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# The Admin *Express*

## 10 Keys to Getting Paid What You're Worth!

By Mary Jeanne Vincent

Asking for money is so taboo in our culture that most of us shake in our shoes when we think about negotiating salary. It conjures up our insecurities about not being good enough, not knowing enough, or not being considered valuable enough. We worry that the company will rescind its offer if we ask for what we're worth.

The truth is if you don't negotiate, the employer thinks he or she has paid too much. When you are confident enough to negotiate, your value goes up in the eyes of the employer. You may not get everything you ask for, but if you don't ask you won't get what you are worth! Use these keys to open the locks on your earning potential.

**DO YOUR RESEARCH.** You must find out what the going rate is for the kind of work you do. Check out online salary surveys and surveys published by professional associations. But remember the best source of salary information is the people who currently work in the field. Ask them for a salary range based on your experience for a given position and industry.

**DEMONSTRATE YOUR CAPABILITIES AND EXPERTISE.** Sell your skills, knowledge, and expertise from your initial contact with the organization right through to the offer. Know what the employer's problems, challenges, and issues are and demonstrate that you are the best person to solve the problems, meet the challenges, and resolve the issues.

**PUT OFF SALARY DISCUSSIONS** until after you have been offered the position. When asked about salary requirements or expectations, realize that you have a one in three chance of answering correctly. The odds are not in your favor so shift the conversation to a discussion of the employer's needs and how you can solve their problems. Your goal is to move the employer from concern about their budget to conviction that you are the answer to their problem.

**BUY TIME TO CONSIDER THE OFFER.** Be gracious and politely request time to evaluate the offer. There are sound reasons why you need time to consider an offer:

- To study and understand the total package.
- To decide how to deal with a salary that may be lower than you expected.
- To discuss the offer with your family, colleagues, or network contacts.
- To plan and execute a successful negotiation strategy.
- To transition from the high of getting the offer to the level-headedness required to negotiate.
- To keep your options open for another offer which you expect to receive shortly.

**DEVELOP A NEGOTIATION STRATEGY.** Identify multiple options for getting to the compensation level you seek. Maintain a positive attitude and negotiate from the basis

of worth not need. Seek win-win solutions.

**NEGOTIATE IN PERSON.** Because body language and tone of voice are essential to this process, you must negotiate in person rather than by telephone.

**RESPOND TO THE INITIAL OFFER WITHOUT REACTING.** When the employer quotes a figure, repeat the figure or the top of the range, then keep quiet and silently count to 30. Often the silence will prompt them to immediately bump up the salary.

**KNOW WHEN TO WALK AWAY.** Make a conscious decision before you sit down to negotiate that you will politely walk away from the opportunity if it doesn't meet your "must have" requirements. Don't accept the position thinking things will change once you are on the job.

**GET THE OFFER IN WRITING.** Things change; bosses come and go. If you negotiate anything out of the ordinary—additional or early vacation, higher than usual salary, an office with a door instead of a cubicle—get it in writing so that when circumstances change your agreement is still intact.

**DELIVER WHAT YOU PROMISED AND MORE.** Once you are on the job deliver what you promised and more. Why? For future promotions, salary increases, to protect your reputation, and to give you leverage should things at the company take a turn for the worse.



# Tech Talk

## Pop-ups - 5 Ways to Stop



By Jason Kohrs

5 Ways to Block Pop Ups...

Advertisers are constantly looking for any way to draw attention to their products. Although typical banner ads are still used heavily, they now seem to be almost invisible to the average web surfer. Pop ups and other intrusive types of advertising are now used to thrust an ad in your face that you have no choice but to at least acknowledge. Regardless of the nature of the ad, pop ups are a nuisance, and there are now many options available for keeping them off of your computer screen all together.

### 1. Internet Explorer on Windows XP with Service Pack 2

This summer's release of Service Pack 2 for Windows XP brought about a few significant changes to the operating system. One of the most noticeable was the addition of a pop up blocker to Internet Explorer.

