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Easy HR Newsletter
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Easy HR Training Update

Please visit our website for a complete list of courses
<http://www.easyhr.com.au>

OHS Consultation

Workcover NSW Accredited

This course is compulsory training for OHS committee members and OHS representatives.

We still have vacancies on our 4 day public courses.
Our Parramatta venue has plenty of free onsite parking.

8, 9, 15, 16 March / 5, 6, 14, 15 April / 3, 4, 10, 11 May / 7, 8, 16, 17 June

Course Cost: \$450.00+\$45.00 GST = \$495.00.

Risk Management For Line Managers & Supervisors

Workcover NSW Accredited

We still have vacancies on our 2 day public courses.

23, 24 Feb / 27, 28 April / 29, 30 June

Course Cost: \$370.00+\$37.00 GST = \$407.00.

Manual Handling Awareness

Workcover NSW Accredited

Understand the requirements of the Manual Handling National Code of practice, and how to identify and eliminate manual handling hazards in the workplace.

Course Cost: \$150.00+\$15.00GST = \$165.00

19 March 2004

OHS Construction Induction

Workcover NSW Accredited

Required by Workcover NSW for those working in the construction industry.

Course Cost: \$85.00 (GST Exempt)

26 Feb / 31 March / 30 April / 28 May

Regional NSW Training

We have recently launched our regional NSW training value package. If you are located outside of Sydney, please contact us, to find out more about this package.

Apply for a course

To obtain a public course application form, visit our website or send a blank email to apply@easyhr.com.au. Our automatic secretary will send you an application form. Applications can also be made online through our website.

All our public courses can be conducted in-house, anywhere within NSW.

Please contact us for details – inhouse@easyhr.com.au or call us on 1300 667 331.

Did You Know ?

- *Eugene Ely landed a plane on a boat in 1911, but aircraft carriers weren't perfected for another 20 years.*
- *The first parachute jump was made from a hot air balloon by Andre-Jacques Garnerin in France in 1793. Leonardo da Vinci made detailed sketches of parachutes in 1485. He also sketched studies for a helicopter, a tank and retractable landing gear.*

Workcover NSW Amnesty

Certificates of competency authorise the holders to undertake work such as scaffolding, dogging or rigging – or operate equipment – such as forklifts or cranes.

WorkCover NSW is currently investigating accredited assessors who test for and assess applicants for certificates of competency.

WorkCover is offering an amnesty to those certificate holders who were assessed without completing a proper knowledge test or practical assessment.

To be eligible for the amnesty, you must hand in your certificate to WorkCover and provide information about the improper assessment.

Certificate holders who were improperly assessed and who do not apply for the amnesty may be prosecuted and face heavy fines and prison.

Use the amnesty and avoid prosecution.

If your certificate has already been cancelled by WorkCover or you have received notification of a proposed cancellation, you are not eligible for the amnesty.

The amnesty period will run from 9 February to 30 April 2004.

To apply for the amnesty or for more information, contact WorkCover NSW on 1800 500 827.

Source: Workcover NSW

Unsafe Work Systems - \$195 000 Fine

A Penrith metals manufacturer was fined \$195,000 by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission sitting in court session following serious injuries suffered by a worker who became trapped in a conveyor.

Crane Enfield Metals Pty Ltd pleaded guilty to three charges brought by WorkCover NSW under Section 15(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983 for failing to ensure the health and safety of its workers.

On 17 December 1997 an employee had his right leg severed at the groin, two fingers amputated and other injuries when he became trapped in the chain and sprocket system of a conveyor used to move large metal ingots.

A WorkCover investigation found that the company failed to ensure that an appropriate isolating system was in place to prevent the conveyor operating while it was being worked on.

In imposing the fine, Justice Wright ordered the company to pay WorkCover NSW a moiety of the fine and WorkCover's legal costs.

