

# Bonkers

Issue 16

## Business

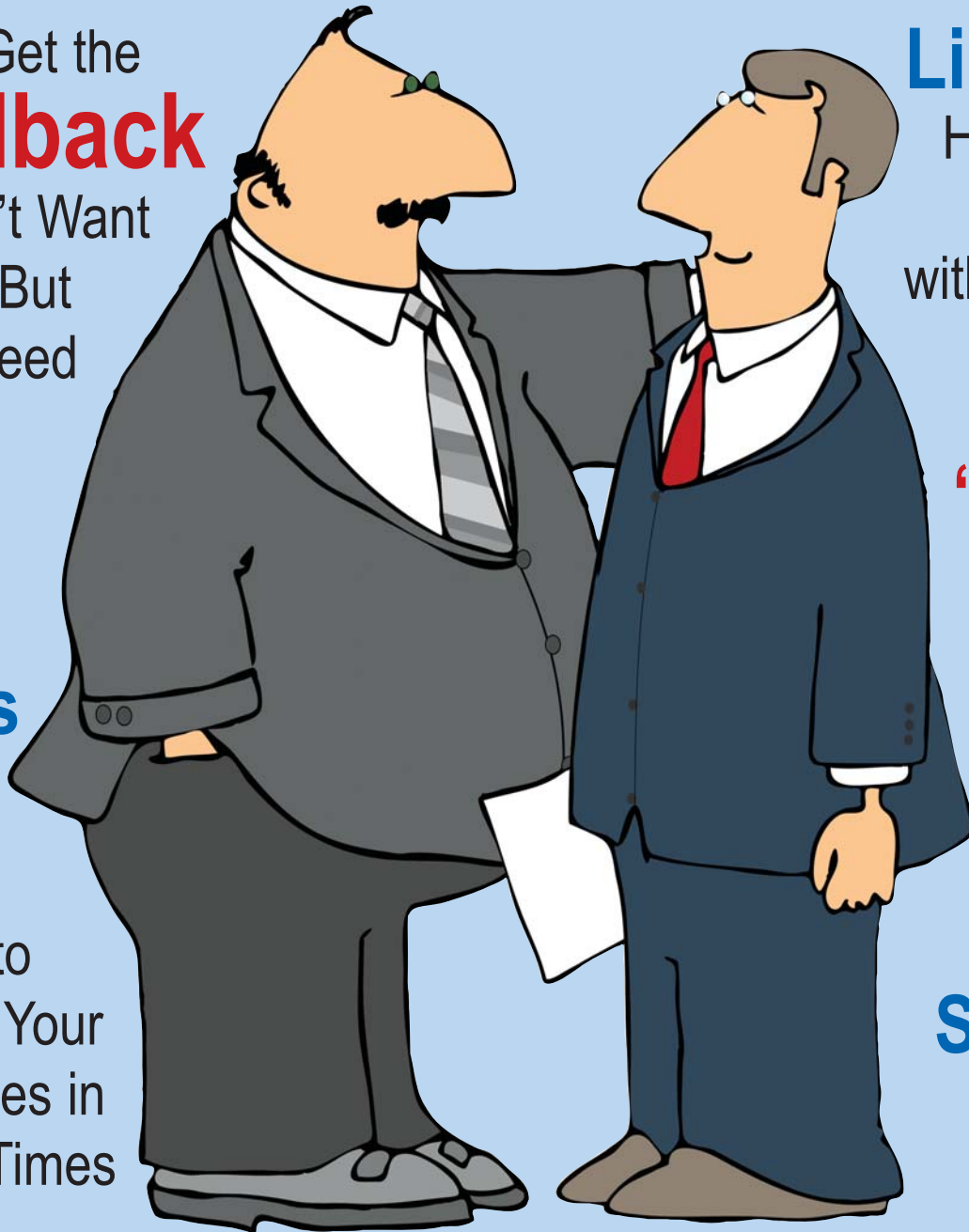
ABOUT™

How to Get the  
**Feedback**

You Don't Want  
to Hear, But  
Really Need  
to Know

**No  
Raises  
this  
Year?**

Secrets to  
Keeping Your  
Employees in  
Difficult Times



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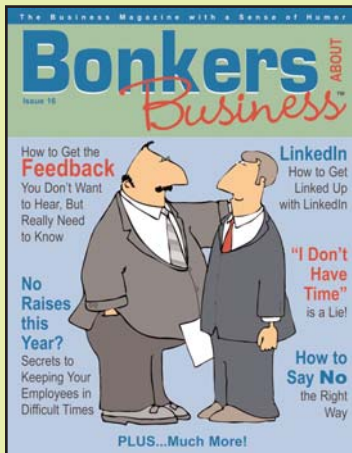
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is a Lie!

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**PLUS...Much More!**

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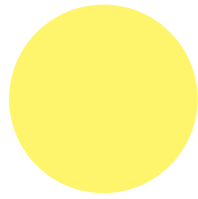
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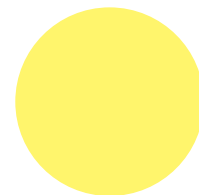
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# FOLLOW THE MONEY



## Prevent Embezzlement

By Rhonda R. Savage, DDS

With the economy improving, John was thrilled to see his small company starting to boom. With all the new business, John was so busy signing new accounts and training his new staff members, he delegated the bookkeeping responsibilities to a long-time employee he trusted. As time passed, John started noticing discrepancies in the business' account and discovered the employee had been embezzling money from the company. Unfortunately, embezzlement is not uncommon and is often difficult to detect. What could John have done differently to prevent this kind of problem?

Embezzlement is a crime of opportunity and trust. A person who is trusted is placed in a position that allows him or her complete access to the financial data of the business, typically with minimal or no oversight by the supervisor or owner. The best way to prevent embezzlement is to first, be honest yourself in your activities. Leaders must lead by example. Secondly, pay your employees well and treat them well. Third, hire the right employee. Start

by checking all references. Consider obtaining fidelity bond insurance coverage on this employee. If the employee is not bondable, do not place them in the position of handling your financial matters. Run a criminal background check.

Here are some simple techniques that decrease the opportunity and temptation for embezzlement:

**1. Assign designated duties.** Do not have only one person handle the incoming mail, deposits, balance the checkbook and send statements. This is difficult in smaller businesses with only a few staff members. In this case, the owner needs to handle or outsource payroll, tax preparation, balancing the checkbook and management of the accounts payable. If the owner chooses to outsource this work to a bookkeeping company, the same due diligence of inspecting the bookkeeper's work is very important.

**2. The owner should review reports.** Every day, you should have an end-of-day report, an adjustment

report, a history of payment that breaks down cash receipts, credit card payments, checks and outside financing for services on your desk. The owner should compare the deposit slip receipt to the deposit. Do an occasional mini-audit of the books. Let your staff know you're looking daily by questioning them. For example, say "I see Mrs. Smith didn't pay for today's fee; is there a reason why?" This shows your employees you are keeping an eye on the day's activity. These checks take 5-10 minutes of your day.

### **3. Review your bank statement.**

Inform your staff that they are not to open any mail from a banking institution. Even better...have your bank statements sent to your home address if your mailbox is secure. Scan the checks that were written. Your signature should be on each check.

### **4. Know where your money is going.**

If you do utilize an employee to process your accounts payable, develop a system for your mail. Staff members should put the incoming mail in one location on your desk. Review the bills and put them into an in-basket for the employee to process. Have them print the checks and attach them to the invoice, then sign them. If you don't recognize a check, question it. A different staff person should stuff the envelopes and mail the payments. If the same person pays and stuffs the envelope, the checks can be changed.

### **5. Establish office policies.**

Make deposits daily, close and balance each day, bill as services as rendered and send periodic statements if purchasing extends over time.

Review your monthly reports. Each month should be closed out prior to running the reports to prevent changes from happening. Write pre-numbered receipts for all cash payments and monitor petty cash. All records should be kept at the office. Do not allow employees to work extended hours and establish password control for sensitive areas, such as payroll.

**6. Watch your overhead numbers.** Learn to read your financial statements. You should know the basic overhead numbers for the business. One example of a common fraud/ embezzlement system involves double payment for supplies, or the creation of dummy vendors. Another example is the ease of obtaining preauthorized credit cards in your name, using the credit card to pay personal bills and developing schemes to pay the credit card. Run periodic credit checks on yourself and watch open lines of credit.

**7. Be a fair, consistent, honest leader.** Leaders live in glass houses. We cannot expect our staff to model differently than we ourselves model. Don't take supplies from the office home. This teaches your team that stamps, pens and office supplies are okay to take home. Watch your use of time in the office. If your time involves taking personal calls, surfing the Internet or running a side business and you are not focused on your primary business, your team will do the same.

Time embezzlement is the greatest loss to the majority of practices. General Norman Schwarzkopf said, "You don't have to be loved to be a

leader, but you do need to be respected. Respect must be earned. To be respected, you must give respect." Set your office policy regarding cell phone and Internet usage during office hours, and then abide by it yourself. An employee that embezzles by spending time on the phone or Internet not only hurts your bottom line, but he or she impacts the entire business. Because of the increased burden on the team that is working, resentment builds. And with the resentment, you'll experience decreased morale, which leads to loss of production.

Know that you shouldn't become immediately suspicious of your team, but that there are steps you can take to reduce your risk. Consider these steps to be a positive focus for your business. You will become a better manager of your business when implementing these steps, protect your assets and enjoy more profitability which you can then share with your team in the way of rewards, bonuses and increased pay.

#### **About the Author**

**Dr. Rhonda Savage** is an internationally acclaimed speaker and CEO for a well-known practice management and consulting business. Dr. Savage is a noted motivational speaker on leadership, women's issues and communication. For more information on her speaking, visit [www.MilesGlobal.net](http://www.MilesGlobal.net) or e-mail [Rhonda@MilesandAssociates.net](mailto:Rhonda@MilesandAssociates.net).