The pop up blocker is integrated into the browser and can be customized by browsing to the "Tools" tab at the top of the program. Like many pop up blocker applications, personal preferences can be set to allow/block pop ups from certain sites, as well as providing customization for how the user is alerted to the fact that a pop up has been blocked.

For those using Windows XP, upgrading to Service Pack 2 is an excellent idea for your system's security as a whole, but specifically for the additional convenience of an integrated pop up blocker. For those with a Microsoft operating system other than XP, sorry, this is not available for you.

### 2. Alternative Web Browsers

There are other choices for web browsers available, and many have included a pop up blocker long before Microsoft decided to include one with Internet Explorer.

The Mozilla Firefox browser version 1.0 was officially released on November 9th. This browser has already received a great deal of acclaim and has become quite popular as an alternative to Internet Explorer. Firefox is a highly customizable web browsing application that includes an effective pop up blocker, tabbed browsing, and many other features not found in Internet Explorer.

Crazy Browser is another option that was released in 2002, which is not as much an alternative browser, as it is a skin for Internet Explorer. In order for Crazy Browser to run, a system must have Internet Explorer 5 (or greater) installed, as well as Windows 95 (or greater) installed as the operating system. The Crazy Browser application then takes the base functionality of Internet Explorer and adds features similar to Firefox, such as the pop up blocker and tabbed browsing.

### 3. Browser Tool Bars

A growing trend is for websites to offer a downloadable toolbar for use with Internet Explorer. Many of these toolbars offer unique features

intended to enhance the user's web browsing experience in different ways, but they generally also include a pop up blocker. Although there are toolbars available from dozens of websites, Google, MSN, and Yahoo are some of the more reputable names with one available.

The installation of these toolbars is quick and easy, and the most difficult part may be reading the fine print in the license agreements.

Although these toolbars may do an excellent job blocking pop ups, they may also be retrieving data on your web surfing / search habits. If you feel a toolbar may be the right solution for you, stick with one from a trusted name, and just be sure to read the fine print.

### 4. Pop Up Blocker Software

Stand alone pop up blocking software is available from dozens, if not hundreds, of different sources. With various interfaces, and prices ranging from free to \$30 (and higher), choosing one can be a difficult task. Many of the programs that are not available for free do come with a free trial download, so you can at least get a sense of whether the program is right for you before committing. Some of the options in this category include STOPzilla, Secure IE, Zero Popup and Pop Swatter, to name a few.

The main drawback to this type of pop up blocking solution is that you now have another independent application running on your computer. Although they are generally not resource intensive, why run a program to do something that can be handled by one that is already running anyway? Additionally, with so many reliable solutions available to eliminate pop ups for free, spending money on one is hard to justify.

Along with a dedicated pop up blocker, another recommended tact for eliminating pop-ups is eliminating spyware on your computer system. Some pop-up programs use accompanying spyware to target pop ups specifically to you and your web surfing habits. An excellent, free program for eliminating spyware of all type is Spybot Search & Destroy.

### 5. Internet Access Software from Select ISPs

Some ISPs (Internet Service Providers) now incorporate a pop up blocker with the software they provide to subscribers for accessing the internet. Earthlink, Optimum Online, and AOL are just a few of the larger providers that add value to their packages by adding a pop up blocker. Bundling this functionality with the ISPs base software definitely makes things easy for the subscriber, as there may be no need to find one elsewhere.

In general, these blockers are effective, but are not the most feature rich and may have limited options for customization by the end user. One draw back with ISP provided pop up blockers is that some only work with their service. So, if you ever switch to a new provider, you'll need to be prepared to switch to a new pop up blocker as well.

### Final Words

Pop ups are a fact of life on the internet, but that does not mean you need to put up with them. Among the five general solutions presented above, there are literally hundreds of options available for eliminating the clutter of pop up ads, allowing you to enjoy only the content you intended to see.