WorkCover Acting Chief Executive Officer, John Watson, commented: "This incident highlights the need for employers to provide systems of work that allow work to be carried out safely. "

Thought For The Day

- "A memorandum is written not to inform the reader but to protect the writer." - Dean Acheson
- "A new idea is delicate. It can be killed by a sneer or a yawn; it can be stabbed to death by a joke or worried to death by a frown on the right person's brow." - Charles Brower

New Road Transport Standards

Drivers applying for, or renewing a dangerous goods bulk driver's licence are now subject to new national medical standards.

The required standard is described in the publication *Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers*, published by Austroads Inc.

The publication gives medical standards for both commercial and private vehicle drivers.

The document includes sections on assessing fitness to drive, medical standards for a number of specific risk factors, including diabetes, prescription drugs, epilepsy, sleep disorder and others.

The new standard replaces the National Road Transport Commission's *Medical Examination of Commercial Vehicle Drivers* and *Austroads' Assessing Fitness to Drive*.

The standards, approved by State and Territory transport ministers and all road transport, traffic and licensing authorities, are made effective by separate arrangements in individual States and Territories.

Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers can be downloaded from Austroads' website. (http://www.austroads.com.au/downloads/AFTD_2003.pdf)

New Code For Moving Plant

A new industry code of practice for moving plant - *Code of Practice for Moving Plant on Construction Sites 2003* - commenced on 16 January 2004 in NSW. The object of the code is to provide practical guidance to employers to prevent injury to people when mobile plant is being used on construction sites.

The code emphasises the importance of employer-employee consultation and utilising a risk management approach to ensure that the moving of plant on construction sites is managed safely.

Student Suspended

The High Court recently ruled that a school that expelled a pupil for violent conduct, did not necessarily discriminate, even if the conduct is a symptom of a disability.

A student enrolled at a mainstream high school suffered an intellectual disability that manifested itself in violent behaviour, including swearing and attacking teachers and other students.

The student was suspended several times following violent incidents. He was finally expelled from the school.

His father lodged a complaint of discrimination on the ground of disability by the Department of Education with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The Commission found that the student had been discriminated against and awarded compensation.

The Federal Court subsequently set aside this decision on appeal and the father sought leave to appeal to the High Court. However, a majority of the High Court dismissed the appeal.

The High Court found that it was not appropriate to focus on the cause of behaviour to the exclusion of the actual behaviour that resulted from the disability.

The student was suspended and excluded from the school because of his behaviour, not his disability. It was likely that a student who did not have a disability but behaved in similar fashion would also have been suspended and expelled from the school.

The High Court found that the student's behaviour was disruptive to the extent of jeopardising the school's ability to perform the function of providing educational services to all students.

The Department and the school also had a duty of care to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Railway Fined \$156 000

The death of an electrician who was standing on a platform on the roof of a maintenance train at Grafton in 2001 has led to a \$156,000 fine being imposed by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission sitting in Court Session.

Spenco Rail Maintenance Australia Pty Ltd pleaded guilty to failing to ensure the health and safety of the electrician under Section 15(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983.

The court heard that on 3 February 2001, the electrician was on a platform on the roof of the train as it approached a pedestrian bridge over the rail line at Grafton.

The court heard that warnings shouted to the electrician by a workmate failed to alert him to the danger, and he received serious injuries to the back of his head from which he died on 8 February 2001.

In imposing the penalty, Justice Boland said: "The defendant had not identified the top platform on the carriage and the pedestrian bridge as a risk at the daily work briefings, and there were no chains or guarding to prevent persons from accessing the platform."

WorkCover Chief Executive Officer, Jon Blackwell, commented: "This case is a tragic reminder to employers of the possible outcome of a failure to provide safety systems of work by identifying and controlling risks in the workplace."

Source: Workcover NSW

Dismissal Was Fair

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) has dismissed an unfair dismissal application in which an employee was dismissed for excessive periods of unauthorised absences.

Over the course of about six months, the employee developed a pattern of taking periods of unauthorised leave. On one occasion, the employee was found taking a shower during her shift and on another she was found reading a newspaper.

On each occasion, the employer sought an explanation for the absence. On a number of these occasions, the employee was issued with warnings that such conduct was not acceptable.

