

# WCT

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### **1. MARCH MADNESS EVEN WITH THE LIQUIDITY CHALLENGES ZIMBABWE IS FACING I'M SURE THAT MANY OF YOU ARE THRILLED THAT BUSINESS REALLY SEEMS TO BE PICKING UP AGAIN!!**

*I hope in all sectors and that we are all experiencing a bit of March Madness. It is great to see organizations, managers, executives and their staff getting busier and busier. With that comes the need for all parties to pick up their pace, work smarter and faster, respond quicker, and keep things moving at a record pace.*



One big challenge is that while business is picking up after the festive season, it is not at a point where salary increases will necessarily be given this year. Some executives are saying, "We need more out of the staff we have because we absolutely cannot hire this year; and we can't give raises."

As an x-employee for 15 years+ you want to know that when you do a great job and give (what you think) is your all, the best compliment is an increase in your paycheque. I get it! But as many business owners and managers know, when profits are way down and sales are not flowing in, you have to be financially smart. If you do not think "lean" in every aspect of the business, you eventually have to cut staff.

Here are some tools to help you manage better and still provide good customer service:

- **Look at your work with a question mark; not a full stop.** This is my life and work philosophy. When you look at work with a full stop, that means: good enough, there is no other way, this is the best way or best answer, stop, the end. Your subconscious will not work to find new answers when you haven't asked it. When you look at your day with a questions mark, you are asking questions like:
  - How can I do this better? How can I streamline this process? Is there a smarter way to approach this project? What other resources can I use to make my life easier? Who do I know that can help me? Save me time? Share their expertise with me?

When you plant a question mark in your subconscious, you will eventually find the answers because your subconscious just finds them naturally. You may get the answers while dressing for work, walking past something in a shop or even seeing a billboard - it's amazing when the answers will come to you. The best part is they come naturally; they are not forced. Some of your best ideas will come when this happens.

1. Use your time wisely. Little time wasters add up to hours in a day: 2 minutes here, 3 minutes there, 5 minutes of chit chat, etc.
2. Give clear directions and state your expectations to others so they can give you what you need in a more timely fashion.
3. Network with your peers to brainstorm on setting office standards and how to save money
4. Promote your good ideas. Speak up!

**Collaborate! Collaborate!** We have worked very hard in our office for the past year to work as a team and assist and help each other understand our roles, how to assist each other, and especially combine all our good ideas to achieve the best possible outcome.

Join a professional organization. Update your résumé and post it on LinkedIn. Tell people that you've had a great year and that you're looking to make a change.

Start a career development group with a few friends in other industries; meet every few weeks to exchange contacts and help one another think through career goals and talk about your fears of making a change. "Exploring other opportunities can feel like career adultery, but everyone has to have two tracks, especially if they're unhappy,".

Become a part of something bigger than yourself. Offer to mentor a younger colleague at work. Cultivate interests and challenges outside the office. Train for a marathon. Take a language class. You'll become more efficient at work if you have a new reason to leave at night or to keep your weekends open.

Take a break. Even a three-day weekend can help you start to develop a clearer vision of your future and help you put your situation in perspective.

Career "hooks," like staying at your job because you love your colleagues, or simply because you're afraid of starting over, can lead to inertia. Those hooks obscure our ability to make rational decisions that are good for us.

## **2. DATES TO DIARISE**

### **Management Development Seminar - 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2012**

A training seminar that will make managing both people and jobs easy and fun.

If Your staff could rate your Management Skills on a Scale of 1 to 10 How High Would You rate??

#### ***MISTAKES MANAGERS MAKE*** - A Dynamic 1 Day Seminar

As managers, we all sometimes make mistakes. By examining the mistakes most often made by our managers, we can develop solutions to prevent them, and create a more motivated team of employees.

Best value - Best training

Presented By Dr Geoffrey Chada

#### ***Become part of the learning, our family, our passion and Courses***

Sharpen skills and stay ahead of the competition with our leading-edge seminars in 30 distinct subject areas. WCT offers training to meet every individual's needs. Our Business Enhancement Skills seminars deepen your level of self-awareness

and help build your professional competencies, with skills that you need whether working independently or managing a team.

- ✓ Management Development Seminar **16 March 2012**
- ✓ Meetings and Minute Taking - **24 – 25 April**
- ✓ **5 Day Mini MBA 14-18 May 2012**
  - **1. Leading High Performance Teams – \*14th May 2012\***
  - **2. Business Finance Fundamentals (BFF) - \*15th May 2012\***
  - **3. Strategic Planning - \*16th May 2012\***
  - **4. Marketing Excellence – \*17<sup>th</sup> May 2012\***
  - **5. Best Practices for Recruiters and HR Personnel - \*18th May 2012\***
- ✓ Implementing a Total Safe Lifting and Material Handling program in your plant or operation 16-17 May \*\*\* **New**
- ✓ PA's Winter School **13-15 June (Vic Falls) Registration Now Open**

### Professional Meetings and Minute Taking 24-25 April 2012



**Accurate and concise minutes** are essential for an organisation's planning procedures. By keeping them brief, to the point and comprehensible, planning can move forward and businesses can stay on track.

