

## VENTRAX BE TIME WISE – September, 2016

### 4 STEPS TO SURVIVING A NEW JOB



#### Step 1 - Learn the art of being a sponge

There's an art to being genuine about what you don't know without appearing like a clueless idiot who never should have been hired in the first place. How do you do that? By doing what savvy CEOs and other executives do when they show up for work the first day. They announce with authority that **"being a sponge" is priority one.**

***Getting a clear understanding of how things work and what various stakeholders expect of you should be the first priority of everyone starting out in a new job.*** And that's perfect air-cover for not having a clue about what's going on or even how you're going to go about doing your job. Believe it or not, it works. It works because it makes sense.

Just to be clear, don't overdo it. We're not talking about making a big deal and asking questions about every little thing. You are expected to have some level of competency and understanding of your job function. But instead of nodding your head like a bobble doll when you have no idea what people are talking about, be a sponge. Just make sure you listen and learn. You only get to be a sponge for so long.

#### Step 2 - Plan how to make an impact

While you're going about being a sponge, the most important thing you need to determine, besides all the basics like what your job is, what folks expect of you, and how to actually do your job - is how to make a real impact.

You can take some time with this, so don't rush it. But before long, it's a good idea to remind people that ***you're not just a sponge and that their original reasons for hiring you were valid*** - that you are



actually capable of producing results. ***The way you do that is to set a goal and plan to accomplish something reasonably visible and impactful.***

Planning to make an impact is good for another reason, too. Fear loves a vacuum, like when you're feeling unfocused, confused and generally clueless about what to do. This, on the other hand, will give you something to focus on and make a splash at the same time. It's all good.



### Step 3 - Get down from your pedestal

Overachievers, professionals, even just plain competent people, have a nasty habit of setting themselves up for failure by hoisting themselves way up on pedestals. The problem with that is you place undue pressure on yourself which renders you far more likely to screw up, make errors in judgment, that sort of thing. Besides, most jobs are challenging enough without the added burden of unreasonable pressure from inside your head.

So stay off the pedestal. Reality is challenging enough without you making stuff up.

### Step 4 - Face your fear, not your anxiety

Most people think fear and anxiety are the same thing, but they're not. They're completely different and you need to get the difference. ***Fear is an emotional response to a real or perceived threat. Anxiety is apprehension over something you're anticipating or even something unknown.***

What does that mean? If you're afraid or concerned that you don't have the skills or capability to do the job, that's real and something you need to deal with. Face it, confront it, determine whether it's real or not, and then plan to address it.



But if you're getting yourself all stressed out ahead of time, over anticipation of all kinds of what-ifs that haven't happened yet and may never happen, you're just building things up in your head and making things worse for yourself. Don't do that. Don't stress over the unknown.

***Instead, recognize and realize what you're really afraid of.*** That way, you can confront it and determine if it's justified or not. Besides, if you face your fear, you won't blabber about it to everybody else. Some people do that, thinking it will help relieve the tension and maybe even endear people to them. It won't. The only thing it'll do is make you look like an insecure person with no self-confidence. And that's probably not what your management thought they were getting when they hired you.

***Last word.*** If you're one of those people who looks for a quick fix for everything, forget it. ***That's a sure fire path to disaster.*** As with all things, the answer isn't in a book or a pill.

# WORKPLACE ISSUES THAT MAKE YOUR EMPLOYEES LESS PRODUCTIVE



Ensuring that employees have a productive and satisfying work environment is a major concern for many companies. No one wants to work in an atmosphere that makes them feel uncomfortable, distracted or anxious. In fact, the space where your staff works can have a direct impact on their performance.

But according to new research from Oxford Economics and audio electronics company Plantronics, most managers don't really understand the full impact of a distracting or uninspiring workplace. The study found that employees have a few common complaints about their work environments that make it difficult to be productive.

## 1. Inability to focus without interruptions

Oxford Economics found that employees place a high value on a distraction-free environment. The opportunity to concentrate without constant noise is one of the most desired features of an office setting, and yet the popular "open office" plan leaves a lot of room for distractions during the workday.



According to the survey, more than half of employees find ambient noise displeasing at work, yet only 39 percent of executives actually believe that an open floor plan negatively affects their workers.