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# Personal Health, Safety and Well-being

## The Top Seven Causes of Workplace Stress And Fifteen Ways to Get Rid of Them

By Dan Strakal

Anyone who has ever worked knows that stress is part of the workplace. Stress in itself is not bad, in fact, we can't live without it. Applying the correct amount of stress hardens our muscles, sharpens our minds, and strengthens our spirits. It is when we move from this "good" type of stress into distress that things begin to go wrong. The fact is, most people who work are feeling pressure from things going on both inside the workplace and outside the workplace. Let's explore...

There are seven common stressors that effect how people feel about the workplace:

- Being out of sync with one's career values
- Consistently applying burn out skills rather than motivated skills
- Being delegated responsibility without authority
- Being expected to produce more work with fewer resources
- Job and career uncertainty and insecurity
- The pace of change
- Balancing family and work obligations

A combination of some or all of these seven stressors is the root cause of most, if not all, stress in the workplace. The indicators pointed out by many workplace surveys (working harder, feeling overwhelmed, work/life time priorities, irritability and frustration, zoning out with TV, feelings of helplessness, etc.) can be viewed as symptoms of these underlying root causes. Stress can be manifested by something as benign as someone having a tiff with a coworker to something as tragic as a disgruntled worker harming others. Following is a brief overview of each of the seven workplace stressors.

### 1. Being Out Of Sync With One's Career Values

Put simply, career values are the personal principles or standards that govern our behavior in the workplace and that are important in our overall career decisions. Examples include job flexibility, time freedom, preferring either a fast- or slow-paced work setting, working alone, working with others, helping society, monetary reward, job stability, and so on. It is important that workers narrow down and define their 5 to 10 core career values. These core career values then become decision making and assessment points for people to measure and see if where they are working and what they are doing at work is in sync with their values. It is when someone is not in sync with her values that stress occurs. For example, if Jane's top career

value is work/life balance, but she is spending 80 hour per week at work, has not taken a family vacation in two years, and consistently misses her children's school events; she has a values clash and stress occurs. The more she works, the greater the stress.

### 2. Consistently Applying "Burn Out" Skills Rather Than Motivated Skills

Skills are what people bring to the table to get work done. Budgeting, supervising, editing, computer programming, training, designing websites, etc., are examples of skills.

Motivated skills are the things that a person does well and likes to do. Burn out skills are the things a person does well but does not like to do. If someone is constantly applying his or her burn out skills rather than his or her motivated skills on the job, performance will begin to decrease, motivation is lost, and eventually "burn out" occurs.

Why don't people always use and apply their motivated skills in the workplace? Most companies have a performance management system or performance appraisal process. It is in these systems and processes that motivated skills can be sabotaged. For example:

Sam, an account manager in a healthcare organization, has always been good at working with people, getting others to buy into his ideas, and documenting his work results. He completes a motivated skills assessment and learns that his main motivated skills (what he likes to do very much and is very good at doing) are employee training, sales, and writing. His burn out skills (what he is very good at doing but does not like to do) turn out to be planning and budgeting. His supervisor invites him to the annual appraisal meeting and the following conversation ensues:

Supervisor: "Sam, you did such a great job on the budget last year that this year instead of having you just do the planning and budgeting for our department, I'm going to ask that you do the planning and budgeting for the entire company. Again, you were so thorough and did such a great job that I think you should be rewarded."

Sam: (Afraid to appear ungrateful and possibly jeopardize his job). "Well, thanks, but I..."

Supervisor: "Now don't worry. I know working on the company-wide budget is going to take a lot of time. As such, I am revamping your account manager position and taking all of your training, sales, and report writing tasks off your plate. That should free you up to work strictly on planning and budgeting."

Unless Sam speaks up and finds a positive way to negotiate himself back to what he likes to do and is good at doing, he will experience burn out, usually sooner rather than later. This burn out will lead to decreased motivation, which leads to less productivity, which leads to poor performance appraisals, and ultimately could result in Sam losing his job.