After a number of further unauthorised absences, at a meeting with the employer at which a union delegate was also present, the employee was issued with a formal warning and advised that for the next three months she was to seek the permission of a supervisor for any absences. The employee refused to comply with this action plan, and was sent home.

Following this meeting, there were numerous further unapproved absences for which the employee was counselled and advised that if she did not co-operate, disciplinary action may be necessary.

After some additional periods of unauthorised absences for which the employee refused to provide an explanation, the employee was issued with a final warning for her failure to obtain prior approval.

After further unauthorised absences, at another meeting, the employee was presented with a history of incidents and warnings and was asked to explain several of the incidents that had occurred since the issue of the final warning.

The employee disputed all the allegations. The employer dismissed the employee for continued misconduct and failure to provide satisfactory explanations for her periods of absence.

Based on these facts, the AIRC was satisfied that the employee had been:

- notified of the reasons for her termination
- given an opportunity to respond to her employer's concerns about her conduct
- accompanied by a union delegate
- warned on several occasions about her behaviour and that its continuation threatened her employment.

As a result the AIRC was satisfied that the employee's termination was not harsh, unjust or unreasonable.

Visit our website to download our free warning form and Action Plan form from our *Free Utilities* Page. <http://www.easyhr.com.au?source=newsletter>

Huang v Rheem Australia Pty Ltd AIRC (Raffaelli C) (PR942601) 16/1/04

Emergency Landing

According to our sources, A respected national Australian newspaper recently reported the case of an airliner that encountered severe unexplained vibration in flight.

The captain decided to make an emergency landing, and switched on the seat belt sign. The vibrations stopped immediately.

A passenger emerged from a lavatory and explained that he had been jogging on the spot in the loo.

More From The Skies

As a crowded airliner is about to take off, the peace is shattered by a 5-year-old boy who picks that moment to throw a wild temper tantrum. No matter what his frustrated, embarrassed mother does to try to calm him down, the boy continues to scream furiously and kick the seats around him.

Suddenly, from the rear of the plane, an elderly man in the uniform of an Air Force General is seen slowly walking forward up the aisle. Stopping the flustered mother with an upraised hand, the white-haired, courtly, soft-spoken General leans down and, motioning toward his chest, whispers something into the boy's ear.

Instantly, the boy calms down, gently takes his mother's hand, and quietly fastens his seat belt. All the other passengers burst into spontaneous applause.

As the General slowly makes his way back to his seat, one of the cabin attendants touches his sleeve. "Excuse me, General," she asks quietly, "but could I ask you what magic words you used on that little boy?"

The old man smiles serenely and gently confides, "I showed him my pilot's wings, service stars, and battle ribbons, and explained that they entitle me to throw one passenger out the plane door on any flight I choose."

Pregnant at work

Employers are not permitted to discriminate against employees on the ground of pregnancy and potential pregnancy.

However, the law does allow employers to reallocate work and to require employees to take some of their maternity leave before the baby is born in order to protect pregnant employees.

The Sex Discrimination (Pregnancy and Work) Act 2003 (Cth), which took effect on 12 November 2003, makes it clear that discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy amounts to sex discrimination in the federal jurisdiction.

It is unlawful for an employer not to offer a woman employment because she is pregnant or might become pregnant.

It is also unlawful to ask a woman during a job interview whether she is pregnant or intends to become pregnant if that information is requested in connection with deciding whether to offer her employment.

When a woman returns to work after having been on maternity leave, she should be consulted before being transferred to another position even if her salary is to remain unchanged: *Gibbs v Australian Wool Corporation* (1990) EOC ¶92-327.

Employers should be careful, however, not to attempt to "protect" pregnant women from situations which do not warrant it.

In *Kimler v Lort Smith Animal Hospital* (1995) EOC ¶92-757(2), for example, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission found the dismissal of a pregnant veterinarian, in an attempt to protect her, was discriminatory.