This practical 2 day course offers a step-by-step guide through the process of preparing for meetings, active listening and accurate note taking to producing the perfect minutes. This course is not only for minute takers but for anyone who attends chairs or attends a meeting.

**Course Dates: April 24- 25 2012,**

**Venue: Harare Crone Plaza**

**Who should attend?**

- Any individual who chairs, runs, or attends meetings for organisations, municipalities, government, businesses, body corporates, social or sports clubs, charitable organisations, academic committees, etc.
- General Administrators responsible for meetings and minutes
- New employees who have never been exposed to meetings or minute taking before
- Anyone who has been entrusted with minute taking for their team, Attends Meetings or Chairs Meetings

### THE 5 DAY MINI MBA 14 -18 MAY 20

**Ever increasingly, managers and professionals** are expected, to have a holistic understanding of all facets of business over and above their area of specialization. This is why Waterfront Conferences is running this Business Development Workshop to help professionals master the fundamental business concepts which are so essential to you and your organization's success. *Waterfront Conferences* are offering a course titled "The 5 Day Mini MBA".

It is specially designed for the busy manager who wants to get ahead in their career and who needs to get to grips with a business programme in a timely and cost effective manner .

The Workshop covers the following Modules:- *Leadership* | *Marketing* | *Finance* | *Strategic Management* | *HR Management*

Ensure your widespread understanding of modern business and all its functions ranging from finance to HR, we are offering all business Professionals the opportunity to attend this training programme.



**Do you want to improve the support you provide to your boss.** The Congress will provide you with the systems and skills needed to better organise, plan and manage your workload to maximum effectiveness and win your bosses full confidence.

**WCT IS** pleased to announce their signature Congress. Fun and Inspiring works. A bigger and better Motivational and Educational experience.

**Get Professional Skills and Increase Productivity:** *In and out of attending educational sessions*, you can experience everything you love about tranquillity in a 4 star setting, right in the heart of the Zambezi.

### 3. ARE YOU "POLISHING THE STATUS QUO" - OR MOVING AHEAD BY JOAN BURGE

I've always felt that good advice is worth repeating. So today, I'd like to share the invaluable views of a colleague, Ron Richardson, who wrote an article for me some years ago. When I came across it again recently, I realized it truly is a gem. I hope you think the same. Here are some of his observations regarding what he calls "polishing the status quo."

*If you are polishing the status quo because you are comfortable, beware. Comfort is a narcotic. It takes away your desire to look into the future. It makes you think things will be the same tomorrow as they are today. Comfort will have you expend your energy on warding off the future instead of developing skills to deal effectively with it. Sooner or later, the future will come calling, and all the fortifications you have built won't be able to keep it out. If you are not prepared, the new reality can be harsh.*

As you know, I'm a big proponent of advancing your career and breaking status quo barriers as often as possible! Try any of these tips for even greater success:

Ask yourself, "Am I polishing the status quo at work, or am I deeply involved in changing, improving and creating a more effective workplace?"

Assess your commitment to excellence and innovation: Are you content to cruise around work in the equivalent of a '51 Ford while others whiz by in their sleek, new vehicles?

Be willing to invest the time and effort necessary to pursue new processes or techniques that will result in great productivity.

Remember: Fear is a great inhibitor to action only when you fail to acknowledge its presence. Take fear along with you on your journey - and use it for extra energy! Over time, you'll conquer fears to achieve more.

Be an inspiration to others. Innovate and elevate the workplace whenever possible.

**This week, let's not polish the status quo. Let's recognize that we need to update our knowledge and skills regularly. To do anything less is to risk becoming obsolete**

### 4. Seven Deadly Sins At Work

Having an affair with a colleague tops the list of seven deadly business sins newly appointed bosses should avoid at all costs.

First100, a company which specialises in helping business leaders during their first 100 days, has compiled the following "seven deadly business sins" for those starting out in a new role:

**Don't sleep with a colleague**

**Don't keep referring to "how we did things in my old company"**

**Avoid too many introductory meetings which you can't follow up**

**Don't make decisions just for the sake of being decisive**

**Don't avoid firing someone in the hope they'll work out - they rarely do**

**Don't avoid playing the political game - everyone else is at it**

**Avoid telling staff you're going to spend your first 3 months asking questions.**



First 100's Garrett O'Keeffe said: "The **first 100 days in a new role are important in so many ways**. Get off to a good start and a boss can set the tone for the rest of their time at an organisation, but equally the opposite applies.

"We have worked with hundreds of companies during the past six years and our list of seven sins in your first 100 days is based on our experiences.

"Starting in a new senior role is a highly pressurised time and it is crucial that bosses put in place a proper plan with clearly defined objectives for their first 100 days and beyond.

"A good leader will have a clear vision, have no fear, be a fast learner and know when to show patience and resilience.

"Without a clearly defined plan for the first 100 days, it is easy to fall into the trap of holding lots of introductory meetings, asking endless questions and talking about how good things used to be in their old company.

"These are some of the biggest blunders new bosses will make and the result is that the first 100 days will have gone and very little will have been achieved. The first 100 days in a new role is a critical time period and will have an impact for the next 12 months and beyond.

"A chief executive or senior business leader struggling to get to grips with their new role can further massively compound any problems if they are tempted to have an affair with a more junior colleague.

"Life at the top can sometimes seem a lonely place which probably goes a long way to explaining why some of our leading public figures are tempted to stray, but the potential long-term damage to an organisation both internally and externally is immense."

## 5. 10 WORST THINGS NOT-TO-DO IN A MEETING

Meetings have been hailed as the No. 1 time-waster in the corporate world-over, and -- unless food is served to offset the boredom -- they are the most tortuous part of the work day.

Who among us hasn't cringed as the office windbag launched into a self-aggrandizing discourse that was completely off-point? Pitied a meek co-worker who got trounced by the office bully? Or marvelled at a colleagues' ability to string together an array of buzzwords that mean absolutely nothing?

Yet no matter how mind-numbing things get, don't be lulled into thinking that meetings aren't important. The fact is, they can make -- or break -- your career. Here are 10 things you should never do in a meeting:

### 1. Show Up Late.

Nothing says "**I'm disorganized**" like walking into a meeting already in progress. Arriving a few minutes early not only demonstrates that you respect your colleagues' time, but guarantees you get a good seat as well.

## **2. Be Unprepared.**

If you've been given an agenda or materials beforehand, read them. Think of any questions you have or contributions you could make to the subjects being discussed.

## **3. Monopolize the Conversation.**

When discussion ensues, it's protocol to let more senior figures contribute first. Once they've said their piece, concisely make your points. Don't drone on -- or feel compelled to speak at all if you don't have anything purposeful to say. As the old adage goes, "Better to be thought a fool, than speak and remove all doubt."

## **4. Make Your Statements Sound Like Questions.**

Phrasing your statements as questions invites others to say no, argue or take credit for your ideas. Speak in declarative sentences, such as "Let's do more research on that."

## **5. Misread Signals.**

Try to gauge the needs and mood of those in the room. Listen carefully to what people are saying to discern how receptive they might be to your ideas. You need to make your message relevant to your audience. For example, if everyone is focused on cutting costs, and you're angling for a system upgrade, you'll either want to stress how the new software will save money -- or table your request for another day.

## **6. Get Intimidated.**

Unfortunately, some of your co-workers may view meetings as a battleground and themselves as verbal gladiators, sparring for the boss' favor. If you become the victim of a put-down or accusation, calmly defend yourself. If you need to buy time to think, do so with a question that will make your attacker accountable. For example: "Andrew, when did you start thinking I don't care about our sales results?"

## **7. Chew Gum.**

The smacking, popping, cracking and cow-like chewing are annoying. Plus, it's rude and unprofessional. 'Nuff said.

## **8. Keep Your Cell Phone On.**

You turn it off in restaurants and at the movies. Turn it off for your meeting. A ringing phone interrupts the presenter and distracts the audience. And whatever you do, never take a call in the middle of a meeting.

## **9. Wander Off Topic.**

Don't hijack the agenda. Stay focused on what you and your team are trying to accomplish. If you must digress into unrelated areas, make sure it's alright with the others present. A good way to handle important issues not related to the topic at hand is to record them on a flipchart and revisit them at an appropriate time.

## **10. Skip It.**

Sure, you might get more done if you forgo a meeting to stay at your desk and do your actual work. But if the meeting was called by someone higher up in the organization, you'll miss an opportunity to make yourself known. Remember, in the end, meetings aren't about productivity; they're about projecting a positive image, building teamwork, sharing information, and forming relationships that are crucial to your success.

## 6. SAYING OF THE MONTH

"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." **Walt Disney**

Stay Blessed and don't forget to email your contributions articles and adverts.

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