

advantage

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CORRECTIVE ACTION IN A UNION ENVIRONMENT.....	2
HOLIDAYS DON'T HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL.....	4
HR DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT	4
HRA LIST OF 35 – BUILD RAPPORT	5
THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT	7
NOT-FOR-PROFITS TAKE NOTE	8
HRA CALENDAR.....	8
BRIDGING A SOFT SKILLS GAP	11
REMINDERS.....	12
COVID-19 Q AND A – GET INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM THE SOURCE.....	12
HR BY THE NUMBERS.....	13
MANAGING REMOTELY.....	13
ON MY SOAPBOX	15



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Editor: Deborah Jeffries, SHRM-CP, PHR, CPC: **Advantage** is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations, HR practices, and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resources professionals and labor relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, or questions about your subscription, please call us at 503-885-8915 or email us at info@hranswers.com

CORRECTIVE ACTION IN A UNION ENVIRONMENT

By Paul Hutter, SPHR, Sr. Consultant

Effective performance management in any work environment is so much more than just the use of discipline. It requires collaboration, effective use of policy and practice, and coaching. In a union environment an effective Issue Resolution system is an essential foundation block in sustaining the Labor Management Partnership. The system developed by the Partnership has two components: The Issue Resolution (IR) Process: This process provides a means for workplace problems to be raised and solved jointly. The Corrective Action (CA) Process: This process provides a means for employee performance/behavior concerns to be addressed in a non-punitive manner.

For a Partnership to be successful, both parties must gain something of equal importance and value. IR and CA are positive processes that help to build employee commitment, generating self-discipline and ensuring individual and organizational responsibility and accountability for performance and behavior. When an issue arises, the first step in the Issue Resolution and Corrective Action system is to analyze the problem to identify the root causes through joint discovery. Issues, which do not involve elements of individual performance and/or behavior, are addressed through the Issue Resolution process.

IR reduces conflicts, grievances, external complaints, and arbitration. And creates a workplace climate that increases employee morale and commitment.

Corrective Action is a method for resolving employee performance and/or behavior issues in a **non-punitive** fashion in a **safe environment**. It is a process in which an employee, supervisor, and the union representative work together to identify the causes of problems and together craft a solution. Corrective Action focuses on identifying and resolving all the factors contributing to poor performance without assigning blame or threatening punishment. This level will encompass resources and systems like coaching, facilitation, mentoring and a Developmental Action Plan. The objective is to resolve most performance & behavioral issues within this first level.

Performance and behavior issues which are not resolved at the first level, or incidences of gross negligence or misconduct, are moved into the second, or Discipline phase of the procedure. The next level of the Corrective Action procedure is the first step in the formal disciplinary process. Although nonpunitive in nature, this process can ultimately lead to termination. The employee must therefore be notified of this fact.

Union contracts usually include a reference to “just cause”. Just cause is the standard that management must adhere to when disciplining or discharging an employee. It means that in union settings, the employer must have a reason to act in disciplining an employee and the reason must be just and fair.

The concept of just cause is well established in labor law. There are specific tests that have been generally recognized as defining just cause. In brief, they are as follows:

1. **Notice.** Was the employee adequately warned of the consequences of their conduct? This means that the employer must have clear rules of conduct at the workplace that are either written or oral, including the consequences for violating such rules.
2. **Reasonable Rule or Order.** Was the employer's rule or order reasonably related to efficient and safe operations? The employer's rule must not be arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory and must be related to the employer's stated goals and objectives.
3. **Investigation.** Did management investigate before administering the discipline? The employer must investigate before imposing any discipline. The burden is on the employer to gather all of the facts, documents, and witnesses.
4. **Fair Investigation.** Was the investigation fair and objective? The employer must conduct a fair and timely investigation. It must respect the employee's rights to due process and to union representation. The investigation must be made objectively and without a rush to judgment.
5. **Proof.** Did the investigation produce substantial evidence or proof of guilt? The investigation should produce substantial proof of a violation. The conclusions of guilt must be supported by the evidence.
6. **Equal Treatment.** Were the rules, orders, and penalties applied evenhandedly and without discrimination? The rules must be applied consistently to all the employees. The application cannot be discriminatory or selective. If other employees who commit the same offense are treated differently there may be evidence of discrimination or what is referred to as "disparate treatment". Also, if enforcement of a rule has been lax in the past, management cannot suddenly reverse course without first warning employees of tighter enforcement of the rule.
7. **Appropriate Discipline/Penalty.** Was the penalty reasonably related to the seriousness of the offense and the past record? The degree of discipline must be related to the seriousness of the violation. For instance, an employee generally cannot be terminated for an isolated instance of tardiness. Mitigating circumstances must also be considered as well as the employee's past record.

