



Smart Strategies Solutions for Workplace Challenges

Issue #1
March 2008

Greetings!

Welcome to the first issue of our redesigned newsletter! We hope you find useful tips and strategies for addressing challenges at work and for making your workplace more positive and productive.

This issue includes two short articles: a challenge for supervisors and a tip for managing interruptions.

Please let us know what you think about the newsletter and any suggestions/requests you have for future issues. Send comments to me at: alan@krsol.com or use the feedback form in the Quick Links below.

Thanks!!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alan'.

Alan Krieger



Alan Krieger
President
Krieger Solutions,
LLC

Supervisory Puzzler - Creative Solutions

Is this the best approach?

Joe is a discouraged older worker. He constantly complains about the work and says it was better in "the old days". He thinks everyone moves too fast and quality is going downhill.

Bill, Joe's supervisor, has spoken with Joe several times about his performance and listened to his complaints. Bill has clarified the performance expectations and has given constructive feedback and encouragement. Joe's performance continues to decline. Other workers perform much faster and Bill is ready to begin the discipline process.

In This Issue

Supervisory Puzzler - Creative Solutions.

Managing Interruptions - Time Management Tip

About Krieger Solutions, LLC

Joe processes contracts. He's been doing it for 20 years and knows the process backwards and forwards. Bill has relied on Joe to handle the more complex situations.

After taking one of Krieger Solutions' coaching classes (a shameless plug!) Bill decides to give Joe one more try.

He asks Joe for some feedback. Bill listens closely to Joe's whining and teases out the underlying problem. Joe complains that with all the interruptions - emails, faxes, phone calls - he can't concentrate. "In the old days you got two mail deliveries a day and very few phone calls. You could plan your work and get it done efficiently." Joe feels the current work place is too chaotic for quality work. Joe's hobby is building ships in bottles. He likes deep concentration.

Bill offers Joe a deal. He will take Joe off of the fax and email lists. All contracts and related correspondence will come in to the other staff. When they receive complex or difficult contracts they'll pass them to Joe to deal with. Joe's in-basket will be outside his work area so no one has to interrupt Joe while he's in deep concentration mode. When Joe has more than a full day's work in his in-basket, he'll raise a red flag and no one can give him more work. When he's down to less than a day's work he'll raise a green flag.

Joe will check his in-basket twice a day and prioritize the work.

What do you think of Bill's solution? Email your thoughts to me at alan@krsol.com and we'll compile the responses and share them in the next issue.

Time Management Tip

Managing Interruptions

You can't always eliminate interruptions the way Joe and Bill did in the case above, but you can minimize them.

Sarah was a charge nurse in a hospital. She worked with patients who had come out of surgery. She was constantly being interrupted by family members asking her for the latest updates on their loved one's condition. Family members from out of town would call every day and family members who were visiting would seek Sarah out to get the latest update. There often wasn't much new information to report.

Sarah analyzed the driver for these interruptions - family members were worried and wanted regular reassurance, and were afraid information was being withheld. Sarah came up with a win-win solution:

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Joe's Hobby



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As each patient was admitted to her floor, Sarah met with a family member and asked them to appoint one or two official contact people. She promised to call these people every time there was significant news to report. All other family members were instructed to check in with these two contact people and not to call the hospital. The patient's family was assured of timely updates and easy access to a nurse and Sarah had her interruptions cut by 70%.

find out more about
Joe's hobby!

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Closing Thought

*"A conclusion is simply
the place where you got
tired of thinking."
(unknown)*

Seems like a good
place to stop. Hope
you enjoyed it.

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