INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

215 Dean A. McGee, Suite 153, Oklahoma City, OK 73102 http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/ (405) 231-4167

Chair's Corner

Greetings fellow FEB Members! I am honored to be elected as Chairperson for the Oklahoma Federal Executive Board (FEB) this fiscal year and hope to carry on the fine tradition of our organization and the work of the Chairs that have served before me. Although my Agency is "up the street" from Oklahoma City, it is my goal to make all of the FEB meetings as Chairperson.

Our Executive Policy Council will have a Strategic Planning meeting early in the fiscal year to identify possible topics for meetings, events, and training. If you have particular topics or speakers you would like to see included in this year's programs, please call the FEB Office at 405-231-4167 and let LeAnn know, so it can be added to our agenda for discussion.

The topics identified through your input and our planning meeting will be coordinated and confirmed so that the informational material can be distributed to the FEB members and posted on our website in the late January timeframe. During that same timeframe we will be distributing:

- The annual "Employee of the Year" award nomination package,
- FEB interagency training opportunities, and
- The Leadership FEB program for the FY 2011 class.

Be sure to review the information and how you can take advantage of resources provided by our Federal Executive Board.

Later this month, FEB members will receive their annual assessment of "cost avoidance" from participation in FEB activities, meetings, and trainings. This will provide you specific feedback on your agency's cost avoidance through utilizing FEB resources, compared to comparable training available on the market. Each year, I always find the "cost avoidance" number to be enlightening. Reading over the assessment, I immediately understand the benefits my employees and Agency receive – a direct result of an active FEB.

Also watch for the 2nd Annual Oklahoma Federal Executive Board Calendar, expected to be available at the end of November to early December timeframe. Each FEB member will receive one, and there will be ample stock available for purchase.

I am looking forward to another active and successful year and I hope to see you at our events!

Jon Worthington, Chairman

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Ponzi schemes, other scams target federal employees

Taken from "Personal Adviser" article in Federal Times, dated 7-19-10 by Mike Miles

The recent revelation that 260 federal employees and annuitants and their families may have lost some $34 million to a crooked investment manager is a loud and clear wakeup call.

Wayne McLeod and his firm, Federal Employees Benefit Group, are accused by the Securities and Exchange Commission of defrauding a group of investors, many of them federal law enforcement personnel, in an apparent Ponzi scheme. According to the SEC, McLeod admitted perpetrating the scheme to investigators before taking his own life.

While this story is shocking and sad, it is also instructive. I met McLeod at a seminar several years ago and found him interesting, professionally. Among other things, he aggressively encouraged federal employees to move money from their Thrift Savings Plan accounts into retail investment accounts, presumably ones that he or his associates managed or were compensated for selling—a strategy I strongly oppose. Back then, I did some digging to see who he was and why he might be motivated to give what I considered to be poor advice.

I found that McLeod and his business were basically selling insurance and investment products on behalf of others; there was no mention at that time of the in house investment fund that is now the subject of investigation. I found no evidence in publicly available materials that would indicate that he was a criminal.

Not so long ago, the idea that an investment scam would be targeted at federal employees would have seemed far-fetched. The investment industry has more or less ignored federal workers and retirees since much of their wealth is often tied up in their annuities, and investment managers couldn't get control of it to siphon off those fees they like so much. But, the confluence of a tough investment environment and a dramatic increase in the number of six-figure TSP account balances has caught the industry's attention.

As attention turns to the federal employee market, there is bound to be an increase in the frequency of fraud to go along with it. So, it's important to be skeptical and vigilant when it comes to considering where to invest your money. Here are the best ways to make sure that what you pay for is what you get:

- Keep as much of your retirement money as you can in the TSP for as long as possible. There is going to be increasing pressure to try to convince you that you'll be better off moving your money, after you retire, to this or that IRA account. Don't believe it. I haven't seen an investment opportunity yet that will provide you with better risk-adjusted returns than the TSP. The person most likely to gain from an investment move is the one who sells it to you.

- Avoid giving custody of your money to all but the largest, most reputable firms, and never to an individual. What all Ponzi schemes have in common—an attribute essential to their existence—is custody of client funds. If you or someone else wants to manage your retirement money, do so through an account at a reputable broker. It's your brokerage account, and you get the statements every month. Your investment manager only has a limited power of attorney to direct trades in the account on your behalf, not to do as he pleases with the money. Bernie Madoff was able to do what he did because people made their investment checks out to his firm. His investors' only way of knowing what he was doing with the money was to read statements that his firm produced.