The concept of "progressive discipline" is recognized as an integral part of just cause. This means that the employer issues increasingly serious penalties for repeated violations (such as- verbal warning, written warning, suspension, termination). However, some serious violations in fact may require harsher discipline from the outset.

Clearly understanding your union's collective bargaining agreement, and a willingness to work through an Issue Resolution process first, creates a much more successful unionized work environment.

HOLIDAYS DON'T HAVE TO BE STRESSFUL

The Holidays rank among the most stressful life events for most people, but many experts say it does not have to be that way. This time of year is different because of the number of expectations we have from ourselves and from others. We have a lot of internal rules about how the Holidays should be and we try and match up those expectations and rules and we sometimes forget we have choices. This year has certainly reminded us we have to focus on what is important and sometimes we have to break those internal rules.

Acute stress is the most common form of stress during the Holidays. It comes from demands and pressures, and many of us know that stress on an individual's body can cause us to go into emergency mode otherwise known as fight or flight. Of course, that means our blood is pumping everywhere, our blood pressure is going up, our gastrointestinal track can shut down, our blood sugar can go up, and our breathing becomes shallower. This often means we suffer from headaches and stomach aches, trouble sleeping and perhaps become more prone to getting sick. If it is chronic stress it can lead to anxiety, irritability, depression, lack of energy, muscle tension, weight gain, and a host of other challenges. Typically, the most vulnerable are those who are already living on the edge. With a year like this one, most of us have extra stress in our lives.

So, to combat stress let's start practicing mindfulness which starts with taking a deep breath before reacting to any situation. As we have heard before it's basically learning how to stay present in the moment. This also means you need to understand your own triggers and your own limits so as not to find yourself on overload. And again, we know we need to learn how to say no and we need to learn how to pace ourselves. There is no perfect holiday (and especially not this year).

Remember: taking care of your self is not selfish. Here are some recommendations for self-care and for the season:

- Find some time to do something that you find relaxing and nurturing.
- Consider making to-do lists.
- Order gifts online (set those budgets).
- Get takeout items for meals.
- Learn to say no.
- Set realistic expectations.
- Ask for help (as best you can) given current restrictions.

HR DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

HR document management involves managing the entire lifecycle of employee documents to ensure proper storage of required records, controlled access to documents and information, and timely disposal of obsolete files. A successful HR document management strategy protects sensitive data, enhances administrative efficiency, and protects your business from risk. It also empowers your leadership teams with data to drive better decision making.

While it takes time to create file management strategies for your organization, your investment will pay off because you will be able to address:

- Compliance
- Security and privacy
- Legal protection
- Administration efficiency
- Flow of data

As part of your initial steps, you will want to identify the documents your organization collects. Here is a typical set of documents to get you started:

- Recruiting documents
- Hiring Records
- Employee Agreement (documents they have signed)
- Disability records
- Medical and healthcare documents
- Benefits records
- Personnel records
- Payroll records
- Leaves records
- Safety and accident reports
- Training materials

As a next step think about access to and security needs of these records as well as their retention requirements and storage plans.

To learn more about the what, the how, and when of these activities, join us for our upcoming virtual [HR Records Management workshop](#).

HRA LIST OF 35 – BUILD RAPPORT

Building rapport is about getting to know someone new by making a connection about something beyond the surface-level. Rapport-building questions help connect people on a personal level with a unique, memorable, and appropriate questions to start a conversation, versus surface-level questions that may prompt a short back-and-forth but won't lead to meaningful connection. This activity is also valuable when working with your customers. If your relationship with your customers is strong, they'll be less likely to turn to your competitors.

Life History. The journey we all take in life does a lot to define us. Finding others who have had similar experiences can be both very meaningful, and help you understand what makes someone who they are today.