### 3. Being Delegated Responsibility Without Authority

This is a classic stress builder and is occurring more and more in organizations. Many people, especially those who have been with the company for a period of time, become taken for granted. Because they are always there and always willing to pitch in, it is often assumed that they will take on more and more work and responsibility. In essence, this creates a vicious cycle – as soon as one task or project is completed, it is assumed these loyal people will take on the next one with no consideration of their own time or motivational needs.

Because of the fast pace in most businesses these days, it is a common flaw that this work is assigned with no real structure in place as to who has the authority to carry it out – kind of a "just do it and don't ask too many questions" approach. People in this position are often under self-imposed stress and end up working longer hours than many others in the organization, including the people who do the delegating.

### 4. Being Expected To Produce More Work With Fewer Resources And For Less Rewards

As managers are being asked to do more with less, they in turn pass this along to their work groups. This creates a see-saw of stress that bounces up and down the organizational chain. It is assumed that people will not push back on either of these points because it is an "employer's market." That is, there are more people looking for good jobs than there are good jobs available and the added stress of job security is imposed (more on this later.)

Along with the challenge of doing more with less, many employee benefits and/or reward programs are being "revised" or cut back. For example, many companies no longer carry over unused vacation from one year to the next...if you don't use it you lose it. The irony being that it is harder to take time off because there is so much work to

do and if a person does take a week's vacation, the amount of work that piles up while out of the office kicks the stress drive into high gear once she returns to work. As such, many people don't take a true vacation but take work with them or come into the office during vacation times just to keep the work from piling up too high. Holiday shutdown between Christmas and New Year's is also being scaled back by many organizations. Promotions are tougher to attain. Some employers are even tampering with maternity leave by proposing a variety of flexible work schedules to dissuade employees from even taking leave. These "incentives" include items such as telecommuting, part-time hours, working during off hours, etc. Finally, there's often a perception by workers that if they don't play ball they will be "encouraged" to move on and find a different position.

#### 5. Job And Career Uncertainty And Insecurity

It's a fact: Most people in the workplace will have five to seven career changes over the course of their work lives. Some of these changes will be by choice, while others will be due to economic, business-related decisions, and other non-controllable factors. The fact remains, these changes are going to occur whether workers believe it or not, want them or not, or are ready for them or not.

Why so many career changes? It used to be that a person could go to work for a company and stay with the company for 30 or 40 years. If he or she was loyal to the company and did certain things in a certain way the company would take care of him or her. After a lifetime of employment the person would retire with a nice pension and a gold watch.

This type of informal employer-employee contract began to disappear in the 1980's. From the early 1980's through the mid-1990's massive and unprecedented layoffs occurred (often in the name of the "bottom line"). Job security as we once knew it became a relic of the past. Today it's all about becoming career self-reliant. The informal contract has changed to

"...we (the company) will give you the necessary resources (such as training and job aids) to do your job, but it is up to you (the employee) to determine where you want to go and what you want to do within this framework. Furthermore, there is no obligation on our part to ensure your job security – it's up to you, the employee, to keep your skills sharp, your knowledge keen, and your career goals updated. Oh, but by the way, we expect you to work 45-60 hours per week, not say bad things about the company, and thank your lucky stars that you even have a job."

This change in the informal employer-employee contract has snuck up on most workers and many still don't realize this transition is occurring. In fact, the current workforce, those people aged 22 to 65 years, is the transitional generation of workers. What this means in terms of stress is that when many people (especially

those between 30 and 65 years old) entered the workforce, they had an expectation of the way it used to work: That if one entered the workforce and was loyal to the company that the company would take care of her or him. After all, that's what they heard from their parents and grandparents: "Get a good secure job, preferably with benefits, and things will be OK." However, the reality has changed and people become confused and often fall into a survival mode of operation. They become afraid to challenge the status quo and question decisions made by the company decision makers (such as cutting vacation and other benefits, having more and more work piled on them, and being delegated more responsibility without the adequate level of authority to carry out the necessary tasks.)

