



NACOP Notes

April 2011

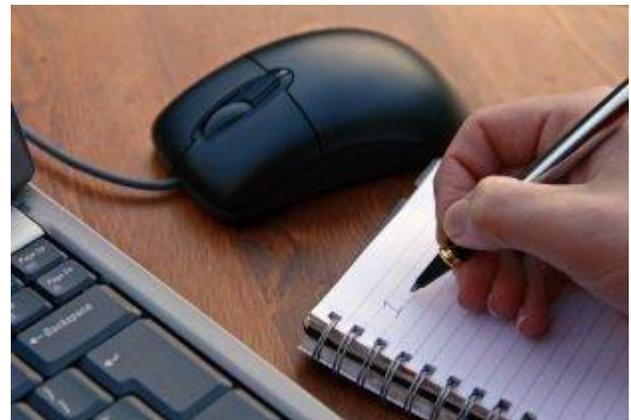
Message from the Co-Chairs

By: Sandy Groneberg, Sr. Co-Chair, MWA
Jackie Kelly, Jr. Co-Chair, HQ

Administrative Professionals Day is April 27, 2011, and we wish to recognize the importance of your role in accomplishing the work of ARS. The recession has forced us to do more with less, and sometimes workplace stress may seem overwhelming. It is important to celebrate the achievements we have had and stay focused on our goals.

The mission of NACOP is (in part) to enhance the office support profession through training, mentoring, and recognition. We celebrate the achievement of a dynamic training workshop held August 18-19, 2010, in Norman, Oklahoma, with 123 office professionals attending. We celebrate the support we receive from Dr. Knipling, Mr. Bradley, the Area Directors, and our sponsors, who make it possible for us to interact and learn from each other. (Remember the days when you didn't know another ARS secretary anywhere? Now we network and assist each other on a weekly basis, if not more frequently.) We can celebrate that others have knowledge and skills that make our jobs easier (Can you imagine doing your job without any web resources? We are grateful to those who maintain websites with up-to-date information.) We celebrate the award programs sponsored by ARS, which provides recognition to those who go beyond the call of duty. These are only a few of the things we can celebrate this year as office professionals.

Abraham Lincoln said, "The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time." Vincent Van Gogh said, "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." We encourage each of you to do a series of small things, one day at a time, and we will have great things to celebrate next year on Administrative Professionals Day.



Did U know...

In 1955, the observance date of National Secretaries Week was moved to the last full week of April. The name was changed to Professional Secretaries Week in 1981 and then became Administrative Professionals Week in 2000 in order to keep pace with changing job titles and the expanding responsibilities of today's administrative workforce.



**2010 ARS
Office
Professional
of the Year...
Beth A. Holt,
Bushland,
Texas**

Beth Holt,
Program Support
Assistant at the
Conservation
and Production
Research
Laboratory
(CPRL) in

Bushland, Texas, has been selected as the 2010 ARS Office Professional of the Year. Beth provides administrative support to the Director and the laboratory staff, as well as direct program support to one research unit. She is known for her outgoing and positive attitude that is encouraging to lab employees and others within the Southern Plains Area (SPA) because of her enthusiastic acceptance of assignments, her organizational skills, and her willingness to spearhead projects that support the community and the environment.

Beth has spent 35 years as a Federal employee and for the past 13 years she has worked for ARS. Her other 5 Federal experience includes the years she spent on Active Duty in the U.S. Army and the 17 years she worked for the Department of Defense at several Army installations in the United States and Germany. She considers herself fortunate to have worked at two ARS laboratories as a Program Support Assistant; 8 years at the Appalachian Fruit Research Station in Kearneysville, West Virginia, and currently at the laboratory in Bushland where she has been since January 2006. This has given her a unique opportunity to experience several of the different aspects of ARS research; from the genetics of fruit trees to soil, water, and manure management as well as renewable energy.