1. *You went to the same college or rival colleges.*
2. *You both did the same club in high school or college (i.e., debate, theater, band, etc.).*
3. *You grew up in a small town, big city, county, or if abroad, country.*

4. *You have the same or similar first car.*
5. *You both experienced similar significant cultural or historical events (i.e., fund-raising events, going to the Super Bowl / Final Four / NBA Finals, summer camps, major natural disaster, etc.).*
6. *You share common struggles growing up (i.e., awkwardness, being bullied, rebellious).*
7. *You both can speak the same foreign language(s).*

Family. Whether you come from a big family, or a small one, helicopter parents, or a broken home, connecting with others on your family you grew up in or the one you're building.

8. *You both have children or are starting families.*
9. *You both have parents of similar backgrounds or similar cultural backgrounds with which you both identify.*
10. *You are both from big or small families or are only children.*
11. *You both have/love the same pets.*
12. *You both have a sister(s) or brother(s) or was the same oldest, youngest, middle kid.*

Hobbies. Everyone has a life outside of work, and how they choose to spend it is very meaningful to them. Hobbies are often great sources of creativity and fun for people.

13. *You share the same craft-based hobby (i.e., knitting, home brewing, woodworking, building apps, gardening, cars, etc.).*
14. *You are both into making art or photography.*
15. *You both enjoy hiking and the outdoors.*
16. *You both play or have played the same instrument.*
17. *You both want to learn a new skill, start a hobby, or join a club.*

Sports. Few things bring people together, and with as strong a display of passion as sports. Whether you play them yourself or root for others, it's a huge part of just about every culture around the world.

18. *You both love the same sport, sports team, or player.*
19. *You both enjoy sailing, surfing, or other beach/water or outdoor activities.*
20. *You both played the same sport in high school or college (i.e., soccer, volleyball, football, basketball, baseball, hockey, track, etc.).*
21. *You both run or like to race, do 5ks, marathons, etc.*

Entertainment. There are so many forms of entertainment today. We love talking about them especially right after a big event (season finale, new album, a concert, etc.)

22. *You listen to similar podcasts.*
23. *You read similar books you can discuss together.*
24. *You share a favorite TV show, documentary, or movie.*
25. *You love the same music or artist or have a great music collection.*
26. *You both love video or board games.*
27. *You have the same favorite comedian, actor, author, band, etc.*

Professional. As a manager, it helps a lot to build a connection with your team beyond work, but that doesn't prevent you from building rapport based on professional habits and aspirations, too.

28. *You both had the same first job (i.e., waiting tables, cook, grocery store, etc.)*

29. *You both have or want similar career paths (even if one of you is earlier on that journey.)*
 30. *You have similar reasons for joining the organization at which you work.*

Food. *This is a source of joy and passion for many people! Nothing brings people together quite like sitting around a table to share a meal.*

31. *You are both foodies and love talking about great restaurants and meals.*
 32. *You both have the same favorite food, drink, or dessert.*
 33. *You are both into healthy eating.*
 34. *You both enjoy cooking, trying new recipes, or learning new techniques.*
 35. *You both share the same love for regional foods you grew up with (i.e., Dunkin' Donuts, In-N-Out Burgers, Waffle House, BBQ, etc.)*

Bonus Questions/Ideas

Life Goals. *Everyone has dreams and aspirations. Connecting on shared dreams or even just helping them [achieve their goals](#) in small ways can have a huge impact on their morale, motivation, and most importantly, their life. This a great topic for any manager who wants to really invest in their people and understand where they want to go.*

36. *You both love to travel or have the same travel goals.*
 37. *You both have lived abroad before or have interest in doing so in the future.*
 38. *You both have the same New Year's resolutions or failed to fulfill them already.*
 39. *You both have similar goals for the year (i.e., run X number of races, get promoted, save enough for a car/house/vacation, etc.)*
 40. *You both wanted to be the same thing growing up.*
 41. *You have similar retirement dreams.*

THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." - C.S. Lewis

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." - Mark Twain

"Remember...true learning happens when we *experience* things; not when we talk about experiencing them. What have you experienced recently?" - Anonymous

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." - Tom Brokaw

"What we need is more people who specialize in the impossible." - Theodore Roethke

"If we don't change the direction we are going, we're likely to end up where we are headed."
 - Chinese proverb

"Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds." - George Eliot

“Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value.” - Albert Einstein

“No matter how far you have gone on a wrong road, turn back.” - Turkish proverb

NOT-FOR-PROFITS TAKE NOTE

The FBI has seen a spike in fraudulent unemployment insurance claims complaints related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic involving the use of stolen personally identifiable information (PII).

