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UNOPA Notes, Volume 49, Issue 7, March 2011

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UNOPA Notes

Volume 49, Issue 7

March 2011

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA OFFICE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

UNOPA Mission Statement:

The purpose of UNOPA is to provide professional growth and promote high professional standards for educational office professionals with the University of Nebraska, as partners, upholding the quality of service to the university educational systems and community.

President's Message — Spring is here!

Mari Greer, President



UNOPA M.A.G.I.C.

*Making
A
Greater
Individual
Commitment*

It's almost here, springtime! Pretty soon we will see the beautiful crocus flowers popping out of the ground all around campus. On your lunch break, take a little time to walk around and enjoy all of the trees and flowers as they start to bud and bloom, then listen to the birds as they start to sing. Oh, isn't it lovely?

Many of us work with students on a daily basis, but do we really know what is going on around campus when it comes to students? Our March 8th general meeting addresses that question. Justin Solomon, ASUN student body president and University of Nebraska student regent,

will make a presentation on what is happening around UNL. It is a meeting you will not want to miss!

Don't forget to nominate a UNOPA member for the Rose Frolik award! Check the UNOPA website for all of the details.

I hope you have turned in your registration form and will join me at our half-day workshop that will be held on Tuesday, March 22, from 1:00-4:30 p.m. We are excited to have Kim Ratz back in Lincoln to teach us about "Women, Men, Generational Communication Styles" and "Open Space Technology." I am looking forward to it.

Inside this issue:

PSP: WHAT IS IT?	2
PSP LUNCHEON	2
FEBRUARY MEETING RECAP	2
LOLA YOUNG'S JOURNEY	3
NEW MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT	3
CIRCLE OF GENERATIONS	4
UAAD WORKSHOP	4
TRIBUTE TO ROSE FROLIK	5
HUMOR FOR YOUR HELATH	5
CENTRAL AREA RETREAT	6
BRIGHT LIGHTS ADVENTURES	6
UNOPA SPRING WORKSHOP	7
NATIONAL CONFERENCE	7
BRADLEY MUNN FUNDS	7
RECOGNITION SKILLS	8
SAVE THE DATES	8
WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION	9
PROCRASTINATION WEEK	9
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	10

What is a Student?

Donna Boone, Program Director

I found the following definitions of a student in dictionary.com: 1. A person formally engaged in learning, especially one enrolled in a school or college, such as a student at Yale. 2. Any person who studies, investigates or examines thoughtfully, such as a student of human nature.

These two definitions actually make us all "students" in one way or another.

At our general meeting on March 8, 2011, we will have as our speaker, Justin Solomon, President of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN). When I asked

Justin to speak to our members he asked what we would like the subject of his speech to be. As I considered this question, the first question that came to my mind was, "What is ASUN and how does it benefit the students here at the University?" Then as the little "cogwheels and gears" began turning I started wondering how we, as office professionals, could help the students during their time spent at the University.

Since I came to the conclusion we are all students in one way or another, wouldn't it be a misapplication to let opportunities for learning from

one another go to waste? Justin will introduce us to ASUN, the organization, and how it benefits the students as well as the University. He will also give us a few ideas on how we may be of service to the students.

Please plan to attend the March 8, UNOPA General Meeting in the Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center on City Campus. Send your RSVP to Belva Harris by **Thursday, March 3, 2011.**

I always say, "The day is wasted when I don't learn something new." So come and learn something new!



Justin Solomon

Deadline to register for the March 8 General Meeting:

MARCH 3

<http://unopa.unl.edu>

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PSP — Professionals Standards Program

Mary Guest, CEOE, Career Development Co-Director

What is it? The PSP is a voluntary, certification program based on experience, education and professional activities. The program was established by the National Association of Educational Office Professionals (NAEOP) to encourage educational office professionals to grow professionally.

What's in it for me?

- Show pride in your profession by attaining a PSP certificate.

- Receive a certificate from NAEOP and be recognized at a formal banquet held at the annual conference.
- Be enriched by the activities you will participate in while working toward your goal. You will enhance UNOPA and be a contributing member of your community.
- Upon successful completion of each level of the Program or recertification you will be among the best and know

you have met the challenge of excellence!

How can I find out more?

Contact UNOPA's Career Development—PSP Director, Mary Guest (402-472-3204 or mguest2@unl.edu) and start on your path to certification!



