

**SMART WORKPLACES BY HR TO GO, INC - FEBRUARY 2005**

**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - OUTSOURCE IT!**

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**Avoid These Common Mistakes When Using E-Mail to Manage People**

More than 23 million workers are connected by e-mail networks, and the number is growing fast. However, the smart manager

understands that e-mail can be dangerous if not properly used. Here are some common e-mail abuses to avoid:

- **Hiding behind the terminal.** Don't use e-mail for performance reviews, disciplinary actions or other touchy matters. It's worse than breaking up over the phone; some things you have to do in person.
- **Forgetting it's in writing.** The informality of e-mail is part of convenience. But it is a permanent record of a written communication - often much more easily retrieved than an ancient memo. Just because you've forgotten about it doesn't mean you won't see it again.
- **Flaming.** Spontaneity is another benefit of e-mail, but you should watch the tone of an e-mail message as closely as you would a memo written on paper. Sarcasm can be devastating when it is glowing on the screen.

### **Use the Eight-Second Rule to Hone Your Speaking Style**

Public speaking experts agree that most people decide in the first eight seconds whether a particular speaker is worth listening to. So a strong beginning is crucial. One way to make sure you start strong is to practice the eight-second drill. Here's how it works:

\* **First, pick a timely topic** that you could easily talk about for three minutes. Don't just read a script. Have an opinion, and then try to convince the audience that you are right. Pick a very specific topic.

\* **Second, present your case.** Organize your thoughts, set up an outline to follow, and write your ideas down in a row. Then, set your notes aside, stand in front of a mirror, and start talking. Present your case in three minutes - don't go even one minute over.

\* **Third, start shaving time off your presentation.** First, take off one full minute. Present the same information in two minutes. Then, go to one minute; then down to 30 seconds; then down to 20, then 10, until you are finally getting your point across in eight seconds.

You'll find the hardest part is going from 30 seconds down to eight; but once you do, you will have captured the essence of your presentation. This is your theme, your message. Never lose sight of it.



## Service Before Sunset

When a client has a problem, don't let the sun set without doing something about it. If a problem can't be resolved on the spot or "before the sun goes down" you should at least set the process in motion and let the client know that you're taking action.

Taking some action before sundown may simply mean leaving a voicemail letting the client know the status of your investigation. Or it could mean sending a letter or e-mail. The important rule to follow is: Don't leave clients waiting.



## Prevent Repetitive Strain at the Keyboard

If rapid motion on a keyboard is what your day's all about, then correct posture, and proper wrist and hand position, are the keys to your ongoing comfort. When you find the right position, your muscles are unstressed and flexible, so your wrists, hands and back don't have to overwork.

**Use Correct Posture.** Your posture at your workstations affects the position of your wrists and hands. Why? If you lean your body forward or backward too far, or if you slouch, your wrists and hands adapt by bending too. This means that the muscles and tendons that support your wrists and hands become tense and strained.

Correct posture includes sitting upright in your chair, knees at or slightly below the level of your hips, muscles relaxed, with your upper body tilted slightly back.

**Keep Your Wrists and Hands Straight.** Each time you touch a key, muscles and tendons in your wrists and hands move your

fingers. When you work with straight wrists and fingers, these muscles and tendons stay relaxed and comfortable. The result: you're less likely to develop strains and pains that may come from typing.

**A straight wrist** stays level or flat. This position keeps extra pressure off muscles and tendons in your wrist and hand. **Bending your wrist forward** tires muscles and tendons. **Bending your wrist backward** or **twisting your wrist** to either side strains muscles and tendons.

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