Jeff Lowe, vice president of marketing at Smart Technologies, said that even the slightest bit of clatter can act as an interruption for employees. Sounds like chatter, sneezes and phone calls may be much more distracting than employers realize.

"Ambient noise and lack of personal space can make it hard for employees to concentrate and get things done. All of this has led us to re-imagine the workspace and productivity. Designing for today's workplace means building spaces that help employees be as productive as possible and do their best work."

## 2. Lack of access to appropriate technology

Many employees use their personal mobile devices for work purposes. However, only 40 percent say these personal devices integrate with their work technology and only one-third say



their devices are distraction-free for out-of-office work.

***Employers don't always realize that their staff doesn't have the appropriate tools to do their jobs,*** and with the growing number of remote workers, this lack of access can impede your staff's workflow.

***That's why it's so important for each worker to feel prepared for their job.*** It is also vital to ensure that the devices actually perform properly and efficiently, no matter how the setting. We will have to make sure that all of the technology tools to be as effective at home as you are in the office or on the road — the location matters not.

### 3. Constant connectivity



Because of the blurred boundaries between work and personal time, people may ***constantly feel pressured to respond to texts and emails right away*** and they may have a fear of missing out even when they're in the workplace. More than one-third of employees admit that they use their devices mainly for these reasons, which can be distracting and unhealthy — the study noted that ***constant connectivity breeds compulsive behaviour and burnout.***

***Maintaining a work environment that respects its employees' personal time is essential*** to avoiding this burnout. As an employer, you should communicate exactly what you expect from your staff while being realistic and flexible.

"Work enters your personal life all the time, so if my personal life enters my corporate life occasionally, that's the trade-off.

### 4. An uninformed boss

***Ignorance is not bliss in the workplace.*** The survey found that nearly two-thirds of executives believe their staff is equipped with the tools they need to deal with distractions, but less than half of employees agree. Dodging these issues will only make workers feel unappreciated and indifferent. Workplace distractions have a big impact on productivity. ***"These are issues that companies can address — but first, they need to acknowledge the problem."***

# THINGS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO BEFORE BREAKFAST

## MAKE TIME TO EXERCISE BEFORE IT FALLS OFF THE TO-DO LIST

“If it has to happen, then it has to happen first,” writes **Laura Vanderkam**, time management expert and author of “What the Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast.”

They must set aside their ***first hours of the day to invest in their top-priority activities before other people’s priorities come rushing in.***

So what do successful executives and entrepreneurs do when they are rested and fresh? From studies of morning rituals, we outline some of the following activities that the most successful people do before breakfast.

### 1. They wake up early

Successful people know that ***time is a precious commodity***. And while theirs is easily eaten up by phone calls, meetings, and sudden crisis once they’ve gotten to the office, the morning hours are under their control. That’s why many of them rise before the sun, ***squeezing out as much time as they can, to do with as they please.***

PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi, for example, wakes at 4 a.m. and is in the office no later than 7 a.m. Meanwhile, Disney CEO Bob Iger gets up at 4:30 to read, and Square CEO Jack Dorsey is up at 5:30 to jog.

The bottom line: Productive mornings start with early wake-up calls.

### 2. They Exercise Before It Falls Off The To-Do List

The top morning activity of the rich and powerful seems to be exercise. These are incredibly busy people, as such if they make time to exercise, it must be important. ***A pre-breakfast workout helps reduce stress later in the day, counteracts the effects of high-fat diet, and improves sleep.***

### 3. They work on a top-priority business project

The quiet hours of the morning can be ***the ideal time to focus on an important work project*** without being interrupted. What’s more, spending time on it at the beginning of the day ensures that it ***gets your attention before others*** (kids, employees, bosses) use it all up.

### 4. They spend quality time with family

Some successful people use the mornings ***to invest in family time***, whether reading stories to the kids or cooking a big breakfast together.

## 5. They connect with their spouses

In the evening, it's more likely you'll be tired from the day's activities, and time can easily be wasted with dinner preparations and zoning out in front of the TV. That's why *many successful people make connecting with their partners a morning ritual.*

## 6. They network over coffee

Especially if you like to make it home for dinner, the mornings can be a great time to meet with people for coffee or breakfast. Plus, *networking breakfasts are less disruptive than midday lunches and more work-oriented than boozy cocktail parties.*

## 7. They meditate to clear their minds

Before they head out the door, many successful people *devote themselves to a spiritual practice such as meditation or prayer to centre themselves* for the rush of the day.