Attention: UNOPA members, spouses, family & friends!

Lorraine Moon, CEOE, Co-chair PSP Luncheon Committee

Ancient Roman Religion and Nebraska Football April 2, 2011

Professor Michael Hoff from the Art History Department is a fan of college football. He is also an archaeologist who understands the workings of ancient Roman cult. This brought about the realization that there were similarities between this religion and college football. At the 5th Annual PSP Luncheon on April 2, Dr. Hoff will share insights on how UNL's football program, like ancient Roman religion, is an institution that binds together the different populations within the state.

UNOPA members who have been fortunate enough to hear this presentation say it is very entertaining. The planning committee for this event know you will not want to miss hearing Dr. Hoff. This is also a presentation that the men in our lives would enjoy. Plan now to attend the luncheon on Saturday, April 2, Vine Congregational Church, 1800 Twin Ridge Road.

Reservations are \$15 each. (\$5.00 off to UNOPA members with coupon—contact Jeanne Andelt at jandelt1@unl.edu or 402-472-6625). Registration forms are available on the UNOPA website:

(<http://unopa.unl.edu>), from any PSP member or by contacting Lorraine Moon (lmoon1@unl.edu or 402-472-6082) or Gretchen Walker (gwalker1@unl.edu or 402-472-0602).



Recap of February 8th meeting

Gretchen Walker, CEOE

At the February 8, 2011, general meeting, speaker Heath Tuttle, On-Line Learning Project Leader for Information Services, provided an interactive presentation on Skype, Facebook and Twitter.

Heath demonstrated Skype by uplinking to his wife, a teacher at Culler Middle School.

Tuttle suggested those who use Facebook for both personal and work purposes should create separate Facebook accounts. He also alerted us to check the security settings of our Facebook accounts.

Many UNOPA members provided comments and additional tips for Skype, Facebook and Twitter.



Heath Tuttle presenting at the February General UNOPA meeting on Social Communication ... keeping "in the know"

My journey

Lola Young, CEOE, NAEOP Vice President & Membership Director

My professional journey began in 1981 when I first started working at UNL. In my first position, I was a very shy Clerical Assistant working for University Housing in the Abel maintenance office. After a year, I transferred to the central Housing Office and was their receptionist for a year. Next I was fortunate enough to move into the Housing Director's secretary position. For fifteen years I absolutely loved working with Doug Zatechka. While there, one of the ladies who worked for Educational Psychology in the same building encouraged me to join UNOPA, so I could come to a meeting and hear Bob Kerry speak. It sounded like a worthwhile opportunity so I did. Those ladies became my friends and before I knew it I was serving on the membership committee.

Dr. Zatechka was always supportive of me, and I distinctly remember bringing him with me to a UNOPA Bosses Luncheon where he encouraged me to run for office. I did so, resulting in my serving as UNOPA's Corresponding Secretary. I ended up going all the way with UNOPA and served as President in 1998-99. In 1990 I received UNOPA's

Silver Pen Award and in 1991 the Rose Frolik Award. At some point, I was encouraged by some of my UNOPA friends to join NEOPA and NAEOP so I could participate in the Professional Standards Program. Of course I did so knowing how much professional growth and enjoyment I was enjoying in UNOPA. I served in various roles for NEOPA with the highlight during the first month of my year as President-elect, when the President resigned, resulting in my serving as President for the remainder of her year followed by my entire year (1997-99). Needless to say, I really didn't expect to win both elections so I was very busy in 1998-99 serving as President of both UNOPA and NEOPA. In 2002, I received NEOPA's Educational Office Professional of the Year Award.

Making 1997 even busier, I changed positions and became the Complex Staff Assistant (now renamed Residence Life Services Supervisor) for the Cather-Pound-Neihardt (now Cather-Pound-Neihardt-Husker-Courtyards) complex. My new supervisor was equally supportive of me in my busy roles.

My next endeavors included NAEOP. Having attended all but one National Conference since 1990, with the encouragement and support of my supervisors, I had the opportunity to serve as an Advisory Council Delegate a number of times. After receiving NAEOP's Educational Office Professional of the Year award in 2003, I decided I would consider running for Central Area Director. I was successful and served in that position from 2006 to 2010. Currently I am serving as NAEOP's Vice President and will be installed this July as NAEOP's President-elect in Charleston, South Carolina.

