

ADMINADVANTAGE

The Exclusive Online Magazine for Administrative Professionals

May
2016

Hate Your Job?

Before You Quit, Conduct a Career Audit

FEATURES:

From Corporate Burnout to a Life Inspired
Selecting an Off Site Records Management Provider
Retreats - All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Boy

A publication of
Deskdemon.com
North American edition

ADMINADVANTAGE

US & NORTH AMERICAN EDITION

303 Twin Dolphin Drive, 6th Floor
Redwood City, CA 94065 - usa
Tel.800.406.1348 Fax.888.215.1852

EDITORIAL TEAM

Susan Silva
Managing Editor
susan@deskdemon.com

PRODUCTION & DESIGN

Robert Olszewski
Graphic Designer
robert@deskdemon.com

Kulasekaram Vimalarasa (Raj)
Web Developer
raj@deskdemon.com

Suresh Karuppannan
Website Designer
suresh@deskdemon.com

ADVERTISING

Susan Silva
Advertising & Sales US
susan@deskdemon.com

Jane Olsen
Director Advertising & Sales UK
jane@deskdemon.com

BUSINESS STAFF & PR

Mek Rahmani
Founder, CEO & Publisher
mek@deskdemon.com

CONTENTS

of May '16

6 Lizards, Wizards, Horses and Humans
From Corporate Burnout to a Life Inspired

10 Career Growth:
5 Key Points to Make Office Politics Work for You

14 Hate Your Job?
Before You Quit, Conduct a Career Audit

18 Selecting an Off Site Records
Management Provider

22 Retreats
All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Boy

14



6



10



22



18



Acroball®

THE BALL POINT OF THE FUTURE

Reward Your Future Self

with smooth-writing, smear-resistant Acroball advanced ink. Writes like a gel, dries like a ball point. You deserve an incredible, effortless writing experience.

Acroball® PURE WHITE

- Black Advanced ink
- Fine point (0.7mm)
- Contemporary white barrel with assorted textured grips



UPC # 72838	Description	List Price
Dozen Boxes		
PIL31850	Blue Accent, Black Ink, Fine	\$26.76 dz
PIL31854	Purple Accent, Black Ink, Fine	\$26.76 dz
Packs		
PIL31859	3pk Asst. Accents (Pnk/Ppl/Org), Black Ink, Fine	\$6.90 pk
PIL31860	3pk Asst. Accents (Blu/Lim/Trq), Black Ink, Fine	\$6.90 pk
PIL31861	5pk Asst. Accents (Blu/Lim/Org/Ppl/Trq), Black Ink, Fine	\$11.25 pk

Acroball® COLORS

- Colored Advanced ink
- Medium point (1.0mm)
- Bright, colorful barrels with matching textured grips



UPC # 72838	Description	List Price
Bar-coded Dozen Boxes		
PIL31821	Black, Medium	\$26.76 dz
PIL31822	Blue, Medium	\$26.76 dz
Packs		
PIL31838	3pk Asst. (Blk/Blu/Red), Medium	\$6.90 pk
PIL31820	5pk Asst. (Blk/Blu/Red/Grn/Ppl), Medium	\$11.25 pk
PIL31808	5pk Asst. (Ppl/Pnk/Trq/Org/Grn), Medium	\$11.25 pk

Acroball® PRO

- Colored Advanced ink
- Medium point (1.0mm)
- Sophisticated barrels with textured grips and metal accents



UPC # 72838	Description	List Price
Dozen Boxes		
PIL31910	Black, Medium	\$29.88 dz
PIL31911	Blue, Medium	\$29.88 dz
PIL31912	Red, Medium	\$29.88 dz
Packs		
PIL31922	3pk Asst. (Blk/Blu/Red), Medium	\$7.63 pk



REWARD

YOUR

Future Self

Earn a \$15 Visa Gift Card

With the purchase of \$50 or more of Acroball products

Acroball®
THE BALL POINT OF THE FUTURE



Acroball
PureWhite



Acroball
Colors



Acroball
Pro

Purchase any eligible Acroball products listed on the back of this flyer between April 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016. Submit completed redemption form (all information is required) with proof of purchase consisting of original or photocopied invoice, itemized and dated with the UPC code from each Acroball item purchased.

