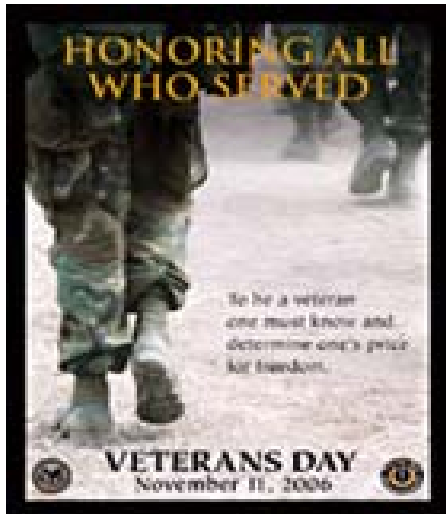




## Inside this Newsletter

- Drug Testing and other Conditions of Employment
- Get your Finances in Shape for the Fall
- Boomers – Are They Still the Trend Setters?
- Justifying a Staff Increase
- More on Dirty Words – Fair, They, and Why?
- How to Ask Behavioral Questions?



## Veterans Day – November 11

Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11 in honor of those who have served in the armed forces of the United States. It is a legal federal holiday.

The observation was originally designated in 1919 by President Woodrow Wilson as Armistice Day. Wilson selected November 11 because the Armistice ending World War I had been signed on this date in 1918. Wilson wanted to make sure that Americans did not forget the tragedies of the war. In 1938, Congress passed legislation which designated Armistice Day as a federal holiday. The name was changed to Veterans Day in 1954 so that all veterans would be honored. For a brief period (1971-1977), the holiday was celebrated on the fourth Monday in October.

On Veterans Day, special services take place at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery.

## Sheriff's Youth Programs in Marshall and Group Home are the Next Program Topics at Next Meeting

Steve Hubbard, President and CEO of the Sheriffs Youth Programs of MN and Tim Kent, Program Director for the Marshall Group Home, will be the guest speakers at the next SHRA meeting on Thursday, November 9 at the Best Western Marshall Inn.

Steve Hubbard's presentation will focus on the Sheriffs Youth Programs of MN which involves teaching youth (ages 16-21) independent living skills, such as home management, money management, and career management. The Sheriffs Youth Program helps youth locate employment and/or housing in conjunction with teaching independent living skills.

Tim Kent's presentation will focus on the Marshall Group Home and what services are provided to youth for the local area and how businesses can benefit from hiring and retaining these youth in their employ.

Learn more about the program and how you can get involved by attending the next SHRA meeting on Thursday, November 9 at the Best Western Marshall Inn. Meeting begins with lunch at 11:30AM and program at noon.

## Greetings from the President . . . .

Congratulations to the following new SHRA Board Members: Ken Wilson as the 2007 President, Sonya Kayser as the 2007 President-Elect, Denise Vierstraete as the Treasurer, and Deb Boulton as Membership Chair. I want to personally, and on behalf of the current board, thank each of these individuals for stepping forward and making a commitment to lead the SHRA in the future.

We are still searching for a Secretary for next year so please contact me if you are interested in this position.

Sonya Kayser, Jody Rindfeisch and I recently attended the SHRM State Conference in St. Cloud. We volunteered to work the SHRM Foundation "Basket Table" selling tickets and collecting money for the Foundation. They collected several thousand dollars from the basket raffle and auction items to be donated to the SHRM Foundation. Our chapter will receive a check for the volunteer work that was provided by our chapter representatives during the conference.

As many of you know, our chapter also conducted a 50/50 raffle during our monthly meetings from July through October. We collected a total of \$77 during this time in an effort to raise money for the SHRM Foundation. Denise Myhrberg was the winner and donated her winnings to the Foundation. Thank you Denise! Therefore, in addition to our chapter's usual annual donation of \$100 we also contributed \$77 from the raffle collections to the Foundation. Thank you to all members who purchased tickets.

As always, please feel to contact me at 507-537-2578 or email me at [Robert.Albano@admworld.com](mailto:Robert.Albano@admworld.com) if you have any questions.

**Rob Albano**  
SHRA President

## **Boomers: After all these years, are they still the trend-setters?**

At 42% of the workforce, Baby Boomers still make up the vast plurality of the workforce (not to mention a healthy majority of our readers). What is more, Boomers hold the lion's share of leadership positions in most organizations in most industries today.