# Accountability

## Sharpening Your Competitive Edge to Develop Loyal Customers

By Walt Zeglinski

In today's highly competitive business climate, most successful companies are finding new and creative ways to win business. By building customer-centric business plans and increasing their commitment to company-wide execution, they've managed to succeed in a turbulent economy. Most of all, they've discovered they simply cannot afford to make mistakes in their customer relationships. They strive to "out-execute" the competition in every aspect of their business that touches the customer. These organizations understand that the key to creating loyal customers is building a culture of accountability.

Most of us have heard the stories of accountable employees who have made a difference – the 911 dispatcher that stays on the phone and calms a caller until the EMT arrives or the jewelry clerk in a department store that helps a customer to pick out a new dress. Unfortunately, there are far more employees that do not share this commitment to customer accountability and, as a result, fail to deliver on their goals.

Organizations that foster accountability run like well-oiled machines, as people and processes work in lock-step to achieve more predictable and profitable results. I'm

not referring to the sort of organizational accountability that focuses on catching employees doing something wrong. Rather the kind of positive accountability that is combined with high levels of employee satisfaction – as individuals are enabled with the right resources and management support. From the outside, these organizations appear to have some magical formula that helps them win even as others are struggling to stay in the race. We have found three keys to creating a culture of customer accountability – exceptional leaders, process discipline, and workforce engagement.

### Setting A Direction

Establishing a customer-accountable culture starts with developing exceptional leaders. They are the navigation system that guides employees toward the finish line. These leaders have a foundation of management expertise that can maximize the talents of their teams as they keep them focused on their customers. Fifty years of client research has led us to six job functions that are critical for exceptional leaders – communicating, planning, organizing, controlling, staffing, and leading. Leaders who are effective at these functions consistently elevate the performance of their people.

Transforming leaders from average to exceptional requires they get beyond their perceptions of their abilities. Managers who understand the impact they have on others have been given a unique gift. In our experience, "feeling" the perspective of others is a significant catalyst for getting managers committed to improving their skills, attitudes and beliefs. Gaining this realistic perspective can be transformational. Unfortunately, many managers subscribe to the adage "if it ain't broke don't fix it", content to continue with the management practices that have allowed them to be successful in the past. But when market conditions are constantly in flux, leaders must be exceptional. They must find new and better ways to improve performance.

### Doing Things Right

Process discipline is the fuel that accelerates customer accountability. Leaders who hold their teams accountable for exceeding customer expectations establish a systematic approach to monitoring progress and taking corrective action. This typically involves a regular, top-down examination of goals and tasks, enabled by a plan for overcoming obstacles to success. But a consistent methodology is not enough if there is not a clear understanding of

the importance of customers to accomplishing key business drivers. Identifying and planning to execute on these “vital few” is the key to energizing employee commitment to individual, departmental and corporate goals.

In years past, many companies have been able to succeed because of great products and people. When markets get tough, accomplishing the same results requires more. A “flexible” approach to goal achievement can encourage mediocre performance. Process discipline drives accountability and insures success even in a turbulent economy.

## People Make It Happen

Leaders who support employee development and clearly communicate goals enable workforce engagement. For many organizations it's the engine that drives accountability. When an individual feels leadership is aligned with their efforts to serve customers and understands the role they play in achieving the company's vital few, they tend to maintain their customer needs-focus. It helps them to show up for work on purpose and provide their employers with the discretionary effort that can distinguish them from competitors. An engaged employee views each customer experience as a “moment of truth” – an opportunity to deliver value and create another loyal customer.

Ultimately, workforce engagement enables commitment to excellence. When individuals understand how their dedication plays into the organization's broader goals, they see themselves as part of a team and work to better themselves to ensure the whole team wins. What's most

interesting is how an environment of engaged employees can thrive, not only because it's a great place to work but also because it creates a vibrant, productive culture that delivers predictable and profitable results.

Customer-accountable cultures with exceptional leaders, process discipline, and an engaged workforce have the unique ability to establish a competitive advantage. Companies with an uncompromising commitment to leadership, process and people, by extension, are committed to their customers. Accountability makes customer loyalty possible. **GB**

## About the Author

**Walt Zeglinski** is CEO & Chief Client Advocate for Management Action Programs (MAP), a performance-improvement firm that helps organizations achieve profitable growth. MAP's performance and process solutions establish the disciplines that create a culture of accountability. Walt has over 20 years of successful experience in the corporate performance industry, with expertise in developing and implementing practical solutions for complex business challenges. He has worked with executive teams across most industries including financial services, health-care, technology, hospitality and manufacturing. For more information call 888.834.3040 or visit [www.mapconsulting.com](http://www.mapconsulting.com)



## HOW TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS ON FACEBOOK

**Creating a Page**  
The first step is to create a page for your company, explaining in detail what your business does. This page will be your business card on Facebook. Though this is the first step, it's the most crucial one.

**TAGGING.** Now that you have created a page for your business, you need to start showing people it exists. People are not going to just pass by and suddenly realize that there is a page that they need to visit. Ask your friends to 'tag' your page in their statuses or posts. After tagging, the people in your friend's friends list will be able to see your page. Eventually, a lot of people will come and visit it.

**SHARING.** Share the posts you put up on your company page from your personal profile page and ask your friends to do the same. On the platform of

Facebook, the option of sharing is considered the best way to spread information, so make sure you make optimum use of it. To share any post, you need to click on the 'Share' button given usually at the bottom of the post.

**INVITES.** Sending invites to an event is another way to market your business on Facebook. The event can be held on Facebook itself.

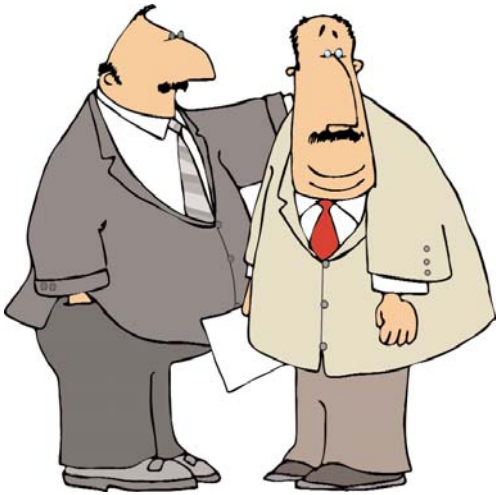
**OFFERS & DISCOUNTS.** When you share your business page with people on Facebook, make a request for them to like this page. The *Like* option is given on the top right of the business page. Once people *like* this page, they will be updated each time you publish a post. To make this option more lucrative, post some offers and discounts.

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# NO RAISES THIS YEAR?

## Secrets to Employee Retention in Difficult Times

By Rhonda R. Savage, DDS



Across the U.S., employers and employees alike are struggling. Many Businesses are flat in growth or have declined and employers are faced with these tough choices:

- Lay off employees or cut hours
- Decrease benefits
- Reduce pay
- Freeze salaries

By far, the most appealing of the four is freezing salaries. The problem is, no hard working employee wants to hear these words “times are tough...no raises this year.” The question is, how do you keep employees happy and productive during tough times? In addition, key employees may have the opportunity to move to another company. How do you retain, challenge and motivate these key people to stay with you during the hard times?

Pay and benefits are not the number one motivational factor for employees. While important, most rank the need for praise and appreciation the highest, closely followed by the need to belong to a close-knit team. Team members also need to have responsibility and feel like their voice matters in an organization.

Use the following tips to keep employees happy, employee turnover down and productivity up, despite “no raises this year:”

***Look towards the future.*** Ask your employees what skills or training you can give them to better do their jobs and help them set short-term personal goals that are business-oriented. Work with your employees to outline the steps necessary to accomplish the goal and provide encouragement and guidance throughout the process. This gives employees a sense of pride and responsibility for the future success of the company and will motivate them to help the company get through these tough economic times.

***Have efficient systems in place for accomplishing tasks.*** If team members don’t fully understand how to get things done, morale will go down. Work on systems like team training, follow-up calls with clients, collections, stocking and ordering, and letters to clients. Focus on improving communication and customer service. Train your employees on the behind the scenes duties that are critical to a well run business.

***Hold regular staff meetings.*** Staff meetings improve communication, goal setting and accountability. Through team meetings, you can keep your staff informed, motivated and involved. This forum gives staff members the opportunity to discuss the problems they are having or any concerns they have about the company, allowing leadership to solve small issues before they turn into bigger ones. When employees feel their contributions are valued, they will have a higher tendency to stay with an organization, even if times are tough.

***Be a good leader.*** What employees want from leadership is that you’re fair, consistent and apply the same office policy to everyone. Make decisions and stick to them. Avoid wavering, but know that if you and your team try something and it doesn’t work, it’s okay to change it. When you make a decision and stick with it, not everyone will agree, but they’ll respect you for making a decision and moving forward with it.

***Promote a positive work environment.*** As a leader, if you consistently have a positive attitude in the office, employees will mirror

that attitude. If you sense gossip or issues among team members, take steps to resolve these things before they become an issue. Acknowledging and rewarding team members for accomplishing goals can also contribute to a positive environment. When employees feel appreciated, they are happy and motivated to continue doing a great job.

***Be sure each employee has a copy of the office policy manual.*** Be sure the handbook is current and that you stick to the guidelines. If team members learn and understand the office guidelines upfront, they are less likely to break the rules, resulting in less conflict between leadership and the team member.

***Do things with your team outside office hours.*** Scheduling regular outings with team members outside of the office improves morale and encourages friendship between employees. In addition, respect increases between your team members. When team members get along, they work together better and are more productive.

***Involve your team in the decision-making process.*** Gather input and ask questions, but as the leader, you should make the final decisions, even if you have an “office manager” or “practice administrator” on the team. Involving your team in this process helps show that you value their opinions, giving them a sense of pride.