All fields required (please print clearly)

Name _____

Company _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

(Requested for verification of mailing address if necessary)

Mail redemption form along with proof of purchase to:

Pilot Corporation of America
Attn: Sales Administration
3855 Regent Boulevard
Jacksonville, FL 32224

Offer valid on qualifying purchases made between April 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016. Redemption must be postmarked by July 30, 2016. Redemption form must include all contact information. Proof of purchase is required in the form of (1) original or photocopied dated invoice or receipt that includes the original UPC code for each Acroball item. One redemption per customer and per invoice. Void where prohibited by law. This offer valid only to current commercial consumers in the United States. Allow up to 12 weeks for processing. Pilot Corporation of America reserves the right to modify or cancel the promotion without notice. Not responsible for late, lost, misdirected, postage due or undeliverable mail. Non-conforming, duplicate, illegible or incomplete requests will not be honored, acknowledged or returned. Not redeemable for cash.

Lizards, Wizards, Horses and Humans

From Corporate Burnout to a Life Inspired

by Barbara Alexander



It all started at Barnes and Noble. I had a cup of coffee and ended up with a book that unbeknownst to me, would change the direction of my life forever. It was titled: “The Tao of Equus, A Woman’s Journey to Healing and Transformation Through the Way of the Horse”. Of course, there are no coincidences... »

Joseph Campbell said, “It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life. Where you stumble, there lies your treasure.”

My ‘treasure’ seemed to be found in achieving corporate goals, fulfilling clients needs and caring for my family. Keeping up with the things that inspired me was an exciting adventure, reaching

for the incredible feeling of doing more, doing better than I had done before and continuously moving forward... but something insidious had slowly been changing.

Over time, I had begun to lose my energy, and my inspiration had long left the stage! I ignored the warning signs that my body had given me... until

one day I realized, that I just wasn't happy anymore. So what had shifted and why didn't I notice long before this, that I was losing the joy in my life?

INNER LIZARDS - BOUTS OF DOUBT ▼

Many of us put up with a lot of things before we are willing to make a change. It's the ever increasing discomfort that makes us reach for the new doors to life-breathing inspiration. So how much discomfort is enough before we are ready? The Inner Lizard, referring to one of the most primitive layers of our brain, sends out warnings to keep us out of danger and is thought to link back to the neural structure that evolved in early vertebrates. Listening to the Inner Lizard leaves us believing we don't have an option, there is not enough to go around, we can't get what we need, and that we may lose something we want. These fragments of conditioned patterns cause us to fixate on what is wrong. We've all experienced bouts of doubt in what is commonly called the self saboteur. We tend to turn on mental tape loops from the past, laced with 'things we should have done', 'could have done,' and 'aren't doing good enough'...

The problem is that the Inner Lizard blocks us from feeling our way to a better life experience. It inhibits the path to the life we dream about and we can end up with a feeling of being stuck where we are.

INNER WIZARDS ▼

Having found your inner guide, you have found yourself...

I had overridden my 'Inner Wizard' and had put personal self-care and self-awareness on the back burner for when I had more time - but no matter how I may have muffled the sound, it was always there... boundlessly there... waiting for me to listen.

Through extensive research, we are learning that there is infinite wisdom in every cell of the human body; however, most of us have no idea how to access this 'Inner Wizard' in our everyday lives. We are just beginning to learn how to tune into in to this silent, personal awareness that provides the best answers for our health, well-being and the ultimate satisfaction of our Soul. Getting to the place where we can hear who-we-really-are, unencumbered and clear, seems to be a common challenge.

I knew I needed to change but I was not sure what was wrong or how to fix it. Who was qualified to help me on this most intimate of journeys to the me I wanted to be? That was when I found the book that serendipitously led me to my first personal retreat, but I had no idea of what I was about to experience...

HORSES AND HUMANS ▼

My first encounter was with a magnificent horse who was skilled in the art of allowing his own authentic nature to be fully focused and in the moment... all 1200 pounds of him! I was mesmerized by his presence. It was as if everything else had fallen away... just me and a horse, untethered. It was exhilarating, and I felt so alive!



LIFESTYLE

Many of the people attending this retreat had never experienced horses this closely. We had no idea of what to expect, but the outcome started an extraordinary shift that has helped to reclaim the person I was meant to be.

It was like a rush of clarity and serenity was unleashed, along with the onset of my own self-awareness. I was seeing myself mirrored through the eye of the horse. While it took a few moments to stop resisting the possibility of what was actually happening, I realized that this was the equine-influenced shift in consciousness that I had just been reading about.

Horses do not project their opinions of us as good or bad, they simply mirror, with discerning awareness, each person's individuality. They sense our heart rate and blood pressure as opposed to what we may portray, for instance acting like we are in control or that we have no fear.

As opposed to dogs, cats and other predators, horses are highly intuitive and responsive because of their prey animal instinct. They sense our non-verbal energy, the messages that we are continuously, and involuntarily emitting. Because of this ability, horses shift their behavior the split second we energetically shift ours, thereby teaching us precisely what we need to learn in the moment... that is, if we are ready to learn.

