

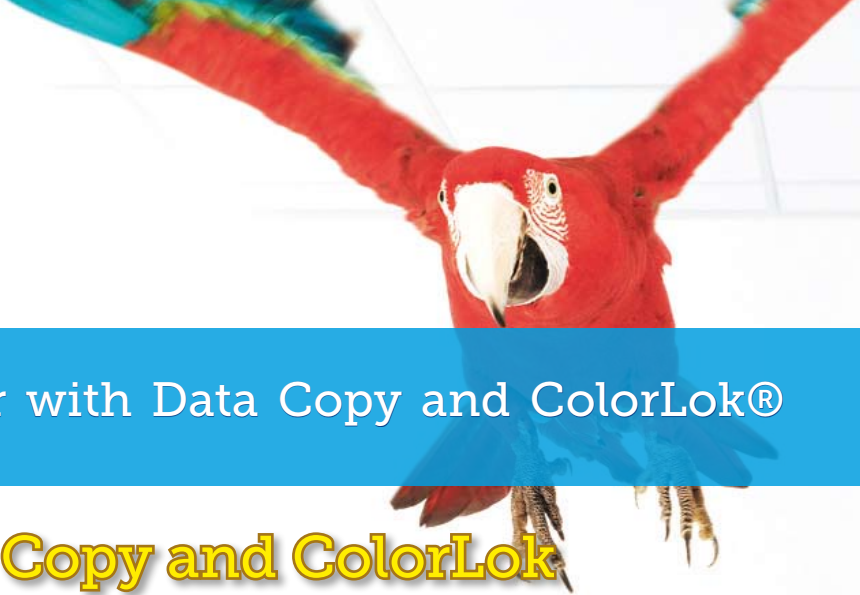
PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

July 2010

- 
- ▶ Balancing Career and Family
 - ▶ Turbulence Training – key to fat loss
 - ▶ Excel 2007 - Top Tips
 - ▶ Where Blackberrys are NOT welcome

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4,5,6,7,8

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Lunchtime sandwich can be a health risk to office workers

Millions of office workers are risking food poisoning by eating lunch at dirty desks.

Four in 10 people say they grab a quick bite to eat at their desks - but only 7% clear up after. This leaves behind countless harmful bacteria, which multiply even more quickly in summer heat. Two thirds also admitted they did not wash their hands before eating.

Vikki Brunning of Carex, which commissioned the survey, said: "A chicken sandwich could contain tens of thousands of harmful bacteria if left out on a desk. These days everyone is so busy that a quick bite while we work is the most any of us have time for.

"However, it's important to make sure we clean up after ourselves as bacteria thrive and multiply in moist conditions so food or drink spills must be cleaned up straight away."

The risks of salmonella and other food poisonings increase in summer, with heat and moisture accelerating the growth of bad bacteria, which can cause vomiting and possible diarrhoea.

Vikki Brunning added: "We preach to our children to wash their hands before eating. However it would seem the majority of adults don't.

Washing your hands before eating is by far the best way to prevent germs from spreading. The World Health Organisation claims people who do this are 40% less likely to suffer tummy bugs."



Meeting Magic joins up with Coach in a Box

Meeting facilitation company, Meeting Magic, has formed a strategic alliance with Coach in a Box. Meeting Magic is known for its seven step method to successful meeting design. However, some individuals

individual concerns.

Katherine Woods, founder of Meeting Magic explains, "as well as facilitating face to face meetings and conferences, we offer a one-to-one virtual service for individuals who need help to design an effective meeting. By collaborating with Coach in a Box, these people will be given support to build the skills they need to execute their meeting design brilliantly."



Typical areas Coach in a Box can help with are:

- being at best and most resourceful when under pressure
- increasing presence and influence
- handling tricky relationships
- managing anxiety
- engaging and inspiring others.

The two companies have 16 years of shared experience of working with large global organisations. From new managers through to business leaders, Meeting Magic and Coach in a Box work with clients across the private, public and third sectors. Both companies share a passion for innovation. In each of their respective fields, they use leading edge, creative methods to deliver their services.

www.meetingmagic.co.uk

www.coachinabox.co.uk

can lack the confidence to execute the meeting design they work hard to prepare. This is the point where executive coaching company, Coach in a Box, will introduce their skills. Coach in a Box will supplement the Meeting Magic Method by providing behavioural and attitudinal coaching to help tackle

BE GREENER WITH SCOTCH MAGIC 900 TAPE

Now you can do your bit for the environment, within the confines of your office job! 3M, the diversified technology company, has launched an environmentally responsible product – Scotch Magic 900 Tape.