I've not only made many special long-lasting friendships, but I've also worked my way through the PSP program and have earned my Advanced III and CEOE. I continue to serve on and/or chair committees for all three organizations and treasure each networking opportunity. My UNOPA/NEOPA/NAEOP friends have transformed a painfully shy person into one who is no longer afraid to get up and speak in front of large groups of people. Shy or not, give us the chance to do the same for you!



Lola Young, CEOE, (second from the left) with a few of her UNOPA friends. LtoR: Mary Guest, CEOE, Lola, Peg Johnson, Sandy Lineberry, and Diane Wasser, CEOE.

New members in the spotlight

Gretchen Walker, CEOE

Please welcome Sally Hawkins to UNOPA! Sally is currently employed as a Secretary III in the Computer Science and Engineering Department and has worked at UNL for 20 years.

Sally was born and raised in Fairbury, Nebraska, but has lived in Lincoln for over 40 years. Sally is married with grown children and one in high school (believe it or not). She enjoys reading, walking, and listening to music.

Her favorite activity to do on a day off will of course depend on the weather. And *The Sound of Music* is a favorite of Sally's.

Other new UNOPA members include Marilyn Augustyn, an Administrative Technician, also in the Computer Science and Engineering Department, and Murd Holland, Administrative Support Specialist in the IANR Vice Chancellors Office and NU Vice President's Office. A new

Associate Member is Rosann Kevil, Sales & Marketing Manager, Staybridge Suites.

Next time you see Sally, Marilyn, Murd, or Rosann please stop to introduce yourself.



Sally Hawkins

UNOPA Notes

Circle of generations — A PSP workshop

Mary Guest, CEOE, Co-Director Career Development

If you would like to learn more about bridging generational differences or open space technology, please click on the following link to register:
<http://unopa.unl.edu>

Speaker: **Kim Ratz**
Date: **Tuesday, March 22, 2011**
Time: **1:00-4:30 p.m.**
Place: **City Campus Union**

FREE to UNOPA members
Non-members \$10.00

Generations represent common experiences and shared values. A generation can also represent all the people born at about the same time. To understand your generation's perspective, learn more about the characteristics of each generation. What was happening for each generation that helped to form their thinking and visioning? To help foster respect, caring and cooperation between the generations, look at things that were happening in each of the five generations.

Mature or Civic/GI Generation (1901-1931)

Characteristics include: Duty, honor, country, dedication, sacrifice, patience, hard times and then prosperity, national pride, doing a good job was the most important thing, and conformity + blending + unity = "WE."

Mediating Generation (1932-1944)

Characteristics include: Children of the depression and war, Peace

Corp volunteers, civil rights and activists, created the corporate system, developed the concept of career, loyalty to employer, finest mediators, arbitrators, and public interest lawyers.

Baby Boomers (1945-1963)

Characteristics include: "Workaholic" and competitive, success is largely visible with trophies, plaques, and lifestyle elements, optimistic, consumers of lots of items, and social justice = real measure of citizenship.

Diversity or Generation X (1964-1981)

Characteristics include: Came of age when the traditional world leaders were struggling, i.e., economy, Vietnam, Watergate, Japanese domination of industry, AIDS, birth control, first ones comfortable with technology, very self reliant, had to learn to fend for themselves and get along well with Civics, suspicious of Mediating and Boomers, and can be cynical and pessimistic.

Millennial Generation (1982-present)

Characteristics include: Optimistic, VERY short attention span, busy, entrepreneurial, ambitious yet clueless, acknowledge and admire select authorities, and think the Matures and Parents are cool, too!

How can the generations work together to solve problems in the community, in the family or in the workforce? Through communication and working together, people can build relationships and learn from other generations.

Have a conversation with your family of different generations to see what respect was like when they were a teenager.

Source: *James V. Gambone, Together for Tomorrow –Building Community Through Intergenerational Dialogue*
Written by *Eileen Krumbach, University of Nebraska Extension Educator*



University Association for Administrative Development

Gretchen Walker, CEOE

The University Association for Administrative Development will be sponsoring a workshop entitled, *Continuous Process Improvement – Creating Excellence in Service Delivery*, on **Tuesday, March 29**, 1:30-4:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union.

Are your customers/stakeholders frustrated by the processes your department uses? Do you ever think "there has got to be an easier way to get the work done?" Then come and learn about *Continuous Process Improvement* and the toolbox that puts the concept into action.