Most importantly, as a leader, stay positive at all times. Affect the

changes that are needed and be the leader that your staff needs. Speak in positive terms about the company, its leadership and the colleagues who are not in the room. Say thank you more often. When something does go wrong, work through the issue and encourage everyone to move on. Acknowledge people who are accomplishing their goals and encourage those who are not. Show interest and get excited about your employees, your business and the future.

In this economy, encouraging employees to work harder, quicker and more efficiently can be difficult without being able to offer raises. An overworked employee can easily become resentful, negative and walk away, which will affect the rest of your staff. Following these guide-

lines will help you keep your staff happy, motivated and productive, ultimately helping your business come out of the recession on top! **GB**

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### GB BONKERISM

The only time to be positive is when you are positive you are wrong.





# Timely Tips for Pre-Presentation Preparation

By Patricia Fripp CSP, CPAE

The day has come for your first big speech or presentation. You know are an expert in your chosen subject; know your presentation content; what could go wrong? After all, you have your presentation ready. You are feeling confident in your message and delivery. The thoughts of how a positive outcome will propel your career are exhilarating! You are ready to deliver your presentation.

If you ever find yourself invited to speak to a group, perhaps you have overlooked a few final details. These factors could derail your impact and your confidence. To guarantee your success there are still a few final steps to take before you face your audience and thrill your boss, client, colleagues or meeting planner.

**1. Check in early.** Arrive early to check out the logistics of the room in which you will be speaking. Is there a platform; where is it? Where will you be standing when you are introduced? How many steps for you to reach the lectern or center stage? Is the audience close enough to where you will be speaking to build intimacy? Is the light on you instead of the banner or the lectern if you are not standing behind it? Audience

research proves if you put the sound up and the lights down the audience thinks they can't hear!

**2. Make friends with the stage.** When the room is empty, walk on the stage and "block" your presentation, or plan where you are going to stand and when you are going to move during your speech. You do not want to distract from your message with unnecessary movement. Go through the outline of your talk. Imagine an enthusiastic response. The more time you spend feeling comfortable on stage the more you can relax and focus on the audience. This is what actors call "making friends with the stage."

**3. Take a clock.** Make sure you have a clock you can see from a distance. To keep me on track and on time, I travel with a large kitchen clock that I can see from a distance without having to wear glasses. Very few people know how long they have been speaking. If you are including Q & A, have a dramatic close or the speech has a "must-end-by" time. Scheduling this adds to your professionalism.

**4. Microphone.** Do you have

your preferred microphone: handheld, lavalier, or lectern? Practice talking into it; the proper placing is chin level for a handheld. Ask someone to walk around and check that you can be heard from all parts of the room. Make friends with the audio technicians. Make sure you are on time for your microphone check and thank them for their help when you have finished.

**5. Audio visual.** If you are using a PowerPoint presentation make sure the equipment is working well. Are your PowerPoint slides in the right sequence? Do you have a remote control to change them? This way you can move around and are not chained to your computer. Remember to turn the slide to black when you are not addressing what is on the screen. Is each slide visible from the back of the room or auditorium? Are the talking points presented as a "build" or "reveal?" Remember, your visual aids are a tool, not a crutch. They are there to support you.

**6. Connect with the organizer or emcee.** Be clear about who will introduce you, and where you will be during their comments. Will

you walk on from the wings or up from the floor? Will you shake hands with him or her, or will they exit once you hit the stage and before the applause dies down. I recommend you nod and mouth “Thank you.” If you are speaking at a banquet, check that you will have a clear path to the microphone without tripping over wires, chairs, or diners.

### 7. *Pre-written introduction.*

In advance, send your pre-written introduction to the person delivering it. Carry another two with you. Have it written in an 18-point, bulleted list. This is easier to read than paragraphs. Be sure your introducer knows how to pronounce your name correctly. It is a good idea to confirm they have the introduction and are comfortable with what is written. Make sure your introducer knows the introduction is prepared in a certain way to set the tone for your presentation.

### 8. *Be your own warm up act.*

Connect with as many audience members as possible before you speak. When they see you are extending yourself they will return the favor of giving their attention. That only lasts a few minutes so make sure you grab their attention with a great opening.

### 9. *Learn from the experience.*

Always follow any presentation with an After Action Analysis. Start with asking yourself what you did well. Next, what could be improved? Always record your presentation and listen to what you said. There are three speeches for every one you deliver. The one you planned to give, the speech you actu-

ally delivered, and the improved next presentation based on what you did right, would like to do better, and what can be added from what you learned from the experience.

Any speaking engagement or presentation can be intimidating. Remember, your goal is to present the most valuable information possible to the members of the audience. Keeping focused on the positive impact of the presentation, preparing and paying attention to these details will help you deliver the best speech possible. Delivering a dynamic presentation is not rocket science; however, it is a lot more complex than most people realize. GB

#### About the Author

**Patricia Fripp CSP, CPAE**, is Hall of Fame keynote speaker, executive speech coach and sales presentation skills trainer and keynote speaker on sales, effective presentation skills and executive communication skills. She works with companies large and small, and individuals from the C-Suite to the work floor. She builds leaders, transforms sales teams and delights audiences. She is the author of *Get What You Want!* and *Make It, So You Don't Have to Fake It!*, and is Past-President of the National Speakers Association. To learn more about having Patricia do her magic for you, contact her at [www.Fripp.com](http://www.Fripp.com), (415) 753-6556, or [PFripp@ix.netcom.com](mailto:PFripp@ix.netcom.com).



## ENCOURAGE your staff to UPSELL!

Essentially, upselling involves adding related products and/or services to your line and making it convenient and necessary for customer to buy them. Just placing more products near your usual products isn't going to increase your sales much. To upsell successfully, the customer has to be persuaded of the benefit. For instance, when I last had my carpets cleaned, the cleaner noticed a pet stain. Instead of just cleaning it up, he drew my attention to it, and showed me how easily and effectively the spot cleaning solution removed all trace of the stain. Did I buy the spot cleaning solution? You bet. He persuaded me that buying it was beneficial to me and made it convenient to purchase it. Result: increased sales for the carpet cleaning company.

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# The Art of Practicing Reflection

## STOP MAKING BUSINESS MISTAKES YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR LATER

By Joelle Jay, Ph.D

Imagine being able to accurately predict what would happen before taking a certain action. Imagine being able to adjust course mid-decision so you could achieve a better outcome. Imagine learning from your mistakes in such a way that you not only overcome the current mistake, but also achieve more success because of it. All of these scenarios are within the reach of everyone. Unfortunately, few people take the steps to actually do them.

So how exactly can someone predict the future, harness the present, and use the past as a springboard for success? The answer lies in the art of reflection.

Reflection is a way of learning from your mistakes and your successes in the course of your life and in your business. It means looking at your experiences to make informed decisions about what to do, when to do it, and why it should be done. It's about stepping back, taking it all in, and looking ahead. Ultimately, reflection brings clarity, and clarity leads to sound decisions.

Think of reflection as the art of extraction. You are extracting knowledge and learning right out of

your own experiences, squeezing daily events for every ounce of learning they have to offer. Studying your own experiences by reflecting on them allows you to move faster toward your goals instead of having to try, try, try again until you get it right.

To some degree, reflection happens naturally, but it is far more powerful as a business tool when you understand how to steer your reflection purposefully to make the most of your talent, experiences, and business knowledge.

### The Art of Practicing Reflection

To practice reflection, you simply choose an event or scenario that will impact you and your company. Then think about the event in advance, be conscious about the experience in the moment, debrief the event afterwards to see what there is to learn, and prepare for an even more successful experience next time. In this manner, your learning "curve" should not be a curve at all but a continuously moving cycle of thinking-and-acting-and-thinking-and-acting-and-thinking-and-acting. That's how we learn. Researchers call this:



- **Reflection for action**, or thinking before you act.
- **Reflection in action**, or noticing your thoughts and feelings right in the middle of the action. Like a jazz musician, you play off the events of the moment, improvising as you perform.
- **Reflection on action**, or the process of looking back at your experiences to see what there is to learn so you can apply it in the future.

For business professionals, taking the time for reflection is essential for long-term success. When you're skimming along, trying to make a profit, and making all the daily decisions, you're going through the motions but not really reflecting on them. As such, you could be missing opportunities, trading results for what's urgent (fire fighting), working too much, and/or sacrificing your

health and relationships in the name of something else that's less important. These are the kinds of mistakes you'll pay for later – and they're usually the ones you can undo.

If all you do is manage fires all day, you're not being reflective. And if you're not reflective in your job or business, then you won't be the one who gets the promotion or who creates the new product or service. The people and companies that get the promotions and create new offerings are the ones who have new ideas. You don't get innovative ideas by answering e-mails all day or dealing with one crisis after another.

So let's say, for instance, you want to evaluate your company's advertising strategy. To do so with the art of reflection, you would do the following:

**1. Reflect for action.** Think about any new advertising you want to do ahead of time. Decide such things as your specific goals of advertising, how long you'll test a certain medium, and which advertising venues your customers typically deem credible.

**2. Reflect in action.** In the midst of your advertising campaign, stay cognizant of your goals and intentions. See if you need to adjust course midway.

**3. Reflect on action.** After the specified timeframe you already identified, ask yourself:

- How did it go?
- What went well?
- What didn't go as well?
- What would you do differently next time?

Repeating this pattern again and again will eventually help you learn what you need to achieve your vision.

## The Benefits of Reflection

How exactly does reflection help you be a better leader and have a better business? The benefits of reflection are many:

• **You avoid mistakes.** Reflective leaders and business owners are rarely blindsided. You give yourself the chance to weigh options and consider consequences before making a big decision.

