“April Showers Bring May Flowers”

This phrase paints us a clear picture of the relationship between Spring weather and sprouting plants, but take note of its underlying meaning: something good may happen as a result of unpleasant events. Like a rainbow after a terrible storm, and the lovely flowers that result from the sprinkle of April showers, it is written all over nature that positive things can result from negative events.

Look at it from a different perspective. Whether it is a bad day at work or the feeling after receiving some bad news, evaluate the situation and find the best way to deal with it.

Our word for this month is REVITALIZE – meaning to give new life.

It is very fitting for this month because the bitter cold of the last couple of months is officially over. April, for some, means adjusting to the time change in March as well as bringing out equipment for outdoor activities and preparing to give our lives a jolt of energy after months of hibernation.

In this issue, we provided more opportunities for involvement and interaction through our newsletter. Additionally, we shed light on self-evaluation and some teaching session advice in order to improve your educational programming throughout the year.

We have been working to get caught up and even ahead of the game. Last month’s spring cleaning went well. In-services continue to be available and provide an opportunity to enhance your knowledge, or even learn new things. April opens with Easter weekend and we encourage you to spend this time with your family and friends. Food and fellowship, along with self discovery and learning, will leave you feeling revitalized.

From Joyce, Krista and Dianne
The Staff and Program Development Team
About 34 percent of last year’s in-services were held via CENTRA, and the rest were held in various locations. Although face-to-face in-services are the majority, we want to examine the factors that contribute to your decision to choose between in-services online and in-services face-to-face. What are some reasons you prefer one over the other? Does it make much of a difference? Share with us any experiences or thoughts you may have on the Pros and Cons of these two types of in-services. Listed below are some of our thoughts.

**CENTRA / On-line**

**Pro:** It is convenient - I can attend at my office!

**Con:** It is far too common to experience technical difficulties during the session, or before it even starts.

**Pro:** It saves money, especially travel expenses.

**Con:** It takes a bit longer to find out if a person is having difficulty with their connection, which burns up time. What happens when someone’s microphone stops working in the middle of a discussion?

**Pro:** It gives me the opportunity to multitask and tackle things on my To-Do list.

**Con:** Has a higher rate of distraction and makes it harder to pay attention.

**FACE-to-FACE**

**Pro:** Instructors are able to provide more in-depth presentations, having the advantage to “show” instead of tell.

**Con:** How far are educators willing to travel to attend in-services that take place out of their district?

**Pro:** Educators get a chance to meet new folks.

**Con:** Many sessions are free, but some require fees for materials.

**Pro:** There is more variety in teaching tools, visual aids and other materials used for learning, which will strengthen the ability to pay attention.

**Con:** Bad presentations from instructors can easily distract attendees, which places stress on instructors to maintain an energetic tone or find ways to make their sessions as engaging as possible.

**Take Our Poll**

Click on the link below to vote between CENTRA and Face-to-Face In-Services.

http://www.makesurvey.net/cgi-bin/survey.dll/8505DA811BB94C6AB070AEA6A887066B

You can only vote once, so choose carefully.

We will reveal the results on next month’s issue of *The Extension Exchange.*
How to Recover from a Bad Day at Work

1. **Take a nap or go to sleep early.**
   So you are finally home after one of the roughest days of your life. Get comfortable, jump in bed and get some shut-eye.

2. **Do something fun.**
   One of the best remedies for bad days is to do something you love. Watch a movie or spend some time with people who are dear to you.

3. **If problems are the culprit of your spoiled day, determine solutions for them.**
   Perhaps this would be best after you have done either the previous two suggestions, just to get your mind off things for a little bit.

4. **Ask yourself whether you are ready to move on from your bad day, or do you need to dwell on it a little longer?**
   If you are busy beating yourself up for feeling miserable, drowning in your sorrows or feeling victimized, these are signs that you are not ready to let go of it. But word of advice: the longer you dwell, the longer the feeling will control you.

5. **If you ARE ready to move on, determine what it is that you want to move on to.**
   How do you want things to be? How do you want to feel? What will your mental attitude be? Try your best not to carry your bad days with you when you move on to better days.

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**Useful Tech Tips from our DASNR Computer Specialists**

**Rogue Antivirus Problems**
In the last several months, attacks on computers have dramatically increased. The attacks take the form of a *fake* antivirus program that alerts you that your computer is not secure. It prompts you to either purchase a program, or to scan your computer for viruses. A good way to help protect yourself from these fake antivirus programs is to make sure that your Windows, Adobe, and Java updates are all installed. These programs alert you when updates are available and they require your input to complete the installation.