- Don't confuse nice with honest. I've never heard of a Ponzi schemer whom people didn't like—before they lost their money. Ponzi schemers, and salespeople, are successful because they're nice. I can't tell you who many people have come to me over the years with stories about the really nice investment adviser who lost their money. That was, in fact, my first investment experience, and I've never forgotten it.

- Everything in life involves risk. More return generally involves more risk. Any time someone promises you oversized returns with undersized risk, you should be wary. That doesn't automatically mean that they're trying to mislead you, but you should be on alert, and if in doubt, just walk away.

Spotlighting Information in Public Service

Did You Know…..?

Veterans Benefits Administration

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These benefits are legislated in Title 38 of the United States Code.

General Eligibility

Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions. Active service means full-time service, other than active duty for training, as a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or as a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service, Environmental Science Services Administration or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or its predecessor, the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Generally, men and women veterans with similar service may be entitled to the same VA benefits.

Dishonorable and bad conduct discharges issued by general courts-martial may bar VA benefits. Veterans in prison and parolees must contact a VA regional office to determine eligibility. VA benefits will not be provided to any veteran or dependent wanted for an outstanding felony warrant.

Certain VA Benefits Require Wartime Service

Certain VA benefits require service during wartime. Under the law, VA recognizes these war periods:

- **Mexican Border Period**: May 9, 1916, through April 5, 1917, for veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders or in adjacent waters.
- **World War I**: April 6, 1917, through Nov. 11, 1918; for veterans who served in Russia, April 6, 1917, through April 1, 1920; extended through July 1, 1921, for veterans who had at least one day of service between April 6, 1917, and Nov. 11, 1918.
- **World War II**: Dec. 7, 1941, through Dec. 31, 1946.
- **Korean War**: June 27, 1950, through Jan. 31, 1955.
- **Vietnam War**: Aug. 5, 1964 (Feb. 28, 1961, for veterans who served "in country" before Aug. 5, 1964), through May 7, 1975.
- **Gulf War**: Aug. 2, 1990, through a date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation.

Important Documents Needed to Expedite VA Benefits Delivery

In order to expedite benefits delivery, veterans seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, DD-215, or for World War II veterans, a WD form), which documents service dates and type of discharge, or give their full name, military service number, and branch and dates of service. The veteran's service discharge form should be kept in a safe location accessible to the veteran and next of kin or designated representative.

The following documents will be needed for claims processing related to a veteran's death:

1. Veteran's marriage certificate for claims of a surviving spouse or children.
2. Veteran's death certificate if the veteran did not die in a VA health care facility.
3. Children's birth certificates or adoption papers to determine children's benefits.
4. Veteran's birth certificate to determine parents' benefits.

For additional information, visit the VA Web page at www.va.gov

Spotlighting (cont'd)

VA Health Care Overview - Questions? Call 877-222-8387(VETS)

VA provides a Medical Benefits Package to all enrolled Veterans. This comprehensive plan provides a full range of preventive outpatient and inpatient services within VA health care system. Also, once you enroll in the VA's health care system, you can be seen at any VA facility across the country.

VA operates an annual enrollment system that helps to manage the provision of health care by providing an overall population of beneficiaries. Additionally, the enrollment system ensures that Veterans who are eligible can get care and ensures that care is given to Veterans who are eligible. VA applies a variety of factors in determining Veterans' eligibility for enrollment, but once a Veteran is enrolled, that Veteran remains enrolled in the VA health care system.

Do You Qualify?

There are many ways that a Veteran may qualify to receive top-notch VA health care at over 1,400 medical centers and clinics across the nation. The VA has highly trained physicians and clinicians that allow the VA to address many specialties. You may also be able to receive assistance with prescription medication. VA health care is portable. Once enrolled, you may receive care at your home facility as well as the nearest VA facility while traveling. If you are a Veteran, and you want low-cost, high-quality health care, please take a moment to see if you qualify by visiting: www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/tools/Quick_Eligibility_Check/index.asp

VA Extends "Agent Orange Benefits" to More Veterans

VA announced recently that it has established a service connection to three diseases linked to herbicide Agent Orange use during the Vietnam War: B cell leukemias; Parkinson's disease; and ischemic heart disease. The addition of these "presumed" illnesses for Agent Orange simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits for Veterans. For more information, see the news release at: www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1796

Burial Benefits Available from the National Cemetery Administration

Requests for burial in a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemetery cannot be made via the Internet.