Topics include:

- Identification of key processes and their desired outcomes.

- Flow charting processes.
- Use of flow charts to identify the tasks/steps with the greatest potential for improvement.
- Methods of data collection and analysis to guide the improvement process.
- Development of a plan to implement the proposed improvements.
- Tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of the change.

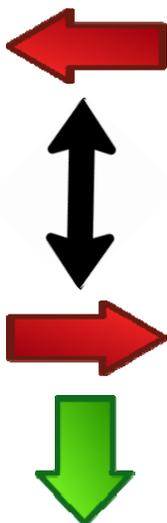
Speaker Dr. Paula Wells has a B.S. and M.S. in Civil Engineering and a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering and Management Systems. She is currently an Operations and Business Systems

Analyst with The Wells Resource and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Nebraska College of Engineering, Business Administration and School of Public Administration.

Cost is \$20 for UNOPA & UAAD members. Cost to non-members is \$35 (this includes a UAAD one-year membership).

To register please go out to the following website:

<http://uaad.unl.edu/downloads/spring2011.pdf>



Tribute to Rose Frolik

Sandy Lineberry

UNOPA and the world lost a very special person on December 21, 2010. Her name was Rose Frolik and she was the Founder of UNOPA. She was 101 when she passed. She was alone when she died, which bothered me terribly, but I take comfort in knowing that Anton was there with her. You see, she lost her husband, Anton, due to a freak accident on a horse early in their marriage. They had one son, Richard, who was still just a child when his father died. Rose then became the sole provider for herself and her son.

She was one of the strongest women I have ever known, and I have a picture of her that shows how beautiful she was as a young lady. Her voice was always soft and her words were always kind. Where her son, Dick, was concerned, she was a very proud mother. He was the reason she lived and she loved him more than life itself. The only time I would ever see her angry was when something had happened regarding Dick. She would grit her

teeth and in a low voice tell me what had happened. You've heard the expression, "if looks could kill," well, I would never have wanted to be the cause for her wrath!

Rose loved UNOPA and she too had great pride in the organizations accomplishments. She followed National, State and Local newsletters until her sight prevented her from reading. She took great pride in having an award named after her, and it was such an honor for her to make the presentation each year. If you were a recipient of the Rose Frolik Award, I can assure you that as long as she was able, she called each recipient and congratulated them.

My mother passed away in 1990 and it was shortly after that I became acquainted with Rose. We took a liking to each other and formed a relationship that lasted for over 20 years. I was one of the very few people who she allowed to see her without her

wig. I only wish I had known her in her early years. She told me one time that I had gotten much wiser as I aged and I took that as a compliment. And one other thing – my hair. It seems I was constantly changing my hair in her mind. One style she liked – the other not so much. We laughed about that.

My tribute has rambled because I could go on and on about her – tidbits that I will always remember and treasure. She was my friend and I loved her and I will miss her very much. This poem says it all.

Memory

*You walked into my life,
But just like that,
You walked back out,
Still you will be a memory,
A memory that I created in my mind,
Still you will be a memory,
A memory that will always be locked,
Away in my heart and my mind,
I will always have a memory of you
in my heart,
And I will always carry that picture
of you in my mind,
Still you will be a memory.*

—written by Nicole Elizabeth Edwards



Rose and Sandy

Humor: Laughing your way to health

—from University of Nebraska Extension Educators and Specialists

Laughter has been called “inner jogging.” A hearty laugh gives the muscles of your face, shoulders, diaphragm and abdomen a good workout, and sometimes even your arms and legs. A good laugh can burn up as many calories per hour as brisk walking. Researchers speculate that laughter triggers the release of endorphins. This may account for the pain relief that accompanies laughter. Modern science is beginning to confirm that laughter is not only enjoyable, it provides health benefits. Laughter is an invigorating medicine that heightens and brightens our mood gently releasing us from tensions.

Laughter affects the body in the following ways:

- Laughter lowers blood pressure. People who laugh heartily on a regular basis have lower standing blood pressure than average.
- Humor changes our biochemical state. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases infection fighting antibodies. It increases our attentiveness, heart rate, and pulse.
- Laughter protects the heart. Laughter, along with an active sense of humor, may help protect you against heart attack, according to a

study at the University of Maryland Medical Center. The study found that people with heart disease were 40% less likely to laugh in a variety of situations compared to people of the same age without heart disease.