U.S. citizens from several states have been victimized by criminal actors impersonating the victims and using the victims’ stolen identities to submit fraudulent unemployment insurance claims online. The criminals obtain the stolen identity using a variety of techniques, including the online purchase of stolen PII, previous data breaches, computer intrusions, cold-calling victims while using impersonation scams, email phishing schemes, physical theft of data from individuals or third parties, and from public websites and social media accounts, among other methods.

NFP employers are encouraged to carefully review invoices regarding reimbursements made for unemployment allowances paid to past employees. Employers can actually receive a claim while the employee with that name is still working for them. That one is easier to resolve. But many victims of identity theft related to unemployment insurance claims do not know they have been targeted until they try to file a claim for unemployment insurance benefits and receive notification from the state unemployment insurance agency that a claim has already been filed (by someone else) or get notified by their employer that a claim has been filed.

It is unfortunate, but true, there are individuals looking for every way to stake advantage of the current crisis. This means that employees and employers need to be vigilant for anything that suggests someone has compromised unemployment benefits. The U.S. Department of Labor released a letter [UIPL 16-20, Change 2](#) on monitoring for suspicious activities.

HRA CALENDAR

Open your Daytimers, Outlook, and all those Smartphones. The following is a look at upcoming events and workshops, special days, and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and schedule. To register for our workshops, go to [HR Answers Events](#) or click on the event below.

DECEMBER: National Human Right, AIDS Awareness Lung Cancer Awareness, Military Family, Spiritual Literacy Month

- | | |
|-------|--|
| Dec 1 | Giving Tuesday |
| Dec 3 | International Day of Persons with Disabilities |
| Dec 4 | National Cookie Day |
| Dec 5 | International Volunteer Day |

- Dec 10** **Job Search Workshop**
11:00am to 1:00pm
[Register Here](#)

- Dec. 10-18 Hanukkah
- Dec. 10 Human Rights Day

- Dec. 15 National Cupcake Day
- Dec. 18 Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
- Dec. 22 National cookie Exchange Day
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve
HR Answers will be closed
- Dec. 25 Christmas
HR Answers will be closed
- Dec. 26 Kwanzaa begins

COMING UP:

- Jan 6** **HRA Webinar - Managing Remotely**
9:00am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 6** **HR Lunch Bunch - Performance Review Forms**
12:00pm to 1:00pm
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 7** **HRA Webinar - HR Records Management**
10:00am to 12:00pm
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 14** **HRA Webinar - Oregon Pay Equity: Self Audit**
1:30pm to 3:30pm
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 15** **HRA Webinar - Developing Your Resiliency**
9:00am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 19** **HRA Webinar - Self-Care for HR – Morning Session**
7:30am to 9:30am
[Register Here](#)

- Jan 19** **HRA Webinar - Self-Care for HR – Afternoon Session**
3:30pm to 5:30pm
[Register Here](#)

**Jan 26 to
Mar 16** **Success for Beginning Supervisors (a series)**
8:30am to 12:30pm on Tuesdays
[Register Here](#)

Jan 27 **HRA Webinar - Soft Skills: Communication**
8:30am to 12:00
[Register Here](#)

Jan 29 **HRA Webinar - Developing Your Resiliency**
9:00am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)

LOOKING AHEAD:

Feb 3 **HR Lunch Bunch - Job Descriptions**
12:00pm to 1:00pm
[Register Here](#)

Feb 4 **HRA Webinar - Personal Improvement: Goal Setting**
8:30am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)

Feb 9 **HRA Webinar – Handbooks: Your Guide to Consistency**
1:30pm to 3:30pm
[Register Here](#)

Feb 16 **HRA Webinar -Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA): Tips and Tricks to
Compliance Success**
9:00am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)

Feb 18 **HRA Webinar - Managing Generational Differences**
8:30am to 12:00pm
[Register Here](#)

Feb 24 **HRA Webinar - Soft Skills: Conflict Resolution**
8:30am to 12:00pm
[Register Here](#)

Mar 2 **HRA Webinar - Prevention of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**
1:30pm to 3:30pm
[Register Here](#)

- Mar 10** **Mindfulness – Morning Session**
8:00am to 10:00am
[Register Here](#)
- March 10** **Mindfulness – Afternoon Session**
3:00pm to 5:00pm
[Register Here](#)
- Mar 11** **HRA Webinar - Employee Leaves: Protected, Discretionary, Paid or Unpaid**
9:00am to 11:00am
[Register Here](#)
- Mar 18** **HRA Webinar – Ideas for Creating a Happy Workplace**
8:30am to 12:00pm
[Register Here](#)
- Mar 24** **HRA Webinar – Self-Awareness Through DiSC**
8:30am to 12:30pm
[Register Here](#)
- Mar 31** **HRA Webinar - Soft Skills: Creativity and Curiosity**
8:30am to 12:00pm
[Register Here](#)

BRIDGING A SOFT SKILLS GAP

To get, and keep, a job you typically need a repertoire of technical skills. Regardless of the job you have or the job you want, you need soft skills – these allow you to succeed at work. While your technical skills may get your foot in the door, your people skills are what open most of the doors going forward.

The challenge is, the importance of these soft skills is often undervalued, and there is far less training provided for them than technical skills. For some reason, organizations seem to expect people know how to behave on the job. They tend to assume that everyone knows and understands the importance of being on time, taking initiative, being professional, and producing high-quality work.

Soft skills are the skills that enable you to feel connected in a workplace. They include your personality, attitude, flexibility, motivation, and manners. Soft skills are so important that they are often used as decision points for employees in a variety of areas. The workplace has evolved into an interpersonal dynamic that can't be ignored. The acts of listening, presenting ideas, resolving conflict, and fostering an open and honest work environment all come down to knowing how to build and maintain relationships with people. It's those relationships that allow people to participate fully in team projects, show appreciation for others, and enlist support for their projects.

In an effort to bridge this gap, HR Answers will be offering a new Soft Skills Series - one topic per month over the course of 2021. We will offer the following topics:

- Communication
- Conflict Resolution
- Creativity
- Critical Thinking
- Emotional Intelligence
- Change Management
- Time and Stress Management
- Relationship Building
- Positivity
- Teamwork
- Negotiation
- Motivation

To learn more or sign up for some programs, check our [website calendar](#) frequently as we add topics and dates.

REMINDERS

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which brought us the Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Paid Family and Medical Leave provisions, is scheduled to sunset on December 31st, 2020. These provisions have provided both leave and pay for individuals impacted through various COVID-19 related instances. While the Federal Legislature has been working on an additional stimulus package, called the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES), there is no guarantee that this will come to fruition or what the details of the final Act will include. Your organization needs to plan for and communicate this scheduled sunset. This includes informing employees of the change in leave and pay potential. Simply put they need time to plan. A special note for those of you in Oregon: The Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) provides protected leave, not pay, for individuals who need to care for a child due to the closure of daycare or school under the Sick Child provision.

For those of you with Oregon locations, OR-OSHA COVID-19 rules have additional work that must be accomplished prior to the end of 2020. This work includes two separate plans which require documentation and employee participation in the development activities. Organizations also have the responsibility to train every employee based on the timing of the rules. Again, before the end of 2020.

COVID-19 Q AND A – GET INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM THE SOURCE

Oregon

[Oregon Health Authority- Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Oregon Occupational health and Safety Administration – Q & A](#)

Washington

[Washington State Department of Health – Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Washington State Department of Labor & Industries – Common Questions](#)

California

[California Department of Public Health](#)

[California Department of Industrial Relations – Frequently Asked Questions](#)

HR Answers is maintaining a library of additional COVID-19 information links are found [here](#).

HR BY THE NUMBERS

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic through Nov. 12, 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA in Washington DC) has issued 232 citations arising from inspections for violations relating to coronavirus, resulting in proposed penalties totaling \$3,148,452.

OSHA inspections have resulted in the agency citing employers for violations, including failures to:

- Implement a [written respiratory protection program](#);
- Provide a medical evaluation, respirator fit test, training on the proper use of a respirator and personal protective equipment;
- [Report](#) an injury, illness, or fatality;
- Record an injury or illness on OSHA [recordkeeping forms](#); and
- Comply with the [General Duty Clause](#) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970

OSHA has already announced citations relating to the coronavirus arising out of 203 inspections, which can be found at [dol.gov/newsroom](https://www.dol.gov/newsroom). For the full article you can go to:

<https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osha/osha20201120>

Oregon – Job Info by the Numbers (as of Nov 19, 2020):

605,300: The number of Oregonians who have filed for regular unemployment since March 15. **386,300:** The number of people paid.