#### 6. The Accelerating Pace Of Change

Business decisions, technology, markets, and the economy – all seem to be changing at the speed of light. One day the company decides it is going to ramp up to provide product or service "A" and the next day switches to product or service "Z". Workers invest time and energy to learn a new email program and 2 months later are asked to drop that one and learn a different one. Markets and the economy ebb and flow and the company reacts or even overreacts, setting off huge ripples of chaos and uncertainty within the organization.

These are things that managers and employees deal with on a daily basis. Over time, if a person does not learn to go with the flow of change, she or he will become overwhelmed when even the slightest change occurs. When someone reaches this point, something as simple as the company letterhead changing can be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

#### 7. Balancing Family And Work Obligations

There are two key family issues facing many in today's workplace, 1) child care, and/or 2) elder care. This at a time when society, in the form of peer pressure and media advertising, continues to set the expectation that today's worker should be able to do it all: Look great, be full of enthusiasm, have a great career, keep the home fires burning by taking care of children and/or parents, handle the pets, make over the spare bedroom, plan a fabulous vacation, the list goes on. It is worth mentioning that this sample list of perceived expectations was taken directly from just one evening of watching TV and noting commercials, sitcoms, and reality shows occurring during primetime. All these expectations foisted upon working folks in just a couple of hours. The question is, what message is this sending to workers and how are they dealing with it?

This constant effort of trying to be the perfect mom or dad, the perfect partner, the perfect

worker, have the perfect body, drive the perfect vehicle and so on, is really taking a toll on workers and adding to the pile up of stress.

#### Summary Of Workplace Stressors

As you can see, the seven stressors mentioned overlap and integrate in such a way that it is no wonder that today's workforce is becoming more and more stressed, apathetic, tired, and burned out. Being expected to do more with less, not having opportunities to recognize and apply their career values and motivated skills, having more responsibility heaped upon them without the necessary levels of authority to carry out the responsibility, and the constant nagging worry of keeping their jobs is a huge challenge for today's workers.

#### Here's The Good News: Fifteen Ways To Get Rid Of Workplace Stress

Although the stressors outlined above are real, it is always a good idea for people to assess how much reality versus perception we have in their individual situations. As such, take a few minutes to ask yourself the following questions and to really think hard about if you have more power than you may think to change at least some of your situations for the better:

1. Am I bringing any of this on myself?
2. Are there things I can be doing to improve the situation?
3. Am I blaming someone or something else (my partner, my company, my children, traffic, etc.) for the degree of happiness I am attaining or not attaining in my life?
4. Am I actually taking control of what I can control and accepting what I cannot control?
5. Have I lulled myself into a false sense that my work and my non-work lives are beyond my capabilities to handle – am I copping out?
6. Do I know what my career values and motivated skills are? If not, how can I find out?
7. If I am unhappy with my work situation, what is my short-term action plan to transition to something better? Who controls this decision?
8. What are my long-term career action plans?
9. Am I being as time efficient as I can? Am I looking for ways to integrate tasks and projects?
10. Am I focusing on what needs to get done so that I don't have to take work home?
11. Can I form a support group (possibly made up of trusted coworkers, friends, clergy, etc.) where I can safely share my concerns, vent my anger, and deal with non-productive emotions?
12. Am I a Type-A workaholic? If so, can I admit it and ask for help?
13. Do I use work as a convenient excuse to not deal with other facets of my life? (Primary relationship, self image, weight challenges, etc.)
14. What would it take for me to turn off the TV two nights per week and do something more energetic or socially responsible?
15. Are my tears and frustration at work really a symptom of something else going on in my life?