Boomers often tell some variation of this story about the generational shift in the workplace: "These Generation Xers and Generation Yers think they invented youth!?! We're Baby Boomers. WE invented youth. And we'll be defining youth culture from geriatric wards. When I was growing up, my parents were real traditionalists. There were rules for everything. Heck, we had standard operating procedures for dinner. You followed the rules and respected your elders at home, in school, and in public... Of course, I came of age in the Sixties/Seventies. I had my period of youthful rebellion... you should have seen me." (That's when they get all wistful.)

Then they get serious again: "But I grew up and settled down. I hitched my wagon to the star of an established organization and started paying my dues. And MY boss was a real grown-up, like my parents, not some groovy Boomer who understood young people. I did as I was told, but most of the time it was 'sink or swim' so I had to figure out what to do and then do it. I kept my head down and worked hard. I didn't make demands. I waited for my boss to notice my hard work and reward me in due course. I figured the system would take care of me."

"Then, just as I started to earn some seniority, people started saying 'everything has changed; job security is dead.' Downsizing and restructuring became an every day thing. All of a sudden seniority doesn't matter and the only thing that counts is how much work you can do today, tomorrow and next week. Then along come these young upstarts---Generation X and now Generation Y---and they are not willing to pay their dues at all. They make demands on day one and every day thereafter: 'What's the deal around here? What do you want from me? What do you have to offer me today, tomorrow and next week?' The nerve of them!"

Remember this: There is not a trend in the western world worth its salt without the baby boomers. If most boomers had rejected the 'free agent' norms and values so often associated with Generation X and Generation Y, it would have dried up and blown away. But that's not what happened. It was when the

Boomers embraced the new mindset that these trends became unstoppable.

Now for their next act, Boomers are set to expand upon and entrench the emerging trends in retirement. Many boomers (even those in their forties) tell us they are getting ready to retire. But most also tell us they will NEVER stop working. We fully expect boomers to reinvent retirement as a hodgepodge of part-time, flex-time, telecommuting, consulting, and entrepreneuring. The question you should be asking Boomer leaders is this: Are you doing the hard work of cultivating high potential employees so there will be enough bench strength to take over leadership roles? After all, you want to make sure there is someone there to facilitate your flexible work arrangements after you "retire."

Source: Bruce Bulgan, 2006

## **Meeting Greeters for 2006**

Nov. 9 Denise Myhrberg and Deb Boulton  
Dec. 14 Executive Board - HOLIDAY SOCIAL

## **How Do We Write A Business Case Justifying A Staff Increase?**

**Q:** What are the points to be covered in writing a business case to increase staff?

**A:** As you plan your case, keep in mind the universal objectives of every company: using resources as efficiently as possible, having productive employees, and ultimately creating a successful business, sooner rather than later.

When considering any change that would have a significant impact on the company, test the waters and garner support first. "Trial balloon" your ideas with key colleagues and/or superiors to ensure that the written case represents the interests of all parties involved. They will then be much more likely to lend their support.

The actual arguments that you use will vary depending on why you want to add staff: do you want to increase productivity? Build the customer service department to have fewer dropped calls and therefore more satisfied customers? Create better back-up capacity among your staff? Hire someone with a special talent that will allow your company to venture into previously uncharted territories? Whatever your goal, here are some steps to follow in writing your case:

1. State the reason for adding staff and all the anticipated benefits to the company, both short and long term. Ask and answer the question: "Can the company afford not to create this position/hire this person?"
2. Give details on reporting structure, and how the new position will affect and interact with existing positions.



Note: if you have recently had layoffs, adding new positions may seem confusing to your staff. Careful explanation and an over-emphasis on communication are necessary to help maintain morale, and should be part of your case. Keep in mind too that the opportunity for employees to help create, recruit, supervise, or perhaps be promoted to a new position can be attractive, and provide career growth -- a great retention tool.

3. Anticipate and address objections and problems.
4. List the total cost, including benefits, training time, other staff time, furniture, business cards, etc. Consider how much money the company may be losing by not having a fully staffed team. For example, how many sales opportunities are you missing by not having an experienced sales and marketing representative?
5. Focus on how the benefits will outweigh the costs; for example, how soon the new position(s) will pay for itself. Note: How you choose to discuss the costs can vary depending on your company's financial situation. If you're in a cash crunch, the executives will most likely want to see immediate return on investment. If you're in a more stable period, they may be able to appreciate the advantages of a longer-term investment.