- Laughter gives our bodies a good workout. Laughter can be a great workout for your diaphragm, abdominal, respiratory, facial, leg and back muscles. It massages abdominal organs, tones intestinal functioning, and strengthens the muscles that hold the abdominal organs in place. It can also benefit digestion and food

absorption.

- Humor improves brain function and relieves stress. Laughter stimulates both sides of the brain to enhance learning. It eases muscle tension and psychological stress, which keeps the brain alert and allows people to retain more information.

So, keep on laughing as it's good medicine for a healthy body!



UNOPA Notes

Central Area retreat

Lisa Morehouse, CEOE, Central Area Director



Greeting to all members of Central Area.

I am pleased to announce we will be holding a Central Area Leadership Retreat, March 18-20, 2011, in Columbia, Missouri.

This retreat will be held as a brainstorming session for members to address the issue that all of our associations are facing: low membership, low conference attendance, and lack of participation in all areas. If you are enthusiastic about your association and have a passion for helping revitalize and strengthen our foundation, we

need you to attend this retreat.

The retreat will start Friday afternoon and conclude on Sunday morning. A reminder that this is a "retreat" and not a conference. It will be a working retreat that will involve long discussions, a lot of listening and major brainstorming. Please come with your "blinders" off and your thinking caps on! We need to be prepared to think outside the box. This will be an intense brainstorming session with the goal of generating and creating an entire realm of new possibilities and ideas.

We are also excited to have several NAEOP Board members attend including NAEOP President Kathy Lech. Kathy will facilitate a workshop during this retreat.

There are no registration or workshop fees. All expenses are on your own. PSP points will be awarded for those that attend.

I hope all Central Area members will consider attending. For more information or questions, please contact me at lmoreho@lps.org or 402-436-1594.

Bright Lights: Summer Learning Adventures

Becky Rock, Communications Specialist, Bright Lights



"It was cool to see cows at an organic farm and sample homemade cheese."

"I enjoyed learning how a radar gun works."

"I learned I want to be a bio-engineer when I grow up."

Bright Lights Summer Learning Adventures will celebrate their 25th birthday this summer. Through Bright Lights, generations of elementary and middle school students are provided with unique, motivating, and hands-on learning opportunities in science, math, and the arts. Students have worked with quality teachers, played with their passions, and brought their dreams alive.

"Kids get so hooked into what they're doing at Bright Lights," says veteran science teacher Carol Moravec, "I can hardly get them out of there. Whether it's looking in a microscope or at fingerprints, they get so involved in the activity that it seems like it's an 'aha' moment every day!"

The past 25 years of experiences at Bright Lights Summer Learning program has proven what some experts tell us, that 60% of high school seniors have already made the decision of what career path they want to follow. And the

majority of these students found their path by the time they finished middle school.

Nebraska native, UNL Engineering graduate, and now New York City businessman Andy Malone is just one example. He credits Bright Lights with introducing him to his career. "Bright Lights gave me a good sense of what was in store both in engineering and in college. It definitely enhanced my interest."

It's because of Andy and many like him that Bright Lights offers over 100 half-day classes and full-day camps each year, some of which are held on college campuses in Lincoln. Summer 2011 at the University of Nebraska may include offerings such as: Engineering Day Camp, Mock Trial, Television Done Right!, and 3D Animation & Virtual World Creation. All are filled with hands-on experiences intended to spark a lifetime of possibilities in engineering, law,

technology, and journalism. Think lasers, robots, and scale-models.

Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education, states: "I would love to get a lot more kids on college campuses. When I grew up, my dad was a college professor, and I was in that environment every day. You feel like you belong; you feel like that's a part of who you are."

Dates for Summer 2011 are June 13-17, June 27-July 1, and July 11-15.

For more information on the Bright Lights program, visit <http://www.brightlights.org>



UNOPA Spring workshop

Tonda Humphress, Co-Director Career Development

As front line employees, we are used to juggling it all and coping with whatever situation comes our way on a daily basis. As University employees, we want to provide excellent customer service. But with all the stress, changing times and recent news reports, we may be considering how to do all of this and stay safe at the same time. UNOPA is pleased to offer a practical, interactive workshop for you, the front line employee, to help answer your questions and to support you in doing all that you do!