## 8. They write down things they're grateful for

Expressing gratitude is another great way to centre yourself and *get the proper perspective before heading to the office.* Writing down the people, places and opportunities that you're grateful for takes just a few minutes, but it can make a real difference in your outlook.

## 9. They plan and strategize while they're fresh

*Planning the day, week or month ahead is an important time management tool to keep you on track when you're in the thick of it.* Using the mornings to do big-picture thinking helps you prioritize and set the trajectory of the day.

## 10. They check their email

While time management gurus may suggest putting off email as long as possible, *many successful people start the day with email.* They may quickly scan their inboxes *for urgent messages that need an immediate response* or craft a few important emails that they can better focus on while their minds are fresh.

## 11. They read the news

Whether it's sitting in the corner diner and reading the papers or checking the blogs and Twitter from their phones, most successful people have a pre-breakfast ritual for getting the latest headlines.





## SELF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR



**The TOPIC for October, 2016**

**How Do We Change Our Habits?**

**Date: 5th October 2016**

**VENUE (MALAYSIA)**

**Banker's Club Kuala Lumpur (Amoda Building) Jalan Imbi  
(Opposite Berjaya Times Square)**

**Time : 6pm – 8pm**

### **Timely Inspiration**

#### **“Self Management with Dr. Venga”**

Always bear in mind that the brain is full of “rivers”. Your thoughts and ideas are unlimited. But what you need to do is to have an open mind that is free to accept new ideas and expand on them. As Charles Darwin in 1857 rightfully said “survival depends on the ability to change” but the change that is crucial here is to change our thinking. We need to think with a broader mind. Not to close our mind to more training and education. Statistics have shown that the top 10% of British companies spend 80% of their time and money on training. When we looked at the companies in the Fortune 500, the top 5 computer companies spend over a billion dollars on their employee’s education. So, this goes to show that with constant education and training, people will improve in their work and thus, contribute to the growing success of the company.



*(Extracts from “How long can you wait for results”)*



# TABLE ETIQUETTE



## RESTAURANT DINING ETIQUETTE

In all but the most informal restaurants, good manners require that you observe a number of civilities and procedures, from the proper use of your napkin and buttering your bread to enjoying your coffee and dessert.

### NAPKIN ETIQUETTE

Put your napkin in your lap shortly after you sit down. As you use it, blotting or patting your lips is preferable to a washcloth-style wipe and remember that this square cloth should never do double duty as a handkerchief.

When the meal is finished, traditional etiquette says you shouldn't place your napkin on the table until the host or hostess has done so, signalling the meal's end. The practice is largely obsolete, but remembering it may come in handy if you're in a group that leans toward formality. In any event, leave the napkin to the left of the setting in loose folds, positioned so that any dirty part is out of sight.

### BREAD AND BUTTER ETIQUETTE



If you want a piece of bread and the bread basket is close to your place setting, it's perfectly fine to pick up the basket and ask, "Bread, anyone?" After everyone has been served, pick out a piece and put it on your bread plate, along with a pat or two of butter. If the butter comes in a dish, use your butter knife to scoop out a portion to deposit on the edge of the bread plate. (The bread plate is also the place to put jam or jelly, as well as any finger foods

served on a communal platter.)

Once you've taken a piece of bread from the basket, **it's yours**: Don't tear off a portion of a slice and then put the rest back in the basket. Put your bread on the bread plate. Each time you want some, break off one or two bites' worth, butter it while holding it on the plate (not in the air), and eat. Don't hold your bread in one hand and a drink in the other (the polite diner uses only one hand at a time), and don't take the last piece of bread without first offering it to others. When an uncut loaf (with cutting board and knife) is placed on the table, the host or whoever is closest to the basket- cuts three or four slices, leaving them on the board. If manageable, the board is then passed when diners want to cut their own.



## FIRST COURSES

Appetizers are eaten with the small fork to the left of the dinner fork. If you're having soup, the server will probably bring the soup spoon with the soup; if it is already part of the place setting, it is to the right of the knife or knives.