• **You fill in the gaps.** Through your reflection, you will discover not just what you need to do, but also what you know and what you don't know. Once you can see what's missing to help you be successful, be it information, education, resources, funding, or connections, you can go out and get it.

• **You are lighter on your feet.** Many times people struggle with a decision. Should we or shouldn't we? Which way is best? What should we do? Reflection is a big stop sign to keep you from running in circles. The more reflective you are, the faster you can see how each and every option does or does not advance your goals. You make a decision and get back into action while everyone else chews on their options.

• **You learn by leaps and bounds.** Reflection is a way of learning that cuts out wasted time and unnecessary action. If you rely on learning-by-doing, you have to *do* a lot before


you can *learn* a lot. If you couple learning-by-doing with reflection, however, your learning is more condensed, and therefore, faster.

The good news is that being reflective doesn't mean you have to go into the woods for a week to assess how you and your professional pursuits are advancing. Reflection is possible in a half hour here, a day there, or even a few minutes every now and then.

The bottom line is that if you're reflective, you can live the life you want and have the professional success you desire. But if you're not reflective, you may later regret your life's choices and may pay dearly for business mistakes. You can choose to stay on the same path you're currently on, or you can see the path you really want and take the steps to get there. The choice is yours. Reflect on it . . . and then choose wisely. GB

### About the Author

**Joelle K. Jay, Ph.D.** is an executive coach specializing in leadership development and the author of *The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership*, in which shows leaders how to improve their effectiveness by learning to lead themselves. Her newsletter, *The Inner Edge Quarterly*, offers articles, exercises, tips, quotes, and success stories from real leaders to help you excel. To register, please visit [www.TheInnerEdge.com](http://www.TheInnerEdge.com) and click on Newsletter, or email [Info@TheInnerEdge.com](mailto:Info@TheInnerEdge.com). Visit her website at [www.joellekjay.com](http://www.joellekjay.com)

  
**BONKERISM**  
If you say it can't be done,  
then never interrupt the one  
doing it.



# It's Time to Link Up with LinkedIn

By Jean Kelley

Mention the phrase “social media” and most people automatically think of Facebook and Twitter. But if you have any dealings in the corporate world – whether you’re a CEO, salesperson, human resource manager, administrative assistant, or anything in between – you’ll want to take a closer look at LinkedIn. You will find it a useful tool to make your business relationships more meaningful . . . and more profitable.

Before you dismiss the idea of using LinkedIn because you only know it as that “bland” social media site where people go when they’re looking for a job, realize that currently there are 90 million LinkedIn users worldwide. One new user joins every second of every day. And unlike social media sites like Facebook where many people use the site for entertainment, all LinkedIn users are business minded. That means the connections you develop on LinkedIn are more likely to positively impact you or your company in some way. Therefore, if you want better or more professional business relationships, LinkedIn is the place to be. Even if you have a business profile on Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn makes a perfect addition to your personal or business branding efforts.

## An Essential Business Resource

The key to making LinkedIn work for you and your company is to use the site regularly. That means posting something, either an update or a question/answer, every seven days at a minimum. Why? Because the more you use any social media site, the higher your “Google Juice” will be – in other words, Google’s algorithm will notice your regularity and you’ll get a higher ranking with Google than you would otherwise. Additionally, the more you interact and post on LinkedIn, the more prominent you’ll become within your network – your name recognition will grow.

Fortunately, staying active in LinkedIn and a regular user is simple when you understand how LinkedIn can benefit you professionally. Use the following ideas and suggestions to make the most of your LinkedIn account.

- **Show off your skills.** It’s as easy to set up your profile in LinkedIn as it is in Facebook. Make sure your profile is well written and that it highlights what you currently do, what you have done, your strengths, your talents, your key

attributes, and your education. Remember that people will access your profile for many different reasons (recruitment, background information, professional contacts, etc.), so be thorough and always make your profile public. Since your LinkedIn profile is essentially a dynamic mini resume, keep it updated, tasteful, and accurate at all times. Additionally, you have an opportunity to display recommendations for you. As a point of etiquette, when you ask someone to write a recommendation, you must reciprocate.

- **Say something meaningful.** By posting status updates that contain valuable content, you show your network that you are a team player and that you care about other people’s success. Remember that status updates are not the place to advertise your company’s products or services, nor is it a conversation group. A better idea is to share a best practice, announce a seminar/event you’ve been to or are going to, or give a quick tip. If you can’t think of anything to post, it’s perfectly acceptable to post a meaningful or motivational quote. The key is to post something interesting and relevant to your network. And always remember that what you post stays on the Internet forever. So if you

wouldn't want your comment on the front page of your local newspaper, don't post it on LinkedIn.

- **Uncover conversation starters.** LinkedIn is a great place to get an inside glimpse of people. For example, you can look up potential clients or vendors on LinkedIn and see what kind of books they read, where they went to school, what their main interests are (based on the groups they belong to), and so much more. Now you'll have more to talk about when you meet the potential client, potential vendor, or potential networking friend. Think of LinkedIn as a gateway to have a professional relationship with someone much quicker. In fact, some estimates show that by using LinkedIn to research the people you plan to interact with, you can have a six-month head start on the relationship.

- **Spot trends and hot topics.** There's an amazing amount of real-time information available on LinkedIn. By being a member of various groups that interest you, you can see what people are thinking on a certain topic by the questions they're posting and the responses they're getting. So if you want to know what the current trends or best practices are in lean manufacturing, for example, you could join several lean manufacturing groups on LinkedIn and track each group's activity. You can then use the information you discover in your own company.

- **Get an "in" with top companies.** Whether you're looking for new clients, new vendors, or even a new job, with LinkedIn you can search the companies you want

to work with and see who in your network has connections there. You can then ask that person – your connection – for an introduction to a decision maker who can help you. Even if you find that no one in your network has connections with a particular company, perhaps someone in one of your groups works there. That's why it's important to belong to every group that interests you. Continually build your LinkedIn relationships and make those key connections before you actually need them. As Harvey Mackay says, "Dig your well before you're thirsty."

## The Missing Link to Your Success

Even though 82 percent of people use some kind of social media regularly, social media itself – including LinkedIn – is much like the Wild West. It's not tame yet, and best practices are still being formed. With that said, if you've spent much of your time on other social media sites and feel they aren't working for

building professional relationships, then it's time to give LinkedIn a try.

The key to making LinkedIn work is to work it regularly. Commit to spending at least thirty minutes per day on it, posting your ideas in updates, asking and answering questions, participating in groups, and reaching out to potential connections. Yes, it's one more thing to schedule in your calendar, but by building relationships and gaining new information on people and topics, it's also something that can make your job easier and your company better positioned. <sup>GB</sup>

### About the Author

**Jean Kelley**, president and founder of Jean Kelley Leadership Consulting, is the author of "Get A Job; Keep A Job." She works with corporate leaders all over the world to achieve their highest potential. Coupled with her other book, "Dear Jean: What They Don't Teach You at the Water Cooler," Jean has positioned herself as America's workplace coach. For more information, please visit [www.jeankelley.com](http://www.jeankelley.com).



# Business is Funny!



*Stories so outlandish -- they must be true!*



Two women were comparing notes on the difficulties of running a small business. "I started a new policy last year," the first one said. "I insist that each of my employees take at least a week off, without pay, every three months."

"Why in the world would you do that?" the other asked.

She responded, "It's the only way I can learn which ones I can do without."



We once had an engineer work for us who had a gift for fixing all mechanical things. After serving our company for 30 years, he retired. We contacted him one day regarding a seemingly impossible problem we were having with one of our multi-million dollar machines. We had tried everything to get the machine fixed, but to no avail. In desperation, we called him, since he had solved so many of our problems in the past. The engineer reluctantly took the challenge. He spent a day studying the huge machine. At the end of the day he marked a small X in chalk on a component of the machine. That component was replaced and the machine worked perfectly again. The company received a bill for \$50,000 from the engineer for his services. They demanded an itemized accounting of his charges. The engineer responded briefly: One chalk mark \$1; Knowing where to put it, \$49,999.



I used to work in technical support for a 24/7 call center. One day I got a call from an individual who asked what hours the call center was open. I told him, "The number you dialed is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

He responded, "Is that Eastern or Pacific time?"

Wanting to end the call quickly, I said, "Uh, Pacific."



I was the manager of an upscale men's wear store in a wealthy section of town and was interviewing a young man, as a favor to a friend, for an advertised salesman role. After reviewing his resume, I noticed he never worked in retail before, and that he was requesting a very high starting salary. I said, "for someone with no retail experience, you are certainly asking for a high salary."

"Well I suppose I am," the young man replied, "but you must understand that the work is so much harder when you don't know what you're doing."



## **The Differences Between You and Your Boss**

When you take a long time, you're slow.  
When your boss takes a long time, he's thorough.

When you don't do it, you're lazy.  
When your boss doesn't do it, he's busy.

When you make a mistake, you're an idiot.  
When your boss makes a mistake, he's only human.

When you take a stand, you're being bull-headed.  
When your boss does it, he's being firm.

When you please your boss, you're brown nosing.  
When your boss pleases his boss, he's being cooperative.

When you're out of the office, you're fooling around.  
When your boss is out of the office, he's on business.

# The Going Bonkers Family!

*Better than a pill... Hotter than a stolen tamale... Healthier than a carrot...  
More helpful than a hotline...*



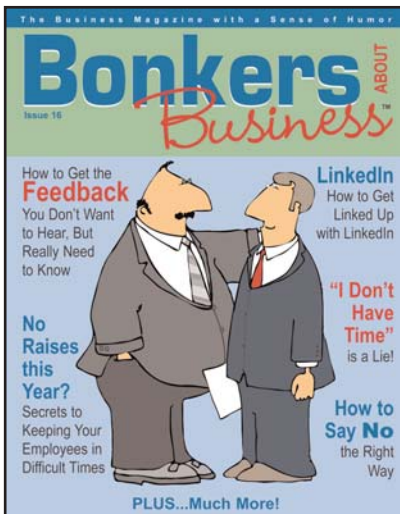
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# “I DON’T HAVE TIME” IS A LIE!