211,974: The number of claims received for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), the program for self-employed and gig workers who don't qualify for regular unemployment. **74,987:** The number of people paid PUA.

\$5.6 billion: Benefits paid to Oregonians. **6.9%:** The Oregon unemployment rate, down from 7.9 in September.

MANAGING REMOTELY

Over the past few years, remote working has become a way of life. And since COVID it has become the new normal for many organizations. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 73 percent of teams will have remote employees by 2028. There are benefits on both sides of the equation of remote working. The key is working out a mutually agreeable situation that is productive for both sides.

Consider these:

- Freedom and flexibility
- Cost savings
- Time savings
- Peace and quiet (maybe)
- Broader talent pool
- Reduction in absenteeism
- And more...

Areas to focus on is keeping connected. The communication pipeline needs to be active, making sure technology is available and reliable, and then managing these remote staffers. It is a lot of the same and yet different. We need to think about it differently and we need to act on it differently – especially since there are so many unique situations to work with and around when people are not close.

Sometimes there can be feelings of being disconnected from the team and wanting to connect and communicate with co-workers more frequently. The goal then is to create an inclusive work environment that is also mindful of your organization's remote workforce effectively keeping all employees engaged and connected. We understand this can be challenging and we want to help! We will talk more about successful activities and approaches to managing and motivating remotely in an upcoming webinar. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Information and advice offered through **Advantage** should not be construed as legal opinion. The material contained herein will not apply to all circumstances or to all organizations. Use it as a resource and reference. Should you feel legal advice is required, please consult with your corporate counsel.

ON MY SOAPBOX

There are bumper stickers, quotes galore, posters, and all kinds of messaging that “One Day at a Time” is the way to get through any challenge, even COVID 19. We can all understand why that is so prevalent. The world has been a difficult place this year. The rules have changed innumerable times, even daily. This has caused disruption and uncertainty. While there may not be panic everywhere, there certainly is fear. The number of COVID cases and deaths now seem to set a record every day. We are not working from our original place of employment, and **way too many of us are not able to work at all**. Our world has tipped on its side and we can't find our balance. These conditions invite us to say and operate on a “One Day at a Time” basis. If you sense that my message will continue with a but, then you are completely correct!

Operating from a One Day at a Time basis gives us only the potential of a 24-hour goal...never enough time to accomplish anything, except on TV. Because of our current situations, maybe 2021 is not suitable for a BHAG (a Big Hairy Audacious Goal). But it certainly can be enough time for a goal of progress or something the organization can believe in and tackle. One Day at a Time is not likely to stir people's fervor. But creating a high-quality, perhaps an emotional goal can help employees feel they are achieving in spite of the odds.

Having a goal or dream can be a powerful force in a person or in an organization. It excites and it motivates. And it seems to me that we can all do with a little positive excitement in our lives right now. It also can serve as a shared vision which builds camaraderie and inspiration. Many are trudging through days now perhaps waiting for whatever befalls them. We can be more intentional than that. Some might say that we have to be more intentional than that. I would be among them.

This is my last Soapbox of the year. It has been the most unusual year of my lifetime. And I suspect that at least the beginning of 2021 will continue the challenges. But there is hope! Hope for our organizations; hope for our families; hope for us as individuals; hope for our planet. We mustn't lose sight of that. I believe it will take all of us being intentionally hopeful and acting in concert with those hopes. We may find ourselves stronger and more connected as a result of the challenges of this year.

I will spend some time this month identifying what I wish for 2021 and then determine how my goal is to be accomplished. That will turn it from a wish to action. If I don't have a plan and am not intentional then it is likely that my goal will just be words and wishes likely to blow away in the slightest of breezes. It will not be the catalyst for improvement or change or accomplishment.

I can't change the virus, but I can change some aspects and habits of my life. And if it is true that the Butterfly Effect of Lorenze, Poincare, Wiener is accurate, if all of us took just one step to change one thing or to improve one thing, then even though there is the virus and major challenges, there is a chance that we can look beyond One Day at a Time.



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Judy Clark, Founder