If a platter for sharing has been ordered, say, of antipasti or stuffed mushrooms, it is passed around the table, with each diner holding it as the person next to him serves himself, using only the serving utensils provided.

## BEVERAGES

Before taking a sip of water, wine, or any other beverage, blot your lips with your napkin to keep the glass from becoming soiled. And remember that the water goblet is not a substitute for a finger bowl. If you want to clean your fingers, use your napkin or, if a dish has been messy to eat, excuse yourself to clean your hands in the restroom if no finger bowl or hot towel has been provided.



## MAIN COURSES

The period spent eating the main course is meant to be enjoyable, but sometimes uncertainties or difficulties will creep in. Following are some of the problems that might crop up and tips for how to deal with them:

The food arrives at different times. If a significant time elapses between the arrival of the respective diners' hot dishes, the host (or if there is none, the other diners) should urge the first who have been served to go ahead and eat. If everyone is having cold dishes, follow the rule of waiting until everyone is served.

**You want to send food back.** As a rule, send a dish back only if it isn't what you ordered; it isn't cooked to order (a supposedly medium-well fillet arrives bleeding, for instance); it tastes spoiled; or you discover a hair or a pest. Just speak calmly and quietly to the server when making the request.

Your side dishes come separately. When vegetables are served in individual small dishes, ***it's perfectly proper to eat them directly from the dish***. Or, if you choose to transfer the food to your dinner plate, use a fork or spoon to carefully slide them onto the plate. You could also ask your server to transfer the side dish to your plate when he brings it. If necessary, ask for the empty dishes to be removed so that the table isn't overcrowded.

You want to taste one another's food. Accepting another person's offer to taste a morsel of his dish, or offering a bite of yours, is fine as long as it's handled unobtrusively. Either pass your bread plate to the person so he can put a spoonful on it or (if he's sitting close by) hold

your plate towards him so that he can put the morsel on the edge. ***Do not hold a forkful of food to another diner's mouth, and don't ever spear something off the plate of anyone else.***

You're faced with unfamiliar foods. If a food you're not sure how to eat comes on a platter of appetizers, a type of sushi, perhaps or crab in the shell, you, as a polite diner, have three choices of how to proceed: (1) Wait until someone else starts to eat and follow suit. (2) Ask how the food should be eaten (fingers or fork, for example). (3) Avoid the food altogether. ***Only the ill-mannered diner cries, "Ewww . . . what's that?"***

You're not sure how to rest your utensils. During the meal, never place a fork or spoon you've been using directly on the table. Instead, place the utensil diagonally on the edge of your plate, not propped against it like an oar. In fact, how you place your utensils on your plate is a code to the waiter, letting him know whether you have finished a course.

### LEFTOVER FOOD

When you have food left over that you don't want to go to waste, it's usually acceptable to ask for a doggy bag-today, often a lidded container slipped into a small paper bag. When not to request one? First, at most business meals, (If you're dining with a business associate who's a close friend, it's fine to request a bag if you're going Dutch, but if she's the host, leave leftover food behind.) Second, at a wedding reception or other special function.

### CONDIMENTS

Condiments range from salt and pepper to the individual small dishes that accompany Chinese, Indian and other ethnic foods.



### FRUIT AND CHEESE

It's possible that a fruit course may be served at some point during the meal-either with the salad, after the main course (in that case, often with cheese), or as dessert.

The days of peeling your own fruit are largely past, but a whole fruit should be quartered, cut up, and eaten with a knife and fork. Cheese, seen on the menu in many upscale restaurants, is served before the dessert course. The server (a fromager [froh-mah-ZHAY] if male, fromagere [froh-mah-ZHEHRE] if female) will either bring a tray of cheeses or wheel out a cart, suggesting the most suitable choices. Slices of different types are then arranged on a separate plate (often centered with a piece of fruit, a wedge of fig, or plum cake) for each diner. While the cheese can be eaten on bread, the full flavor comes through if you eat it with a knife and fork. Start with the milder cheeses and progress to the strongest.

## DESSERT

In some place settings, a dessert spoon and fork are placed horizontally above the dinner plate. Use the fork for eating and the spoon as a pusher, or vice versa, depending on the softness of the dessert.

## COFFEE AND TEA

If a waiter places a pot of coffee or tea on the table but doesn't pour, the person near the pot should offer to do the honors, filling her own cup last. Two other points:

Do not take ice from your water glass to cool a hot drink. Just be patient. Do not dunk doughnuts, biscotti or anything else into your coffee.