Beth is most passionate about helping others by finding and developing ways to make their administrative burden a bit lighter. She compiled, wrote, formatted and distributed the *SPA*

Handbook for Office Professionals, as well as a *115 Publication 'How-To' Guide* for the staff at her location. In collaboration with the SPA Program Analyst, Ruth Treat, she also wrote, formatted, and distributed an interactive *SPA Research Grants Guide*. The grants guide provides scientists and administrative personnel with the information and resources needed in the grant application and approval process; all in a single publication.

The environment and the local community are also important to Ms. Holt. She serves as the coordinator of the laboratory's outstanding recycling program. She coordinates the monthly delivery of cardboard, plastics, paper, and aluminum to the Amarillo recycling facility, and she "educates" all new employees about the recycling program. She has coordinated several campaigns to collect and distribute cell phones, eyeglasses, winter coats, shoes, books, toiletries, and games to local charities. Additionally, Beth was a co-leader in establishing a People's Garden for the CPRL in response to direction and suggestions from the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. She designed flyers and prepared Emails to solicit for labor, implements, and seeds, as well as collecting materials needed to create the raised 'lasagna' beds in which the garden was planted. She spent weekday and weekend time maintaining the garden and harvesting vegetables. Through her efforts, approximately 2000 pounds of fresh organic vegetables were delivered in 2010 to the High Plains Food Bank in Amarillo, Texas, that provides food to people in need throughout the Texas Panhandle.

Ms. Holt is extremely honored and humbled to be selected as the 2010 ARS Office Professional of the Year. When asked what she uses as a guide to accomplish her job, she suggests to other Office Professionals to follow these four 'rules' from one of her favorite books *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom*. They are: (1) Be impeccable with your word, (2) Don't take anything personally, (3) Don't make assumptions, and (4) Always do your best! And she would also like you to remember that "up ahead, there's always a reason for now."

KINDNESS AS AN ATTITUDE IN THE WORKPLACE

Contributed by Linda Fulton

Definition of Kindness: Disposed to do good and confer happiness; Averse to hurting or paining; Benevolent; Gracious. Synonyms are: Compassion, Gentleness, Kindheartedness, Thoughtfulness; Consideration; Helpfulness. Antonym: Cruelty.

Benefits of Kindness in the Workplace: (1) Excellent productive relationships, (2) Kindness encourages intuition and sensitivity, (3) Harmony in the workplace, (4) Promotes leadership qualities, and (5) Inspires trust and confidence.

As Office Professionals, we should promote kindness in the workplace. One of the synonyms as listed above – helpfulness – certainly defines a major role in our profession. It is important to remember that not everyone has the knowledge office professionals have about how to accomplish a task. Helpfulness is the key when someone asks, maybe even for the second or third time, about a “procedure” or a “form”. The individual requesting the information is most likely not involved in the process on a daily basis, and it is not commonplace to the individual. Also, temptation is such that often our comment to an inquiry is “didn’t you see your E-mail”. Try to bear in mind many, many E-mails are received on a daily basis. Most often, if a person is not involved in the particular subject matter of the E-mail when it arrives, it is not something that is readily cataloged for future reference. On the other hand, office professionals keep abreast of administrative “procedures” on a daily basis. Therefore, we should be kind and helpful. **Office professional expertise frees up research time for scientists, therefore contributes immensely to the mission and goals of the Agency. Indirectly, kindness is a cornerstone in accomplishing Agency milestones.**

Kindness is important on a personal basis as well as a professional basis in the workplace. A person may just need a sympathetic ear one day, a question about his/her family that shows you are interested, a ride to the mechanic shop, etc.

Interest in the personal well-being of an individual promotes trust and confidence. This also sets the tone for the office in general, therefore, making the office professional approachable and accessible.

To sum up the merits of kindness, it demonstrates strength of character, encourages fairness and confidence, identifies you as a leader, teaches patience, and teaches enjoyment of the actions of giving and receiving.

Let us strive to be an office professional leader by being **helpful, gracious, and patient.**

Below are a couple of quotes about kindness as an attitude that reiterates the effects of kindness:

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.” - Mother Theresa

“Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate” - Albert Schweitzer

When You Are on the Receiving End of Anger or Criticism

Contributed by Wanda Rohrer

Professionalism is often defined as grace under pressure. In every business person’s life, there comes a time when he or she suffers some type of business humiliation. Depending on the organization, it may happen more than once. There are a number of ways to react, most of which just worsen the problem.

Here is a list of ways not to react to criticism:

1. Don’t make excuses. “I haven’t been feeling well lately, and you just keep making me work late. It’s no wonder that I botched that project, I’m just exhausted.”
2. Don’t cry and become defensive. “I know you don’t like me. You have never taken me or my work seriously. You love to humiliate me in front of the office or make me cry.

3. Don't counterattack. "Well, I may not have gotten this report in on time, but at least I didn't get drunk and make a fool of myself at the last office party!"

Some Ways to React to Criticism*:

1. Allow yourself to feel anger, and don't bury or deny it. Use moans and groans, grumbles and tears, but do it privately.
2. Look at the situation from a different perspective. Can it be interpreted differently?
3. Build your own logical arguments as to why your reaction is justified and write it down. Be active—pace, shout, hit a pillow, meditate, exercise, say a prayer—but again, do it privately.
4. Change your environment. Have a safe place where you can retreat and be alone. Engage in a pre-planned activity such as exercising, playing a game, watching a funny video, or reading a funny or inspiring book.

*Adapted from *The Manager's Pocket Guide to Emotional Intelligence*, Emily A. Sterett, Ph.D. (HRD Press, Amherst, MA 2000)



Employee Assistance Program

We care, just call.

1-800-222-0364

1-888-262-7848 TTY Users

www.FOH4YOU.com

Contributed by Diona Austill

Face Your Stress Head On!

Life is filled with unexpected ups and downs. Whether you're worried about a problem at work or dealing with a personal issue at home, stress can hinder your ability to move forward. By understanding how stress affects you and impacts your life, you will be better prepared to meet stress head on and move forward successfully.

Log on to www.FOH4YOU.com to learn how to:

- Recognize the warning signs
- Laugh your stress away
- Utilize exercise to manage stress
- Reduce tension through relaxation
- Cope with stress by making healthy decisions
- Achieve work-life balance

What is Stress?

Stress is what you feel when you react to pressure from others or from yourself. Pressure can come from anywhere, including school, work, activities, friends and family members. You can also feel stress from the pressure of wanting to perform well or wanting to feel like you belong. Stress comes in many forms and everyone feels stress.

Managing stress effectively can bring a sense of well-being to your everyday life, help you navigate issues at work in a positive fashion and improve your interactions with others—no matter the situation.

Breathe In!

Need to shake that stress quickly? Take some deep breaths! Experts agree—deep breathing is one of the best stress-relieving techniques out there. When stressed we're naturally prone to start taking shallow breaths, which actually increases feelings of tension.

Take a minute and breathe deeply. Inhale through your nose for four seconds and exhale through

your mouth for six seconds. Repeat five to 10 times and you'll feel your stress melt away—really!

Go Online Today!

Log on to www.FOH4You.com to access *Stress Management* and other helpful resources in the *Spotlight* section. Log on now and register with our program's toll-free number, 800-222-0364.

Take the Healthy Approach to Stress Management

If your coping methods aren't helping you achieve greater emotional and physical well-being, it's time to find healthier ones. There are many ways to cope with stress, but they all require some level of change. When deciding which option to choose, it's helpful to think of the four A's: Avoid, Alter, Adapt or Accept.

Avoid unnecessary stress:

- *Learn how to say "no."* Know your limits and stick to them.
- *Take control of your environment.* If the evening news makes you anxious, pick up a book instead.
- *Pare down your to-do list.* Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

Alter the situation:

- *Express your feelings, don't bottle them up.* If something is bothering you, communicate your concerns.
- *Be willing to compromise.* When you ask someone to change their behavior, be willing to do the same.
- *Be more assertive.* Don't take a backseat in your own life. Deal with problems head on, doing your best to anticipate and prevent them.
- *Manage your time better.* When you're stretched too thin, it's hard to stay calm and focused. If you plan ahead, you can reduce the amount of stress you're under.

Adapt to the stressor:

- *Reframe problems.* Try to view stressful situations from a positive perspective.

- *Look at the big picture.* Ask yourself how important it will be in the long run. Will it matter in a month? A year? Is it worth getting upset over?

- *Adjust your standards.* Set reasonable standards for yourself and others.

- *Focus on the positive.* When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life.

Accept the things you can't change:

- *Avoid controlling the uncontrollable.* Many things in life are beyond our control. Focus on the things you have personal control over.

- *Look for the upside.* When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth.

- *Share your feelings.* Talk to a trusted friend, family member or professional.

Give Your Body a Boost!

Increase your resistance to stress by improving your physical health. The better you feel, the more equipped you will be to handle life's curveballs.

Exercise regularly. Physical activity reduces stress. Make time for 30 minutes of exercise, three times per week. Nothing beats aerobic exercise for releasing pent-up stress and tension.

Eat a healthy diet. Well-nourished bodies cope with stress better. Start your day right with breakfast, and keep your energy up and your mind clear with nutritious meals throughout the day.

Reduce caffeine and sugar. The temporary energy boost that caffeine and sugar provide can also give you the jitters. Reduce coffee, sodas and sugary snacks in your diet and you'll feel more relaxed and less stressed.

Avoid alcohol, cigarettes and drugs. Self-medicating may provide an easy escape from stress, but the relief is only temporary and usually makes the situation causing the stress worse.

Get enough sleep. Adequate sleep fuels your mind as well as your body. Fatigue increases your stress levels and decreases your ability to think clearly.

1.22. Corrections made to proofs should be indicated as follows:

⊙	Insert period	<i>rom.</i>	Roman type
^	Insert comma	<i>caps.</i>	Caps—used in margin
:	Insert colon	≡	Caps—used in text
;	Insert semicolon	<i>C+SC</i>	Caps & small caps—used in margin
?	Insert question mark	≡	Caps & small caps—used in text
!	Insert exclamation mark	<i>l.c.</i>	Lowercase—used in margin
≠	Insert hyphen	/	Used in text to show deletion or substitution
∨	Insert apostrophe	⊘	Delete
↔	Insert quotation marks	⊚	Delete and close up
—	Insert 1-en dash	<i>w.f.</i>	Wrong font
—	Insert 1-em dash	⊖	Close up
#	Insert space	⊣	Move right
<i>ld</i> >	Insert () points of space	⊢	Move left
<i>shill</i>	Insert shilling	⊡	Move up
∨	Superior	⊞	Move down
^	Inferior		Align vertically
(/)	Parentheses	=	Align horizontally
[/]	Brackets	⊞	Center horizontally
□	Indent 1 em	⊞	Center vertically
□□	Indent 2 ems	<i>eg. #</i>	Equalize space—used in margin
¶	Paragraph	✓✓✓	Equalize space—used in text
<i>no ¶</i>	No paragraph	Let it stand—used in text
<i>tr</i>	Transpose ¹ —used in margin	<i>stet.</i>	Let it stand—used in margin
<i>~</i>	Transpose ² —used in text	⊗	Letter(s) not clear
<i>sp</i>	Spell out	<i>run over</i>	Carry over to next line
<i>ital</i>	Italic—used in margin	<i>run back</i>	Carry back to preceding line
—	Italic—used in text	<i>out, see copy</i>	Something omitted—see copy
<i>b.f.</i>	Boldface—used in margin	<i>S/?</i>	Question to author to delete ³
~~~~	Boldface—used in text	^	Caret—General indicator used to mark position of error.
<i>s.c.</i>	Small caps—used in margin		
≡	Small caps—used in text		

¹In lieu of the traditional mark “tr” used to indicate letter or number transpositions, the striking out of the incorrect letters or numbers and the placement of the correct matter in the margin of the proof is the preferred method of indicating transposition corrections.

²Corrections involving more than two characters should be marked by striking out the entire word or number and placing the correct form in the margin. This mark should be reserved to show transposition of words.

³The form of any query carried should be such that an answer may be given simply by crossing out the complete query if a negative decision is made or the right-hand (question mark) portion to indicate an affirmative answer.