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# Fabulous Books

## Books Every Administrative Professional Should Have in Their Collection

Every Administrative Professional should have a personal library of reference books and guides to consult and ready to access when the need approaches. The following books are among the must haves:



**\*Managing Up: How to Forge an Effective Relationship with Those Above You**

By Rosanne Badowski



**Be the Ultimate Assistant- A celebrity assistant's secrets to success**

By Bonnie Low-Kramen



**The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style Grammar, Usage, and Formatting**

By William A. Sabin



**Administrative Excellence: Revolutionizing Our Value in the Workplace**

By Erin O'Hara Meyer, PHR

\*If you would like to purchase a copy of *Managing Up*, please contact Tammy Wiggs at [twiggs@shrm.org](mailto:twiggs@shrm.org)

## Hot Tips and Tricks:

### 10 Easy Steps to Speed Up Your Computer – Without Upgrading

By Jim Shutes



1. Empty the Temp directory regularly. To do this, make sure NO programs are open, and...

a. In Windows 95, 98 or Me, go to C:\Windows\Temp and delete everything inside the Temp folder.

b. In Windows 2000 or XP, make sure that you can see hidden folders. Go to C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator\Local Settings\Temp folder. Delete everything here.

2. Empty the Temporary Internet Files regularly. Go to your Control Panel and double-click the Internet Options icon. Choose to Delete Cookies, and to Delete Files

3. Check your hard disks for problems.

a. For Windows 95, 98, or Me, double-click My Computer. Right-click the C-drive and click on Properties. Click on the Tools tab and choose to check the computer for problems.

b. For Windows 2000 and XP, double-click My Computer. Right-click the C-drive and click Properties. Click on the Tools tab and choose to check the computer for problems. Click on Check Now.

4. Download a good 3rd Party Disk Check and Optimization Utility [HERE...](http://www.lapeertechgroup.com/downloads.asp)

5. Or, you can do a few of the performance tweaks yourself, if you have Windows XP. Right-click on My Computer and click on Properties.

Click on the Advanced tab. Under the Performance section, click on Settings. On the Visual Effects tab, you will see a list of check boxes. You really don't need any of them for Windows to run.

6. Turn off Active Desktop.

a. In Windows 95, 98 and Me, right-click on the desktop and in the pop-up menu, choose Active Desktop. Inside that option, uncheck Active Desktop

b. In Windows 2000, right-click on the desktop and in the pop-up menu, choose Active Desktop. Inside that option, uncheck Show Web Content.

c. In Windows XP, right-click on the desktop and in the pop-up menu, choose Properties. On the Desktop tab, choose Customize Desktop. Now, on the Web tab, make sure that there are no websites chosen here.

7. Use a good AntiVirus program, such as AVG AntiVirus. Get it [HERE...](http://www.lapeertechgroup.com/downloads.asp)

8. Get rid of Spyware. Install two different AntiSpyware programs: AdAware SE and SpyBot. They compliment each other and catch Spyware that the other misses. Get SpyBot [HERE...](http://www.lapeertechgroup.com/downloads.asp)

9. Get Adaware SE [HERE...](http://www.lapeertechgroup.com/downloads.asp)

<http://www.lapeertechgroup.com/downloads.asp>

9. Streamline MSCONFIG. You can use a utility, called MSCONFIG, to turn OFF unnecessary Start Up items.

a. In Windows 98, Me, and XP, click on Start\Run and type msconfig. Click on the Startup tab. This is a list of everything that is running in the background. Now, be careful, some of these you do need. Some items to keep are Ctfmon.exe (XP), Scan Registry (Win98, Me), Task Monitor (Win98, Me), System Tray (Win98, Me), LoadPowerProfile (Win98, Me), Rundll.32, any AntiVirus programs (such as McAfee, Norton, or AVG). Others, you can uncheck. Remember, if something doesn't work because you turned it off, it can always be turned back on.

b. For Windows 2000, MSCONFIG must be downloaded [HERE...](http://www.perfectdrivers.com/howto/msconfig.html)

10. Defragment your hard drives.

a. To defragment your hard drives, double-click on My Computer. Right-click on the c-drive and click on Properties. Click on the Tools tab and choose to Defragment Now...



