

OFFICE MANAGER *Today*

Your practical guide to a better workplace

Business Management Daily

In the Know...

When must you give workers access to their personnel files?

No federal law grants employees the right to inspect their personnel files.

However, many states do give employees such rights and spell out the terms under which they can inspect the files. Check out our new white paper, *Access to Personnel Files: 50 State Laws*, to learn the access laws for states in which you operate. Go to www.OfficeManagerToday.com/personnel50.

Create an SOP for every job.

If an employee suddenly goes out sick, don't be left wondering, "How does she generate those daily reports?" Require all staff to create a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that explains how they accomplish their daily tasks. For more details and a free sample SOP template to get you started, go to www.OfficeManagerToday.com/SOPs.

How toxic is your workplace fridge? With the sluggish economy, more than half of U.S. workers now brown-bag it, meaning a more crowded and germ-infested break-room refrigerator.

Currently, less than half of all office fridges are cleaned once a month; 22% are cleaned only once or twice a year, says an American Dietetic Association survey.

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Get more done with less effort: 7 tech tips

Admit it. You are constantly pressed for time and looking for time-management answers. The sad fact is, many timesaving "secrets" have been around since the advent of paper clips.

Here are seven tech strategies you may be overlooking:

1. Organize your overflowing email inbox by setting up folders labeled ACTION, FYI, READ and PERSONAL. File messages into the folders.

2. Put your browser on your taskbar. Right-click on the taskbar at the bottom of your screen, select Toolbars and Address. Type in the URL you want, and you'll be able to open up that web page with one tap on the new taskbar item.

3. Stop using Internet Explorer. While the latest version has some real improvements, IE is bloated with features. Switch to Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome: Both are speedy, free and include useful features such as bookmark syncing.

4. Back up your data using an online backup service. A surprising number of office managers forgo this essential step.

Benefit: No additional equipment is needed. Simply install the software, and it runs in the background, regularly copying your files.

5. Become a hero to staff members who know only the basic

Continued on page 2

Take steps to make a 'newbie' feel welcome

Just as communication at the beginning of a marriage can indicate if it will end in divorce, the foundation established early on with a new hire is crucial to productivity, engagement and retention.

Sadly, many employers use passive onboarding procedures that simply cover a checklist of unrelated items.

Studies show that comprehensive onboarding programs yield the best results if they cover these five areas: clarification, connection, culture, compliance and check back. Here are some key elements of each area:

1. Clarification

Pair each new employee with a mentor or coach who can offer advice on job duties and company culture. Mentors can answer questions that new employees hesitate

to ask managers. Ensure that new employees understand their jobs and performance expectations. Within the first 60 days, managers should schedule a check-in meeting with new employees.

2. Connection

Help employees network and establish relationships within the

Continued on page 8

15 questions in first 60 days

A manager should hold a one-on-one with a new hire within the first 60 days to discover his likes/dislikes about the job, see if it meets his expectations and head off potential problems before it's too late. For tips on hosting this meeting and 15 sample questions to ask, go to www.OfficeManagerToday.com/15questions.



Sound Bites

2 tips for giving praise from Gretchen Rubin, author of *The Happiness Project*: “Never offer praise and ask for a favor in the same conversation. It makes the praise seem like a setup.” And, “Look for something less obvious to praise—a more obscure accomplishment or quality that a person hasn’t heard praised many times before.”

Use these seven words more often: “I don’t know, but I’ll find out.” No one has all the answers—even bosses. A person who can speak with candor, then follow through, gains the trust and admiration of others.

Elevate the clarity of your own writing by using the inverted pyramid journalists use: Put conclusions first, followed by background. Tell readers within the first two sentences why they should continue reading. Otherwise they may skip to something else.

7 tech tips

(Cont. from page 1)

functions of your voice mail system and other machines by learning the shortcuts and most useful—and underused—features, and then teaching them.

6. Set up a file-sharing service. It’s a more elegant solution than emailing files to yourself. Set up a free account with www.dropbox.com, and you’ll have an icon that sits on your desktop. Drag a file onto the icon, and it instantly saves it to the cloud.