**Other Internet Browsers**
While Internet Explorer is a very popular internet browser, especially since it automatically comes with Microsoft Windows, there are other browsers that offer more capabilities and are more secure. Two examples include Mozilla Firefox, available at [http://Firefox.com](http://Firefox.com), and Google Chrome, available at [http://google.com/chrome](http://google.com/chrome).

(CONTINUE “TIPS” ON PAGE 4)
More tips...

Social Media Safety
If you use social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook, a couple of steps can better protect your account (and yourself):

- Use a strong and unique password for each account.
- If you receive a Twitter Direct Message from a follower whose account you suspect has been infected by a phishing site or spam site, let him or her know and suggest that they change their password immediately. (Sites are considered bad if they include links that have been shortened with “bit.ly.” The site www.longurl.org is a helpful tool to use when figuring out where suspicious links actually direct you to. Just copy and paste the suspicious link into the text area on the longurl Web site. Most social tools provide information and help to account owners who suspect their account has been compromised.
- Facebook attacks often take the form of a video link sent from an infected friend. When you click the link, you will be prompted to install or update video software; this update is the malware. Be extremely careful following video links on Facebook.
- Select third-party programs and applications carefully.

Beware of Popups
If you receive a popup that you feel is suspicious, do not click on the popup! If this happens, save any open files and restart your computer. If the popup reappears after you restart the computer, please contact your Extension Technology Support Specialist. We currently use McAfee VirusScan, however, Super AntiSpyware and Spybot Search and Destroy could also work just as well to help protect your computer against viruses and malware. These programs will, from time to time, need to be updated. You can update the programs by following the instructions listed below.

Updating McAfee and Anti-malware Programs

To update McAfee Antivirus:

- In the bottom right side of your screen, right click on the red V surrounded by a blue shield.

- Select the Update Now option to begin updating the program. If this fails, go to http://support.mcafee.com, click on Large Enterprise=>Downloads and then “Security Updates” on the left side. Click “I Agree” to accept, then click the “SuperDATs” tab. Download and run the file named “sdat####.exe”.

To update SuperAntiSpyware:

- In the bottom right side of your screen, right click on the little yellow bug.

- Click the “Check for Updates” button to start download process.

To update Spybot Search and Destroy:

- Click Start, then All Program, and “Spybot Search and Destroy.”

- After Spybot opens, select the “Search for Updates” button.

- When the update window opens please select an update site with USA in the name and then click “Continue.” Once the list of files to download is displayed with checkmarks beside them, click “Download” to begin the update.

A special thanks to Levi Arnold, Scott Wilson, and Mick Hoeltzl - our DASNR Support Technicians, for compiling this information. We appreciate all your help!
One of our first interactions when trying to get employed by the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources is with the Human Resources office. The HR team consists of Sue Bonner, Betty James, Patty Speaker, Lee Freeman, and student assistant, Kelsey Cowan. Their responsibilities allow them to “provide human resources support for DASNR,” Betty said. This includes both employment and benefits. Lee provides data support for the administration. Currently, she is working to smooth the transition from paper to electronic forms. The team works with all areas of DASNR, including both campus and state-wide departments. This includes Cooperative Extension, Sue said.

When asked about the best part of their job, they replied in unison “the people.” In order to be in HR, you have to like people, Sue said. Betty, who is retiring in June after 30 years of service, also mentioned that she enjoys her co-workers. These ladies function in a team-oriented fashion, in order to best serve others. Conversely, meeting deadlines and trying to stay ahead of the game poses the most challenge for the group. Like any other position, deadlines must be met.

Small gestures of appreciation are among the best workplace memories for the group. Thank you letters or other gestures affirm to the group they are doing well and are making a positive difference. The group offered up some advice on getting a job in the current economic situation. Patty recommends double checking to ensure what is required of you is what you send in. Having irrelevant materials, or missing materials, makes their job more difficult. Double and even triple checking your work is Lee’s advice.

As spring comes, excitement around their office increases. For Kelsey, this is partially the result of her recent engagement to Kurtis Shaw. They were engaged around Valentine’s Day. Patty, a grandmother of one, enjoys the smell of spring. It reminds her of Virginia Beach. Sue enjoys the smell after a good rain storm. Betty enjoys the flowers that come as a result of the showers. Like many of us, Lee said spring represents a desire to be outside.

Hopefully you enjoyed getting to know the ladies behind the HR sign.