# Assertiveness is a Learned Skill. Learn it!

By Karen Fritscher-Porter  
 Publisher/Editor, *The Effective Admin*

You weren't born assertive. That's a fact. But you can learn to be assertive. And you do need to learn how to be assertive to be effective on the job and successful in your career. Assertiveness is also a factor in self-empowerment. It's a way to go home from your job feeling good because not only did you do your best job, but you weren't somebody's doormat. Nor did you use anybody as a doormat. You left work with no bad feelings due to a poor communication interaction with a co-worker, client or boss. Nothing will gnaw at your gut after work or on the job tomorrow.

Why is learning to be assertive important for administrative professionals? It's like this, says speaker, trainer and consultant Annette Dubrouillet who specializes in the subject of assertiveness training and self empowerment ([www.annette.biz](http://www.annette.biz)):

"Administrative assistants really want to be helpful and that's good," says Dubrouillet who points out that's a primary characteristic of their job. "But sometimes they take that way to the extreme of thinking they have to say yes to everything. And that ends up the passive of not letting people know that boundaries have been crossed or needs are not being met."

Dubrouillet says administrative professionals sometimes think that they won't be viewed as a team member if they say anything but yes. "They haven't found that balance between making sure their needs are being met, making sure that they're not over-committing, and providing service to others," Dubrouillet says.

**ARE YOU ASSERTIVE, PASSIVE OR AGGRESSIVE?** If you'd like to be more assertive, you need to first define what is and isn't assertiveness. Here is a bit of explanation from Dubrouillet:

**"ASSERTIVE** means getting your needs met without offending somebody else, without having somebody pay the price for getting your needs met.

**AGGRESSIVE** means being in somebody's face, having somebody else meet your needs but they pick up the tab for it.

**PASSIVE** is picking up somebody else's tab."

## ONE MORE TIME

Here's another example from Dubrouillet on the difference in these three attitudes used in conjunction with a scenario you probably

know too well as an administrative professional---that of being given work overload or being given one assignment too many:

---"**PASSIVE** would be just doing the work and not saying anything," Dubrouillet says.

---"**AGGRESSIVE** would be blowing up and saying 'I'm not putting up with this anymore,'" Dubrouillet says. Or she says you might smile at the manager and then be aggressive by blowing up at somebody else instead.

---"**PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE** is taking the work assignment and saying you'll do it and then not doing it right, not doing it on time or doing it at the last minute so that the manager doesn't have it in a timely fashion," she says.

---"**ASSERTIVE** would be saying 'I'll be happy to do that. I have these other things that also have timeframes. Check with the other two managers and if they say I should drop their stuff and go ahead and do this, I'd be happy to do it,'" Dubrouillet says. Take a non-emotional approach that solves the problem for everybody, not just you but also the people you're providing a service to, she says. Make sure that those people's needs are being met as well but without getting emotional.

Essentially, take the middle of the road that's between aggressive and passive. That's the assertive road.

Easy, huh? Not really. "What's really challenging about this is assertiveness is not something people are naturally born with," Dubrouillet says. "It's a learned skill."

## ASSERTIVE TECHNIQUES

With that in mind, Dubrouillet also offers these three subtle techniques that you can implement that will help you to be more assertive:

---"**FOGGING**: "You acknowledge what somebody else has said without really saying that you're going to do so," Dubrouillet explains. "If someone complains to you 'that dress really looks terrible on you', you simply acknowledge it. Say 'you think this dress looks terrible.' You're just repeating. You're not saying you're going to change the dress or saying they're right but you're

acknowledging it. And what can they say back?"

---"**NEGATIVE ASSERTION**: Perhaps your boss comes to you and says you just did something incorrectly. And he's right! "Then you simply acknowledge he's right by saying 'You're right. It's wrong. It wasn't done properly and I'll do it properly,'" Dubrouillet says.

---"**NEGATIVE INQUIRY**: That's when you take the above scenario further by saying 'What do you mean by that? I don't understand.'