If you effectively address each of these points, briefly and concisely, while keeping in mind the overall goals of your company, you will have made your case. Good luck!

Source: Personnel Management Systems

## Drug Testing And Other Possible Conditions Of Employment

While some may consider drug testing, credit checks, reference checks, and other pre-employment checks to be Gestapo tactics, they are a requirement for many companies today. And, yes, in most cases they are legal. An example of this "condition of employment" clause being invoked occurred when a recently hired grad was found to have lied about some information on the employment application. There have been numerous cases of graduates who have been hired and then fired by the new employer based solely on the conditions of that document. As long as the new hire has been straight and honest, this should not be a problem for you.

There is no simple answer as to how long drugs will remain in a person's system, since the answer is influenced by the specific drug half life, intensity of the usage, method of usage, length of usage, tolerance, fluid intake, body size, body fat, metabolism and (most important) the specific range which the drug testing lab uses to signify a "positive" for drug use. But the following table provides some general guidelines for the amount of time a drug can be detected by most standard drug tests:

Drug	Detection Time
Alcohol	6-24 hours
Amphetamines	2-3 days
Barbituates	1 day to 3 weeks
Benzodiazepines	3-7 days

Cocaine	2-5 days
Codeine	3-5 days
Euphorics (MDMA, Ecstasy)	1-3 days
LSD	1-4 days
Marijuana (THC)	7-30 days
Methadone	3-5 days
Methaqualone	14 days
Opiates	1-4 days
Phencyclidine (PCP)	2-4 days
Steroids (anabolic)	14-30 days

Keep in mind that detection time listed above does not mean that the drug is fully expelled from the body within that amount of time--just that it has dissipated enough that it can no longer be accurately detected--or at least is not high enough to register a "positive" on a drug test. Most drugs are treated by the body as toxins which take time to eliminate. Rather than allow the toxins to potentially affect vital organs, they are often stored in fat cells, making them typically difficult to release or detoxify from the body.

The basic drug test used by most corporate drug testing programs is called a "Five-Screen" (or "NIDA-5" or "SAMHSA-5") which is testing for five types of drugs:

1. Cannabinoids (Marijuana, Hashish)
2. Cocaine (Cocaine, Crack, Benzoyllecognine)
3. Opiates (Heroin, Opium, Codeine, Morphine)
4. Amphetamines (Amphetamines, Methamphetamines, Speed)
5. Phencyclidine (PCP, Angel Dust)



However, many drug testing firms now offer a "Ten-Screen" which expands to include five additional drugs:

1. Barbituates (Phenobarbital, Secobarbital, Pentobarbital, Butalbital, Amobarbital)
2. Methaqualone (Qualuudes)
3. Benzodiazepines (Tranquilizers--Diazepam, Valium, Librium, Ativan, Xanax, Clonopin, Serax, Halcion, Rohypnol)
4. Methadone
5. Propoxyphene (Darvon compounds)

One major drug testing company is now offering the Ten-Screen for the same price as the Five-Screen. Result? Most employers end up testing for more, rather than less. Other drugs that can be included in drug tests include:

1. Ethanol (yes, that's alcohol)
2. LSD
3. Hallucinogens (Psilocybin, Mescaline, MDMA, MDA, MDE)
4. Inhalants (Toluene, Xylene, Benzene)

If there is a drug out there, there is a drug test for it. Illegal drugs have *no place* in work society today and *never will*.

If a person is not a drug user and fails the drug screening (it does happen), the person should be as straightforward with you as possible. They may ask if you would please do a confirmation test. Recent estimates from the *Journal of Analytic Toxicology*

showed error rates of 5 to 14% for initial drug testing. Following is a list of over-the-counter medications which have been known to cause false positives in drug testing:

- Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)
- Midol
- Nuprin
- Sudafed
- Vicks Nasal Spray
- Neosynephren
- Ephedra and Ephedrine-based products (often used in diet products)
- Detromethorphan
- Vicks 44

There are more, but suffice to say that not every drug test is accurate. That's why almost all drug testing companies ask the person in advance what medications they are presently taking or have taken in the last 30 days.



## How to Ask Behavioral Questions

**In the job interview, which behavioral questions will help you get information necessary about traits such as high energy level, integrity and ownership?**

Behavioral interviewing is based on the assumption that one's past behavior is an excellent indicator of the actions that person will take, and the results he will generate, in the future under similar circumstances. Behavioral-based interview questions enable you as the interviewer to focus on how a candidate handled a real-life situation in the past, instead of how the person might handle a hypothetical situation in the future.

The typical behavioral interview question is based on the following framework: Problem/Situation -> Action -> Result. Ask the candidate to outline a problem or situation they have faced that highlights the skill, trait or core competency you are seeking (problem/situation). Then, ask candidates to describe the action they took and the results it generated.

You can apply this technique to any question you find relevant to the role for which you are hiring by putting it in this problem/situation-action-results framework. For example, if you are looking to define integrity, you could ask the candidate to describe an actual situation or problem in their professional past that tested their integrity, what action they took, and what results they obtained.

Ordinarily we encounter two challenges when using this type of questioning. First, if the candidate is unable to come up with a similar situation or problem, it can take serious probing on your part to find it. Of course, that process in and of itself can be revealing about your candidate. Second, a candidate can potentially reframe your question to make some unrelated point

about him or herself. When that happens, I simply redirect them to the original question.

## More on Dirty Words – Fair, They, and Why?



The dirtiest words we use in our daily vocabulary and thought processes aren't necessarily four letter words. The words themselves are not 'dirty.' Rather it is the context in which we misuse them to negate ourselves or others, avoid commitments, or create win-lose situations.

The following ten dirty words interfere with successful communication, motivation, and personal success.

1. TRY
2. CAN'T
3. IF
4. FAIR
5. THEY
6. WHY
7. SHOULD (OUGHT)
8. UNDERSTAND
9. BUT (HOWEVER)
10. RIGHT



Misuse of these words has been observed in communications in hundreds of business organizations from shop floors to executive offices, as well as in daily conversations with friends and family. There is not one that I have not used, and without caution, will use daily. Eliminating or replacing these words in our daily communications and thought processes will have a powerful impact on improving our verbal and written effectiveness and self image. Eliminating them in your organization will have the same positive effects. Here are the second three dirty words with examples and remedies to change the communication.

**1. FAIR.** Fair becomes a dirty word when people who feel they are losing, as in "This isn't fair" use it. When the score is 19-0, you can bet the team with 19 is not complaining about the game being unfair. I've never heard anyone who was winning complain that it isn't fair. Only losers think life isn't fair.

The word fair is over used by people who are 'counting', or keeping score; to be sure they are getting their 'fair share.' They seem to believe that somewhere there exists a universal determination of fairness. We have never found this place. However, we have found countless local, national, and international places that are UNfair.

*"It isn't fair that we always get the old equipment and sales gets the new stuff."*

*"Women receive favoritism in promotions. It isn't fair."*

*"Overall men receive higher pay for the same work. Now that just isn't fair!"*

*"It's just not fair, the Japanese restrict our auto imports."*

While the Bible speaks of the meek inheriting the earth, it doesn't say anything about the whiners inheriting anything. Instead of complaining, observe what the people who are winning are doing and then take action to duplicate their behaviors.

All the above examples may have been accurate observations at the time they were stated. So what! Complaining about them not being fair is relatively useless until we add the word SO. . .

Adding the word SO initiates our thinking about what we intend to do about the alleged unfair situation, converting us into potential winners rather than whiners.

When others complain that their situation is not fair, cautiously listen. Do not immediately attempt to change the situation unless you want to take away the opportunity for growth that occurs when people are afforded the challenge of resolving their own problems. An appropriate response to "It isn't fair that women get better opportunities for promotion." is to ask "SO what do you intend to do about it."

The world was never designed to be fair. We have found that most people who are winning think it is UNfair. So instead of wasting our time complaining about losing, we are far better off planning and implementing what we can do to fix our immediate specific situation.

**3. THEY.** They becomes a dirty word when we use it to generalize. These generalizations usually fit two categories. The first category is when we use "they" to refer to vague omnipresent people who exercise ultimate control over our destiny. Most often "they" are people in authoritative positions such as parents, administrators, management, or government officials. "They" get blamed for our inability to function perfectly because:

*"They don't listen to us."  
"They'll never let us ...."*

There is very little we can do about THEY except complain or blame, thus minimizing our degree of responsibility. After all, what can we possibly do about someone as big and vague as THEY?

An alternative for this type of THEY is to eliminate the word, substitute a specific name, and add the word SO.

*"Mr. Biggs doesn't listen to us, SO we could talk to Mrs. Harris, [or stop talking, or confront Mr. Biggs, or]."  
"Norm will never let us purchase 40 cell phones. [SO] Let's ask him if testing with just two would be O.K."*

The second category is when "they" is used to derogatorily generalize about groups of people. Such groups include people over 30, attorneys, upper, lower, or middle social/economical class people, specific ethnic groups, as well as entire nations and nationalities. These "they's" receive complaints about their character flaws because:

*"They are all crooks."  
"They can't be trusted."  
"They are all lazy."  
"All they care about is getting rich."*

All of these THEY statements are inaccurate. Each statement assumes that the subject, THEY, are one single thinking, feeling, believing, breathing unit. In reality, no two people are the same, much less an entire group of people. Some attorneys are crooks. So are some doctors, ministers, coaches, teachers, mechanics, neighbors, politicians, news casters, plumbers, developers, real estate agents, and writers.

Some attorneys, as well as people in these other professions, are honest, intelligent, lazy, arrogant, ethical, abusive, caring, and greedy. Generalizing about groups of people is a display of ignorance.

*"They" are outside our sphere of control. "They" are omnipresent. "They" are usually bad or wrong in some manner - lazy, abusive, illegal, immoral, or unethical. In reality, I have never met a "They."*

Being specific, taking personal responsibility, planning your course of action, and implementing it will take you much farther than complaining about or blaming "Them" for your frustrations.

Taking action is a great relief for frustration.

You can eliminate this application of 'they' right now. It's your choice. My favorite response when others start telling me about "they" is to interrupt and say as I turn to leave: "Excuse me, I need to get more ice . . ."

**3. WHY.** Why becomes a dirty word when it appears to be the beginning of a question and turns into a criticizing statement. Examples abound. Some of our favorites are:

*"Why do I have to always pick up your things?(!)"  
"Why didn't you turn in your work on time?(!)"  
"If you know all of that, why do you continue to smoke?(!)"*

Why 'questioning' is very likely to result in nonproductive, guilt contaminated responses like "I don't know". The accused person often responds with lowered voice and eyes, and very little, if any, behavioral change. The main thing the recipient of WHY questions [statements] learns is to avoid the WHY person.

More productive substitutes for WHY are I statements followed by a WHAT or HOW question. Using the above examples, these interactions become:

*"I feel that I pick up your clothes quite often. How can we work together to improve this?"  
"I need your work completed on schedule, because . . . What can we do to accomplish this?"  
"I agree with you, smoking is very difficult to stop. What are you planning to do?"*

The goal is to fix the problem, rather than the blame. Why questions/statements fix blame. "I" statements followed with what and how questions help us identify and find a solution for the problem. The "I" part of the statement contains your position or opinion on the specific subject. Stating your position is a first step to better communications, affording the other person the opportunity to clarify the situation. The "what" or "how" focuses on resolving this issue.

We will encounter situations in which others use WHY 'statements'. Effective responses for someone who tosses us a WHY statement start with an empathic statement followed by a what or how question. As with the I statements, there is likely to be a dialogue between the initial statement and the how or what question. This dialogue is essential for allowing the other person to express emotions and to clarify the issue. Examples of such statements are:

*"You feel that I leave messes around for you to pick up. How can we resolve this?"  
"It fowls you up when my work is not completed on time. Besides my getting it done on time when ever*

*possible, what can we do to handle the situations when I can't meet the schedule?"*

*"Thanks for taking an interest in my health. What program did you use when you stopped smoking?"*

Focusing on fixing the problem, rather than the blame, is the key to handling the WHYs.

Find out how SHOULD, UNDERSTAND, BUT, and RIGHT are dirty words in the December issue of SHRA News.

Source: Book: Common Sense Managing

## December Issue Highlights

- President Albano's Looking Back: 2006
- Introductions to Executive Board Member for 2007
- The Last of the Dirty Words
- What's New in Programs for 2007

*If you have an interesting topic or article you'd like to submit for consideration in this newsletter, please email it to editor: Ginger Kaufman at [kaufmang@southwestmsu.edu](mailto:kaufmang@southwestmsu.edu)*



Plan to attend the  
**SHRA Holiday Social Event**  
December 14  
at the Best Western Marshall Inn  
3- 5 PM  
Bring \$5 Gift to Exchange  
Can of Food for Food Shelf  
Plate of Goodies to Share  
And Bring a Guest  
Open to Members and Guests!

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