For Burial in a National Cemetery

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of the 131 national cemeteries (listed at: www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp) with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for Burial Allowances. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

For Burial in a Private Cemetery

Burial benefits available for Veterans buried in a private cemetery include a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for Burial Allowances. There are not any benefits available to spouses and dependents buried in a private cemetery.

Persons Eligible for Burial in a VA National Cemetery

The National Cemetery website identifies the eligibility requirements for burial and memorial benefits at: www.cem.va.gov/bbene/eligible.asp

Social Media Myths: 5 Roadblocks to Discovery

Posted to GovLoop by Andrew Einhorn on August 23, 2010 at 2:27pm

In recent years, social media has emerged as the hottest Internet phenomenon ever created. Yet, despite its prominence as the number one online activity, the promise that social media holds for governments, businesses, educators, and politicians has yet to be fully realized. This is due in large part to (1) a variety of incorrect myths that large segments of society still believe about social media, which prevents widespread adoption in professional applications, and (2) a lack of awareness of how social media can be used for a number of branding, policy, and research applications.

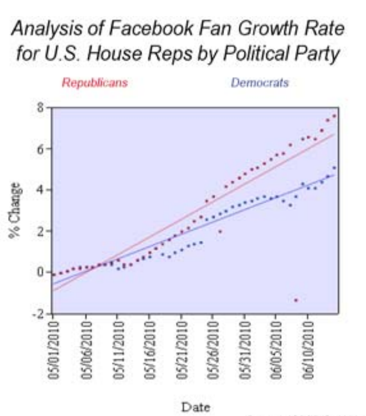
OhMyGov! recently unveiled a white paper that attempts to debunk prevailing myths about social media and provide insights into how social media—when used and analyzed correctly—can identify trends, unravel mysteries in public perception of a person, organization or brand, evaluate the effectiveness of outreach campaigns, and even predict the future. Below is an excerpt from the paper.

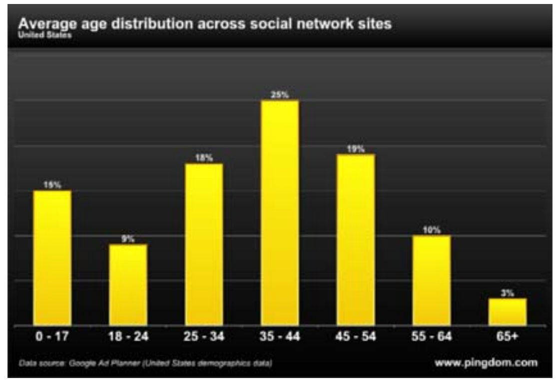
Myth #1: Social media is free

Reality: Manpower is required to run a successful, or even an unsuccessful, social media campaign. These manhours translate into real costs that the organization incurs. The myth of social media being completely free leads organizations to undervalue the importance of running a successful social media campaign.

Myth #2: Social media is for kids

Reality: Middle-aged adults rule the social media space. While the early saturation of Facebook and MySpace by college students and teens has perpetuated the erroneous myth that all social media is dominated by the same age group, the average age now on Facebook and Twitter are 37 and 39, respectively, treated as a valuable business tool and data source.





Myth #3: Social media is just a fad

Reality: Now approaching its 15th year in existence and rapidly growing and evolving with each new quarter, social media has proven itself as a still fresh but well-established method of communication. Organizations attempting to ride out the social media wave on the sidelines must learn to recognize that social media is no more of a fad than email was.

Myth #4: Social media is only for socializing

Reality: This dated myth overlooks the incredible diversity of applications users have found for social media. Today, social media is used to break and track news stories, share product reviews, provide feedback to companies and governments, survey employees for new ideas on improving operations, orchestrate boycotts, and elect presidents. In fact, it seems that each new day brings a new application for social media.

