HR Update

Forget New Year’s Resolutions! Make Life-Changing Decisions.

If you’re like the majority of us, you make New Year’s resolutions with the best of intentions, but then January plods on into February, and before you know it, those resolutions are just a foggy memory. The whole idea of New Year’s resolutions is to actually make changes and stick to them. Here’s how to make positive decisions in your life — and put them into action in 2009.

What’s disturbing you most in your life right now?

One of the keys to keeping your New Year’s “decisions” is to make the right ones. Ask yourself this question: “What two things in my life are most disturbing to me right now?” This question helps you narrow down your choices to the things that are bothering you the most.

For instance, does your weight make you cringe every time you look in the mirror, or are you just mildly uncomfortable? Are you truly worried about your health because of smoking, or will you wait a little longer before you quit for good? Do you feel embarrassed to entertain friends because your backyard is such a mess, or are you satisfied to just close the blinds?

Instead of setting a vague goal (“I want to shed some pounds”), be specific. How many pounds do you want to lose, and by when? Perhaps you want to finally banish cigarettes from your life. Are you going cold turkey, or will you cut down on how much you smoke? By when will you have completely stopped smoking? If you want to have a backyard you’re proud to use, are you going to do it in stages, or within a short period of time?

When you set specific, reasonable goals, you have a clear focus upon which to act...and your decisions begin to look achievable. If you approach a goal with honesty, and if you spend some time planning, long-lasting change is in your future.

3, 2, 1...Action!

Once you’ve decided what you want to change and set specific goals, you must have a rock-solid action plan. An action plan should describe exactly how you intend to meet your goals. It should include your step-by-step approach.

Seap Newsletter
December 2008
DRIVING SAFELY IN WINTER WEATHER

Snow, ice, and extreme cold can make driving treacherous. These safety tips can help make winter car travel safer.

- Before winter arrives, have your car tuned up, check the level of anti-freeze, make sure the battery is good, and check your tire tread.

- Keep emergency gear in your car for everyday trips.

- For long car trips, keep food, water, extra blankets, and required medication on hand.

- Avoid driving in snow or ice storms. If you must travel in bad weather, drive slowly.

- If your car is parked outside, make sure the exhaust pipe and the area around it are free of snow before you start the car. Snow packed in or around the exhaust pipe can cause high levels of carbon monoxide in the car.

- Don’t sit in a parked car with the engine running unless a window is open. Do not let your car run while parked in the garage.

- If your car stalls or gets stuck in snow, light two flares and place one at each end of the car, a safe distance away. Make sure snow has not blocked the exhaust pipe. Then stay in your vehicle and open the window slightly to let in fresh air. Wrap yourself in blankets and run your car’s heater for a few minutes every hour to keep warm.

(From the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the National Safety Council)

THE FISH! PHILOSOPHY®

FISH! is a skill that provides the process, tools and language to generate the skills necessary to design a workplace full of inspiration, creativity and innovation. FISH! creates a common language. A language that will help improve your culture by using four simple practices – Be There, Play, Make Their Day and Choose Your Attitude™.

- Play— Work made fun gets done, especially when we choose to do serious tasks in a lighthearted, spontaneous way. Play is not just an activity; it’s a state of mind that brings new energy to tasks and sparks creative solutions.

- Choose Your Attitude— When you look for the worst you will find it everywhere. When you learn you have the power to choose your response to what life brings, you can look for the best and find opportunities you never imagined possible.

- Be There— The glue in our humanity is being fully present for one another. Being there is also a great way to practice whole-heartedness and fight burnout, because it’s the halfhearted tasks you perform while juggling other things that wear you out.

- Make Their Day - When you “make someone’s day” through a small act of kindness or unforgettable engagement, you can turn even the routine encounters into special memories.

FISH! is a wisdom that everyone can embrace. It is an invitation that enables people to care about each other and their commitments. FISH! is an ongoing journey. It is not a fad. It is a practice and a skill that evolves over time creating a positive workplace and a vibrant culture each time it is embraced. Watch for upcoming training on FISH Philosophy.
THE SEVEN-STEP PEAK ENERGY SOLUTION

The Seven-Step Peak Energy Solution can:

- Boost your energy levels
- Increase your productivity
- Decrease your stress levels
- Improve the way your body functions
- Increase your strength, coordination, and flexibility

STEP 1: Proportioned Eating of Protein, Carbohydrates, and Fat—1:1:1/10 ratio. These proportions are about the size of your palm. The carbo and protein serving size would be the same, and the fat 1/10 would be the size of the tip of your thumb (about a spoonful).