THE VIBRATION BETWEEN TWO BEINGS ▼

This unforeseen equine teacher, like many

spiritual teachers, appeared in my life with perfect timing. He patiently taught me how to shift my physical energy forward and back as we played with the experience of mutual respect and all of its subtleties. His patience and persistence was amazing, and if I had not experienced it for myself, it would have been hard to believe.

As the retreat began to go deeper, it all started to make sense. The fragments of my conditioned patterns that had been keeping me from seeing my life clearly, were playing out right in front of my eyes though the actions of this horse. He helped me to see, without judgment, what I needed to do differently to change the unhealthy dynamics in my life. How did he know? How was he so gracefully reflecting the experience that I had been living?

THE EFFECTS OF BEING OUT OF BALANCE ▼

Because I had learned to value my intellect and was never taught how to listen to my emotions or inner wisdom, I did not pay attention to the red flags signaling that my life was out of balance.

I also realized that without learning the subtlety of simultaneous awareness in connection to others, relationships could become a painful experience. It was an epiphany when I began to understand all that the horse had shown me and how it related to my life at home and at work. This was the primary key as to why many of our


experiences in life and business end up falling short of what we most desire.

Having spent most of my adult life working with Fortune 500 companies, I felt a great sense of sadness for what we, as a culture had been missing. The lack of personal awareness was causing ripple effects of dysfunction among individuals, families and organizations. In many cases, people resorted to acquiescence, or conversely, dominance to compensate for personal imbalance.

A NEW BEGINNING ▼

What I learned was not about the horses, it was about me and the way I had been living my life. This equine dance of biofeedback was extraordinary. It was exquisite personal guidance at the most intimate level - something I never could have learned from a book or a lecture. From that point forward, my new direction was born.

Up to that point, my life had been the sum of all that I had learned and this had offered the crucial missing piece that I needed to move forward. Because I was willing to let go of the things that needed to change, I was opened to a new life-breath of inspiration, one that helped me to fulfill my greatest dream so far... Epona Ridge.

My journey started when a book landed in my lap. Now this is in yours, and you have opened to this page... 

Barbara Alexander is the Founder and Director of Epona Ridge, Teacher and Leading Innovator of Equine Experiential Learning and Coaching for Advanced Human Development.

Epona Ridge is a sanctuary retreat center for personal inspiration and rejuvenation located in the mountains of Asheville, North Carolina. Programs offer life visioning, personal energy awareness, leadership skills, Reiki certification, train the trainer for facilitators, various personal growth workshops and women's retreats. For more information see: <http://www.EponaRidge.com>

"Barbara is an incredible teacher, whose profound understanding of human emotions allows tremendous healing and growth for all participants in her programs. Her workshops quite literally changed my life. It was almost like hitting a reset button... I am reconnecting with all of these parts of myself that I had almost forgotten were there..."

Career Growth: 5 Key Points to Make Office Politics Work for You

by Dorothy Tannahill Moran

There was once a time when I thought “Office Politics” was tantamount to a dirty word. It was something low, underhanded and potentially unethical. If this sounds familiar, I’m here to illustrate for you that office politics isn’t this offensive behavior I once thought it was. Hopefully, I can help you jump beyond that to see how it is something for you to master, if you intend to rocket your career to the next level. ►►

If you look up the definition of politic or politics you find the following: - wise in promoting a policy - tactful and shrewd - competition between groups or individuals. In other words, a person who is politically savvy in the office is someone who is wise at promoting themselves and promoting the agenda of the business management that will move them both ahead.

Any time you get more than a few people together for a specific reason, you have politics to deal with. Politics are formed as a result of a

combination of factors, not the least of which includes popular opinion and goals (or agendas). Politics are driven by the most dominant people in the group.

Generally, the most dominant is the boss, but you can't discount the natural evolution of the alpha leader that most groups include. The alpha leader is, for a number of reasons, the unofficial leader of the group. Sometimes their opinion matters more than the bosses or certainly as much.

HOW CAN YOU USE OFFICE POLITICS TO PROMOTE YOUR CAREER GROWTH? ▼

1. Identify influencers. You need to first understand the major influencers in the group. Obviously, you can pick out the boss(es). There will be other people in the group who are looked to for answers and opinions, even by the boss. They may or may not be the most senior or experienced. You can pick them out because they will usually voice an opinion or provide input on most subjects. You will observe people going to them for counsel, advice and insight. They may be irritating, picky people, but they are still the ones that wield power. Knowing who's who in your organization is important, as you need to learn from these people and understand what is being prized and rewarded.