Myth #5: Social media is not measurable

Reality: The relative popularity of political candidates can now be measured by their number of followers and mentions on social media platforms. These same numbers can be used as a litmus test for public sentiment towards politicians, brands, and campaigns. Similarly, campaigns waged on these platforms can be monitored and analyzed to determine the public's response to the messaging, regional variations in message uptake, key influencers or detractors, and the number of people reached by the campaign. In certain instances, social media can even be used to make predictions as to future earnings or election outcomes.

Federal workers' use of Internet social media has limits under the Hatch Act

WASHINGTON POST By Joe Davidson Tuesday, August 24, 2010

When the Hatch Act was passed in 1939, social media tools like Facebook and Twitter were decades away.

But they are ubiquitous now and the Office of Special Council has received many questions about how the law, which limits the political activity of federal employees, affects these new forms of communication. With the District and Maryland holding primary elections next month and the entire country gearing up for congressional and other elections in November, OSC decided it's a good time to let federal employees know what they can do using social media without running afoul of the law.

The Hatch Act applies to executive branch workers, including postal employees, but not the president and vice president. District government workers also are covered. Congress, however, is considering legislation, introduced by Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), that would exclude them once the District enacts a law with the same effect.

Generally, the Hatch Act permits federal employees greater freedom to participate in election activities than many realize. "If you're not on the government dime and you're not in a government building," there's a good chance the activity is allowed, said Ward Morrow, a lawyer for the American Federation of Government Employees.

According to the OSC, "federal employees may not solicit, accept, or receive campaign contributions at any time. Further, they may not use their official authority or influence to affect the result of an election. Finally, they may not engage in political activity while on duty or in a federal workplace."

Those prohibitions carry over to the Twitter and Facebook worlds.

But what happens if you telework and your kitchen table is your federal workplace? That was not addressed in the July guidance.

OSC issued a list of "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Social Media and the Hatch Act" last month. But as he so often does, Uncle Sam did not make the answers simple. In some cases, the answers differ based on position, with "less restricted employees" getting more leeway than "further restricted employees." The further- restricted employees include many federal law enforcement employees, intelligence agency staffers, administrative law judges, senior executives and Federal Election Commission employees.

Here is a sampling from the Q & A provided by the Special Counsel's office:

May federal employees write a blog expressing support or opposition to partisan political candidates and political parties?

The basic answer is yes, but with restrictions.

They can't write blogs while at work and they should not use their official titles to give weight to their opinions. Further- restricted employees also may not take an active part in a campaign. That includes distributing campaign literature, which means they are not allowed to post anything on their blogs "that was created by, or leads to information created by, the party, partisan candidate, or partisan campaign, because OSC would consider such activity to be the equivalent of distributing literature," according to the special counsel's guidelines.

Employees may advocate for or against political parities or candidates on Facebook pages as long as they stay within the broader Hatch Act limitations.

May federal employees continue to "follow" the official White House Twitter account, or be a "fan" or "friend" of, or "like," the official White House Facebook page, after President Obama becomes a candidate for reelection?

Yes, but with the same restrictions that apply to other candidates.

"Note that the Twitter account @barackobama is not an official Presidential account," cautions the OSC guidance. "Nor is the Facebook page found at www.facebook.com/barackobama." Both are affiliated with the Democratic National Committee, and that's a partisan political group.

The "fan" and "friend" restrictions come with general limitations, such as engaging in political activity while at work. That includes using social media or e-mail to accept an invitation to a political event or forwarding the invitation to others.

Further-restricted employees have an additional limitation. Links on their Facebook pages to a candidate's Web site must be visible only to the employee.

Sometimes the guidelines seem almost contradictory, or like a hair-splitting exercise.

Less-restricted employees, for example, may post a link that leads to the home page of a candidate but not "directly to the page of the Web site on which readers can contribute money." Of course, many candidates ask for money on their home pages, though readers may need a second click to make the contribution.

Nonetheless, "I think it's good they put the rules of the road out there," Morrow said.

Suggestion: Read the rules carefully, then check with your supervisor if you need clarification.

This article was added to our newsletter to provide information that highlights the sensitivity and additional responsibilities created by social media.

Additional resources are available on our FEB website.

