

BMTFedNewsletter

Caption Competition!

Please e-mail your entries for the best cartoon caption to alison@hollinconsulting.co.uk for a chance to win a cool BMT gift.



Behaviour Based Safety Conference

Conference Day – 1st December
Workshop Day – 30th November
“10 years of BBS and how it was done”

at
The Park Royal Hotel,
Stretton, Warrington WA4 4NS

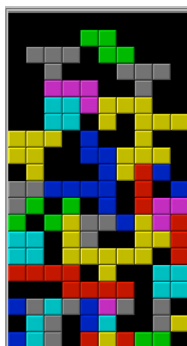
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Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a blend of applied behavioural science tools and project management skills. BMT is used to improve business and safety performance.

I Don't Have Time For This!

by Denis O'Hora, PhD

What does your diary for this week look like? If you're like me, it's full of blocks of this and that, with little slivers of time where I can rush out and get a bite to eat. I fill my diary like someone playing Tetris lining up blocks of time with the least possible space between them (for those of you too young to remember Tetris, look it up, you lucky so and so!). It feels good to have spent all my time so efficiently and effectively. I feel like I'm doing my best and giving the best possible value to my employer.



Meanwhile, I haven't written an article for this newsletter in a year, I haven't exercised in six months and I must have a dozen valuable meaningful projects busy growing cobwebs on my shelf. My collaborators are waiting on projects and have stopped asking me for updates. What's gone wrong?

When I'm pushed for time, I've seen two patterns in my behaviour. First, I prioritise visible short-term tasks. These are the tasks that I'm pretty sure others know I'm doing and will have a pay-off pretty soon either for me or for the employer. Long term strategy gets put away for another day, something I'll get to when I've got the time.

Second, I over-commit and then miss details that others are relying on me for. [This is one reason that doing the simple things right on time is difficult.] When we commit to others and let them down, if we're lucky, our co-workers will let us know, “Where the hell's the you said you'd get to me?”. This is precious feedback, but when we're tired (and this frantic way of working is tiring), we are often defensive when our slip-ups are pointed out. We feel that we did all we could. How could we possibly have done more? And we're right, we could not have done more, but we could have done better.

What can we do? The first action you can take is to allocate time to strategic thinking, no matter what level you are in your job. Don't leave your career to chance. Spend time each week reviewing your overall strategy and goals and measuring how you are progressing. The second action is to ensure that you have empty unassigned space in your calendar for the unexpected. How much white space you need is something that you need to learn. Too little and you will slip up in your commitments, too much and you won't get enough work done. The third action is to review your commitments and reduce the list to what you can do, not what you wish you could do. Reduce the list by communicating with your co-workers, customers upfront and proactively and delegating tasks to others.

Ignorance Leads To Bliss

by Elizabeth Faulkner



When you become a parent life seems to revolve around dates and progress e.g. visits from the health visitor, getting injections, regular check-ups, even down to dates as to what your child should be doing and by when. Being a mum I regularly trawled the Internet ‘baby’ sites and kept an eye out for telltale signs of any behaviour changes in my child. To be honest, over time I hadn't really seen any changes and compared to other mums I knew I thought ‘my child's an angel compared to yours!’ Everyone's heard of the terrible twos and this was the time I was dreading...but still nothing.

Then it started. It was Oscar winning stuff too. We had the full Monty of throwing herself on the floor, rolling around, stomping the feet and making the sort of noises only a small child can make. We didn't even have to speak and there she would be, on the floor.

At first we tried talking to her to calm her down but quickly realised it was getting us nowhere. This was also probably because she couldn't hear us over the noise she was making! So, we had a little parent conflagration and decided ignoring the activity would win the day.

Over the course of the next week whenever any tantrum started we would ignore it, carry on our conversation and either step over her, if she was in the way, or just leave the room. This approach worked a treat although not as far as our daughter was concerned. At first the fact we just stepped over her and stuck to our own conversation did not go down at all well and seemed to heighten her trauma. But when she eventually realised we were not going to give her any attention for that kind of behaviour it promptly stopped.

They say ignorance is bliss but in our case, ignoring lead to peace.

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There's a Bully Out There Who's Driving Me Crazy

by Howard Lees

'Code Pink' describes itself as a 'women-initiated grassroots peace and social justice movement'.

I read an article about how a bunch of nurses in the USA dealt with a bullying doctor. Their goal was to change his workplace environment and they met to decide how they would do this. They soon settled on their strategy and when he appeared on the ward someone broadcast the phrase 'code pink' on the loud speaker. He could hear 'code pink' as he entered the ward. Also the nurses stopped making eye contact with him when he was on the ward. When he realised something was afoot he had an outburst of temper and then a brave soul gave him the feedback on his rude behaviour, he took the hit and toned it down.



The goal for any change is to see if you can adjust the workplace environment. You do not have to be the boss or the bully to achieve this, anyone can do it. Of course you will have to judge how risky some of these things would be.

Here are some suggestions for things you could say in meetings to a bully:-

- "Can you repeat that, it was a bit complicated."
- "Do you have a family", if he says yes, say, "just wondering."
- "It feels like you have an unusual take on the agenda for this meeting."
- "I'm sorry but are we here to (fill in the purpose of the project/business), just checking."
- "Of all the things you just asked for which ones are you happy to pay extra for (if you can make something cost more, bullies hate it if the trail ends with them)."
- "I'm sorry but I'm finding your constant untrusting comments rather tiring now."
- "How about you just write down your gripes and I'll take them away and sort them out for you?"
- "We are trying to run a business here, in order to achieve that I will need the co-operation of the staff, I can achieve that but you are just pissing everyone off, what about you talk to me and I'll translate what you want to them."
- "I'm afraid you have created a bit of a comic caricature for yourself, I am trying to control it but you're going to have to help me out here."
- "I have been in business for many years, I have never seen good come out of your style of management, only misery and overspends. Would you like me to give you any more feedback?"
- "It seems you don't care about pissing off people, did someone upset you when you were young?"
- "Can I let everyone else go back to work and you can just rant at me, it will be better for the business."
- "This could still be a great business, to be honest it's your call, this could also easily continue to go pear shaped, it's your call really."
- "I hate to see someone make a fool of themselves, but in your case I'm willing to make an exception."

Here are some ideas to help you change the environment in the meeting:-

- People in the room look out of the window when the bully says a particular word (this is hilarious if everyone joins in, you need a trigger word the bully uses commonly).
- Record your meetings (just buy a digital recorder and plonk it on the table in front of you). You can make most meetings more efficient by doing this.
- Everyone furiously write stuff down when he is talking, looking furtive.
- People in the room look at the floor (again if you can agree a trigger word, it's funny).
- People in the room sigh loudly (ditto for a trigger).
- People in the room do stuff on cell phones, etc, when challenged say, "I'm trying to make this a bit more fun for myself."

Of course these suggestions require you to get together with other people, if you can't do this then you have a different problem.