By Jim Bain

You have heard people say this over and over again, “I don’t have time.” The fact is that we all have the same number of hours in each day and we choose what to do with those hours. We choose whether to stay in bed, get up and go to work, or show up at our exercise class. We choose whether to write a letter to our mothers, take out the trash, clean the garage or paint the house. We choose what kind of work we want to do, where we want to live, who we want to live with, what hobbies we like to pursue. Our lives are a collection of our choices.

Ben Franklin said, “time is the stuff of which life is made.” If that is true, it means that time management is no more than self-management. As a result of the economic collapse of 2008, there are fewer people doing more work. There is more competition, which means more proposals, more sales calls, and more projects to be done by fewer people. In short, many of those who still have jobs are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of things they are expected to do. Since very few of us can “do it all,” we had better find some ways to make better choices.

While there are a lot of good habits that you can develop to better manage

your time, it’s best to pick a few to get started. Master those and then move on to another group. Start with these simple ideas to make your life a little easier. Remember, they are simple ideas, not necessarily easy. They will require self-discipline just as developing any good habit does.

**1. Develop a set of goals and write them down.** Consider short-term goals and long-term goals. Consider establishing goals that will help you balance these eight important areas of your life: Professional, Social, Spiritual, Financial, Recreational, Family, Intellectual and Physical. If that’s too many, use the YMCA model of Mind, Body and Spirit. Either way, you should be thinking in terms of life balance.

**2. Analyze where you spend your time now.** Develop a simple time log where you will record what you are doing over the course of two weeks. You can use the same categories from step one if you like or you can create some others. The important thing is to get an accurate picture of how you spend your time now. Where you spend your time is a direct reflection of your priorities. Are you spending your time on the things that will help you achieve your goals?

### 3. Plan your day and schedule your day, again in writing.

What is the difference? Planning is deciding, in advance, what you will do in a given day, week, or month. Scheduling is determining when you will do it. Too many people begin their day or their week with no real idea of exactly *what* they want to accomplish and *when*. Writing it down has two great benefits. First, it creates a sense of urgency in your subconscious. Because you've written it down, you believe that you need to get it done. Second, it gives you a chance to pat yourself on the back when you cross it off the list. Are the things you are putting in your plan and schedule contributing to reaching your goals? If so, great. If not, you may want to consider eliminating them from your list.

### 4. Make the most of slow time.

There are at least two categories of slow time. The first is when you are not at your peak performance level. Maybe this occurs right after lunch or maybe you're just not a morning person. Schedule easier tasks for these times. These are good times to respond to e-mails, sort through your mail, and return phone calls. The really tough projects need to be scheduled when you are at your peak. The second category of slow time includes waiting time. Waiting for a doctor's appointment or commuting on the train are examples. Always have something to do; have trade journals to read, expense reports to complete or reports to review. Think of all the little, but important, things you can get done during this slow time. An interesting side benefit is that all of a sudden, it

seems as if you never have to wait for a doctor or dentist. When you have something to do, they always seem to be running on time.

### 5. Create and maintain a controlled sense of urgency.

Orchestra leaders, football quarterbacks and airline pilots all have it. They aren't in a hurry but they are committed to everyone starting and stopping at the right time. There is a sense of urgency that everyone must buy in to. The people with whom you work and play will sense it and take their lead from you. You are someone who is in control of your time and in control of your life.

These are old rules but they apply to today's new game. Doing more with less is not only possible, it's required in today's economy. As we learn to make better choices with our time, we achieve more control over our lives. We can better balance our

work time, our play time, and our rest time. We can relieve pressure and stress and maybe even go home from work on time. You have time to do the things you choose to do. "I don't have time" is a lie! <sup>GB</sup>

#### About the Author

**James S. Bain, MBA**, is an author, speaker, consultant, and coach. He is the founder of the Falcon Performance Institute, a consulting and corporate training firm focused on productive performance. He has been a featured speaker at numerous regional and national conventions. Look for Jim's soon to be published book, *Never Pass on a Chance to P- A Roadmap to Success*. To hire Jim or find out more about the Falcon Performance Institute, please call 352-854-4015 or visit [www.fpiteam.com](http://www.fpiteam.com).

## GB BONKERISM

Everyone hits a brick wall now and then; the trick is not to do it with your head.



## OWNER OR CEO

Owners own the company. Owners don't run the company. When I go into the corner office of a company and I ask that individual what he or she does, nine times out of ten, I hear, "I'm the owner." That's the wrong answer. The owner might be who you are, but it's not what you do. What you do is your job title: you are the CEO, the CFO, or the VP of sales. If you take "owner" as your title, then all day you will be operating in your mental state as an owner, and that

might mean worrying about your investments, wondering whether you will make enough money to send your kids to college—all kinds of things that have no business being in the mind of a manager. If an owner is involved in the day-to-day experience of the company, they can't operate as owners. They must operate as their job titles dictate. Otherwise, they might steer the company away from its best path forward.

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# HOW TO SAY NO

## THE RIGHT WAY

By Carl Van

We all have to say “no” at times. Some people find it easier than others. What is interesting is that almost all of us struggle with the right way to say it.

People who hate to say “no” find it hard to do, and sometimes do something much worse than hurt someone’s feelings. They either don’t say anything, which passively sends an incorrect message of “yes,” or they say “no” in such a way that the other person doesn’t really know what is being said, sending the message of “maybe.”

People who don’t mind saying “no” don’t find it hard to do, but can lack the skills to do it gracefully and very often instill hard feelings, even when that is not their intent.

For those of you who have no problem saying “no,” but need a little guidance on how to say it more effectively, here are some tips.

### **Tip #1**

“I’m Sorry” doesn’t have to mean you are really sorry. A little empathy can go a long way.

### **Tip #2**

Repeat back to the other person their point of view. That will allow them

to listen to yours. Once you prove to someone you understand their point of view, by repeating it back to them, they can stop explaining it over and over again.

### **Tip #3**

You don’t have to prove to someone that the situation is their fault. Most people just want empathy, not for you to take the blame. If possible, take their side as much as you can, but return to the situation at hand.

### **Tip #4**

Show the other person you wish it could be different. Telling someone, “I wish I could do this for you . . . however, I just can’t” is much more powerful than, “I won’t do this for you because I don’t have to.”

### **Tip #5**

Help solve the problem in another way if possible. Even if alternatives aren’t the answer, the fact that you offered them shows that you care. Most people, when being told “no,” can take it a little better if it is coming from someone who seems to genuinely care.

### **Tip #6**

Avoid the word “but” when empathizing. When you say, “I understand, but...” what the other

person hears is, “I don’t understand.” Using the tips above, you can say “no” and avoid conflict. The following examples show how a different approach can save you from an unpleasant situation.

## SCENARIO 1

Pat is a hotel clerk who is trying to help Mr. Donnelly. It’s late at night and he needs a hotel room.

*Mr. Donnelly:* Look, I really need a room tonight. You’re the sixth hotel I’ve been to and I’m getting really tired.

*Pat:* I’m sorry, there are no rooms; we’re completely booked.

*Mr. Donnelly:* Please? I’m exhausted.

*Pat:* I understand, but that doesn’t change the fact that we have no rooms.

*Mr. Donnelly:* But I’m exhausted.

*Pat:* I understand, but how is that our fault? You should have made a reservation.

*Mr. Donnelly:* Can’t you do something for me?

*Pat:* (Turning the terminal toward Mr. Donnelly) Look, we have no rooms!

Notice how Pat said she was sorry, but she didn't really convey that very well. She was also concerned with proving Mr. Donnelly was at fault. She offered no real solution, and certainly did not appear that she wished it were different.

The next example shows how Pat does when she applies the tips above.

*Mr. Donnelly:* Look, I really need a room tonight. You're the sixth hotel I've been to and I'm getting really tired.

*Pat:* Oh, I'm very sorry, there are no rooms; we have a conference here and we're completely booked.

*Mr. Donnelly:* Please? I'm exhausted.

*Pat:* Mr. Donnelly, I understand that you are exhausted. I know you don't want to have to keep searching for a room at other hotels. I see how tired you are and understand what you are going through. Believe me, if I had a room, I would definitely give it to you. The truth is... I just don't have a room available. I'd do it if I could... but just can't. Can I help you find a room somewhere else?

*Mr. Donnelly:* Ugh. Okay, yes, please!

Pat's approach led to a much better result. Mr. Donnelly isn't thrilled, but he is ready to move on.

## SCENARIO 2

Debbie is a sales person at a department store. The store has a very strict policy about not accepting refunds over 30 days.

*Mr. Adam:* I want to turn this in for a refund, please.

*Debbie:* This was purchased over 30 days ago, so I can't do that.

*Mr. Adam:* I didn't know that when I bought it.

*Debbie:* I understand, but you should have read the return policy then. It's right there on the sales receipt.

*Mr. Adam:* Who reads sales receipts?

*Debbie:* People who want refunds.

*Mr. Adam:* Come on. It's been 34 days. What's the big deal?

*Debbie:* I understand, but 30 days is the limit. Sorry. You're going to have to be reasonable about this.

*Mr. Adam:* (Now angry) I AM being reasonable!!

Notice how Debbie failed to empathize with the customer. She blamed the customer for not understanding the policy. She even went so far as to imply the customer is an unreasonable person.

The next example shows what happens when Debbie approaches the situation with the tips in mind.

*Mr. Adam:* I want to turn this in for a refund, please.

*Debbie:* I'm very sorry Mr. Adam, but since this was purchased over 30 days ago, no refunds are allowed.

*Mr. Adam:* But I didn't know that.


