

# Nuggets of Knowledge

## ***Ten ways to improve your work life***

### 1. Increasing your productivity.

To organize your desk:

- Remove everything you don't use daily. In nearby drawers put the items you use every other day, everything else keep in the supply closet. File items you haven't touched in the past five days.
- Keep high-priority items in plain sight. Examples: Things due today and tomorrow.
- Provide an in-basket for people to give you things.
- Put destroy-by dates on paper and computer files.

### 2. Managing your time.

Set a specific deadline when people give you tasks so  keep track of when everything is due. Keep them on one master calendar and post it prominently. Color code high-priority items, deadlines and follow-ups. Once each week, let concerned parties know the status of specific tasks.

### 3. Working effectively with others.

Realize that you're responsible for how you feel. If you let others make you feel bad, you're letting them control you. Just say "I don't have to feel this way because I, "not others," control how I feel."

### 4. Fighting stress.

Don't overschedule your day. Underschedule and then you'll feel better when you have time "at the end of the day" to fit in one extra task.

### 5. Improving your writing.

When writing to persuade, address these four questions:

- "Who am I, and why am I writing?"
- "What are my readers' needs?"
- "How will I meet those needs?"
- "How will I follow-up?"



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"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another."

-- William James

"All mankind is divided into three classes: those that are immovable, those that are movable, and those that move."

--Arabian Proverb

"Take care of the minutes and the hours will take care of themselves."

--Phillip Dormer Stanhope

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## 6. Improving your telephone skills.

When leaving messages:

- Speak clearly, especially if you're using unconventional names or words.
- Speak slowly enough to be understood —especially when leaving your telephone

number. And give your name and number at the beginning of your message and again at the end.

## 7. Persuading others.

- Get agreement on little things first.
- Use nontechnical words. Avoid jargon.
- Don't say "Obviously ..." Instead, say "Perhaps you'd ..."
- Ask "How about doing X?" instead of "Why don't we do X?"

## 8. Learning to listen.

Don't start thinking about your next response while the other person is still talking. Instead, hear the other person out, then take a few seconds to form your response.

## 9. Holding effective meetings.

When someone monopolizes meeting time by being the "class clown," confront the person. Say "That's very funny. But what do you think of the problem at hand? What would you recommend?" If the person still won't straighten up, say something such as, "Listen. We've all had a laugh. But let's not lose our focus. We don't want to be here all day."

## 10. Communicating better with your boss.

Ask yourself: Which qualities helped your boss get to the top? Do you have the same qualities? If not, will that affect your relationship? If yes, how will having those qualities help you please your boss?