## CAN YOU Q-TIP?

Q-TIP means "Quit Taking It Personally". Tape a real Q-tip® where you'll see it if you need a visual reminder. "Quit taking things personally," Dubrouillet says. "Instead you move forward to resolve the issue. If it's wrong, it's wrong. Don't take it personally. Instead, find a way to get your needs met."

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Don't try to be assertive immediately in one day, Dubrouillet cautions. "You don't want to be assertive tomorrow when the boss says 'I really need you to stay overtime tonight' and it's your anniversary," she says. "All of sudden you're faced with the situation that it's your marriage or your job. You don't want to turn to your boss and be really assertive at that point. You don't want to have to start learning the skill in that situation."

Practice skills in less serious situations. That could mean in a situation with your boss when you know the issue is not a real hot button of his. Or it could be in a situation with a family member or someone else.

"Begin by identifying where you have options," Dubrouillet suggests. "Sometimes administrative professionals think they don't have any options. They think 'I either have to say yes or it's going to end my career.' Start looking for where you have those options. And sometimes you do and sometimes you don't," she says.

Assertiveness can mean asking for what you want. And you may even get it. Or not. But the nice thing about assertiveness versus aggression or passiveness is that everybody involved in the communication scenario leaves the situation feeling good about the way they handled it. Everyone is a winner when you act assertive.

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**MEETINGS**

Monthly chapter meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 5:30pm – 7:00pm. For more information please contact the chapter president.

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## IAAP News Update

### Post Convention



If you did not have the opportunity to attend the International Convention & Education Forum you truly missed an awesome experience. The workshops were very informative and full of great tips to take back to the office, the exhibit hall was loaded with all sorts of goodies to make our jobs a little bit easier and certainly a little more exciting, the speakers were great and we got first glimpse of the new 2006-2007 International Board of Directors.

Our very own Tia Theriaque, CAP, formerly the Southeast District Director, is the new Vice President of the International Board of Directors, and Tamra L. Goodall, CPS/CAP is the new Southeast District Director. Congratulations to both Tia and Tamra. Kudos! Also congratulations to Sally Ferrell, Virginia Division's President ~ Sally has already shared with OTAC her knowledge and compassion for IAAP! We will learn great things from her.

Next year the IAAP Annual Conference and Education Forum is being held in Tampa, Florida, July 29 - August 1, 2007, make sure that you register early because you don't want to miss out.

## Around Town

### The Old Town Alexandria Chapter hosted the VA Division's Annual Professional Development Seminar on October 20 – 21, 2006

The Old Town Alexandria Chapter hosted the 2006 Virginia Division's Annual Professional Development Seminar on October 20-21, 2006 in Alexandria Virginia. The weekend's event was held at the Society for Human Resource Management Building located in Old Town Alexandria. We "kicked off" the weekend with the Friday Night Open House with Wine Tasting as the main event. The Curious Grape sponsored the event with samples of several red and white

wines, various cheeses, and chocolates, etc. The members got the opportunity to learn what types of wine go best with different meats, fish and poultry, and pasta dishes. The members also seized the opportunity to network with one another within the division. Members participated in this fun filled weekend from several areas of Virginia including Old Dominion, the Peninsula, Tri-City, and Fredericksburg Chapters. The event was a

success. Saturday was just as fun, two awesome speakers made lasting impressions; one with great tips on How to Research – **Ruhal Dooley, SPHR**, and the other on Success and Making a Significant Difference – **Art Jackson**. Both speakers gave a true performance and left the group with great tools and words to help enhance a successful career.

To access pictures of event, visit our website at: [www.orgsites.com/va/otac-iaap](http://www.orgsites.com/va/otac-iaap)

## Words of Inspiration

"There is no such thing as can't, only won't. If you're qualified, all it takes is a burning desire to accomplish, to make a change. Go forward, go backward. Whatever it takes! But you can't blame other people or society in general. It all comes from your mind. When we do the impossible we realize we are special people."

-- Jan Ashfora