Our goal is to help you with the following specific areas:

- Diffusing difficult situations and keeping calm for safety's sake (specific examples of situations and how to handle them).

- Identifying high alert situations and individuals—when to be concerned.
- Customer service: responses to threats to self or others (minimizing risk) and helping someone who is emotionally distressed.

To better meet your needs, this workshop will be a dialogue, not a lecture. So, please bring your questions and comments and join in the dialogue/discussion on April 14, 2011!

Registration form will be posted on the UNOPA website: <http://unopa.unl.edu>. Please contact the UNOPA Career Development Committee with any questions (Tonda Humphress, Co-chair, 402-472-3756 or thumphress1@unl.edu).

While the training offered by John will be terrific, the topic is a serious one so let's balance that with some FUNdraising! UNOPA will have some fun baskets at the workshop for which you will be able to enter a raffle to win. These baskets will be a great way to treat yourself (you deserve it) or to surprise someone else (maybe they will share it with you). Proceeds from raffle baskets will first go to pay expenses for the workshop. Any remaining funds will be contributed to the Bradley Munn Professional Growth Fund. This fund provides reimbursements to UNOPA members for professional development activities, as well as bringing speakers to campus for UNOPA workshops. For more information on this fund and how you can receive reimbursement for your expenses, please see our website:

Training for the Front Lines -- How to Handle Challenging Situations with Safety in Mind

John Goldrich,
M.S.W.
Licensed mental health practitioner with the University Health Center, UNL



Thursday, April 14, 2011
2:30-5:00 p.m.
East Campus Union

FREE for UNOPA members
(\$10 for non-members)

<http://unopa.unl.edu/membership/fundguidelines.shtml>

National Conference

Peg Johnson, NAEOP Liaison

WHO: You
WHAT: NAEOP conference
WHEN: July 18-22, 2011
WHERE: Charleston, SC

The website:
<http://www.naeop.org>

Have you been to a National conference? If not, you need to go. If you have attended, you need to go again. Registration is open and early bird registration ends May 31st.

Are you working on your PSP? National conference offers several avenues to move you toward that goal:

- 1) Institute on Monday & Tuesday — earn either educational credit or in-service credit.
- 2) Briefings on Tuesday & Wednesday — earn PSP points.

Our own Lola Young will be presenting one of those briefings plus she will also be installed as President Elect.

Please let me know if you will be attending nationals. I will also need to know what days you will be in attendance so we can plan a small get-together.

Send an email to mjohnson4@unl.edu.



Bradley Munn Professional Development Fund Update

Peg Johnson, Fund Director

Are you one of the 23 out of 110 UNOPA members that contributes to the Bradley Munn Professional Development Fund? If not, please consider becoming a contributor. If non-contributing members would donate \$1.00 a month, our

contributions would more than double. I will be delighted to send you a payroll deduction form.

Remember, this is your fund!

The next deadline for reimbursement of professional development activities or PSP is April 15, 2011.

Form is located at:
<http://unopa.unl.edu/membership/fund.shtml>

UNOPA Notes

Your degree in recognition skills



"Don't worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition"
—Abraham Lincoln

Of course, we all majored in recognition skills at high school. Being positive comes as second nature to everybody and we never focus too much on faults. Unfortunately there the fairy tale must end. Complaining, it seems, is a much more developed skill than praising and many people find it difficult to be only positive. It is as if they can't help themselves adding a crushing blow. Like Carolyn Burnham (Annette Bening) in "American Beauty" when she praises her daughter Jane (Thora Birch) for her cheerleading performance, she says, "I was watching you very closely, and you didn't screw up once."

Language

It is often said that, in communication, we get the response we deserve. Bear this in mind when you next ask for an additional task to be undertaken. Listen to the words that you use.

Do you apologize, saying: "I'm really sorry that I have to drop this on you."

Do you antagonize, saying: "Whether you like it or not you'll have to do this by 5 pm."

Do you empathize, saying: "I know this is a pain, but it really needs to be done."

Do you sympathize, saying: "Poor you! This extra work probably means overtime."

...or do you enthuse, by saying: "Hey, you're just the person who can help me! I need this urgent job to be done today, and I was thinking you'd be the best person to get it out accurately and on time."

No prizes for guessing which approach gets a more energetic response. Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm and if you can embed a few pieces of recognition in your request without sounding sarcastic you'll stand a better chance of getting a motivated performance.