Hatch Act Information on FEB Website

The following is a discussion of restrictions on political activity by federal government employees, and by employees of certain state and local government agencies, under the Hatch Act.

In 1993, Congress passed legislation that significantly amended the Hatch Act as it applies to federal and D.C. employees (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326). Under the amendments most federal and D.C. employees are now permitted to take an active part in political management and political campaigns. A small group of federal employees are subject to greater restrictions and continue to be prohibited from engaging in partisan political management and partisan political campaigns.

OSC has developed a number of booklets, posters and fact sheets that explain the application of the Hatch Act. Copies of the booklets and posters can be ordered from the Government Printing Office.

Below is information that may be used to provide or brief employees on the restrictions. Additional information is provided on the U.S. Office of Special Counsel website.

- One-page flyer on the Hatch Act and Federal Employees (pdf file) appropriate for posting on bulletin boards
- Political Activity and the Federal Employee (pdf file) fourteen page booklet of information
- Power Point presentation on the Hatch Act

These resources can be found at: www.oklahoma.feb.gov/HatchAct.htm

The flyer, booklet and power point presentation are all downloadable for use in your workplace.

UPCOMING EVENTS
October 2010

Oct 1, 2010
All Day
Hiring Reform Training: Structured Interviews
3738 SW 15th St., OKC
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

Oct 13, 2010
07:30 a.m.
Mayors Committee on Disability Concerns
POC: Diana Hubbard, 405-297-4544

Oct 20, 2010
10:00 a.m.
Interagency Training Council
TBD
POC: Carol Smith, 405-425-4499

Oct 20, 2010
10:00 a.m.
Executive Policy Council Meeting
9900 N. Broadway Ext., OKC
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

Oct 21, 2010
5:00 p.m.
Federal Employees Care Council
TBD
POC: Tom Burton, 405-954-0625

Oct 26, 2010
All Day
Leadership FEB
Law Enforcement
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

Oct 27, 2010
Shared Neutrals, Lunch n Learn
IHOP-Bricktown, 401 E. California
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

Oct 28, 2010
All Day
Hiring Reform Training: Design Assessment
3738 SW 15th St., OKC
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

Oct 30, 2010
12:00 noon
Naturalization
US District Court, 200 NW 4th St, OKC
POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167

INSPIRATION CORNER

Leaders are visionaries with a poorly developed sense of fear and no concept of the odds against them. They make the impossible happen.
–Dr. Robert Jarvik

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.
–Thomas Edison

Your Federal Executive Board

"Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) are generally responsible for improving coordination among federal activities and programs in…areas outside of Washington, D.C…FEBs support and promote national initiatives of the President and the administration and respond to the local needs of the federal agencies and the community." (GAO-04-384)

We applaud the efforts of the Oklahoma FEB Executive Policy Council members who ensure information is provided to direct our activities and efforts:

- Jim Akagi, US Drug Enforcement Administration
- Laura Culberson, Director of Staff, Tinker AFB
- Larry Flener, Representative for the District Director, US Postal Service
- Dottie Overal, Director, Small Business Administration
- Lindy Ritz, Director, FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
- Betty Tippeconnie, Superintendent, BIA-Concho Agency
- David Wood, Director, VA Medical Center

This newsletter is published monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the federal community in Oklahoma. If you have news of interest, please fax to the FEB Office at (405) 231-4165 or email to LeAnnJenkins@gsa.gov no later than the 15th of each month.

Officers:

Chair: **Jon Worthington**
Administrator, Southwestern Power Administration, Tulsa

Vice-Chair: **Adrian Andrews**,
Special Agent in Charge
US Secret Service

Ex Officio: **Kevin McNeely**
US Department of Housing and Urban Development
Mike Roach, U.S. Marshal
US Marshals Service
Western District of Oklahoma
Sam Jarvis
Director, VA Regional Office
Muskogee

Staff:
Director: LeAnn Jenkins
Assistant: Vacant

Continuity of Operations (COOP)
Excellent Series I
Practitioners Certification

In an effort to further support Continuity of Operations efforts of the federal agencies in Oklahoma, the Federal Executive Board is providing information on a FEMA developed certification program available to employees completing specific COOP training. There are two levels of COOP certification available and some of the required training is available through independent study, online.