Similarly, in *Cardoza v Centrelink Service Systems Pty Ltd* (1995) EOC ¶92-758, the NSW Equal Opportunity Tribunal found that a cleaner who was dismissed because a woman who was five months pregnant might place herself at risk working on floors where spillages often occurred had been discriminated against on the ground of pregnancy.

The Queensland Anti-Discrimination Tribunal made a similar finding with respect to a casual receptionist who was given no further work because her employer took the view that she could not perform reception work because she was pregnant and that she should not be working in her condition: *Skellern v Colonial Gardens Resort Townsville & Anor* (1996) EOC ¶92-792.

Source: CCH

Worker Falls Down Lift Shaft

A scaffolder who was seriously injured when he fell 20 metres down a lift shaft on a Sydney building site has led to construction company Bovis Lend Lease Pty Ltd being fined \$175,000.

The company pleaded guilty in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission sitting in court session to failing to ensure the health and safety of the worker under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983.

The court heard that the scaffolder fell on 29 March 1999, when a temporary access platform on which he was standing in the lift shaft gave way.

The scaffolder suffered massive external and internal injuries, including collapsed lungs, and underwent 18 surgical operations after the incident.

Another scaffolder working at a higher level in the lift shaft was able to scramble to safety.

In handing down the penalty, IRC President J Wright said: "The defendant failed to carry out basic obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. In addition, the risk posed by the failure to ensure a safe working system for the erection of the stair system was clearly foreseeable."

WorkCover Acting Chief Executive Officer John Watson commented: "This case highlights the importance of a principal contractor's responsibilities for the supervision and safety of all workers at their sites."

Source Workcover NSW

Is Your OHS Documentation Sufficient ?

Acting as agents, we are able to bring you the Devilishly Easy™ OHS Manual.

The contents of this manual will give you a good starting point for the documentation that you are required to have under the NSW OH&S Act 2000 and NSW Regulations of 2001.

The manual is:

- Easy to follow
- Gives you many of the policies & procedures, as well as over 40 different forms, that you need in your workplace. Let's you fill in the blanks for many of the common documentary requirements under the Act and Regulations
- Gets you started with practical procedures for OH&S issues

Although it focuses on NSW legislation, it can be used as the basis for OHS policies throughout Australia

Please visit our website for more info, or to download a free sample.

http://www.easyhr.com.au/devil_ohs_index.shtml?s=newsletter

Watch That SMS...

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) recently found that a man who sent an SMS of a sexual nature as "part of a joke" was fairly dismissed.

The employee was working as an Acting Manager for the Echuca store of Burson Automotive Pty Ltd. On the morning of the dismissal there had been several incidents of sexual harassment involving the Acting Manager and a 19-year-old female employee who was employed as a driver.

The Acting Manager told the female employee that he had a dream about her. He also slapped her on her bum with a gasket set. The Manager later sent her an SMS message reading "Hey Baby". After lunch the Acting Manager sent the female employee another SMS. In it he indicated that he would like to put his hands down her skirt and touch her bottom.

The female employee became distressed by this and informed another employee of her concerns.

After these concerns were brought to the attention of the employer the Acting Manager was called in to explain his actions. He admitted to sending the SMS as part of a joke, and, that it was not meant to offend the female employee. The employer then notified the Acting Manager that his conduct was unacceptable and he was summarily dismissed.

In the proceedings, the female employee said that there were a number of other incidents involving the Acting Manager, but these were not raised as she was worried that she might lose her job.

The Acting Manager claimed that although he was aware of the employers harassment policy, his dismissal was unfair, because jokes of a sexual nature were common in the workplace.

The AIRC noted that there are several points considered in cases of sexual harassment:

- that the conduct is of a sexual nature
- the conduct must be unwelcome
- the person harassed is or would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct
- having regard to all the circumstances, a reasonable person would have anticipated that the person harassed would have felt this way.

The AIRC noted that, based on these factors, the Acting Manager had clearly violated the employer's policy on sexual harassment.

The fact that the Acting Manager claimed that it was part of a joke, was not relevant, as the SMS had the potential to cause harm to others.