When you are actually praising someone, try to tell them how you feel. "It made me proud that I work for the same company when I saw you handling that complex customer problem," means so much more than, "Good job, keep it up." "I wish I had your comic timing. Your ability to make people laugh and feel motivated to get on with the toughest and

most unpleasant of jobs leaves me in awe," says more than, "I'm impressed, carry on, dude!"

Also make an attempt to acknowledge that you really did understand that the behavior was appropriate; "I was especially impressed when you offered to call them to update them on progress at the end of the day. That's a great standard to work to."

Managers can develop a crippling disability when they use language variously known as "verbal diarrhea," "let me tell you what you mean" and "that's not the way I'd do it." As people climb the management ladder there is a tendency for them to lose the listening skill and to gain an add-on to their verbosity skills. This is not surprising as they are probably expected to talk for most of the day; however, when it comes to gathering information to promote informal recognition, keeping your ears open and your mouth shut is an essential skill.

—article written by Chris Herrmann and published by BoomerangAwards.com

Save the dates



2011 NEOPA Spring Conference
"A Kaleidoscope of Opportunities"
April 28-29, 2011
Southeast Community College
Continuing Education Center
310 S. 68th

LPSAOP will host the Thursday night Networking Event at Parker's Rib Ranch on 66th & O St.

Conference details and registration will be emailed to all NEOPA members in early March.

Conference Co-Chairs are: Susan Bell, CEOE; Carol Reed, CEOE; and Lisa Morehouse, CEOE

MONEY 101: Financial Planning for Your Future

Two locations:

March 29, 2011
12:00-2:00 p.m.
Nebraska East Campus Union

March 30, 2011
3:00-5:00 p.m.
Nebraska City Campus Union

Learn key financial tips and tools for financial planning and walk away with giveaways from the UNL Computer Store, University of Nebraska Federal Credit

Union and the University of Nebraska Bookstore. This event is hosted by the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women. All staff members are welcome. For more information, contact Kelly Payne, 402-472-3871. <http://www.unl.edu/ccsw>

It's not too late to nominate someone for the Rose Frolik Award.

Guidelines on the website: <http://unopa.unl.edu>

DEADLINE: March 4, 2011

Making Communication in the Workplace Effective

Why is it that, when so many businesses commit so many resources to internal communication, people always seem to say that communication in workplaces is a significant problem?

One reason is that too often we take “communication” for granted. After all, we know how to talk to people, don’t we?

In organization surveys (and also in exit interviews) employees frequently say that no one ever tells them anything or listens to them — but managers say in reply that they seem never to stop communicating with employees on important matters.

Poor communication — or perceptions of poor communication — can be directly linked to increased operating costs and reduced efficiency because of lower productivity of people, employee dissatisfaction, employee turnover, absenteeism, lack of understanding of business strategy, and lack of common direction.

In most cases, when people criticize communication in an organization, the concern is expressed in general terms such as “communication is bad” or “we are never given enough information.”

Such criticisms are hard to respond

to and do not really identify specifically what the problem is with communication. (So the response is often to change nothing about the way communication is delivered — on the assumption either that there is nothing really wrong or that nothing can be done. The other reaction is to just do more of what is already being done — thereby worsening the “problem.”)

So what needs to happen?

As a first step, it is important to understand that communication is more than simply talking to people or giving information. There are a number of reasons why communication may not be effective. To apply a “generic fix” or to make changes to address the wrong cause of the breakdown will, in all probability, deliver an outcome that is not greatly improved. Consider these four areas in which communication may fail to be effective.

Style and Method: Just as people learn in different ways, people absorb communication in a variety of ways. So, it is important to ensure that the “style” of communication is varied to ensure that everyone will understand the message.

At its most basic level, consider presenting important information in pictures, spoken and written. Make sure that, as often as possible, your

communication is “two way.” There must be an opportunity for questions, discussion and clarification of the key issues. Messages, emails or notices are more likely to be misunderstood, misplaced or simply not read.

Content: Be sure that what you are communicating has the right level of detail and is expressed in a way that the audience will understand. Too much detail will cause some people to switch off but too little detail may give the impression that there is something being hidden or avoided. Using language that people understand, for example, means that any jargon used is understood by everyone and complex language and words are kept to a minimum.