Individuals completing the pre-requisites can apply for certification:

1. The FEMA Emergency Management Institute will issue all certificates
2. Send certificate requests and supporting information to LeAnn Jenkins, LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov or fax to 405-231-4165
3. Please include your name, organization (spelled out), work address, email address and phone number
4. Expect to wait up to six weeks to receive your certificate

Submission for Certification Consideration

Name:	Agency:
Agency Address:	
Mailing Address:	
Phone:	Email:

Submit copies of training completion for each of the following courses, along with this registration form to the Federal Executive Board (info below). *No certificates have been issued for the Determined Accord exercise; provide date and location of attendance for verification*.

	COURSE TITLE	***Completed***
[ ]	IS 546 or IS 546a: COOP Awareness Course,	
[ ]	IS 547 or IS 547a: Introduction to COOP,	
[ ]	IS-242 or equivalent E/L course: Effective Communication	
[ ]	E/L/G 548: COOP Manager's T-t-T Course <u>or</u> E/G/L 549: Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program Manager Course <u>or</u> University of Maryland Preparing the States Continuity Courses <u>or</u> MGT 331 University of Maryland Preparing the States Continuity Course	
[ ]	E/L 550: COOP Planner's T-t-T Workshop or IS 550: Continuity Planner's Workshop	
[ ]	IS 100: Intro to Incident Command System (ICS) or ICS 100: Intro to Incident Command System or ICS 200: Incident Command System for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents	
[ ]	IS 230 or equivalent E/L course: Principles of Emergency Management or IS 230a: Fundamentals of Emergency Management	
[ ]	IS 700a: Intro to National Incident Management System (NIMS) or IS 700	
[ ]	IS 800-B: A National Response Framework (NRF), An Introduction	
[ ]	E 136 or IS 139: Exercise Development Course/Exercise Design Course/or COOP Exercise Design/ Development T-t-T Course,	
[ ]	Complete attendance in continuity exercise Determined Accord (Pandemic Preparedness) or IS 520: Intro to Continuity of Operations Planning for Pandemic Influenzas and IS 522: Pandemic Influenza Exercise Course (both independent study courses are required)	
[ ]	NARA/CoSA Vital Records Training (optional recommended)	

Successful completion of the above criteria will make you eligible to become a certified Professional Continuity Practitioner

Submit registration and copies of training certificates by fax to: 405-231-4165 (Attn: LeAnn Jenkins)

An amazing statistic

June 7th, 2010 | Posted by Mark Leheney to ***Management Concepts*** Leadership blog

If I told you that as a leader or manager you could do something relatively simple to increase loyalty, motivation, cooperation and buy-in, would you be interested? Probably so.

And if I told you that I have discovered – somewhat accidentally – a statistic that is almost 100% correlated with perceptions of greatness as a manager or leader, would you want to know what the correlation is? Probably so.

I have asked groups for about a decade to raise their hands if they have or have ever had what they consider to be a great boss. Some unpredictable percentage of hands goes up. I then ask people to lower their hands only if they think that boss was not a good listener.

Here's the data: With about 2,000 people (I wish I had kept an actual count), a total of seven hands have dropped. The technical term for that in the social sciences is a "no-kidding correlation."

What is it about listening that is so powerful? And don't we already listen pretty well, anyway?

Let's first dispense with the myth. Many people listen superficially. They are rehearsing in their heads what they will say next (and interrupt if it takes too long for them to make their point), they listen for what it means to them – instead of truly just listening for what it means to the other person, and they get distracted a lot. This is when you are doing things like thinking of your grocery list, wondering what will happen next in your favorite television show, or thinking about that catchy tune you heard on the radio driving in.

(By the way, when you are "listening" on the telephone while typing out a reply to an email message, I hate to tell you this, but the other person knows. Same thing when you're trying to eat your lunch and make it sound like you're not eating your lunch.)

Also, if you want to experience another amazing statistic, keep track sometime of the interruptions in a contentious meeting. I did this recently with a group and tracked 10 interruptions in 20 seconds. The interrupters got interrupted! And the people who interrupted the interrupters got interrupted! Here's the really amazing part – it didn't seem that unusual. It felt like a normal work conversation where people had strong feelings.

This kind of non-listening is not what I am talking about. I mean attentive, focused, present listening.