The claim that the workplace culture encouraged sexual innuendo was also rejected. Several witnesses and the employer's sexual harassment policies were used to refute the claim.

The AIRC said that the Acting Manager should have known that sending the sexually suggestive SMS would be unacceptable under any circumstances.

The AIRC stressed that "young female employees, in particular, however, need to know that they can complain about unacceptable behaviour without risking their employment. I consider that this needs to be reinforced in this workplace."

Matthew Clark v Burson Automotive Pty Ltd, AIRC, Whelan C (PR942362) 23/12/03

If The Glove Fits ...

Choosing the proper gloves to protect workers handling hazardous substances is important. Correctly selected and fitting gloves can make the difference between safe work and a potentially serious injuries.

The following factors should be considered when selecting gloves for your workplace.

Glove size -- A glove that is too large or small can lead to discomfort, poor grip and less protection. Workers are also unlikely to continue wearing uncomfortable gloves for an extended period of time. We have found that riggers glove generally provide a very good fit. For a well fitting glove, stay away from the cheap leather gloves you find in hardware stores.

Material -- Employers should check that the glove's material is suited to the job that the worker is doing. Checking with the manufacturer to see which material is recommended for the substance being handled. For example latex food handling gloves would not be used for handling fuel or chemicals.

Latex allergy/sensitivity -- Some workers may be allergic or sensitive to latex and therefore even a minute exposure could result in rashes, redness or, in bad cases, anaphylactic shock. Employers should be aware if any of their workers have such allergies before purchasing gloves for the workplace.

Thickness -- The thicker the gloves, the more protection and resistance they offer. However thick gloves also reduce flexibility and sensitivity, making it difficult to work with small items.

Colour -- This may be a consideration in certain tasks, eg food preparation, where a brightly coloured glove may be easier to spot and removed from the substance.

Cuffs -- Different cuff styles provide different levels of protection. Choosing cuff styles will depend on the work being done. Welders for example would require a large cuff.

Cost -- Generally, more expensive gloves provide better protection, However it is important that safety is not compromised to save money.

Contact us to find out more about or Workcover NSW Accredited Substances course.

Position Vacant - Payroll

Payroll - Maternity Leave Replacement

- 12 months full time
- Attaché / Award Interpretation / Fringe Benefits for Public Benevolent Institutions
- Starting 13th April 2004
- Based in Cherrybrook

Please forward your resume to: payroll@inala.org.au (No Agencies Please)

“Safety Last” Photo Of The Month



The photo indicates a person working on an electric sign.

In order to work on the sign, they used a metal ladder, which was placed in the pool.

A colleague supports the ladder, by standing in the pool.

This photo was not staged, and was taken in Australia.

\$322 00 Fines for Serious Injury

Fines totalling \$322,000 have been imposed by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission sitting in court session following an incident at Redfern Railway Station in which a worker suffered severe head injuries causing brain damage.

Rail Infrastructure Corporation was fined \$147,000 and Barclay Mowlem Construction Ltd \$175,000 after both pleaded guilty to breaches of the OHS Act 1983 for failing to ensure the health and safety of workers.

On 10 July, 1999, a Barclay Mowlem Construction employee was seriously hurt and another narrowly escaped injury when struck by a redundant electrical wire, which fell while they were attempting to remove it from overhead pylons.

The court heard that the overhead wire, which was not live, had been held in place with ropes to maintain it in a state of tension during the removal process. However, the restraining ropes slipped off, releasing the wire from its tension, “like a big rubber band”, and it fell onto the station platform in a whiplash motion striking the two workers.

In handing down his decision, IRC President J Wright said: “Barclay Mowlem was not unaware of the problem posed by high radial forces on the contact wire. The risk was not, however, adequately or appropriately dealt with.”

He said the culpability of Rail Infrastructure Corporation in the matter lay in the corporation’s failure to adequately supervise the work of Barclay Mowlem and its employees.

WorkCover NSW Acting Chief Executive Officer John Watson commented: “This unfortunate case highlights the need for principal contractors to adequately supervise sub-contractors, and for all employers to provide safe systems of work.”

