



advantage



April Fool's

EXTREME TRAVEL BUDGETING

With the changing economy, organizations across the country are looking at areas to manage differently or areas where they can cut costs. Some organizations have reduced staff, others have cut their advertising budgets, but some are looking at their travel expenses. You know your organization is making deep financial cuts if you see new policies and memos like the following:

TRANSPORTATION

Hitchhiking in lieu of commercial transport is the preferred choice. Luminescent safety vests will be issued to all employees prior to their departure on company business trips. Bus transportation will be used whenever hitchhiking is not possible. Airline tickets will only be authorized for purchase in extreme circumstances and the lowest fares will be used.

LODGING

All employees are encouraged to stay with relatives, friends or mere acquaintances while on company business. If weather permits, public areas such as parks, roadside rest stops and parking lots should be used as temporary lodging sites. Bridges and tunnels may provide shelter in periods of inclement weather.

MEALS

Expenditures for meals will be limited to the absolute minimum. It should be noted that certain grocery chains often provide free samples of promotional items. Entire meals can often be consumed in this manner. The HR department will also provide employees with coupons where and when appropriate. Travelers should become familiar with indigenous roots, berries and other protein sources available at their destination. If restaurants must be utilized, travelers should seek establishments offering "all you can eat" salad bars. This will be especially cost effective for employees traveling together, as a single plate can be used to feed the entire group. Employees are also encouraged to bring their own food while on company business.

ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment while traveling is strongly discouraged. If such extravagances are required on customer calls and client visits, the customer should be encouraged to "pick up the tab." Such action will save company money and convince the customer that we are more concerned with spending money on providing a good product rather than useless frivolities. The hospitality provided to our customers who visit our facility shall also be tasteful, yet cost effective. In lieu of extravagant dinners, a picnic bench will be placed in the parking lot near the dumpster and a green garden hose will be made available so that liquid refreshments can be provided to our guests.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FOR EMPLOYEES

Employers often ask themselves what they can say on letters of recommendation, especially for fired employees. Here are some suggestions of phrases you might like to use.

For the chronically absent:

- A man like him is hard to find.
- It seems her career was just taking off.

For an employee with no ambition:

- He could not care less about the number of hours he had to put in.
- You would indeed be fortunate to get this person to work for you.

For the employee who is not worth further consideration as a job candidate:

- I would urge you to waste no time in making this candidate an offer of employment.
- All in all, I cannot say enough good things about this candidate or recommend him too highly.

For a stupid employee:

- There is nothing you can teach a man/woman like him/her.
- I most enthusiastically recommend this candidate with no qualifications whatsoever.

For a dishonest employee:

- Her true ability was deceiving.
- He's an unbelievable worker.

For the employee with alcohol or drug challenges:

- I feel his real talent is wasted here.
- We generally found her loaded with work to do.
- Every hour with him was a happy hour.

WORTH PONDERING

A lot of fellows nowadays have a B.A., M.D., or Ph.D. Unfortunately, they don't have a J.O.B.

—Fats Domino

The reason why worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work.

—Robert Frost

Victory goes to the player who makes the next-to-last mistake.

—Chessmaster Savielly Grigorievitch Tartakower

There are no traffic jams along the extra mile.

—Roger Staubach

Create a "To-Don't" list that contains tasks, rituals and meetings that you should never waste your time on again. Then stick to it.

—Tom Peters

Celebrate weakness. Play the fool in your group or your company by embracing inversion, absurdity and perseverance. Inverted thinking may help you leapfrog the competition. And just think of the innovations that rose from failure: Post-it Notes, the telephone, Silly Putty, the lightbulb.

—Annette Moser-Wellman

When you're faced with a decision, always choose the bolder option. The most extraordinary things are created by ordinary people.

—Simon Walker

Leadership is an army you have to enlist in. You can't get drafted into leadership. You can get drafted into management.

—Rayona Sharpnack

Inspiration usually comes during work, rather than before it.

—Madeleine L'Engle

I slept and dreamt that life was Joy.

I woke and saw that life was Duty.

I acted, and behold, Duty was Joy.

—Rabirranath Tagore

When you can't have what you want, it's time to start wanting what you have.

—Kathleen A. Sutton

Purpose is what gives life a meaning.

—C. H. Parkhurst

Editor: Deborah Jeffries, PHR, CPC. Advantage is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations, HR practices and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resource and employee relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, questions about your subscription, or if you need additional Advantage binders, please give us a call at (503) 885-9815 or e-mail us at djeffries@hrnorthwest.com.

NEW BENEFITS: BODY PIERCING AND TATTOOS

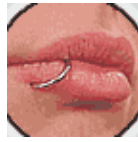
If you can't beat 'em, pierce 'em. A new benefit is being offered in some progressive companies: company-sponsored body piercing and tattoos. This "cutting edge" (or "piercing edge," as we like to describe it) benefit is awaiting FDA approval as a medical necessity. Here's how it works. Employers contract with PPP's (Preferred Piercing Parlors) to provide piercing and tattoos to their employees. Employees select the piercer of their choice from a list of preferred parlors. If your employee decides to go outside the plan, they must pay the tattoo artist or body piercer a substantial deductible. Employees can increase the cost effectiveness of their body piercing or tattoos by deducting pre-tax dollars via their Section 125 (Cafeteria) Plans.