7. Call and ask for a better deal from your phone and Internet providers.

Other tactics: Measure your Internet speed, using www.dslreports.com/speedtest; if it is less than what you are paying for, ask for a free upgrade.

Become a great manager, the Google way

Google, the king of search engines, recently set out on a search of its own—to identify the qualities that make the highest quality managers at Google Inc., and then to replicate those qualities across the entire company.

Being Google, it first looked at data. According to a *New York Times* report, a “people analytics” team compared correlations in the words and phrases that came up again and again in performance reviews, feedback surveys and recognition nominations.

The end result: A simple, yet elegant, list of eight management practices that the best Google managers consistently use. Here’s Google’s list, in order of importance:

1. Be a good coach. Provide specific, constructive feedback, balancing the negative and the positive. Have regular one-on-ones, presenting solutions to problems tailored to your employees’ specific strengths.

2. Empower your team and don’t micromanage. Balance giving freedom to your employees, while still being available for advice. Make “stretch” assignments to help the team tackle

big problems.

3. Express interest in team members’ success and personal well-being. Get to know your employees as people, with lives outside of work. Make new members of your team feel welcome and help ease their transition.

4. Be productive and results-oriented. Focus on what employees want the team to achieve and how they can help achieve it. Help the team prioritize work and use seniority to remove roadblocks.

5. Be a good communicator and listen to your team. Communication is two-way: You both listen and share information.

6. Help your employees with career development.

7. Have a clear vision and strategy for the team. Even in the midst of turmoil, keep the team focused on goals and strategy. Involve the team in setting and evolving the team’s vision and making progress toward it.

8. Have key technical skills so you can help advise the team. Roll up your sleeves and conduct work side-by-side with the team, when needed.

Are you a good communicator? 5-question self-test

Managers’ communication mistakes can slowly hurt morale, sink productivity and even spark lawsuits. According to a recent Wall Street Journal report, here are five key questions to ask yourself:

- 1. Do you send one-word emails?** Efficient, yes. But one-word emails—even a simple “yes” or “no”—are more curt than many bosses realize.
- 2. Do you rarely talk face-to-face with employees?** Many bosses use technology as a shortcut, rather than holding tough discussions in person. It’s better to deal with difficult situations in person. Face time builds trust.
- 3. Are your employees out sick ... a lot?** Some employees fake sickness to avoid a boss they don’t like. And some studies even show that bad interactions with bosses may be bad for employees’ health.
- 4. Does your team work overtime but still miss deadlines?** Giving unrealistic deadlines to employees will hurt morale and lead to scheduling chaos.
- 5. Do you yell?** If employees constantly feel like they’re being reprimanded, they’ll either quit or work less efficiently. And bosses who yell are more likely to become the targets of employees’ “hostile environment” lawsuits.



Facebook: Should bosses friend their staff?

With more than 1 billion Facebook users in the world—and each one having an average of 130 “friends”—managers are increasingly facing the question: to friend or not to friend subordinates?

No law forbids supervisors from “friending” subordinates. But online relationships fostered by Facebook and other social networking sites can create a variety of risks for employers.

For example, because Facebook is loaded with personal information, you may learn things about employees’ “protected characteristics,” such as disability status (covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act) or sexual orientation (protected in certain states and cities).

Even if you never act on that information, the employee may later argue that a firing or other adverse action was based on this personal information. The risk of liability goes up when the supervisor initiates the friend request.

Given the risks, many employers

have chosen to adopt social media policies that set clear guidelines for employees and managers—including prohibitions or limitations on “friending” between bosses and their employees.

Some employer policies say supervisors may not make friend requests to their direct reports. But direct reports can make friend requests to supervisors, which supervisors can choose to accept or not.

Friend or foe

Executives were asked “How comfortable would you feel about being ‘friended’ on Facebook by people you manage?” Their responses:

Very comfortable	12%
Somewhat comfortable	32%
Not very comfortable	15%
Not comfortable at all	33%
Don’t know	8%

Source: OfficeTeam survey.