To Sue, Betty, Patty, Lee and Kelsey, your work is greatly appreciated!
How do you Excuse Yourself From a Conversation that Won’t End?

One of our readers emailed us and asked:
“How do I politely excuse myself from a co-worker who won’t stop talking?”

We’ve all been there, trapped in a conversation that does not seem to end. You want to be polite and attentive, but you have other things to do. How do you excuse yourself from one of these talking marathons without hurting someone’s feelings or seeming rude? There are various ways, we suggest the following to this tricky situation.

- **Try to avoid it:** avoiding the situation altogether will prevent you from having to excuse yourself.
- **Give yourself a time frame:** if someone comes in to talk, explain that you only have a few moments, or a place to be. Hopefully, this will limit their talking time.
- **Use body language:** start to pack up your desk items or straighten up papers. This will indicate you are either leaving or starting something new. Walking towards the door will allow you to indicate that you are short on time.
- **Stop the conversation:** if nothing seems to be working, but you really need to focus on work, you might have to be honest and tell them that you would love to go to coffee and chat, but you are working under short deadlines.

Above all, be polite and listen to the best of your ability. You never know what another person may be going through. They may just need an ear and picked yours. Consider yourself fortunate to have people who want to talk with you. Finally, realize when you are that person. Do not constantly knock on someone’s door at work. Keep non-work related conversations to a minimum.

How to Teach Adults in One Hour – **Introduction**

Teaching short sessions, one to three hours long, can be challenging, but necessary. When done correctly, this provides an effective means of exchanging knowledge to both adults and youth. According to the book, *How to Teach Adults in One Hour* by William A. Draves, this “situation is both one of the better and more challenging situations in which to work.” The short time can seem daunting to work with, however, the book suggests it can be used to the presenter’s advantage. Working in the short time frame will allow you to focus your presentation on the topics that are most relevant. Additionally, the audience can more easily give you an hour of their undivided attention, than they can in four or five hours. “Distill your information down to the core,” Draves said.

Using practical tips and situations the audience can relate provides for a better learning environment for the audience. Utilizing second person allows you to influence your audience to a higher degree. For example, opposed to saying, “I used this to …,” say “You can use this to ….” This will sit better with your audience.

Over the next few months we will be providing you a summary of some of the chapters in the book. The book strives to enhance short sessions. Due to the large number of short sessions presented throughout the year, we think this will provide an excellent opportunity for self-improvement. Hopefully, this will help when planning short learning sessions such as workshops, leader lessons and other educational activities.

**Let us know what you think!**
I scored 17 on the organization questionnaire. I am moderately messy, I guess. I think my main problem is that I don’t file things right away. I tend to pile them on my desk for a few days.

**From Jessica Riggin**  
Extension Educator, FCS/4-H Youth Development, Lincoln County

Hmmmm. . . I’m mid-range messy. . . . I’m really good about keeping appointments and not double booking, and turning things in on time. . . . . . but my desk is missing underneath all of the paper. . . .

**From Shelley Mitchell**  
Extension Associate, 4-H Youth Horticulture & Landscape

I have two different vehicles for work. Can I buy another OCES car tag?

**From Pam Varner,**  
Extension Educator, FCS/4-H Youth Development & CED, Cotton County

Good question, Pam. Yes, you can buy another OCES license plate by contacting University Mailing at (405) 744-9037. The cost for each plate is $2.50. A copy of the order form for all marketing items is available at:

http://www.oces.okstate.edu/for-educators/OCESPrintedMatlsOrderF.pdf

**From the Staff & Program Development Team**

Some folks sent us their results for our “How Organized Are You?” self-assessment

I really enjoy the Extension Exchange! It has even forced me to look at my own unprofessional habits and work on them.

**From Kimberlee S. Arnold**  
Extension Educator, Urban 4-H Youth Development, Tulsa County
We'd love to hear from you!
Please contact us with any feedback. All efforts will be made to include your ideas in The Extension Exchange.

Email: joyce.martin@okstate.edu
Phone: (405) 744-7969

Science has never drummed up quite as effective a tranquilizing agent as a sunny spring day.

~W. Earl Hall

Wise Owl
Words of Wisdom

Toon of the Moment

Source: http://comics.com

Reminder!

- Career Ladder Portfolios are due by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 19, to 255 Ag Hall.
- The 2010 Secretary Directory has been posted to the Staff Development Site at http://intranet.okstate.edu/staff_development/2010SecretaryBook.pdf

Send us Your Exchanges!

We’d love to hear from you! Please contact us with any feedback. All efforts will be made to include your ideas in The Extension Exchange.

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