Timing and frequency: Many organizations fall into the trap of communicating too often or too rarely with their employees. Getting the balance right is a matter of having a clear purpose of each communication and keeping to commitments rather than just a schedule. It is also important not to save important communications with employees until the end of the day or shift or until the end of the week. The chances of a focused and interested audience are, predictably, quite small.

Skills: Make sure that the people who are delivering the

communication have the skills to get the message across—including good written communication skills, good presentation skills, or good group facilitation skills.

The outcome of your assessment: An assessment of the effectiveness of these aspects of communication between management and employees can help you to understand **why** communication is not as effective as it could be and should provide some clear signposts for action or redress the problems.

Out of that assessment you should have some practical information on the key strengths of existing communication methods, the areas of communication that are not working well, and the types of communication that will be more effective.

When you have information like this about the communication in your organization you can then develop a communication plan to improve the effectiveness of communication between management and the workforce.

Finally, be prepared to innovate in your communication. Doing the same thing year-in and year-out may not be delivering you the best results.

—by Simon Osborne, Director of Practical Workplace Strategies.

National Procrastination week

March 7-13, 2011, is National Procrastination Week. If you are having trouble completing projects or getting motivated here are some quick tips that may come in handy.

The 4 Why’s of Your Procrastination. The four most common reasons we put things off.

1. We think it’s difficult. When the task seems hard to do, we naturally avoid it in favor of something easy. This explains why so many taxpayers wait until April 14 to get down to business.

2. We think it’s time consuming. With our time always in short supply, something that seems ready to gobble large blocks of time is going to be set

aside. “We’ll have more time on the weekends,” we say, “so we’ll tackle it then.”

3. We think we don’t know enough. Few people like to make mistakes, so instead of taking real action we turn to study and research. We keep learning more (from the safety of home) until we feel safe to start. Then, when we feel ready . . . we learn some more.

4. We think people will judge us. Engineers don’t get engineer’s block, accountants don’t get accountant’s block. But writers? Oh, they get blocked.

And one possible reason is fear of getting criticized. Because they worry so much about what people will think,

they put off writing, or, worse, work themselves into a lather that we call writer’s block.

What Can You Do? The solution? As simple as it sounds, just tell yourself the opposite. We talk to ourselves—a lot. Often it’s everyday chatter about what we’re going to do or what you would have said to that nasty grocery store clerk if given a second chance. But we also talk ourselves into procrastination. When a task or chore or goal pops into our heads, we often run through one or more of the common traps above. We convince ourselves, even before starting, that it’s going to be hard, or time consuming, or mistake prone, or judged.

That’s why a new conversation—a controlled conversation—is so helpful.

You can stop the problem before it has a chance to kick in. The next time you have to do something, consciously tell yourself,

1. It’s not hard.
2. It won’t take that long.
3. I’m sure I can do it, or at least learn as I go.
4. No one really cares about what I’m doing; they’re worried about their own problems.

—article written by Jason M. Gracia, Founder & President of Motivation 123 and author, *Shifting Balance*

Calendar of Events**March**

- 1 Board Meeting
- 4 Rose Frolik Award deadline
- 7-13 National Procrastination Week
- 8 General Meeting — Speaker: Justin Solomon, ASUN President
- 11 Deadline for UNOPA Notes
- 13 Daylight Savings Time
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 18-20 Central Area Retreat, Columbia, Missouri
- 22 PSP Workshop, Speaker: Kim Ratz, 1:00-4:30 p.m., City Union
- 29 UAAD Workshop, Speaker: Dr. Paula Wells, 1:30-4:30 p.m., City Union
- 29 Money 101, 12:00-2:00 p.m., East Union
- 30 Money 101, 3:00-5:00 p.m., City Union

April

- 2 PSP Luncheon, Speaker: Michael Hoff, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Vine Congregational Church
- 5 Board Meeting
- 12 General Meeting — Frolik Award Presentation & Past Presidents Luncheon
- 14 UNOPA Spring Workshop, Speaker: John Goldrich, 2:30-5:00 p.m., East Union
- 15 Deadline for UNOPA Notes and Bradley Munn Reimbursement
- 24 Easter
- 28-29 NEOPA Spring Conference, SECC Continuing Education Center, 310 S. 68th

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We've gone green!
 Find this newsletter on
 the Web.

<http://unopa.unl.edu>