Avoid top 10 mistakes in employee handbooks

A poorly written, outdated or inconsistent handbook is trouble. *The biggest problem:* Companies often include handbook language that wipes out their right to fire employees at will. Here are the 10 most common handbook mistakes to avoid:

1. Adopting a “form” handbook, which includes promises you’ll never keep.

2. Including lots of detail on procedures, which provides fodder for lawyers. Stick to company policies. Keep a separate procedures manual for managers.

3. Mentioning an employee probationary period. That can erase at-will status by implying that, once the period is over, the employee can stay indefinitely.

4. Being overly specific in your

discipline policy. That gives the impression that the list covers every possible infraction.

5. Not being consistent with other company documents.

6. Overlooking an at-will disclaimer. Have employees sign a disclaimer acknowledging that the company can terminate their employment at any time and bypass discipline policies.

7. Sabotaging disclaimers by what you say, especially reassuring employees that their jobs are secure.

8. Not adapting the handbook to accommodate each state’s laws.

9. Failing to update the manual frequently for changing laws.

10. Setting unrealistic policies. If supervisors won’t enforce it, don’t put it in your handbook.

In Brief

Planning for productivity: What time are workers at their best?

Tackle important projects in the morning and don’t plan brainstorming sessions after noon. That’s the message of an Accountemps survey that says employee productivity peaks from 10 a.m. to noon and hits a wall from 4 to 5 p.m. Want to avoid the afternoon slump? Find five tips at www.OfficeManagerToday.com/time.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) can’t be used for school absences,

but check state law. Parents often need to take time off work to deal with school issues. *Heads up:* The FMLA doesn’t cover employees who take time for school visits or to care for kids who aren’t seriously ill but who must stay home. Some states, however, do mandate such leave. For a summary of state short-term leave statutes, go to www.OfficeManagerToday.com/shortleave.

Department of Labor offers

A to Z guidance. Tired of all the acronyms and jargon of U.S. employment law and everything else that has to do with labor and the workplace? The U.S. Department of Labor released DOLatoZ, a comprehensive guide to hundreds of words and phrases both common and obscure. Not sure what the OFCCP, ERISA or COBRA is? No problem. They’re here. Check it out at www.dol.gov/dolAtoZ/#M.

Bad weather no-shows: Must you still pay them?

If inclement weather prevents an employee from getting to work, can you deduct a full day’s pay from his or her salary? To download our printable flow-chart that helps you decide when you must pay employees (exempt and nonexempt), go to www.OfficeManagerToday.com/weather.



1-Minute Strategies

Room temperature can influence productivity at work, says a study by Cornell University. Changing the temperature from 68 degrees to 77 degrees reduced errors by 44% and increased typing output by 150%.

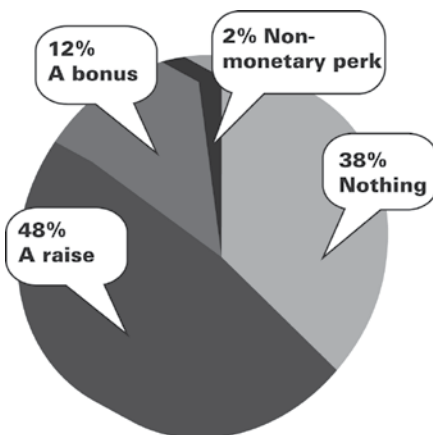
Put the break-room suggestion box to good use. Some of the best ideas can come from team members who are struggling with a problem first-hand. One company, for example, has a Start, Stop and Keep initiative, which requests feedback from all staff members on internal programs that the company should start, stop or keep doing.

— Adapted from “Why going with your gut is not good enough,” Reid Carr, *Fast Company*.

Boost morale among team members by telling them why their work matters, rather than simply what needs doing. *Example:* Instead of saying, “I need this back by Friday,” say, “If we’re going to win our biggest account yet—and become the best agency in town—we need this proposal in perfect shape by Friday. That’s where you come in....”

By the Numbers

Give an employee a stellar review and what does he or she expect?