STEP 2: Proper Water Intake—Drink about half your body weight in ounces, per day. Clear water. Bump this up if you consume coffee, tea, or other caffeinated beverages.

STEP 3: Supplements (Vitamin and Mineral) - An absolute necessity even if you eat all the right things, because today’s fruits and vegetables are bred for travel and shelf life, not nutritional content. A salad today has far less food value than the same salad in the 1940s. So, using a high-quality, digestible multi-vitamin/multi-mineral supplement is a must.

STEP 4: Sleeping Well & Powering Down—Human body functions better on a good night of sleep. Sleep at night is the body’s repair time; when some vital organs take a rest, and others step up their processes in order to “undo” some of the effects of the previous day. You body needs between 6-8 hours of sleep each night, no more, no less. Powering Down is a simple process that your body cease activity for two to five minutes. Take a rest. This is an important aspect of rest that is often overlooked. Do this 2 or 3 times a day and watch how fast your energy level improves.

STEP 5: Stress Reduction—this includes getting your body to function at its best through physical activity, such as exercise or even walking, and taking the steps necessary to keep your body healthy and functioning at its top level.

STEP 6: Stretching—stretching helps prevent injury during physical activity and, once your are warmed-up, it can promote increased flexibility.

STEP 7: Time Management—the least physical, but yet most challenging issue contributing to Peak Energy. Lack of time and similar pressures can cause an enormous amount of life stress. Planning your day well is the first major step in getting your time under control.

Managing your time will allow you to be so much more efficient in what you do that you will actually free time for yourself to do other things. You’ll have time to plan your eating time, plan your power down times, plan to stretch and exercise, plan your daily water intake.

“The happiest people don’t necessarily have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.”

(Adapted from ProAdjuster magazine)

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

Curtis Oakes—Physical Plant
M. Jane Thompson—Accounting & Budget
Jamie Juarez—Learning Center
Ten Ways to Exercise at Your Desk

1. **Eye exercise.** To exercise the muscles that move your eyes, roll your eyeballs in wide circles-first in a clockwise direction three times and then counterclockwise three times. Repeat this sequence as desired. Similar to all desk exercises, perform this exercise periodically throughout your work day (i.e., once every 30-60 minutes).

2. **Wrist exercise.** To exercise your wrist, extend your arms in front of you and raise and lower your hands several times (i.e., flap your hands and wrists up and down). Then rotate your hands 10 times alternating palms up and palms down. Repeat this sequence five times.

3. **Hand and finger exercise.** To exercise your hands and fingers, make a fist and hold it tight for approximately two seconds. Then, place your palms down and spread and hold your fingers wide apart for five seconds. Repeat the sequence five times.

4. **Shoulder exercise #1:** To exercise your shoulders, lift and roll your shoulders forward five times and then backward five times. Use a wide circular motion and try to keep your head straight and motionless while moving your shoulders. Repeat this sequence as desired.

5. **Shoulder exercise #2:** Another way to exercise your shoulders is to shrug your shoulders up toward your ears. Hold the position for approximately two seconds and then recover to the starting position. Repeat the sequence five times.

6. **Upper back and shoulder exercise.** To exercise your upper back as well as your shoulders, reach your arms up overhead, alternating right and left arm in a climbing motion. Repeat the sequence 10 times on each side.

7. **Lower-back exercise.** To exercise the muscles in your lower back while in a seated position, bend down between your knees toward the floor, reaching as far as you can (palms flat). Hold briefly, then return to the upright position. Make sure your chair is steady first before doing this exercise. Repeat the sequence five times.

8. **Hamstring exercise.** To stretch your hamstrings while in a seated position, lock your hands together around your knees and pull your knees to your chest and hold for approximately five seconds, then release your hands and return to the starting position. Repeat the sequence five times.

9. **Neck exercise #1:** To exercise the muscles that rotate, flex and extend your neck, slowly turn your head far to the left and hold for three seconds. Then, turn far to the right and hold for three seconds. Next, drop your chin gently to your chest before returning your head slowly to the upright (starting) position. Repeat the sequence five times.

10. **Neck exercise #2:** To exercise the muscles that laterally, slowly lower your left ear to your left shoulder; then return slowly to the upright position. Continue the exercise by touching your right ear to your right shoulder and then returning to the starting (upright) position. Repeat the sequence five times.

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Courtesy of ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal