



Greetings friends and colleagues! Happy Spring!

I totally understand how busy you all are this time of year and I want to thank you for taking time to read this *Administrative Council Quarterly*. In actuality, it's allowing you to take a few minutes for yourself, and I'm sure you all deserve that and you are ready to take a few minutes breather, as well!

At the Administrative Council Breakfast during the NAEOP Annual Conference and Institute in Kansas City, we will focus on our own personal journeys to excellence. Colin Powell once said, "If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude." Think of the last project you finished or accomplishment you achieved. Was it excellent? What personal habits did you use to help you reach your goal of a finished project or task? I'm going to guess that the skills you use on a daily basis in the school office helped you. Valuable skills like time management and communication are necessary to accomplish great things in an educational office, and in our personal lives, as well.

If the last task or accomplishment you achieved wasn't excellent, or at least as excellent as you thought it should be or wanted it to be, did you evaluate why? If you're like me, my own negative "self talk" sometimes works against me. The very same self-talk that takes me to incredible places and helps me achieve good work will often shatter me and bring me down. I don't mean the type of self-talk we all do every day (like making our mental grocery lists, or things we can't forget to do on the way home from work, or household chores that need done). The self-talk I'm referring to is the kind you don't say to yourself on a daily or regular basis, but rather the kind you say when you are working on or completing a project.

For example, if you make a mistake and the task you are working on doesn't come out perfectly, are you hard on yourself in your mind? Do you belittle yourself and/or damage your own self-esteem, thinking you never can do anything right? This negative self-talk, if done routinely, can actually lead you to believe it's true! This is not healthy or necessary.



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Be conscious of your self-talk. What tone does it have? If negative, replace it with more encouraging thoughts and words. This will take practice, but if you reduce the negative self-talk, you will form a stronger self-esteem and create a greater respect for yourself and your capabilities!

Feel good about yourself. Believe in yourself. Do something good for yourself. Reward your good deeds and qualities. Share your greatness with others – like me! I'd love to hear from you. Tell me how you overcame your own negative self-talk and turned a project or situation around.

I'm so looking forward to hosting the Administrative Council Breakfast July 9th in Kansas City. Please find me and say hello when you get to the conference. Even if you can't make it to the conference, please share with me your ideas for helpful articles in next year's *Quarterly*. I'm here for YOU – the valuable, incredible, inspiring professional members of the Administrative Council!



Handling Pressure... A Quiz

Editor's Note: I don't remember where I originally saw this quiz, but came across it recently in my 'use in the future' file. It's a quick exercise to gauge how well you handle stress.

Have you ever noticed how some people seem to thrive on pressure, while others have trouble coping with just a little bit of stress? The degree to which we can handle pressure tends to be a natural part of our personality, yet there are some steps we can take to improve our ability to cope gracefully with pressure on the job. Try this quiz to assess your ability to handle pressure. Mark each statement as "true" or "false," then read the scoring instructions and suggestions at the end:

1. I enjoy working in a fast-paced environment in which I never know what might happen next.
2. A day when nothing goes as expected leaves me feeling drained.
3. I often have trouble sleeping because I lie awake and worry about problems at work.
4. I am usually able to maintain my composure in stressful situations, such as dealing with angry customers.
5. I enjoy the challenge of working hard to meet a tight deadline.
6. I try to plan my workdays carefully and feel annoyed or upset when something interferes with my plans.
7. I have volunteered to take on challenging assignments, knowing they would come with a fair amount of responsibility.
8. If I could, I would trade my job for one with fewer problems to handle.
9. I like being in the spotlight and don't mind if others look to me for leadership and decisions.
10. I get bored easily with most jobs and am always looking for ways to make my work more interesting.
11. I would prefer a job that is steady and predictable to one in which things are constantly changing.
12. I enjoy a spirited debate whether I'm a participant or a spectator.

Get Your Score

Give yourself five points for each "true" response you gave to questions 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 12, and five points for each "false" response you gave to questions 2, 3, 6, 8, and 11.

If you scored between 45 and 60 you probably thrive on pressure and you may even need a certain amount of it to enjoy your work. You likely handle tense and stressful situations in a calm, cool and collected manner, making you a good person to have around when the team faces a tight deadline or a crisis. But keep in mind that almost every job, no matter how exciting it is, comes with a certain amount of drudge work that needs to be done.

If you scored between 25 and 40, you likely handle pressure about as well as most people. But when things become more stressful than usual, the tension may take its toll on your health and your ability to function productively. Periods like this may require that you take better care of yourself than usual (by getting extra sleep and exercise, for example) and incorporate some new stress management habits (such as daily meditation) into your life.

If you scored between zero and 20, you likely prefer situations that are stable and predictable, and you may quickly feel the impact on your health and productivity when circumstances change rapidly. You can take steps to improve your ability to handle pressure. Try putting yourself in circumstances that require you to gradually move outside your comfort zone. While you may never welcome pressure with open arms, you will improve your ability to cope with tense situations by developing your ability to think clearly and remain composed.

Conference Reminder

Don't forget that in order to be included in the conference program, the National Office needs to receive your conference registration no later than May 14. After this date, registrations will be accepted on-site as space is available.

As you finalize your registration plans, be sure to include the Administrative Council breakfast in your conference travel budget. This time together as a council is so important to share struggles and successes with one another.

If you're like me, from time to time you get stuck in a lengthy email discussion. Often it is better to just pick up the phone and work out the details, but what do you do if you need a written record of the conversation? Enter Outlook's *Edit Message* feature in version 2007.

To edit a message do the following:

1. Open the email message
2. Choose **Other Actions, Edit Message**
3. You can now edit the body of the message by adding notes to yourself, changing font colors, adding high lights, etc.
4. When you are finished, close the email. You will be given opportunity to save your changes.

This is a great way to track discussions that start via email, but are resolved via a phone or face-to-face meeting.



Superwoman Doesn't Work Here

Since the last ACQ was published, I've heard from many of you sharing your personal circumstances and the tremendous amount of stress under which you are operating. And what's more, many of you admit that you've brought it on yourself agreeing to projects and responsibilities that you know don't have a place in your already busy lifestyle.



Why do we do this to ourselves? We aren't superheroes and we all have access to the same number of hours in a day and days in a week as everyone else. Yet a large majority of women are running themselves absolutely ragged. We wake up early to pack lunches, arrive at the office before anyone else, work a full day, make dinner, do laundry, attend meetings, agree to spearhead projects at said meetings, make treats for parties, sew missing buttons on pants, volunteer to work a table at the school fair, clean the house, grocery shop... Whew—aren't you tired after just reading that?

Do we really enjoy living like this? Perhaps some do, but most of you have told me that you don't. And as professional women, it's tough to admit that we can't do it all. But realistically, we can't. My favorite speaker, Rob Bell, even devoted an entire international speaking tour using "you don't have to live like this" as the main point of emphasis.

There is a way to regain control of our lives. It's the same basic principle as airlines use. Safety guidelines dictate that in case of emergency you put on your own oxygen mask before helping those around you. Have you forgotten to put on your own mask first?

It's unfortunate that there often isn't an avenue for sharing those stressors. This quarter, please share your story of managing a busy lifestyle. Be honest. One of the core foundational principles of NAEOP is recognition. Typically this comes in the form of acknowledgements for a job well done, but can also be simply the awareness of a circumstance. Comments will appear in the next ACQ. Even if you don't want your name published, we'd love to hear of your stress- conquering success!!

Each of our members have valuable information to share. This quarter, NAEOP Past President Linda Tribble shares her first conference and PSP experience. Please send articles for future editions to Elizabeth McFall at emcfall@ortn.edu.

My first NAEOP Annual Conference was in 1986 in Kentucky. I had no idea which activities to attend, where I belonged, or if I should go or not. Having a supportive superintendent and being the person I am, I signed up for everything. I went to the general sessions and all the meal functions.

During that week, I attended my first PSP Banquet. It was at that banquet I saw all the ladies receiving their PSP recognition and being praised for all the hard work they had done. At the end, Avis Tarr told the group every one of us could do the same thing. I decided I could do that – I wanted to be involved and I wanted to further my education. I started working on getting the information for PSP and encouraged some others in our school system to join me. We met monthly and poured over the information, made copies of certificates, and compared our notes. Before long, I had compiled everything I needed to submit my forms. Those forms were another story – of course, we had to use a typewriter and make sure they were perfect and complete. I remember putting the information in the mail and waiting to hear if I had been approved. It didn't take long for Becky Grimm to call and congratulate me –

I had “passed”. I would be able to receive my recognition at the next annual conference.

The night of the banquet I felt like a princess! All “dolled up”, being on stage and being applauded for my accomplishment. I liked the way I felt, so I decided I needed to keep trying and obtain the next level. Through the years, I found that I benefitted so much through the work involved in obtaining the PSP recognition. I've met others through my leadership roles, I've learned so much by means of the professional development and classes, and I've gained so much pride in myself through my participation in conferences and organization. This is what PSP is all about – yes, it is a Professional Standards Program but to me it's a Personal Self-Esteem Program. I've never regretted going to that first conference and getting “hooked” on NAEOP.

Submitted by Linda Tribble, CEO
2008-2009 NAEOP President



Last quarter we asked members to share their stories of professional development success. Joyce Tomaka was eager to share hers.



I have been a member of the NAEOP for the past 25 years and also the New York State AEOP and Erie County AEOP.

I started out as a High School Secretary in 1966 - then went to our Middle School as Main Office Secretary - from there to an Elementary School as Secretary and I have been in the Business Office since 1985. I have been with Lake Shore Central School District for 44 years. I enjoy all the experiences I have here at Lake Shore and to see the students come back as teachers, bus drivers, clerical, custodians, etc. and enjoy seeing their children attend here.

Lake Shore's superintendent, Jeff Rabey, put my name in for the Support Staff Excellence Award given out by the Western New York Educational Service Council and out of 13 schools I was picked for that award. I was very surprised and, of course, very pleased. The dinner was Thursday, March 11, 2010, at the Buffalo Marriott with thirteen other awards given.

My husband passed away last year after 53 years of marriage. Our son, Norman is a pharmacist who recently received an award from the United States Government for all the work he has done in pharmacy in the State of Florida. Our daughter, Stacy, is Kitchen Manager at Red Lobster. Both live in Melbourne, Florida.

Submitted by Joyce Tomaka, New York



Just For Fun

Be the first to email the editor to share your tips and you'll win a free book!

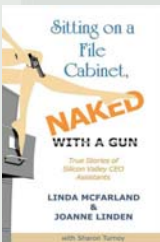
Favorite "Save the Day" Tip wins *Sitting on a File*

Favorite "Staying Young" Tip wins *Younger Next Year*

Editor Elizabeth McFall emcfall@ortn.edu

Sitting On a File Cabinet, Naked, with A Gun

By Joanne Linden and Linda McFarland



If the title of this book alone doesn't compel you to pick up a copy, let me try to convince you as one who just finished reading it. For starters, I read it through in one sitting.

Authors Joanne Linden and Linda McFarland have spent their career working for high-powered executives in California's Silicon Valley. Released in October 2009, their book is a collection of stories and experiences from their 30+ year adventure in the administrative profession. In June 2009, the authors launched their website, PlanetAdmin.net, which provides training and educational programs for administrative assistants.

Although I have worked in this wonderful profession for sixteen years now, I frequently found myself thinking "wow, that's a great approach to that problem" or "oh my goodness, that reminds me of..."

This book is funny, informative and an overall great resource for every administrative professional. It also reinforces the importance of networking and teamwork. The end of each chapter provides *Points of Wisdom* that would make for great workshop discussion starters.

Reviewer: Elizabeth McFall

Younger Next Year for Women: Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy—Until You're 80 and Beyond

By Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge, MD

Younger Next Year for Women - Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy- Until You're 80 and Beyond by Chris Crowley & Henry S. Lodge, M.D. If you saw this title on a cover of a book, wouldn't you be a bit curious? I know that I was.

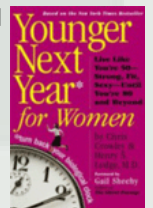
Recently I was given this book and when I saw this title, I said this is a "must read" book and I was right! The beginning of this book is written by Chris Crowley. According to Chris, there are three things you can change to be younger next year which are Exercise, Nutrition and Commitment. The biggest change is exercise, then nutrition and finally commitment. What can one say about exercise other than to just do it! Exercise everyday. With nutrition, quit eating the things that you know are rotten for you, like fast food and lots of fats and simple carbs. Eat less of everything.

For commitment, you must be involved with other people and you have to care about something. Start setting goals; start caring about people, family, job, and hobbies especially after retirement. You have to stay connected and take charge of your life or it can take some bad turns. Keep a simple diary or log. Write down, everyday, these 3 things: 1) What I ate; 2) What I did for exercise (or didn't) and 3) What I did with my life - sexually, socially, morally or whatever you care about.

This book also has the younger next year one size fits all exercise program. I won't spoil it for you and tell you what the aspects are about the program. I'll leave that as happy reading for you. What I do find interesting is as women, we are so busy caring for others that we often forget to take care of ourselves. This book helps us to focus on ourselves. Once we take the necessary steps to be committed to focusing on our own lives, we will feel that we're younger the next year. At least, we'll "think" we're younger anyway!

And that's the way I read it.

Reviewer: Janet McGrant





This is one of my all-time favorite photos. The darlings above are two of my brother's children taken at Newfound Gap two summers ago.

If you are unfamiliar with Newfound Gap, it is on the Tennessee/North Carolina border and offers amazing views. It was on this site in 1940 that President Roosevelt commissioned Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The thing I love about this picture is the **attitude** each girl is displaying. Their circumstances that day were identical. A leisurely awakening, yummy breakfast, picnic lunch by a mountain stream, and playing on the rocks mid-stream. (Even watching my husband fall in said stream!)

Yet one girl was thrilled to climb to the top of the monument while the other was unhappy because she didn't get to go further. Both girls are otherwise very cheery and have wonderful little personalities - they just made different choices in how to respond to the climb.

I share this picture to remind that attitude is a personal decision. As circumstances come along you have the option to be positive or negative. The choice is yours.

Choose wisely!

10 Things

While many offices have become increasingly casual and may not have a formal dress code for staff, there is still an invisible line that shouldn't be crossed in regard to attire. The '10 things' below were excerpted from a recent CareerBuilder.com survey of employers. Unfortunately, I've witnessed several of these first-hand. Remember, it doesn't cost a lot to develop a professional wardrobe. There are some great famous designer pieces available at many stores now. Target and Kohl's in particular carry some great basic pieces for under \$50.

1. **Underwear as outerwear.** Camisoles or visible bra straps and lingerie scream "eek!" not "chic!" (Yes really, I have seen someone wear a turtle-neck underneath a silky pajama tank top with black dress pants.)
2. **Workout gear.** Save your muscle shirts and spandex for the gym.
3. **Soiled, stained or rumpled clothing.** Neatness counts. Better to wear less expensive clothing that is immaculately cleaned and pressed than to sport designer grunge.
4. **Shorts.** Whether of the Bermuda or Daisy Duke variety, wearing shorts to work is just plain wrong. (Unless school is out of session, you are alone, and cleaning out the supply closet.)
5. **Tattoos.** Celebrities like Angelina Jolie have made tattoos seem almost mainstream, but many people are still put off by them considering them to be unprofessional. Best to keep yours under wraps whenever possible.
6. **Extreme hair color.** Natural looking highlights are fine, but colors not found in nature can be a real distraction.
7. **Too much cologne.** A strong scent is a turnoff to most people. Best to forgo fragrance and opt for the clean smell of soap. (I know several people who are prone to smell-induced headaches or have allergies.)
8. **Long, fake or wild-colored nails.** Keep your nails short and neat. Avoid nail decals, black polish or "Elvira" length nails. (It's easier to type with shorter, manicured nails too and French manis are great for summer!)
9. **Overly revealing attire.** Too little is too much. Breasts, back and shoulders should be covered. (It's an office not a cocktail party.)
10. **Athletic socks with street shoes.** Men, the devil's in the details. People notice these things! (Yes, you know you've seen this look - not pretty!)

Finally, as a rule of thumb: If you have any doubt whether something you have on is appropriate -- go back and change.