*Debbie:* I understand that. It's on the receipt, and often people don't really read their receipts, so I can

understand that you didn't know about the policy.

*Mr. Adam:* Well I have to return it. I can't use it now and it's expensive.

*Debbie:* Mr. Adam, I really do understand. This is an expensive item and you are now realizing you can't use it. I truly wish the store policy were different and wish there was some way to make an exception. The policy is quite firm, however, and there is just no way to provide a refund. Can I help you find something you can exchange it for that might be acceptable to you?

*Mr. Adam:* Oh... okay. Do you have a catalog or something?

Hopefully that sounds a little better as well. Remember, saying "no" doesn't have to create bad feelings if you show a little empathy. Follow these simple tips and you might just get a little less resistance from people. 

### About the Author

**Carl Van** is a Professional Public Speaker and business course designer. He is President & CEO of his own international training company. He trains and speaks to audiences all over the United States and Canada on soft skills such as Customer Service and Branding, Negotiations, Time Management and of course Gaining Cooperation. His new book, *Gaining Cooperation* is available on Amazon.com. Mr. Van is available for Guest Speaking and can be reached at 504-393-4570 or [www.CarlVan.org](http://www.CarlVan.org) or [www.facebook.com/carlvanspeaker](http://www.facebook.com/carlvanspeaker)

  
**BONKERISM**

Pick good people;  
talent never wears out.



By Joelle Jay, Ph.D

# HOW TO GET THE FEEDBACK YOU DIDN'T WANT TO HEAR

## (But Really Need To Know)

What if there are things you are doing – or not doing – that are sabotaging your success? What if there are few key things you're missing that could help you get even better results? There's only one way to find out, and that's by getting feedback.

Unfortunately, feedback is sometimes given a bad rap. Poorly conducted performance reviews, harsh criticisms by thoughtless colleagues, and bad experiences with multi-rater feedback systems all contribute to the temptation to steer clear of feedback if you can help it.

But feedback is how we learn. Without feedback and reflection, you have no way to know how you're doing. You don't know what others think of you or how you might be holding yourself back. What you don't know *can* hurt you. A lack of self-knowledge can limit your opportunities and even stall your career.

On the other hand, when you seek feedback, you open yourself up to reflection. You become much more

thoughtful about what you're doing and why, how you can improve, how you can maximize your efforts and get better, more predictable results. When you get high quality feedback, you gain a tremendous advantage. By seeing yourself as others see you, suddenly you realize where, why and how you can improve. You understand where you're holding yourself back and where you have the opportunity to surge ahead. Asking for feedback can benefit you in the following ways:

- **Identifying Your Strengths.**

Feedback helps you maximize your natural strengths and reach your full potential. This is a good idea anytime, but especially when you're secure in your skills and competence and want to truly excel.

- **Seeing Into Your Blind Spots.**

You might want feedback because you want to improve your leadership and see into your blind spots. This is particularly important when you have been newly promoted or are in the throes of a new endeavor.

- **Meeting Your Goals.** Feedback gives you specific direction on how to meet your goals. This approach works best when you are already clear on what your goals are. You don't need information about what to do, but rather how you are to do it.

- **Preparing for Advancement.**

You might want feedback to prepare yourself for advancement. This method is best when you are seeking less self-awareness and more advice and direction.

- **Becoming More Effective.**

Feedback can help you become more effective in your current job, which is helpful at any time and in fact is a strategy you might want to use over and over. Feedback can even give you a sense of what your clients want and need. By asking questions not just about yourself, but about your clients and customers, you can better serve their needs and therefore increase your value to them.

What are your reasons for seeking feedback? What results do you want to achieve? Think about your rea-

sons for feedback in advance to take the fullest advantage of the learning it has to offer. Then, before you actually get the feedback, give careful thought to what will happen when you receive it.

Leaders all react to feedback differently. Reactions range from tears to elation. Are you interpreting the feedback in the way that will be most helpful to you?

Here are ten dos and don'ts that will help you make the most of the feedback you receive.

**1. Do choose one or two areas to work on.** Use your feedback as a jumping-off point for an action plan. Choose one most impactful area to master. Make some decisions about what it will take to improve in that area, and find a commitment you can get started on right away. You can always come back for more later.

**2. Do focus as much on your strengths as your weaknesses.** As you read your feedback, remember to focus on what's right, not just what's wrong. It's just as important to build on what's working than it is to improve what's not.

**3. Do save your feedback for a specific time set aside for review and reflection.** Give yourself the chance to absorb the feedback. Take the time to get in the right mindset to hear both good and bad news, and be sure you have enough time to work with the information productively.

**4. Do seek further detail and clarification as needed.** You may come across feedback you don't real-

ly understand. Don't just speculate. Go find out. While you're at it, thank the people who gave you feedback for their time and thoughts. Giving feedback can be just as risky as receiving it.

**5. Do take notes and explore your observations.** Your feedback isn't the final word on you. It's just a place to start. Add your own insights to what you learn in order to make sense of it and find the real learning.

**6. Don't choose too many areas to work on.** Feedback can be overwhelming. Every comment, good or bad, can be a place to look for improvement. Be careful not to get caught in "analysis paralysis."

**7. Don't focus on the "bad stuff."** It's easy to get sidetracked by fixating on what's not going well. Feedback is important, but it's not everything. Even when you get harsh feedback, you can learn to put it in perspective.

**8. Don't just skim the feedback.** Slow down and analyze it well. You might even want to read or review your feedback several times to really understand the message.

**9. Don't hold feedback against the people who gave it to you.** Every single person who gets feedback feels the same way: exposed. You might feel a little defensive, or even angry. Learn to connect with others over the experience for support. Don't shoot the messenger.

**10. Don't put the feedback in a drawer.** Feedback is a message given to you by others who care

enough to tell you the truth. If all you do is throw it in a drawer and forget about it, it's not worth going through the process at all.

If you adhere to these suggestions, you will be in a much stronger place to capitalize on the learning available in the feedback you receive.

Of course, feedback isn't the only way to learn about yourself. It's also helpful to round out the feedback you get from others with the reflection you do on your own, by taking psychological or scientific assessments, and having good old-fashioned one-on-one conversations with people who can help you be a better you. But feedback is a powerful tool. Like all tools, it serves a particular purpose. The more you learn about how to use feedback for what it can and can't do, the more productive the experience will be.

The process of receiving feedback is a vulnerable one, but ironically the feedback can strengthen you as a leader. Follow these dos and don'ts to be sure you make the most of the opportunity. GB

#### About the Author

**Joelle K. Jay, Ph.D.** is an executive coach specializing in leadership development and the author of *The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership*, in which shows leaders how to improve their effectiveness by learning to lead themselves. Her newsletter, *The Inner Edge Quarterly*, offers articles, exercises, tips, quotes, and success stories from real leaders to help you excel. To register, please visit [www.TheInnerEdge.com](http://www.TheInnerEdge.com) and click on Newsletter, or email [Info@TheInnerEdge.com](mailto:Info@TheInnerEdge.com). Visit her website at [www.joellekjay.com](http://www.joellekjay.com)

# Use Your “Dream Team” to Advance Your Career

By Joelle Jay, Ph.D

Jeff was a junior vice president at the corporate offices of an investment firm. He aspired to be the president of one of the company’s regional properties. Even though Jeff was pegged to be a senior leader of the company, he wanted to be sure he was prepared for every opportunity that came his way. So he brainstormed a list of leaders he hoped could help him. Once his list was complete, he sat down with each person, one at a time, and interviewed them with a short list of questions that would help him grow as a leader. By doing this, Jeff had created a “dream team” and was taking the lead in his career. You can do the same.

A dream team is a loose collection of advisors who help you get where you want to be as a leader. You turn to them because you know that on your path to success, they are further along than you. Your dream team might include:

- Leaders you admire.
- Leaders who have the positions you want to hold.
- Leaders who have the skills you want to have.
- Leaders who have achieved what you want to achieve.

You meet with these people one by one to ask them questions, seek their guidance, and learn from their experience.

The big difference between your



dream team and other “teams” of people you might call upon, such as a mastermind group, is that you never actually assemble your dream team in one place. In this way, your dream team is more like Fantasy Football than a real team. Every member of this group has been hand-selected because together, they represent the best of everything you need to be the leader you aspire to be. Once you know who’s on the team, you can draw on them one by one to support you in your success.

Here are the steps to help you assemble the best dream team possible:

## 1. Choose the “game.”

“Choose the game” means get clear on specifically why you want a dream team. What do you want to learn from meeting with your dream team members? As always, the answer should be tied to your vision. Perhaps you want to:

- Learn how to generate passive income.

- Learn how to enjoy life more without giving up your career.

- Learn how to smoothly conduct mergers and acquisitions for business growth.
- Learn how to triple my profits.

- Learn how to be the kind of leader that balances respect for people and the results of the business.

Notice that in each game, the focus is on *learning*. On your dream team, you’re the rookie, if only in this one area of your life.

## 2. Pick the “players.”

“Pick the players” means being thoughtful and strategic about who gets on the team. This is not the time to hang out with good buddies and old friends; it’s a time to branch out and build new relationships with people from whom you can truly learn. Among the group, it is helpful to have:

- **Advocates.** Advocates champion you, encourage you, and contribute directly to your success, perhaps by introducing you to influential people or making you a part of their team.

- **Experts.** Experts have information and knowledge you need to be successful. Instead of learning it all the hard way, experts help you jump to new levels of awareness by sharing their experience.

- **Inspirations.** Inspirations are people whose accomplishments make you want to be better yourself. As

you watch a person who inspires you – whether that person is your most courageous colleague, a person who has risen to the top of her field, or just someone whose approach to life you admire – you are moved to a higher level of contribution and achievement.

These roles will often cross. In fact, people who can play more than one role on your team are often your strongest supporters.