2. Know the boss' level of power. You need to understand the power your boss does or does not exert. Although power is given to the boss




by virtue of their position, it doesn't always mean they possess personal power. This is important to understand, because if they can't sway opinion by their personal ability, there is a limited opportunity for them to impact your career growth. This is an unfortunate situation in some instances, but not always. Bosses in this situation may not be able to campaign for you, but they probably aren't going to be a barrier either. This simply means you can't anticipate or work to have them aid you in career growth. It will save you time and effort if you understand this characteristic.

WORKSMART

3. Include mentors in your plan. You need to devise a career growth plan that includes not only the work experience you need to bump you up, but define who your mentors and advocates will be. You also need to mentor and advocate for others. The more people that you can positively bring up with you, the better your long term success will be. We are loyal to those who have helped us the most.

4. Observe the shifting tides of opinions. Many things have a cycle of popularity. Just as your hair style may have gone out of style last year, so do the opinions and popularity of people at work. These shifts can range from slow and subtle to fast and abrupt. When they are subtle you may start noticing that the person who was once the department darling is now simply occupying space. What was once thought of as brilliant concepts by the alpha dogs is now largely ignored. There are numerous reasons why these shifts take place - too numerous to mention. If this happens to you, you either need to figure out how to regain the stature you once had or move. If this happens to an influencer you had garnered support from, you simply need to recognize the change and make a decision about who your next support will be. This sounds cold and calculating. I'm not suggesting you toss this person to the curb, unless they hold no other value to your career growth. If they do, then keep them for the other valuable asset they still are.

5. Be always ready to seize new opportunities. Keep

in mind that if you aren't performing the primary job you were given, then it makes almost no difference how observant and scintillating your ideas are. If you aren't doing the basics, the rest of this will make almost no difference. Your performance is the solid base you have to build to spring board the rest of your moves from. Assuming you are doing your job and doing it well, you can plan your growth by jumping on opportunities the political environment presents. Office politics is similar to chess. There are infinite numbers of moves and the best players are the ones who think of the future move possibilities and see how the dynamics of the board continue to change. 

Copyright (c) 2010 Dorothy Tannahill Moran

Dorothy Tannahill-Moran is a Career Coach and expert on helping her clients achieve their goals. Her programs cover: Career growth and enhancement, Career Change, Retirement Alternatives and Job Search Strategy. Want to discover specific career change strategies that get results? Discover how by claiming your FREE gift, Career Makeover Toolkit at:

<http://CareerMakeoverToolKitShouldIstayorShouldIGo.com/>



Executives & Assistants: Take Your Partnership to the Next Level

If you're ready to build a more dynamic, productive and powerful partnership, but you're not quite sure what to do or where to start, have no fear. Your "instruction manual" is here.

Introducing a groundbreaking tool designed to support the relationship between Executives and Assistants by providing a structured path for managing both the people and processes involved.

Executives & Assistants Working In Partnership: The Definitive Guide to Success

A practical resource that works like a self-guided, self-paced coaching program with Joan Burge, the world's leading expert on administrative effectiveness.

Includes:

- Best practices consolidated over 25 years of research and experience in the field.
- Comprehensive and flexible solutions for addressing the most pressing and common challenges facing Executives and Assistants.
- Time-tested proven solutions that work in nearly any professional environment, regardless of industry or business size.
- Specific "conversation points" designed to facilitate open communication between Executives and Assistants, helping you to create your own unique partnership with clearly defined operating procedures.
- A selection of proprietary assessments to help you better understand the nature of the partnership and your key areas for improvement.



EXECUTIVES & ASSISTANTS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SUCCESS

JOAN BURGE
with Chrissy Solivogue



More Than a Book...A "Do-It-Yourself" Operations Manual for Your Partnership!

- Simple, flexible and comprehensive.
- Modify and mold it to meet your unique needs.
- Elegant and functional design features ample space for customization.

Don't accept an average partnership. Stop settling for mediocre. Take your partnership from fine to fantastic!

Contains specific, time-tested strategies for creating the ideal working partnership, where both Executive and Assistant perform at peak levels and experience:

- Less stress
- Improved communication and collaboration
- Better time management
- Greater ability to focus and get things done
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness

Learn more at www.OfficeDynamics.com/eaguide

Hate Your Job? Before You Quit, Conduct a Career Audit

by Brandi Britton, OfficeTeam

Everybody has times in their professional life when quitting a job seems better than enduring the workday drudgery and demoralization. ►

But quitting abruptly isn't wise financially or professionally. If you resign and don't have another job lined up, you could create more stress for yourself by having no income. Also, quitting without providing two weeks' notice will leave a negative mark on your otherwise consistent employment history. So before you walk out that door for good, figure out how you might make your current situation more bearable. Here are the steps:

1. Conduct a job audit. There are many reasons for being unhappy at work, but they fall into two broad categories: "push" or "pull" factors. When you start thinking about these pros and cons to leaving and staying, you may start to see that the general feeling of "I hate my job" is actually the result of some identifiable problems.