Source: AdminProToday.com

How to run meetings more effectively

A talkative co-worker is rambling on again during a meeting that’s already run long. Eventually, with no decisions made, the meeting leader calls it quits, and everyone goes back to work.

“What a waste of time” is all you can think.

The time-waster meeting is a common fixture in offices across America.

The reason, says Reid Hastie, a professor of behavioral science at the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business, is that we’re not thinking about and valuing our time the right way.

Hastie tells *The New York Times* we often equate time with money. But we can always get more money, save it or move it around. Not so with time. You can’t earn an extra hour of it.

We often feel we’ll have more time later, so we waste it now and carelessly steal time from our friends and family later, when we come up short and need an extra hour at work.

Also, we’re blind to lost time opportunities. We don’t think about the

other ways we could have invested our time, as we do with money.

So, time and money? Not at all the same.

To show more appreciation for the value of time, Hastie says he now takes a more active role and tries to make meetings more effective. Here are the principles he uses:

- ✓ **Whoever calls a meeting should explain its objectives** by answering this question: “What do we want accomplished when we leave this room?” This means specifying tangible goals and assigning responsibility for creating, summarizing and reporting on them.
- ✓ **Think about the opportunity costs of the meeting.** How many people really need to be there, and how long does the meeting need to last? If you doubt the need for a meeting, speak up. Set and stick to a finish time.
- ✓ **Tap effective people to lead meetings,** and steer clear of those who have a track record of wasting others’ time.

Preparing for disaster: It’s your job

Organizations often learn that they weren’t adequately prepared when floods, hurricanes and other natural disasters strike.

Office managers can help disaster-proof the workplace with these tips:

- ✓ **Store basic emergency supplies at the office,** including (at a minimum) a first-aid kit, a portable radio, flashlights, blankets and extra food and water. Also keep a weather radio handy because it will alert you when there is an emergency.
- ✓ **Back up your data and store it off-site.** You want it to be accessible, but also far away from your workplace. That goes for digital and paper documents.
- ✓ **Post escape routes.** Do employ-

ees know where the primary and alternative exits are in the building? Hold a practice evacuation and designate an assembly area away from danger.

- ✓ **Gather vital information for a business-continuity plan,** especially if you support the leadership team. Ask if such a plan exists. It should identify everything the business needs to keep running (e.g., client information and orders).

Make sure you have current contact information for staff, including off-site workers. In the event of a disaster, leadership may choose to reach out to employees via personal email addresses or text messages.

7 tips from the 'best places to work'

Is your organization a "great place" to work?

Every year, that title is bestowed upon employers from groups like The Great Place to Work Institute, *Fortune* magazine, the Society for Human Resource Management and many more.

The honor comes with a certificate, bragging rights for a year and a strong selling point to dangle in front of potential employees.

Even if your organization never makes the list, there's no reason why you can't strive to make it the best you can. Some of the leading ideas:

1. Launch a work-life balance support group. Allow parents and caregivers to meet regularly during work hours to share insights on balancing jobs and personal lives.

2. Involve top brass in employee onboarding. Have the CEO welcome all new employees, possibly with a handwritten note or video explaining the company's goals.

3. Allow shift swapping. Permit hourly workers with similar jobs to exchange shifts to handle personal

affairs or take a break.

4. Award on-the-spot bonuses for exceptional work. One company permits managers to spontaneously award bonuses of up to \$175 for truly outstanding performance.

5. Convert to a high deductible health care plan. Use incentives to encourage employee participation in the plan's accompanying health savings account (HSA). For example, use some savings from the first year of the program to contribute to employee HSA accounts or fund part of deductibles.

6. Include spouses and partners in educational meetings about health care benefits. Employees aren't always the decision-makers, and families that choose their plans together may feel better about the benefits.

7. Recognize employees' personal milestones. Celebrate birthdays, newborns, employment anniversaries and engagements. And provide free treats for special days, such as "fruit Tuesdays," "breakfast Mondays" and "pizza Fridays."

Snapshot

What's your most effective way to attract new employees?