Now notice who is *not* on this list:

- **Friends.** Friendship is not a requirement of your dream team. Chances are you will see your members as friends, and your friends may become members of your team. But you can also learn from people you hardly know and may not even enjoy.

- **Yes-Men and -Women.** Do not put people on your dream team who will only tell you what you want to hear. You already have your own opinions. Your dream team is meant to supplement (not rubber-stamp) them.

- **Your Boss.** Just because bosses manage your position doesn't mean they can help develop your gifts. They may. They may not. You decide.

The diversity of your dream team is essential. Cover as many bases as you can in terms of gender, age, race, and station in life. Your eyes will be opened to new perspectives that will enhance your learning. Look, too, for diversity of “gifts.” People who are powerful, political, compassionate, intelligent, international, local, aggressive, spiritual, and reassuring can all add special value. So long as there's chemistry, the more wildly

diverse combination of traits you can cover in your dream team, the better. Of course, you can't get all of that in one person. That's why it's a team.

### 3. Set the “rules.”

The “rules” of your dream team game are how you want to play. If you don't set up the process in a way you'll enjoy it, you'll be less likely to see it through. For example, you might look for opportunities for informal conversation “when the time is right.” Or you might prefer a formal introduction with a letter and a follow-up phone call. Or you might arrange meetings according to each member's choice (e.g. five minutes in the office of one, a fifteen-minute phone call with another, a meeting over lunch with a third). It's a good idea to decide how you want the process to play out so you put your best foot forward and feel comfortable along the way.

### 4. Define a “win.”

What is the best-case scenario for this dream team? In other words,

what will define a “win?” Are you hoping to develop long-term relationships? Do you just want a lot of information fast? Do you want complex information and are willing to talk to as many people as it takes to get there?

This step is important, because it respects the time of the leaders whose advice you're seeking while also meeting the goals that matter most to you. If what you want is concrete advice on how to set up a sole proprietorship, you can get it in a series of short, one-shot interviews. On the other hand, if you want to become steeped in the culture of high-quality leadership, you'll want to develop deeper, more substantial relationships with the people whose work you admire.

### 5. Get in the game!

“Getting in the game” means approaching the people you admire to be on your team – asking them to meet with you, talking to them, and applying what you learn as you work

continued next page



toward your vision. If a meeting with one of your dream team members turns out to be beneficial, great. Ask them if they would mind meeting again. If not, fine. Some of these conversations will turn out to be a waste of time. Others will turn into the kinds of mentorships that last a lifetime.

Remember, the work you do with your dream team is not pandering or political maneuvering. There should be nothing in this process that smacks of manipulation. These are genuine, respectful conversations with people you admire to request the support you would be willing to give someone who asked it of you.

## Dream Big

Over time, you'll find that your dream team project becomes a practice. You will make meeting with inspirational leaders and role models a part of your own personal development, because you will see that you can achieve more, and faster, when you are supported by a strong and experienced team. With the help of your dream team, you'll quickly create the personal and professional life of your dreams. GB

### About the Author

**Dr. Joelle K. Jay, Ph. D.**, is an executive coach and the senior managing partner of the leadership development firm, Pillar Consulting. She strategizes with business leaders to enhance their performance and maximize business results. Her clients include presidents, vice presidents, and C-level executives in Fortune 500 companies. Joelle is the author of *The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership*. For a free Sample Chapter, go to [www.TheInnerEdge.com](http://www.TheInnerEdge.com) or email [Info@TheInnerEdge.com](mailto:Info@TheInnerEdge.com).

# Wacky Wisdom 4 Business



A sales rep, an administration clerk, and the manager are walking to lunch when they find an antique oil lamp. They rub it and a Genie comes out. The Genie says, "I'll give each of you just one wish" "Me first! Me first!" says the admin. clerk. "I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, without a care in the world." Poof! She's gone. "Me next! Me next!" says the sales rep. "I want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with my personal masseuse, an endless supply of Pina Colodas and the love of my life." Poof! He's gone. "OK, you're up," the Genie says to the manager. The manager says, "I want those two back in the office after lunch."

*Moral: Always let your boss have the first say.*



A turkey was chatting with a bull "I would love to be able to get to the top of that tree," sighed the turkey, but I haven't got the energy." "Well, why don't you nibble on my droppings?" replied the bull. "They're packed with nutrients." The turkey pecked at a lump of dung and found that it gave him enough strength to reach the lowest branch of the tree. The next day, after eating some more dung, he reached the second branch. Finally after a fourth night, there he was proudly perched at the top of the tree. Soon he was spotted by a farmer, who shot the turkey out of the tree.

*Moral: Bullshit might get you to the top, but it won't keep you there.*



Upon completing a highly dangerous tightrope walk over Niagara Falls in appalling wind and rain, 'The Great Zumbrati' was met by an enthusiastic supporter, who urged him to make a return trip, this time pushing a wheelbarrow, which the spectator had thoughtfully brought along. The Great Zumbrati was reluctant, given the terrible conditions, but the supporter pressed him, "You can do it - I know you can," he urged. "You really believe I can do it?" asked Zumbrati. "Yes - definitely - you can do it." the supporter gushed. "Okay," said Zumbrati, "Get in the wheelbarrow"

*Moral: Overconfidence in someone else's ability can be your downfall.*

## Office Antics

Is Your Office Work dull? None of your colleagues appreciate your humor? Amuse yourself:

- ✓ Walk sideways to the photocopier.
- ✓ Page yourself over the intercom (do not disguise your voice)
- ✓ At the end of a meeting, suggest that, for once, it would be nice to conclude with the singing of the national anthem (extra points if you actually launch into it yourself).
- ✓ For an hour, refer to everyone you speak to as 'Bob'.
- ✓ While an office mate is out, move their chair into the elevator.
- ✓ At lunchtime, get down on your knees and announce "As God is my witness, I'll never go hungry again".
- ✓ In a colleague's diary, write in 10am: "See how I look in tights".
- ✓ Hang a two-foot long piece of toilet roll from the back of your pants and act genuinely surprised when someone points it out.

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After being laid off from five different jobs in four months, Arnold was hired by a warehouse. One day he lost control of a forklift and drove it off the loading dock. Surveying the damage, the owner shook his head and said he'd have to withhold ten percent of Arnold's wages to pay for the repairs.

"How much will it cost?" asked Arnold. "About \$4,500," said the owner. "What a relief!" exclaimed Arnold. "I've finally got job security!"



An elderly fisherman wrote to a mail order, "Please send me one of those gasoline engines for my boat you show on page 438, and if it's any good, I'll send you a check."

In a short time he received the following reply: "Please send a check. If it's any good, we'll send the engine."

# Take a Laugh Break

A small company was on the edge of bankruptcy. The owner summoned his two-man sales force into his office.

"Things aren't going too well, guys," he announced grimly. "So to perk up sales I'm announcing a contest. The guy with the most sales gets a nice relaxing full-body massage."

"What does the loser get?" asked one of the salesmen.

The owner looked at both men and said, "The loser gives it."

Fresh out of business school, the young man answered a want ad for an accountant. Now he was being interviewed by a very nervous man who ran a small business that he had started himself. "I need someone with an accounting degree," the man said. "But mainly, I'm looking for someone to do my worrying for me." "Excuse me?" the accountant said. "I worry about a lot of things," the man said. "But I don't want to have to worry about money. Your job will be to take all the money worries off my back." "I see," the accountant said. "And how much does the job pay?" "I'll start you at eighty thousand." "Eighty thousand dollars!" the accountant exclaimed. "How can such a small business afford a sum like that?" "That," the owner said, "is your first worry."

A dinner speaker was in such a hurry to get to his speaking engagement that when he arrived and sat down at the head table, he suddenly realized that he had forgotten his false teeth.

Turning to the man next to him he whispered, "Oh my gosh, I forgot my teeth." The man said, "No problem." With that he reached into his pocket and pulled out a pair of false teeth. "Try these," he said. The speaker tried them. "Too loose," he said. The man then said, "I have another pair...try these." The speaker tried them and responded, "Too tight." He then said, "I have one more pair of false teeth...try them." The speaker said, "They fit perfectly." With that he ate his meal and gave his address.

After the dinner meeting was over, the speaker went over to thank the man who had helped him. "I want to thank you for coming to my aid. Where is your office? I've been looking for a good dentist." The man replied, "I'm not a dentist. I'm an undertaker."



# GAINING COOPERATION

## THREE MAXIMS FOR SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION

By Carl Van

“Everything you know is wrong. Black is white, up is down and short is long. And everything you thought was just so important . . . doesn't really matter anymore.” “Everything You Know is Wrong.” –Weird Al Yankovic

If you are a fan of the show “Seinfeld,” you will remember an episode where George concludes that every single decision he made and every single approach he took in his past, was wrong. Every gut instinct he had always led him to disaster. So he incorporates a new philosophy: if every single thing that he had ever done was wrong, then the opposite must be right. And from that point forward, instead of doing what he would normally do, he does the exact opposite. Of course things work out very well for him. He gets a new girlfriend, he gets a new job, and his life becomes quite blissful (for a while).

Sometimes, in order to be persuasive, businesspeople tend to argue and try to prove others wrong, which is the exact opposite of what you should do. In fact, those arguing will be very detailed in pointing out why other's beliefs are wrong so they give in. This usually doesn't work very

well, and then you just have a battle on your hands that isn't needed.

**NEGOTIATION MAXIM #1:**  
*“Great negotiators never argue with reasons; they argue the facts.”*

What are you negotiating? Negotiations are for cooperation. And when negotiating for cooperation, the very best negotiators never argue with people's reasons; they argue with facts.

When you argue with someone's reasons, you are trying to prove them wrong. In fact, most people believe in order to convince someone you're right, you have to show them that they are wrong. It is just a natural response. It's the old “let me show you that you are wrong so that you will see that I am right” impulse.