- Push factors are qualities of your job that are driving you toward the exit, such as

unreasonable demands, unreliable technology (computers that crash constantly), tedious or repetitive work, and persistent conflict with coworkers. No job is perfect, but if the problems continue to pile up, it's difficult not to hate going to work each morning.

- Pull factors are thoughts and ideas that are luring you away to another job with fewer or none of the push factors. It's those moments of clarity when you know you could be doing better somewhere else, either by receiving a higher salary or by finding an employer who offers more opportunities for career development.

Now that you've considered the push and pull factors, can you think of solutions? If so, you're on the path to a happier work life.

2. Fix the things you can fix. Some things are beyond your control, but many common office frustrations can be resolved by seeking a change — before you change jobs.

Problem: Let's say a large part of your workload is data entry, and the daily routine is draining you and possibly causing your wrist, elbow and shoulder pain.

Solution: Can you think of a way to streamline parts of the repetitive tasks, freeing you up to do more interesting and less physically taxing work? Do some research and brainstorm with a colleague in IT to see if there are software tools

that could automate certain activities.

Problem: You're repeatedly having conflicts with a coworker, and it's making you dread coming to work.

Solution: Look for ways to improve the tense situation. Sometimes these difficult work relationships stem from miscommunication or misunderstanding and can be resolved through open discussion. Or, you may be able to rearrange the way you work so you're not in regular contact with that person.

Talk with your boss. You may feel pressured to put on a happy face at work, but since bosses aren't mind readers, it's up to you to tell them when something gets in the way of you doing your best work.

When you sit down with your boss to talk about your concerns, don't present a laundry list of complaints. A negative approach may fall on deaf ears or backfire. Show your proactive side by presenting possible solutions, and ask your boss for his thoughts. Here are some scenarios:

Problem: You feel you are in a dead-end job and you're able to cite numerous reasons such as lack of promotion opportunities or the lack of variety in your work. You see others moving up the career ladder, but you feel stuck.

Solution: Listen to your boss's thoughts then work with him or her to create a career

CAREER

development plan with professional goals you can pursue. Be sure it includes your company's support for training and classes, as well as your commitment to do your best in the required coursework and practical application. Learning a new skill can sometimes help you fall in love with your job again. Also ask your boss if you might become more involved in an activity you enjoy, such as event planning or social media management.

Problem: Your workload is overwhelming.

Solution: Make the case to bring in a project-based assistant to help out during peak periods.

4. Create your escape plan. If you've tried and can't fix the reasons you hate your job, it's time to begin your job search in earnest. You may find that you lack experience or qualifications for the roles you really want. If this is the case, focus on building your resume while making the best of matters in your current job.


Start scouring job boards, working on your administrative resume, customizing cover letters and sending out applications.

Research the job market and get a picture of the opportunities that are available. The OfficeTeam 2016 Salary Guide (<https://www.roberthalf.com/officeteam/2016-administrative-salary-center>) is an excellent resource for hiring trends and the latest salary ranges in your city. Go back to school to get an associate or

bachelor's degree. Or work toward credentials that boost your skills, such as the Microsoft Office Certification.

Another path to a new administrative job is to connect with a recruiter who can work with you to refine your resume, define your career goals and help you land a temporary or full-time position.

If you truly hate your job, the worst thing you can do is to accept things as they are. Work-related stress is a serious health hazard and can affect your relationships not only with coworkers but loved ones.

If you can't quit yet, take positive, proactive steps to improve your working conditions. You might be able to turn your current job into something you enjoy. If you decide to change jobs anyway, remember that it's always best to leave on good terms. Never burn bridges on your way out, even when you really do hate your job. 

Brandi Britton is a district president for OfficeTeam, the nation's leading staffing service specializing in the temporary placement of highly skilled administrative and office support professionals.

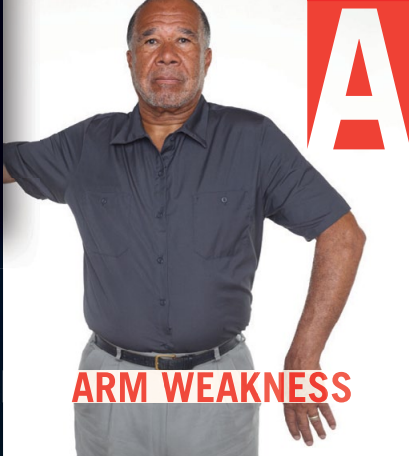
OfficeTeam has more than 300 locations worldwide and offers online job search services at www.officeteam.com. Connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest and the OfficeTeam blog.