Career websites

34%

Employee referrals

31%

Newspaper classifieds

12%

Headhunters/employment services

12%

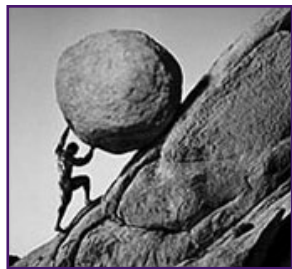
Social networking (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)

9%

Source: www.theHRSpecialist.com poll.

Note: Benchmark your website's recruiting page against the top career sites among the Fortune 500. Find links to the top 25 career sites at www.OfficeManagerToday.com/career.

4 ways to get your calendar under control



It seems like I talk with clients about the challenge of taming their calendars at least two or three times

a week. In the age of interconnected scheduling systems like Outlook and the continuous push to get more done with less in any given day, more leaders feel like Sisyphus rolling that big rock up the never-ending hill.

What in the heck can you do to get your calendar back under control and have time to think, reflect, relax, connect, have some fun and a life outside of

work? I've been brainstorming that question with my clients lately.

Here are four strategies we've come up with that make a difference:

1. Keep your most important objectives in mind: If you're really clear and honest with yourself, you likely have three or four big objectives that represent about 80% of what success looks like for you. Keep that list in front of you and make sure you're not spending a lot of time on things that don't further those objectives.

2. Negotiate on requests for your time: For example, if you're considering a two-day conference, look for the highest impact half-day on the agenda and attend that portion. Set specific desired takeaways from your participation. If there are no specific benefits, maybe you

don't have to be there at all.

3. Beware of standing meetings: Don't fill up your calendar with standing meetings that you attend because you're not doing anything else. Get in the habit of asking yourself, "Is this the highest and best use of my time?" If you've already attended three status meetings on a project in one week, how much marginal value is there in attending a fourth?

4. Bundle meetings by location: Don't waste time traveling back and forth to the same place multiple times a week. Reduce your cumulative travel time by bundling your meetings together by location.













Author: *Scott Eblin is an executive coach, speaker and author of "The Next Level."*



Tech Notes

Windows key offers wealth of shortcuts

In Windows 7, make navigating easier using the Windows key and the following keystrokes:

-  = Opens and closes the Start menu
-  + T = Scrolls through items on your taskbar
-  + Ctrl + Tab = Advance through windows using Aero Flip 3D
-  + Up arrow = Maximizes the active window
-  + Down arrow = Minimizes/restores the active window
-  + Left arrow = Snaps the window to the left side of the screen
-  + Right arrow = Snaps the window to the right of the screen
-  + Home = Minimizes all but the active window
-  + (+/-) = Zooms in/out; opens Magnifier
-  + M = Minimizes open windows
-  + Shift + M = Restores all open windows
-  + E = Open Windows Explorer

10 rules to reverse the email spiral



If you are typical, you probably spend hours every day handling email.

And you probably have dozens, if not hundreds, of email messages languishing in your inbox right now.

Chris Anderson, who runs the high-profile TED conference, believes we need to focus on limiting the flow of email, rather than focusing on how to organize and file all those messages.

Anderson offers 10 ideas that could make a dent in email quantity.

1. Respect recipients' time.

Minimize the time it takes someone to process the messages you send, even if it means taking more time to send.

2. Cut each other some slack.

Short or slow is not rude. If it takes time for you to receive a response, don't take it personally.

3. Celebrate clarity. For example, start with a subject line that clearly labels the topic. Clue in the recipient by starting the subject with the words Info, Action, Time Sensitive or Low Priority. Avoid strange fonts and colors.

4. Quash open-ended questions.

For example, instead of asking "How

can I help?" offer the recipient an easier-to-answer question: "Can I help best by (a) calling (b) visiting or (c) staying out of it?"

5. Slash surplus cc's. Don't default to "Reply All." Maybe you only need to cc a couple of people on the original thread.

6. Tighten the thread. Before forwarding a long email conversation, cut what's irrelevant so the recipient can quickly see what matters.

7. Attack attachments. Can you paste text into the email rather than sending as an attachment? Are you using logos or signatures that appear as attachments?