Source Workcover NSW

Ergonomics In The Workplace

Ergonomics means fitting the job to the person. Essentially, it is all about design – making sure people are not injured as a result of their workplace layout, or the tools they use. Ergonomics assists businesses in identifying and removing barriers between people and production or quality.

Successful organisations realise productivity and safety are closely aligned. People come in all shapes, sizes and abilities, and ergonomics takes account of this variability. In addition to physical size, ergonomics looks at the capabilities and limits of people at work, including: vision, hearing, manual handling, compatibility of controls and displays, thermal comfort, physical and cognitive workloads.

Applied in the workplace, ergonomics can improve worker safety, reduce injuries and claims for compensation, and increase productivity and worker satisfaction.

One of the key drivers for the application of ergonomics in the workplace is the prevention of Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS). Risk factors of OOS include high muscle force, high repetitive work-rates, awkward/static postures, cold environment, vibrating tools.

OHS Regulations in all states require that employers must take reasonable care to identify hazards arising from work practices, work systems and the layout and condition of a place of work (including workstation design).

Effectively managing ergonomics means that you must firstly define the aims of the job, and the various functions to be carried out by people and machines.

You then need to identify the hazards associated with a job, and provides useful data to assist in the development of practical solutions for reducing the risk of injury to employees performing the job.

For each job, the interaction between the person and the equipment must be optimised. This is done by examining the task the human operator will have to perform, and considering their interaction with the machine, the workspace and the environment.

This approach follows the basic SAM principles. Spot the hazard, Assess the Hazard, then Control the hazard and Make it Safe.

Although working in an office has always been considered relatively safe, office workers face occupational hazards that include eye strain, overuse syndrome, headaches, discomfort, trips and falls and manual handling injuries.

Employers should ensure they are aware of the condition of the office environment, keyboard equipment, and that employees take appropriate rest breaks when using computing equipment. Similarly the selection of a suitable office chair is an important factor in making sure that we maintain a suitable posture at work.

A good chair provides adequate support for the user while working and does not place any unnecessary stress on the body, while allowing for comfort and minimum muscle fatigue.

The following factors are recommended to ensure seat comfort:

- elbows level with the work height, forearms horizontal and upper arms hanging freely;
- head erect with the backrest of the seat conforming with the curve of the lumbar spine;
- room for the buttocks below the backrest;
- adequate space forward for the legs stretched out and for knees and thighs under the bench top or desk;

- seat height adjustable in relation to work height and lower leg length with the use of adjustable footstool if necessary;
- feet flat on the floor when the knees are at right angles, which ensures that there is no pressure on the soft tissues at the back of the thighs; and
- the backs of the knees free from the front edge of the seat so there is no pressure on the soft tissues.

Seated work should be mixed with standing and walking. The best way to guarantee that this happens is to design work with a mix of tasks which require employees to get up from a seat and stand and/or walk.

No seat, no matter how comfortable, will allow the user to sit comfortably for more than about an hour at a time without having to move and change posture.

Our Easy RestBreak Software can help you remember to take a break, A free download is available from: http://www.easyhr.com.au/easy_restbreak_index.shtml

Effective Time Management

1. **Spend Time Planning And Organizing.** Using time to think and plan is time well spent. In fact, if you fail to take time for planning, you are, in effect, planning to fail.
2. **Identify Your Own Effective Processes.** Organise in a way that makes sense to you. If you need colours and pictures, use them on your calendar or diary. Raid the stationery cupboard for different coloured highlighters. Some people need to have papers filed away; others need systematic piles.
3. **Set Goals.** Goals give you direction. When asked the secret to amassing such a fortune, one of the famous Hunt brothers from Texas replied: "First you've got to decide what you want." Set goals which are specific, measurable, realistic and achievable. Your optimum goals are those which cause you to "stretch" but not "break" as you strive for achievement.
4. **Prioritise.** Use the 80-20 Rule originally stated by the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto who noted that 80 percent of the reward comes from 20 percent of the effort. The trick is to isolate and identify that valuable 20 percent.
5. **Use A To Do List.** Whatever method works is best for you. Don't be afraid to try a new system. The list gives you a checklist of things to be achieved, and also provides the incentive to move ahead. A to-do list with lots of ticks can be a great morale booster.
6. **Be Flexible.** Allow time for interruptions and distractions. Some time management experts often suggest planning for just 50 percent or less of one's time. With only 50 percent of your time planned, you will have the flexibility to handle interruptions and the unplanned "emergency."