Body language
can tell you all
sorts of things.
Like someone is
having a **stroke**.



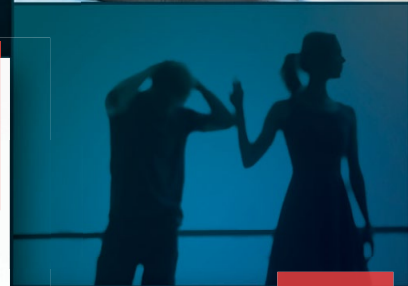
FACE DROOPING



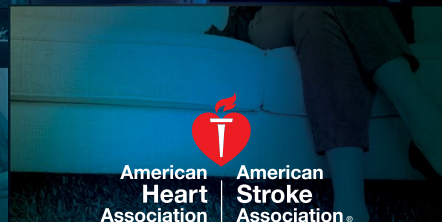
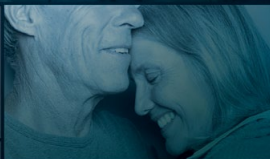
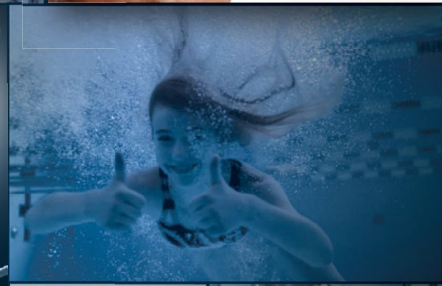
ARM WEAKNESS



SPEECH DIFFICULTY



TIME TO CALL 911



Ad
Council



strokeassociation.org



American
Heart
Association



American
Stroke
Association

Together to End Stroke™

Know the sudden signs.
Spot a stroke F.A.S.T.



WORKSMART

Selecting an Off Site Records Management Provider

by Leo Kane

When setting out to select an Off-Site Provider for your Records Management services it is important that you ask the right questions and look out for the right 'Tell Tale Signs'. At no point here do we give any consideration of the price of their services. The price should be the last thing we seek to get from a provider - you must firstly establish who they are and what value their services can bring to your business. Only then will price mean anything to you. This is not the definitive list of what should be asked but should hopefully guide you in the right direction when you begin to evaluate a number of potential providers. ►►

COMPANY PROFILE ▼

The aim here is to get a feel for what type of company you are looking at. Ask questions about their Company Mission Statement and see how that aligns with your own; How long have they been providing Records Management Services; How do they try to differentiate themselves from their competition; Can they provide you with audited accounts; Can they provide you with references; Do they belong to any trade associations.

GENERAL SECURITY ▼

A major issue in today's records management world is security of information. The rapid rise in identity theft makes personal information a much sought after commodity among the opportunist criminal. Irrespective of this security of information is vital to protecting a company's interests as well as its staff and clients alike. Knowing that when your files and media venture off-site for the first time you don't want it to be a step into the unknown. You don't want to feel like you are waving your kid off for their first day at school. You need to know that the security of your off-site provider is tried and tested and meets the minimum standards you employ within your own business.

Do they have 24hr security; Are their premises protected by both internal and external digital CCTV systems; How do they control access to the facility; How secure is the loading area; Are their staff security vetted; What authorisation procedures do they operate; Do they conduct

regular security audits; What security monitoring systems are in place.

DISASTER PREVENTION & PLANNING ▼

To what lengths does the company go to in relation to protecting documents and media in their care. Don't be surprised if they do not operate a sprinkler system, these are likely only to be found in large warehouse environments where by it is a stipulation by the local authority. Often Records Management service providers will shy away from installing such expensive fire prevention as it can be cost prohibitive, thus driving up the market storage rate and can also be very risky in relation to the potential hazard of the accidental activation of the system. Only you can decide what is right for your business. I guess it comes down to whether you want wet files or burnt ones! The key is really in how they prevent hazards not how they handle a disaster after the fact.

Do they have adequate smoke detection systems in place; Adequate fire detection systems; adequate fire suppression systems; operate a strict no-smoking policy; a regularly maintained and tested internal disaster plan; are detection and suppression systems regularly inspected and tested.

FACILITIES ▼

There can be a number of considerations in relation to the facility in which your records will be housed. Again there is no right or wrong answer as such, you must evaluate what best fits to your business requirement.