8. Give these gifts: EOM NNTR. Can you fit your message into the subject line? Then do it. Follow with "EOM" (End of Message). Ending a note with "No need to respond" is a wonderful act of generosity.

9. Stop sending contentless responses. Be judicious in your use of email responses that merely say "Great" or "Thanks."

10. Disconnect. If we all agreed to spend less time sending email, we'd all get less email. Spend a day email free. Or set up an auto-response that references your commitment to this charter.



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Q&A

Is it OK to open employees' mail sent to the office?

Q Our mailroom opens all mail automatically. Can we legally open *all* mail delivered to employees at the office? — S.M., Oregon

A Unless an employee gives the employer authority to open his or her mail, the employer risks civil and criminal liability under the postal service statute by doing so. If an employer notifies employees that its practice is to open all mail that is addressed to its office, it may have an argument that the employee has no expectation of privacy in his or her mail, but it's still risky in light of the postal service laws.

Must vacation, sick leave be listed on pay stubs?

Q Our pay stubs no longer list employees' available vacation, sick and other leave hours. Some employees insist this information is mandatory. Are they right? — T.L., Texas

A They are wrong. There's no federal requirement that you provide leave time information on pay stubs. In fact, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) doesn't require you to provide vacation leave, sick leave or other leave benefits at all, with the exception of special laws such as the Family and Medical Leave Act and military-leave laws.

The FLSA does require you to keep accurate pay records, but you don't have to provide every bit of information on pay stubs. Always check with your state's labor department for any special rules.

Free to subscribers

- The Top 10 Employment Laws Every Manager Should Know.
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Is a policy still a policy if it's not in writing?

Will a court acknowledge a company "policy" that doesn't exist on paper? One court recently did—even though the policy wasn't written anywhere—because the policy was being followed by all managers.

Still, when in doubt, write it out.

Case in point: Roberta Hollins applied for a job at a Missouri transportation company. Hollins had a criminal record of two shoplifting convictions and admitted to that on her application. Hollins, who is black, was rejected for the job and a white male was hired instead.



Mindy Chapman

The EEOC filed a race bias lawsuit in support of Hollins. It cited, among other comments, a customer service manager's statement that hiring Hollins would be "opening up a can of worms."

The company's response? It said skin color wasn't an issue because it had long followed a rule—albeit an unwritten one—that rejected job applicants with theft-related convictions. Hollins argued that because the company had no such *written* policy against hiring people with criminal theft convictions, it could not fall back on that defense in court.

The result: The court sided with the

company and dismissed the case in the initial summary judgment phase. The main reason was that the company was able to present evidence that it had previously disqualified 28 applicants over an 18-month period because of convictions related to theft. And it proved that no employees currently working at the customer service center had such convictions on their records. (*EEOC v. Conway Express Inc.*)

3 lessons learned

1. Put your policies in writing.

That way, there's less room for misunderstanding. The employer in this case was very lucky that the oral policy was being applied consistently across the board. That was risky.

2. Audit for policies that aren't in writing. There's a lot of risk for inconsistency when rules aren't written.

3. Train employees on all policies. This increases compliance and minimizes risk.

Mindy Chapman is an attorney and president of Mindy Chapman & Associates LLC. She is a master trainer and co-author of the book Case Dismissed! Taking Your Harassment Prevention to Trial. Read her "Case in Point" blog at www.BusinessManagementDaily.com/Mindy.

How a manager's Kwik-E-Mart trip cost \$100K

Employment law risks don't disappear the minute you leave the building at the day's end. Managers should *never* discuss personnel matters outside the workplace—even at the corner Kwik-E-Mart.

Case in point: Terry Risk, a part-time police officer near Pittsburgh, was a very religious person. But when he started wearing a small cross on his uniform lapel, his supervisor told him to remove it. About that same time, the department had decided it needed to cut some part-time officer position to cut costs.

One day, Risk's supervisor had a

conversation about the potential cuts with a clerk at a local convenience store. The clerk, who knew all the officers from their routine patrols, recommended that three officers, including Risk, should keep their jobs. The supervisor then allegedly said he wasn't planning to retain Risk because Risk's religion kept him from working on Sundays.