**NEGOTIATION MAXIM #2:**  
*“You never have to prove anyone wrong; you only have to prove yourself right.”*

So what do great negotiators do with people's reason if not argue? Well, like George, try the opposite.

The opposite of proving someone

wrong is to simply acknowledge where they are coming from. Effective communicators use the tool of acknowledgement to gain cooperation and save time. In the event you are trying to be persuasive and gain someone's cooperation, use these three steps:

1. Ask why they don't want to cooperate.
2. Acknowledge their reasons as valid.
3. Return to the facts.

**NEGOTIATION MAXIM #3:**  
*“People will consider what you have to say, to the exact degree you demonstrate you understand their point of view.”*

Here is an example. Mike works at a department store in the customer service area. His main job is to deal with people who want to get a refund for a product that did not meet their expectations or did not work properly. Rhonda is a recent customer who has brought in an item to return.

*Mike:* Okay, Rhonda, in order to process this return, all I need to do is get a statement from you on what was wrong with the product or how it didn't meet your expectations.

*Rhonda:* I don't want to give you that.

*Mike:* Well, why not?

*Rhonda:* Because, you will just use it against me.

*Mike:* Why would I use that against you? That doesn't make any sense.

Notice how Mike immediately tried to show Rhonda she was wrong? Mike should remember three important things:

- People will consider what you have to say; to the exact degree you demonstrate you understand their point of view.
- Great negotiators never argue with reasons; they argue the facts.
- You never have to prove anyone wrong; you only have to prove yourself right.

Here is how Mike might have handled it.

*Mike:* Okay, Rhonda, in order to process this return, all I need to do is get a statement from you on what was wrong with the product or how it didn't meet your expectations.

*Rhonda:* I don't want to give you that.

*Mike:* Okay, can I ask why?

*Rhonda:* Because, you will just use it against me.

*Mike:* You know, Rhonda, if you don't want to give me a statement about the product and why you're returning it; because you are concerned that I am going to use it against you, then I can certainly understand why you don't want to give me a statement. That makes sense.

I just want to let you know that the purpose of the statement is not to use the information against you. In fact, the reason I need the statement is to document the file to be sure that you do get a full refund and that you do get everything that you are entitled to. If you'll give me a statement of facts, I will be able to process your return and you can be on your way.

Did you see how Mike took the time to acknowledge Rhonda's reasons and skillfully return to the facts at hand?

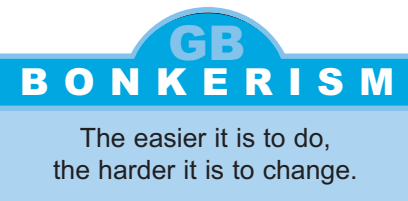
Notice what Mike did in this case. He completely reduced Rhonda's uncooperativeness by acknowledging it. Notice he did not agree with it, and notice he did not say, "yes, you are right." He simply acknowledged where Rhonda was coming from. He called the customer a reasonable person. She's reasonable for the way she feels. The fact that Mike took the time to tell this customer that she was a reasonable person for the way she feels is going to allow her to

change her mind (which, of course, is all he wanted in the first place).

Stop trying to prove other people wrong, and stick to proving yourself right. It's easier and a whole lot less stressful. <sup>GB</sup>

#### About the Author

**Carl Van** is a Professional Public Speaker and business course designer. He is President & CEO of his own international training company. He trains and speaks to audiences all over the United States and Canada on soft skills such as Customer Service and Branding, Negotiations, Time Management and of course Gaining Cooperation. His new book, *Gaining Cooperation* is available on Amazon.com. Mr. Van is available for Guest Speaking and can be reached at 504-393-4570 or [www.CarlVan.org](http://www.CarlVan.org) or [www.facebook.com/carlvanspeaker](https://www.facebook.com/carlvanspeaker).



## HOW TO DEFINE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The most efficient way to run a company is to have employees assigned to specific tasks without overlap. This is true for partners and owners as well. The greater the definition of their roles, the less likely you are to have conflict. This is a key principle because when roles are allowed to overlap, it's often a disaster. Take this example from the U.S. military. The military has a method of covering as much ground during an

assault as possible, and it is called the Buzz Saw. Here's how it works. If you have three professional snipers and their mission is to protect a certain area while under attack, how do they cover as much ground as possible? The answer is strict division of territory. Each is given an area to cover that does not overlap with the other two. That way they can cover as much ground as possible without waste.

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# Increase Your Potential by Improving Your Perception

By Jill Wade, DDS, MAGD and Kelly Martin, DC

John was accustomed to having Superhero status with his family, friends and business colleagues. He was handsome, strong, witty and had been a motivated executive in his company for many years. Recently, as he was leaving a long day at work, he caught a glimpse of his reflection and was shocked at what he saw. He was unable to recognize the defeated, unhappy, overweight, and tired version of “Superhero” John. He felt the weight of the world on his shoulders but was completely unmotivated to do anything about it. So he began to wonder: is *perception* the *reflection* of what is going on inside of you?

Are you aware of how others perceive you? Are you reflecting health, vitality, strength, and mental sharpness? The message you are sending out to the world may not be the one you would like. Your mind, body and spirit are intricately connected and when well balanced, you are at your best. These days so many productive, hardworking business people are feeling the effects of long term stress: weight gain, lack of motivation, less energy, more irritation, less loving, and less tolerance.

Remember you only have one chance to make a great impression;

sometimes perception is everything. You are your best asset, and you may need to take time to focus on the Superhero in you.

## Which Superhero are you reflecting?

**SUPER MAN** – The ultimate hero is sharp, clear thinking, loving, energetic, fit and ready to help others. Success seems to come easy to both in his career and home-life. His stress and sex hormones are in balance; he exercises regularly and practices great nutritional habits. Superman sleeps deep and sound, waking up refreshed and ready to save the world. He is able to balance his drive and motivation with kindness and patience to his employees. Those that work with him admire and respect him. He makes sound decisions and facilitates the growth of his company.

**THE HULK** – You wouldn't like this hero when he is angry. He experiences rage at the smallest things, flying off the handle at work and at home. He is struggling with weight gain around the middle, due to elevated cortisol because of high stress levels. He tries to make it to the gym consistently to work off some steam, and that weight gain, but nothing

seems to help. His stress glands are taking a beating by having to stay in fight or flight mode most of the time, this puts him at risk for decreased immunity and increased recovery time after illness. Sometimes sleeping is a challenge if he is wired and his mind is racing, so often times he will have to rely on caffeine and other stimulants to keep him alert during the day. His employees have learned to read his mood before approaching him with problems during the workday.

**HOMER SIMPSON** – As lovable as Homer can be, he is definitely lacking some Superhero qualities. He is overweight, a heavy drinker, makes poor nutritional choices, is a couch potato, and unmotivated to set the world on fire at work. He has a potbelly, abrasive personality, and is losing his hair! Good thing Marge loves him. At mid-life, Homer's sex hormones are starting to decline, decreasing his libido, contributing to weight gain, making him grumpy, and unmotivated to get off the couch. His stress glands (adrenals) are probably fatigued due to poor nutrition, drinking and lack of exercise. His co-workers are fond of him, but often will circumvent him when trying to finish a product due to his lack of motivation.

**AUSTIN POWERS** – He is a shagadelic example of someone who has it going on internally, but his outer appearance is somewhat misleading. He may be overlooked initially for career opportunities because of his unprofessional appearance; but if given enough time, he can usually prove his worth. He is sharp, witty, and brave, has a healthy libido, and for the most part is physically fit. His hormones are balanced and he manages the stress in his life with flair. He makes decent food choices and doesn't over-indulge in alcohol. He sleeps well with whomever he entices into bed with him. The only thing Austin needs is a power smile, haircut and a stylist! Others would perceive him as healthy and successful that much sooner with a few surface improvements.

Balancing your Circle of Health consists of four key components: hormones, nutrition, nervous system, and purification.

- **Hormones.** As men age, hormones like testosterone and growth hormone start to naturally decline. If these imbalances are corrected, men may have the advantage of an increased libido, maintaining leanness and muscle mass, staying sharp and focused, and maintaining their edge at work.

- **Nutrition.** Because every cellular activity in your body requires the proper nutrients, it is very important to feed yourself healthy food and quality supplements. You have to have the appropriate fuel, to operate as a superhero. For example, B vitamins are important for energy and the production of hormones; where-

as, vitamin D3 is important for immunity and fighting cancer.

- **Nervous System.** Proper levels of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine will keep moods even, tempers in check, creativity alive, and those around you happy. Proper amounts of amino acids are essential for neurotransmitter production. Supplements such as 5-HTP and amino acids, along with moderate exercise can improve your neurotransmitter levels.

- **Purification.** A superhero's world is full of toxicities. Preservatives in foods, pollution in air, lead in paint, aluminum in deodorant are examples of toxicities in all areas of life. Alcohol and prescription/non-prescription drugs can also be considered toxins. To perform at the highest level, purification of cleansing organs like the liver and kidneys is very beneficial.

So, how are you being perceived? Are you reflecting your health or the lack thereof? You can control your reflection for a while, until age or poor health take over. It is important to put your best foot forward in this world. Perception can be critical in a job hire, promotion, sale or deal. You can still be the Superhero you were destined to be by taking a few crucial steps toward health. Bring the superhero back; he is inside you, just waiting to burst out. Who knows, someone may mistake you for Clark Kent!

#### About the Author

**Jill Wade, DDS, MAGD and Kelly Martin, DC** are committed to helping men and women find a natural approach to wellness. Dr. Martin and Dr. Wade explore the synergy between the entire body and the mouth being a window to wellness and alignment. Co-Founding Relevance Health was a combined effort to help men and women lead healthier, better lives. To learn more about a healthy "Circle of Health" visit [www.relevancehealth.com](http://www.relevancehealth.com)



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