WORKSMART

Is it in a desirable location; Is the facility a stand alone unit; Is it located within a multi-tenant building; Are there any potentially hazardous facilities near to their location; Does the facility sit within a non-flood prone location; Do they engage in any other activities within the same facility (Public Storage, General Warehousing etc...); Are back-up power systems in place; Do they have proper insurance coverage in the event of a disaster.

COURIER VEHICLES ▼

This is one area that is often over looked. It is not uncommon to pull a company's facilities to pieces and then give no consideration to how records are transported. In theory and in practice you should be demanding the same standards where possible in relation to security and environment within a delivery vehicle as you do from the warehouse storage facility itself. Do they use their own vehicles and delivery personnel; Are vehicles satellite tracked; How are vehicles secured when stationary at pickup and drop-off points; Do vehicles have appropriate security in place; are vehicles climate controlled (media only); Are vehicles designed for safe media transport; Do vehicles undergo preventative maintenance; Are vehicles equipped with a fire extinguisher; Are vehicles equipped with suitable communications.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES ▼

It is here that you can determine just how much thought, care and attention a Records



Management provider places in to their business, their staff and their clients. Can they provide a clear and acceptable business contract; Are records signed for at point of handover and retained on file for future reference; Do they operate a comprehensive employee screening process; Do they have a substance abuse policy; Are personnel provided with uniform and ID passes; Do employees sign confidentiality agreements; Is there on-going employee education; Are trained personnel available after hours to handle emergency requests.

STORAGE CAPABILITIES ▼

Seems an obvious one this but you need to create a list of all the various types of storage and service you need today and also consider what your requirement may be in the mid to long term also. After all if you can find a provider that can accommodate your business as you adapt within your market then you will really benefit by having uniformity in your RM services during such times of change.

“ Hard Copy Records (Files kept in Boxes)

“ Secure Offsite Document Storage

“ Barcoded File Management

“ Audio/ Visual Media

“ Computer Media

“ Micrographics

“ X-Ray Film

“ Live Filing (Open Shelf Filing)

“ Secure Storage

“ Gas Protected Fire Vault, Temperature & Humidity Controlled

for either: Offsite Tape & Media Storage or Will & Deed Storage

You should also ask about current space to meet current needs and future space to meet future needs. Is the racking structure used specific to Records Management storage needs

CUSTOMER SERVICES ▼


No Records Management or offsite Archive Storage provider will tick all boxes all of the time. We all know and all expect things to go wrong from time to time. What really sets Records Management companies apart is with how they handle this situation. By examining all the key features that put the service together under the umbrella of Customer Services we can see what a company can do to minimise such problems and also how they handle those peculiarities when they should arise.

Can they provide: 24hr customer access; Bar-code Tracking; Client based training; Online inventory management; Client review rooms;

Reports; Confidential destruction services; Departmental billing; Disaster recovery services; Retention management and planning.

Do they log client communications for review and internal training; do they provide a service level agreement in relation not only to the physical service but also in terms of response times to resolving client issues/ queries; Will you be appointed an Account Manager

SUMMARY ▼

All of the above is designed to prompt some thought in to your choice of a Records Management service provider. Only once you have fully comprehended what a company can offer in terms of its full service and facility etc. can you then begin to determine whether their price provides your business with value for money. The cheapest provider may not score too highly when you start to dig deeper into the aspects described above. Achieving the best value for your investment will deliver you the long term savings you crave - working with a professional, efficient provider that can grow and adapt with you is worth its weight in gold as they will be able to provide your business with consistency and stability. 

Leo Kane has been Managing Director of Saracen Datastore Ltd for nearly 10 years and has a wealth of experience in Secure Offsite Document Storage and Offsite Media and tape Storage for more info see our website: <http://www.saracendatastore.co.uk>

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white sleeveless dress, stands on a sandy beach. Her arms are raised high in the air, and she is looking upwards with a smile. The background features a clear blue sky with some clouds and the ocean with white waves crashing onto the shore.

CAREER

Retreats

All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Boy

by Alison Truckle

Retreats, like Inns and Hotels, come in all shapes, sizes and configurations. Regardless of small or large, pleasure or business, it's important to know the goals and objectives of your escape to ensure your chosen venue really hits the mark. All retreats seek a setting for enjoyment and realization of the key goals - for example if you're opting for a romantic retreat, selecting a business-style hotel on a major highway with breakfast from 6 to 7.30 am may not be wise, given a usual goal of such getaways is to relax and enjoy leisurely time together!▶▶

Business retreats typically have many objectives from team-building to stimulating out-of-the box creativity which can rarely be achieved in the normal workplace environment. Finding a venue that allows this to happen and motivates attendees to really look forward to their time away cannot be over emphasized. Venues that offer interesting recreational opportunities as well as relaxing and functional meeting facilities are key and in the ideal world such venues should bear little resemblance to the attendees' typical day to day lifestyle. For example if your company operates from a modern office block in the city "retreating" to a nearby similar modern, purpose built hotel is unlikely to be very motivating or thought provoking for getting those creative juices flowing.