Risk lost his job. When he heard about his supervisor's comments, he sued for religious bias. A jury awarded him \$100,000 after hearing the clerk's testimony. (*Risk v. Burgettstown Borough*)



FYI...

Majority of Americans say they're paid fairly. While you may be the one hearing the cries of the underpaid, a majority of American workers (60%) believe they are paid fairly, says a survey of 1,000 U.S. workers by HR consultant Kenexa. Just over one-third (37%) feel they're underpaid and only 2% feel they're overpaid. Women are more likely than men to feel underpaid (43% versus 32%), as are unmarried people compared with workers who are married.

For desk jobs, standing is the new sitting. An increasing number of employees at desk jobs are taking a stand for their health and ditching their chairs. GeekDesk, which sells standing desks, says sales are likely to triple this year. Advocates of standing desks tout the health and alertness benefits. Detractors cite potential back problems and varicose veins. *Another option:* Treadmill desks, which allow you to slowly walk while you work.

401(k) participation: Show me the money! Curt Lansbery, CEO of North American Tool, couldn't understand why his employees weren't maxing out their 401(k) contributions, even though the company kicked in. So, according to a *Fast Company* report, Lansbery brought a bag holding \$9,832—employees' unclaimed money from the year before—to the 401(k) enrollment meeting. He poured the cash on the table, saying, "This is your money. It should be in your pocket. Next year, do you want it on the table or in your pocket?" After a stunned silence, employees started funding their 401(k)s.

Think about it

"If we keep going the way we're going, we're likely to wind up where we're headed."
— Chinese proverb

3 Friday habits worth doing

End your week on a positive note every Friday with these three work habits—and set the tone for the following week:

1. Choose one person who made your week go more smoothly and send him a quick thank-you note. It's a small time commitment—maybe 10 minutes. But the results are powerful.

Tip: Want to mail a paper card but don't have time to buy one? Use www.sendoutcards.com to create and mail personalized cards in one minute.

2. Make note of your three greatest accomplishments over the past

week and embrace the positive emotion associated with getting important things done. Did anyone help you in tackling them? Consider making her the recipient of your thank-you note.

3. What are your top three goals for next week? Do you have time set aside for them? Who do you need help from? What's the next step associated with each goal? Write down each task and attach a due date.

— Adapted from "3 Great Habits for Ending Your Week on a Positive Note!" Andy Robinson, Careerealism.com.

Look for 'milkshake moments'

Leadership thinker Steven Little performs a test during hotel stays. He asks room service for a milkshake. If he's told it's not on the menu, he walks employees through the list of ingredients.

"Do you have vanilla ice cream?" Yes. "And milk?" Of course. "Do you have a tall glass and a long spoon?" Sure.

If so, he tells them how to make one. If they're willing to do it, that's a "milkshake moment."

His definition: When people understand their true purpose, believe it's their job to fulfill it

and have the tools and freedom to make it happen, that's a milkshake moment.

Little wrote a book about the exact moment that employees realize they can overcome stupid rules and do the right thing.

Ask: What is your organization's highest purpose? Are you putting people in the best position to accomplish it? Do your current policies and systems enable you to deliver it?

— Adapted from *The Milkshake Moment*, Steven Little, Wiley.

Onboard a 'newbie' (cont. from page 1)

organization. Most employees start this on day one, some even before. Schedule team-building exercises and luncheons between new employees and their co-workers.

3. Culture

Include speeches or videos of managers and executives discussing company history, values and organization culture. Follow up with roundtable discussions so new employees can ask questions.

4. Compliance

Explain the basic organization pol-

icies and rules, including employee handbooks, nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies, security procedures, IT policies and at-will employment. Don't just slide a handbook to them and say, "Read this."

5. Check back

More than a quarter (28%) of employers collect little or no feedback from new hires about their onboarding program. And 39% do only "occasional" spot checks. The best onboarding programs are being constantly evaluated by new hires.