog of 200 to 300 hours of incomplete work. Americans use to spend time to save money; now most spend money to have more time. We even complain if we have to wait in line to buy "fast food". What can help us manage our time better? Consider these suggestions from the book Nursing Management Secrets.

1. Choose the essential. Production expert David Allen says "You can do anything-but not everything." He believes most people keep letting too much activity come into their lives because they fear they will miss out on something meaningful. However, wisdom is eliminating non-essentials. And remember that "No." is a complete sentence.

2. Control interruptions. The average business person experiences 170 interruptions a day. If someone becomes long-winded, interrupt yourself. Say "Look at the time. I have to go do something." even if the "obligation" is only to leave the room now. It will not be perceived as rude as long as you interrupt yourself.

3. Use deadlines. Deadlines create a sense of commitment and urgency and most people do their assignment right before them. Two or four weeks are good time periods to use.

4. Put the ball in other's court. Many nurses tend to quickly try to help anyone's expressed need, such as automatically offering to send a relevant article. Instead tell the person to contact you later for that information or how to find the resource themselves. Then it is up them to decide if they want it enough to spend their time-often they don't.

5. Limit work hours.

Everyone needs to retreat from the routine to keep perspective. Psychologist Ilene Philipson warns that not having a balance of different sources for involvement in our lives results in a chronic anger and lack of productivity. Besides, one of the quickest ways to give yourself a raise on a salaried position is to stop working so many extra hours.

Polly Gerber Zimmermann, RN MS MBA CEN

1. Zimmermann, PG, Ed. (2002). *Nursing Management Secrets*. Phil

A Bit of Wisdom from "What the Books Don't Tell You."

When you are in an elected or appointed position, people want YOU to listen to THEM...rather than the other way around. It is one of the most important functions of leadership.*