Another factor to consider in a business retreat is the involvement of partners. Several years ago, I attended the last couple of days of a corporate retreat in the beautiful town of Coeur d'Alene in Idaho. My husband had already been there for 3 days and partners were invited for the last two days to share in the experience. Our common bond of being partners was the only link we had. Over the weekend we not only got to know each other through group hikes, a little retail therapy and some great local food but we too became a team with a better understanding of the company's future goals and what that would mean to our significant others. Bottom line through this short getaway we all bought into the company's growth plan and felt a part of

CAREER

its future. We in turn were motivated to support our partners in any way we could. A priceless benefit for a very small investment.

The Perfect Small Retreat - what to look for
A destination that matches the travel budget.
Do you want to fly or drive? Retreats that are within driving distance typically keep the cost down and can have the added advantage of attendees travelling together thus creating another opportunity for team building. While distance is not important, the destination needs to be far enough away from the corporate base to ideally be unfamiliar to most but easy to reach. For example, if your business is based in the greater Montreal, Boston or Hartford areas, Vermont is an ideal destination.

LIFESTYLE NECESSITIES ▼

While the goal is to find a destination which says from the moment you arrive “this is not your typical day at the office”, it is important that WiFi and Cell Phone Service are available. Retreats where a key sale was missed because the email could not be retrieved are not memorable in the right way.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ▼

Great retreats balance work with play.
Remember “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”. For summer retreats look for golf, hiking and tennis opportunities. Everyone can hike! Also consider a team building activity such as tubing down a lazy river, learning to



kayak, glide or even parasail. In winter look for skiing or snowshoe areas where there’s plenty of fun to be had by all plus some nightlife for those seeking to relax further! Again snowshoeing is easy and a good option for even the least athletic.

EXCLUSIVITY ▼

For a 10-30 person retreat, seek country inns and larger bed and breakfasts in the destination area you are focused on. Choose a venue that matches your group size. You’ll thank me. Having exclusive use of an inn makes attendees feel “special” and the management will want

you to feel special too! They'll go above and beyond to help make your retreat memorable in all the right ways, adapt to your needs and provide you with the thought provoking, confidential environment that creates great future direction for your business. Because they are also experts on the area you have selected, pick their brains. They will likely share tips and suggestions that are not easily found on Google or the web.

“STIR CRAZY” ▼

In planning your retreat be aware of the “stir crazy” syndrome. Everyone likes to feel they can get away from their colleagues, however well they get along. Breakfast and a working lunch in one place is enough. Finish each day allowing sufficient time for personal recreation and plan to regroup in the evening for dinner at a nearby restaurant. Those who need a little space will enjoy this time while many will simply use it to further relations.

GREAT FOOD ▼


Dinner gatherings on retreats tend to be both social and quietly part of the creativity process. Attendees who are somewhat quiet during the day often become braver in the evening and venture an idea that they were previously reluctant to share. Most of all this is a time for enjoyment and motivation, for thank-yous and “let’s kick butt”! Excellent restaurants will be enjoyed, poor restaurants will ruin the evening. Take advice from your venue.

PARTNER ACTIVITIES ▼

If your retreat is including partners, it is important that some activities are planned to ensure their enjoyment. Ideas include visits to local spas and health clubs, a morning yoga class, culinary class with a local chef, golf, tennis, organized excursions to interesting local shops, museums and attractions

EXTENDED STAYS ▼

While ideally your partner gets to join in, you can always extend your stay and have them arrive at the end of the business focus. Most Inns are happy to extend any special rate to attendees deciding to relax and unwind for a day or two more.

So now you are prepared for organizing the best retreat ever. Select dates, finalize the agenda and start searching for the perfect destination. 

Alison Truckle, along with her husband Phill, owns and operates the Tucker Hill Inn, (<http://www.tuckerhill.com>) a Vermont bed and breakfast located approximately 30 minutes from the Vermont State Capital, Montpelier. With a passion for helping people enjoy their stay in this lovely area, she regularly writes columns and articles sharing her knowledge as an innkeeper and love for the outdoors.

Unscramble the words

DAMISVNIRTIEAT

RPAINSLFESDOS

AER

EHT

USUNGN

HOERS

FO

HTE

FOCIEF

ADN

HTE

ACBKEBON

FO

IEDCSFF

DRDAUN

EHT

LRWDO

Your Answer