Endorsed by the AMS (American Metallurgical Society)

Options to consider:



Brow



Lip



Hearts



Disney



Animals

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Believe it or not, work life has improved. This notice, dated 1852, was found in the ruins of a London office building:

- This firm has reduced the hours of work, and the clerical staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. weekdays.
- Clothing must be of sober nature. The clerical staff will not disport themselves in raiment of bright colors, nor will they wear hose unless in good repair.
- Overshoes and topcoats may not be worn in the office, but neck scarves and headwear may be worn in inclement weather.
- A stove is provided for the benefit of the clerical staff. Coal and wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of the clerical staff bring four pounds of coal each day during the cold weather.
- No member of the clerical staff may leave the room without permission from the supervisor.
- No talking is allowed during business hours.
- The craving for tobacco, wine, or spirits is a human weakness, and as such is forbidden to all members of the clerical staff.
- Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced, the partaking of food is allowed between 11:30 and noon, but work will not on any account cease!!!
- Members of the clerical staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available on application to the supervisor.
- The supervisor will nominate a senior clerk to be responsible for the cleanliness of the main office and the supervisor's private office. All boys and juniors will report to him 40 minutes before prayers and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, brooms, scrubbers, and soap are provided by the owners.
- The owners recognize the generosity of the new labor laws, but will expect a great rise in output of work to compensate for these near Utopian conditions.

WISDOM TO SHARE

No matter your age, there is always something to learn:

- I've learned that our dog doesn't want to eat my broccoli either. (Age 7)
- I've learned that when I wave to people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back. (Age 9)
- I've learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up. (Age 14)
- I've learned that silent company is often more healing than words of advice. (Age 24)
- I've learned that if someone says something unkind about me, I must live so that no one will believe it. (Age 30)
- I've learned that the greater a person's sense of guilt, the greater his or her need to cast blame on others. (Age 46)
- I've learned that motel mattresses are better on the side away from the phone. (Age 50)
- I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you miss them terribly after they die. (Age 53)
- I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back. (Age 64)
- I've learned that whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision. (Age 66)
- I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one. (Age 82)
- I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. (Age 92)

HR NORTHWEST CALENDAR (THIS ONE IS SERIOUS)

Open up your daytimers, computer calendars and palm pilots. The following is a look at upcoming events, special days and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and get scheduled.

APRIL

Animal Cruelty Prevention, International Customer Loyalty, National Child Abuse Prevention, and Keep America Beautiful Month.

April 1	April Fool's Day
April 7	Daylight Savings Time Begins
April 7-13	National Civility Week
April 8	Buddha's Birthday
April 9	Yom Hashoah
April 9	HRN Workshop - Portland Compensation - Part I 8:30 - 12 noon
April 14-21	Jewish Heritage Week
April 17	HRN Workshop - Puget Sound Team Building 8:30 - 12 noon
April 21-27	National Volunteer Week
April 22	Earth Day

April 23

**HRN Workshop - Willamette Valley
Understanding & Preventing Harassment
8:30 - 12 noon**

April 25

Take Our Daughters to Work Day

April 26

National Arbor Day

MAY

**May 9,
16 & 23**

**HRN Workshop - Portland
Beginning Supervision, I-III
8:30 - 12 noon each day**

May 14

**HRN Workshop - Puget Sound
Teaching Your Organization
about Harassment -
a Train-the-Trainer Program
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

ON MY SOAPBOX

In the spirit of this issue, I thought I'd share the following with you as my Soapbox this month. Enjoy!

You know that all potatoes have eyes. Well, Mr. and Mrs. Potato had eyes for each other, and finally they got married and had a sweet little potato they called Yam.

Of course, they wanted the best for Yam. When it was time, they told her about the facts of life. They warned her about going out and getting Half-Baked, so she wouldn't get accidentally Mashed and get a bad name for herself, like "Hot Potato," and end up with a bunch of Tater Tots.

Yam said not to worry, no Spud would get her into the sack and make a rotten potato out of her! But, on the other hand, she wouldn't stay home and become a Couch Potato either. She would get plenty of exercise so as not to be skinny like her Shoestring cousins.

When she went off to Europe, Mr. and Mrs. Potato told Yam to watch out for the Hard Boiled guys from Ireland and the greasy guys from France called the French Fries. And when she went out west, she was to watch out for the Indians so she would not be Scalloped!

Yam said she would stay on the straight and narrow and wouldn't associate with those high class Yukon Gold's or the ones from the other side of the tracks who advertise their trade on all the trucks that say "Frito Lay."

Mr. and Mrs. Potato sent Yam to Idaho P.U. (that's Potato University), so that when she graduated she'd really be in the Chips. But in spite of all they had done for her, one day Yam came home and announced she was going to marry Tom Brokaw.

Tom Brokaw!!

Mr. and Mrs. Potato were very upset. They told Yam she couldn't possibly marry Tom Brokaw because he is just a Common Tater.

- Judy Clark, President



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