7. **Consider Your Biological Prime Time.** That's the time of day when you are at your best. Are you a "morning person," a "night owl," or a late afternoon "whiz?" Knowing when your best time is and planning to use that time of day for your priorities (if possible) is effective time management. Similarly, if you know you will get more interruptions in the afternoon, aim to complete most of your work in the morning.
8. **Eliminate The Urgent.** Urgent tasks have short-term consequences while important tasks are those with long-term, goal-related implications. Work towards reducing the urgent things you must do so that you will have time for your important priorities.
9. **Neglect or Delegate.** Eliminate from your life trivial tasks or those tasks which do not have long-term consequences for you. Can you delegate or eliminate any of your To Do list? Work on those tasks that you alone can do.
10. **Avoid Being A Perfectionist.** In the Malaysian culture, only the gods are considered capable of producing anything perfect. Whenever something is made, a flaw is left on purpose so the gods will not be offended¹. Yes, some things need to be closer to perfect than others, but perfectionism, paying unnecessary attention to detail, can be a form of procrastination.
11. **Conquer Procrastination.** One technique to try is the "Swiss cheese" method described by Alan Lakein. When you are avoiding something, break it into smaller tasks and do just one of the smaller tasks. Alternatively work on the big task for just 15 minutes each day. By doing a little at a time, eventually you'll reach a point where you'll want to finish.
12. **Reward Yourself.** Even for small successes, celebrate achievement of goals. Promise yourself a reward for completing each task, or finishing the total job. Then keep your promise to yourself and indulge in your reward.

Did You Know ?

- *The first fax process was patented in 1843 by Alexander Bain, but fax machines went into service 121 years later in 1964.*
- *In 1888, Frank Sprague completed an electric railway, but electric locomotives were introduced only in 1895.*

¹ Caveat: I tried this excuse at my last job and it didn't work !

Brick Layer Injured

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to your request for additional information in block 3 of the accident report form.

I put "poor planning" as the cause of my accident. You asked for a fuller explanation and I trust the following details will be sufficient. I am a bricklayer by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working alone on the roof of a new six-story building. When I completed my work, I found that I had some bricks left over which, when weighed later were found to be slightly in excess of 500lbs.

Rather than carry the bricks down by hand I decided to lower them in a barrel by using a pulley, which was attached to the side of the building on the sixth floor. Securing the rope at ground level, I went up to the roof, swung the barrel out and loaded the bricks into it. Then I went down and untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the bricks.

You will note in block 11 of the accident report form that I weigh 135lbs.

Due to my surprise at being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rapid rate up the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel, which was now proceeding downward at an equally impressive speed. This explained the fractured skull, minor abrasions and the broken collar bone, as listed in section 3 of the accident report form. Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley.

Fortunately by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope, in spite of beginning to experience pain. At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of bricks hit the ground and the bottom fell out of the barrel. Now devoid of the weight of the bricks, that barrel weighed approximately 50 lbs. I refer you again to my weight.

As you can imagine, I began a rapid descent, down the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, broken tooth and several lacerations of my legs and lower body.

Here my luck began to change slightly. The encounter with the barrel seemed to slow me enough to lessen my injuries when I fell into the pile of bricks and fortunately only three vertebrae were cracked. I am sorry to report, however, as I lay there on the pile of bricks, in pain, unable to move, I again lost my composure and presence of mind and let go of the rope and I lay there watching the empty barrel begin its journey back down onto me. This explains the two broken legs.

I hope this answers your inquiry.

Kind Regards,

James Smith