December 2010

FrontLine Employee

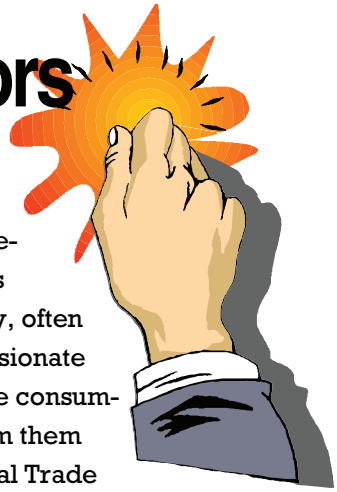
Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Your Employee Assistance Program at CDH 630-653-4218

Checking Email Again

No one knows the exact financial loss of chronic email checking, but it may extend greatly beyond the time used to take a peek. Interrupted concentration, dealing with non-urgent emails, a sudden impulse to surf the Web about unrelated matters, and lost ideas all get thrown into the cost mix. Gain better control over email checking by closing out of your email program, turning off the mail's "in" sounds, using a computer disconnected from the Internet, choosing only specific times of day to check email, and considering whether you need more help, or even professional counseling, to stop obsessive email checking.

Debt Collectors Knocking?



Debt relief services, credit repair, and advance fee loans flourish in a tough economy, often with the help of slick and compassionate advertising. Many companies lure consumers, only to take more money from them after initial marketing. The Federal Trade Commission gets the most complaints about debt collectors. Many violate the law. Know your rights. Did you know that it is illegal for a debt collector to phone you again immediately after you hang up on them? They can't call before 8 a.m. either, or phone your workplace if they know it is inconvenient.

Source: http://www.ftc.gov/debtcollection

Complementary & Alternative Medicine

You don't have to go to a health food store to learn about complementary and alternative medicines (CAM). The federal government runs one of the largest websites on the subject, with discussions on hundreds of therapy and treatment options. From "aromatherapy" to "yohimbe bark," you will find it discussed at www.nccam.nih.gov, even if no scientific evidence exists to support the use of an unusual medicine or therapy. You will find helpful discussions about the science, risks, and controversies associated with many complementary and alternative medicines, some which you may not easily learn any other way.

Stress Takes a Holiday

If you begin feeling pressured and frazzled this holiday season because of too many obligations and high expectations for what must occur, take a moment and decide (if it is not too late) what the holidays really mean to you. What made past years special? See if you can include those things on your "must haves" list while limiting some less significant events. Choose specific times during the holiday season when you find personal time to relax and do what you want to do. Check your reflexes and watch the urge to ask, "Quick! What's next on the list?" every time things quiet down.

Important notice: Information in *FrontLine Employee* is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health or legal professional.
For further help, questions, or referral to community resources for specific problems or personal concerns, contact an employee assistance or other qualified professional.

Making Positive Feedback Perfect

When you give positive feedback to your coworker, be sure to include the "ABCs" of doing it effectively. "A" stands for "Affirmation," "B" stands for "Be Specific," and "C" stands for "Contribution." Start with a positive statement that ("A") affirms your coworker's accomplishment(s)—"Great job!" Then, ("B") be specific to let your coworker know you are sincere and not simply "being nice". "Wow, Susan! I loved your presentation. The three examples you gave of how we can better serve our customers were new and refreshing." This type of positive feedback is even more affirming. But you can go still further. Acknowledge Susan's ("C") contribution so she knows she is valued. For example, add, "I could see everyone's eyes light up with new insights. I am glad you were the one we picked as our trainer." By putting yourself in Susan's shoes, you can see how she will feel positive about her presentation, you, her job, and the organization. This example of positive feedback shows how it can be a force for good. It also underscores how adverse a lack of positive feedback can be if it is ignored or, worse, withheld, when it is obviously deserved.

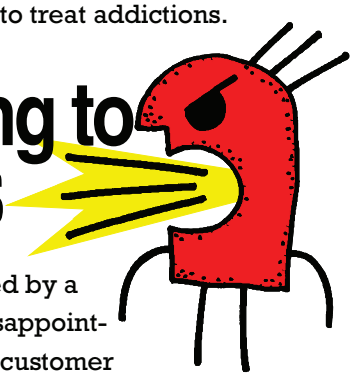
Holiday Alcohol Use & You

If you drink alcohol, stay safe this holiday season by following a few guidelines: 1) Eat food to slow the absorption of alcohol. Foods high in protein, like cheese, work best, but any food in your system will help. 2) Steer clear of carbonated alcoholic beverages and "shots" to avoid rapid absorption of alcohol. Carbonization increases pressure in your stomach. This speeds the absorption rate of alcohol. 3) Understand your body's reaction to alcohol. Don't be fooled into believing that not "feeling it" after you've been drinking means that you are "okay to drive." Not "feeling it" leads many people with a high tolerance to drink more alcohol than their peers. This leads to higher blood alcohol content (BAC) than for those in the group who react to "feeling" alcohol sooner by drinking less. The one with the highest tolerance could have the highest BAC in the group, despite appearing unaffected! *Never drive after drinking.*

Forget the Easy Addiction Cures

As long as the Internet exists, there will be no shortage of scams to sell everything from books to pills promising people their addictions can be "cured." Many scams promise a return to controlled behavior, not abstinence. This is a dead give-away to the scam. To keep billing your credit card is mission #1, which could be for expensive super-vitamins, etc. This business principle is called "continuity income." Most successful scams employ it. Initially, you may be enticed only to request a free pamphlet or inexpensive book that discusses the "cure." This is your entrance into a sales "funnel." These companies rely on desperate customers. Addictions are not shortcomings requiring a secret formula, but are associated with complex, physically caused, and neurologically explained phenomena. Recovery programs and techniques that are time-tested, though more complex than a pill, do work best for most, and are highly teachable. Contact a medical doctor, professional counselor, or employee assistance professional to learn about effective ways to treat addictions.

Responding to Rudeness



Rudeness is prompted by a state of agitation, disappointment, or anger. The customer who displays rudeness is usually in more pain than the recipient of the rude behavior. If you work with customers, you have likely been confronted by rudeness periodically. Learning to view rudeness from this "person in pain" perspective is a key to better coping with it. There may be short-term relief for acting rudely, but there is usually a rebound, which leaves the customer feeling worse. Understanding rudeness can help you detach from it personally, permit you to be more empathetic toward your customer, and help you appreciate the influence and value of your customer-service role.