Here's the easy way to start to understand the power of it. Think of someone who really just listened to you – fully, engaged and dialed-in. What did that mean to you? When people talk about how it affected them, they usually say that it made them feel valued, respected, trusted and connected. (Are you starting to see how this could lead to loyalty, motivation, cooperation, and buy-in? These were the four words used by a management group going through a development program when they were charged with practicing the listening skill for two months.) There is something about this experience that connects people and creates a space in which new meaning can emerge.

I am not claiming that all you have to do to be seen as a great leader or manager is listen – there are other blogs for that — but the correlation speaks for itself.

So how do you get started? This is the easy part. Next time you're ready to chip in your ideas or thoughts, just hold back one more sentence. That's your first step on a development path. The next time, hold back for two more sentences. Work the muscle. Build the capacity to just listen without it feeling strange.

Also, this is also one of those "try it at home" competencies.

See what happens.

Hiring Reform Workshops 2010
Oklahoma Federal Executive Board
Preparing Professionals for the Future of Staffing

Change is coming! Hiring Reform is one of the biggest initiatives influencing change in the Human Resources (HR) profession for the Federal Government. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is pleased to offer comprehensive workshops to provide you with the tools to facilitate change within your Agency. Whether you need an all-inclusive workshop or simply a refresher course, OPM looks forward to partnering with you to prepare you for the future of Staffing in the Federal Government!

Course Location: Oklahoma City Public Works Training Center, 3738 SW 15th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73018

Target Audience: Human Resources professionals responsible for consulting with managers regarding strategic staffing and recruitment methods.

> ***September 23, 2010*** **- Category Rating Training (8:30 am – 3:30 pm):** This workshop is designed to equip agency HR staff with the knowledge and practice to successfully implement category rating. Topics include: distinguishing differences in quality based on job related competencies/KSAs, defining categories, applying veteran's preference, and making valid and legal selections. *50 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 5 attendees per agency.*

> ***September 24, 2010*** **- Occupational Questionnaires (8:30 am – 2:30 pm):** This workshop will cover the basics for how to develop occupational questionnaires. Topics include: developing an assessment plan, assessing minimum qualifications, writing questionnaire items, and implementation considerations. *50 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 5 attendees per agency.*

> ***September 30, 2010*** **- Job Analysis (8:30 am – 2:30 pm):** This workshop provides agency HR staff with the knowledge and practice to conduct job analyses. Topics include: defining a job analysis, describing what it is used for and defining the steps for completing a job analysis. *50 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 5 attendees per agency.*

> ***October 1, 2010*** **- Structured Interviews (8:30 am – 2:30 pm):** This workshop will provide HR staff with the knowledge to design and administer structured interviews. Topics include: defining a structured interview, developing structured interview questions and rating scales, conducting structured interview, and evaluating responses to structured interview questions. *50 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 5 attendees per agency.*

Target Audience: Agency executives, hiring managers and Human Resources managers/professionals involved in strategic staffing.

> ***October 28, 2010*** **- Designing an Assessment Strategy Workshop (8:30 am – 2:30 pm):** This workshop is designed to provide agency executives, hiring managers and HR managers/professionals with a broad overview of assessment options, as well as variables to consider when developing an assessment strategy that meets hiring reform requirements. Specific topics include: assessment goals and principles; assessment options and models (e.g., multiple hurdles) that can be used in conjunction with a category rating model; and common methodologies for establishing cut points for use with category rating. *30 participants on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 5 attendees per agency.*

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Register online at http://hiringreform.golearnportal.org/.
The training is free to participants. Agencies are responsible for any costs associated with travel, lodging and per diem. If you have questions or problems registering for the training, please contact, IA@opm.gov or Rafiell Jones, Rafiell.Jones@opm.gov, 202-606-0922.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
October 2010					**1** Hiring Reform Training: Structured Interviews	**2**
3	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
10	**11**	**12**	**13** 7:30 Mayors Committee	**14**	**15**	**16**
17	**18**	**19**	**20** 10:00 ITC 10:00 Executive Policy Council	**21** 5:00 FECC	**22**	**23**
24	**25**	**26** Leadership FEB	**27** 11:30 Shared Neutrals	**28** Hiring Reform Training: Design Assessment	**29** Naturalization	**30**

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