

- Keep it short. While you want to postpone talking shop until after you have ordered, don't let the lunch go on too long, since your clients may have limited time to meet.
- Give your undivided attention. Avoid taking cell phone calls and other distractions. As the host, it's your job to make sure the meeting is productive and on topic.

## TARDINESS BREEDS CREATIVE EXCUSES

Everyone's had mornings when what can go wrong does. In a survey by Accountemps, a temporary staffing service for accounting, finance, and bookkeeping professionals, executives revealed the most-unusual and original explanations they have heard from tardy employees—everything from pet-related problems to long lines at the coffee shop. Here is a sampling of their excuses:

- "The dog was asleep behind the car and I couldn't back out of the driveway."
- "A helicopter landed in the street and I couldn't get around it."
- "My garage door was frozen shut."
- "My car keys fell into the toilet."
- "The line at Starbucks was out the door."
- "I forgot what day it was. I thought it was the weekend."
- "The wind was blowing against me."
- "My favorite actress just got married. I needed time alone."
- "My husband's pet spider died and I had to console him."

"While these examples are humorous, they address a frequent challenge for managers," notes Max Messmer, chairman of Accountemps and author of *Managing Your Career for Dummies*. "An employee's habitual tardiness can affect the productivity of the entire team, and overlooking it reinforces the behavior."

## TEENS EASILY SKIRT PARENTS' TV BANS

Teenagers who say their parents restrict their television viewing of certain programs are likely to watch the forbidden shows at the home of a friend, an Ohio State University, Columbus, study suggests. They also reported less-positive attitudes toward their parents. "Unfortunately, parents' good intentions in restricting television viewing may actually backfire and contribute to them watching more of the programs they shouldn't see," says Amy Nathanson, author of the study and an assistant professor of journalism and communication.

However, that doesn't mean par-



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ents are powerless to mold their teens' viewing habits. Nathanson's research reveals that parents who discuss issues related to TV with their older children—rather than just restrict watching—are more likely to influence what their offspring watch. The key, she says, is to discuss without lecturing. "When parents talk to older children by asking questions and inviting dialogue, and don't talk to them in a condescending or threatening way, they are more likely to see positive outcomes."

Nevertheless, students whose parents restricted their access to objectionable television content had less-positive feelings toward their parents than did other adolescents. These teens also reported viewing more of the objectionable television shows with friends than did other students. "Adolescents sometimes resent being told what to do, and it can produce this forbidden fruit effect, in which the restricted shows seem even more appealing," Nathanson points out.

## FIGHTING AGING THROUGH EXERCISE

With just 30% of Americans over the age of 65 exercising on a regular basis, the importance of starting and maintaining a safe and effective exercise program has been shown to alleviate some of the conditions associated with aging, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Keeping active and exercising helps maintain gait and improve strength, endurance, balance, agility, and posture, it suggests, while inactivity weakens muscles. Physical activity of approximately 30 minutes a day will help improve health and quality of life along with keeping joints, tendons, and ligaments more flexible. Exercise also slows the progression of osteoporosis.

Seniors should start slowly by adopting a walking program and en-

gaging in regular activities such as gardening, yard work, and household chores before attempting a more-aggressive program such as jogging, bicycling, weight-lifting, walking up stairs, and/or hiking. When ready for more, they should lengthen the time of current activities before increasing difficulty. It is important to tailor an exercise program to one's level of ability and special needs. Most seniors, even those 85 and over and people with illnesses or disabilities, can take part in a variety of moderate exercise programs.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggests the following tips for starting and maintaining a safe and effective exercise program for seniors:

- While it is never too late to start an exercise program, check with your physician first for advice on what you should or shouldn't do.
- Before exercising, it is important to warm up. A typical warm-up period should begin with slow, rhythmic activity such as walking, gradually increasing the intensity until pulse

rate, respiration, and body temperature are elevated.

- Begin any activity in short bouts. Try walking a block or once around a track and adding a little distance at a time as you are ready and adapting to exercise.

- Drink lots of water. When you are exercising, your body requires even more fluid. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink. Thirst is an indication that you have not adequately hydrated your body. Check with your physician since some health conditions require restricted fluid intake.

- Wear the appropriate athletic shoes with good support and comfort.

- Practice improving your balance by doing simple chores like washing dishes or brushing your teeth while standing on one foot.

- Choose activities that you enjoy and can do consistently to maintain your regimen. Perhaps exercise with a friend.

- Be alert to air quality if you work out at a gymnasium. Exercise at less-crowded times during the cold and flu season. Do so outdoors whenever weather permits.

- Consider becoming a mall walker. This enables seniors to exercise during inclement weather. Check your local mall to see if this public service is offered.

- Use common sense and don't exercise when you're coughing and/or have a fever, cold, or the flu.

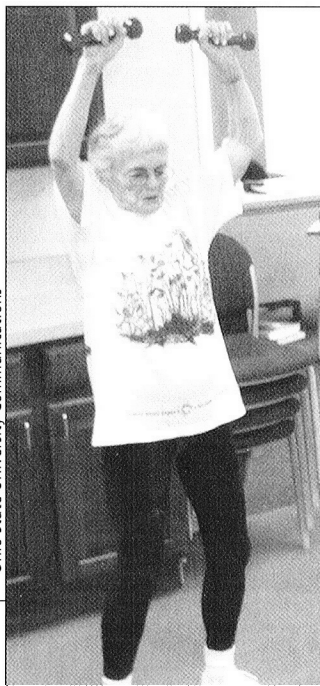
- If you have a temporary illness, don't let this stop you permanently. Resume your exercise program and activities as soon as you can, rather than drift into sedentary habits.

- After an illness, return to exercising when you are ready. Give your body time to recover.

## BANNING SMOKING IS GOOD FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

According to Marc Hiller, professor of health management and policy, University of New Hampshire, Durham, democratic governments always have recognized that there can and should be a limitation on people's and businesses' behavior when it affects other people—especially their health and safety. Drunken driving laws, health standards for restaurants, pollution restrictions for industry, and safety standards in manufacturing are all born from an understanding that freedom is not an absolute. One should not legally be able to act in a manner that harms others.

Proposals for and policies adopted to promote clean air do not deny the right of smokers to smoke, but smoking in occupational work settings, schools, colleges/universities, and other public places de-



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