## HOT TOWELS

In some upscale restaurants, steamed hand towels are brought to diners at the end of the meal. Use the towel to wipe your hands and, if necessary, the area around your mouth. (Wiping the back of your neck or behind your ears is best not done in a restaurant.) Most waiters will take the towel away as soon as you've finished. If not, leave the towel at the left of your plate, on top of your loosely folded napkin.

## EXCUSING YOURSELF

When you need to get up to go to the restroom, it isn't necessary to say where you're going, a simple "Excuse me, please; I'll be right back" is sufficient. At other times, a brief explanation is in order: "Please excuse me while I check with the babysitter." Leaving without a word is rude.

## GROOMING AT THE TABLE

In most circumstances, it is more polite to excuse yourself and put on lipstick in the ladies' room than to do it at the table. The exception is when the restaurant has an informal atmosphere and you're among friends, in which case you can apply the lipstick quickly. What you should avoid is a primping routine, no compact, no powder. And then there's that never-to-be-broken rule: Whether you're a man or a woman, don't use a comb at a restaurant table, nor should you rearrange your hair or put your hands to it wherever food is served. Using dental floss at the table is a major never, ever. Believe it or not, some people have no qualms about doing something so private in public.

**Good Luck!**

## WHY READING MAKES YOU A BETTER PERSON

Want to become the best version of yourself? Try picking up a book. Research suggests that the act of reading isn't simply pleasurable—it also boosts brainpower, lowers stress levels, increases earning potential, and makes you a kinder, more empathetic person.

Next time you're bored out of your mind, don't reach for your smartphone, reach for a book instead. Reading books provides a range of benefits you may not be aware of. In fact, the more books you read, the more awesome you will be.

### READING MAKES YOU (MORE) EMPATHETIC

Reading fiction gives you an inside peek into scenarios and realities you couldn't otherwise live yourself. This opens up your critical thinking capabilities and activates your empathy sensors. You become more aware and sensitive to people's plights, cultures and customs and feel more forgiving and nurturing where you might have once been condescending or inflexible.

### READING IS AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

A good novel will have you questioning reality. A good novel will drag you so deeply into its plot that your identification with the protagonist will be mind-blowing and reality-blurring. Enough said.

### READING IS KNOWLEDGE

You can watch a documentary or tutorial to learn a new skill but nothing beats the original experience of reading, processing and understanding new knowledge or how to do all by yourself.

Reading is a bottomless chest from which you will always be able to get a few jewels — with each book and each tale.

### READING IS TRAVELING FOR YOUR SOUL

Reading helps you leave all your workaday troubles behind, even if for a short moment. It empties your mind until you're powerful enough to confront your daily demons.

### READING IS ENTERTAINMENT

For the bibliophiles out there, reading is a matchless experience. Reading gives you immense joy. It engages your senses and enthralls your mind with scenery, plots and mind-blowing images.

### READING MAKES YOU INTERESTING

From learning smart, little-known facts, to initiating great discussions with friends, reading makes you a knowledgeable, interesting person people will love to hang out with.

### READING IS INSPIRATION

Reading stimulates your creativity. You start thinking critically and more boldly, all because you've already been exposed to various scenarios and have garnered the tools and knowledge to be less ordinary and more unique.

### READING IS GROWTH

Even if you don't read a self-improvement book per se, virtually any well-written book will help you become a better person. From building your self-esteem to becoming better at decision-making, books give you the tools to cope with life's conundrums — and the ever-important Zombie apocalypse.

### READING IS POWER

It's a cliché but it's nonetheless true: reading empowers you. The knowledge and worlds you experience when reading give you confidence and wisdom on how to deal with real life situations more gracefully and wisely.

Reading is your key to becoming a better person in all aspects of your life.

Reading is how you improve your marketability, your communication skills, your empathy and emotional intelligence, your appeal — and even your sexiness. Reading is one of the few habits known to man that you can never have too much of. So go on, read on!

### BONUS BENEFIT

If you speed read you get to reap all these benefits in a shorter time. Awesome, right?

# reflections

Failure will never  
determination to  
enough.

overtake me if my  
succeed is strong