Combining all the benefits of Scotch Magic Tape, Scotch Magic 900 Tape is ideal for everyday office use. Even with tape made from natural fibre, it is invisible on paper and can be written on, it will not ghost on photocopies or yellow with age and is easy to tear by hand or dispense. You can even have it in a 100 per cent recycled plastic dispenser for your desk!

Take a look at its environmental credentials:

- Scotch Magic tape film is made from wood pulp, which is a renewable natural fibre resource. The wood pulp comes from certified sources, which means that the trees that are used are being replaced by new trees.
- The adhesive on the tape is a water based solvent-less adhesive.
- The brand has introduced a 100 per cent recycled carton core. When the tape is finished, the carton core can be recycled in a normal paper recycling process.
- Finally, the brand has done away with all the plastic film from the packaging. Scotch Magic 900 Tape is only available in a recycled carton – there is no plastic wrapping.



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Applying for a Job – The Essential Guide

According to a report from the Office for National Statistics, 2.51 million people are now unemployed in Britain, the highest total since 1994.

Applying for a Job - The Essential Guide, published on 1st July, is for all such people. Written to help all those who are suffering the stress and hard work that is job hunting, this nonsense book guides you through the steps to take so you can get the job you want.

All aspects of the jobseeking experience are covered, from how and where to look for a job, preparing your CV, the application process, techniques for interview, and how to deal with the outcome – whether you are successful or not. It's a book for all ages: from students applying for their first job, to those returning to work after a career break.

The author, Sasa Jankovic, has a special interest in

employment issues and hopes to take the mystery out of the process of applying for a job. She says, 'While we can't guarantee that reading this book will help you get every job you apply for, it will certainly give you a head start when it comes to getting the attention of prospective employers.'

Published by Need2Know – **Applying for a Job – The Essential Guide** is the 47th in the series and is available now from the Need2Know website (www.need2knowbooks.co.uk). The book is also available through Amazon and all good bookshops.

Price: £9.99



CELEBRATION CONTINUES FOR POST-IT BRAND!

The Post-it Brand from 3M continues to celebrate its 30th birthday with the second phase of its popular 'Surprises' campaign. Promotional stickers will be appearing on Post-it Recycled Notes and the brand new range of Post-It Index Pens and Highlighters from July to September.

Exclusively designed for PAs, Secretaries and Office Managers, the 'Surprises' campaign ensures that every time one of these special packs of Post-it products is purchased an exciting surprise gift will be won.

There are more than a quarter of a million gifts on offer including a trip to Monte Carlo, shopping sprees, spa trips and much, much more.

The celebratory year will be rounded off with prizes offered with Post-it Super Sticky Notes and Post-it Meeting Charts from October to December.

Visit www.post-it.co.uk/surprises for more information.

'Civil unrest' as UK workers rate job satisfaction

The research unveiled in advance of the annual **VQ Day**, a celebration of vocational qualifications, shows that 45% of Civil Servants are not content with their roles. 69% would pursue a different career path if they were given a chance, with over a third of these saying that having a vocational qualification would help them achieve their dream job.

At the other end of the scale, the UK's happiest workers are Health Care Professionals, with 88 per cent saying they are content.

Overall one in five UK workers say they are unhappy at work. Given our time again, more than half of us would chose a different profession, with working as a writer or broadcaster/journalist (8%), a teacher or lecturer (8%) or a lawyer (7%) topping the poll for those who would want a change.

Peter Mitchell, Education Director of Edge, the independent education foundation behind VQ Day commented: "There is a misguided view that careers such as law can only be achieved through an academic qualification such as a degree. This is no longer the case - vocational qualifications offer a solid route into a great many careers.

"VQ Day is all about celebrating those who have achieved vocational qualifications and the many paths to success that they open up for learners of all ages. If you are not happy with your career, VQ Day is a wonderful opportunity to have a look at the options that are out there - with events all over the country, log on to the **www.vqday.org** website and see what's happening in your area."

VQ Day took place on June 23rd with celebrations in London, Glasgow, Belfast and Cardiff as well as colleges, learning providers and businesses up and down the UK.

Professions and happiness rating

Healthcare professional - 88%
Scientist/R&D Scientist - 87%
Teacher/lecturer - 84%
Accountant - 81%
Sales person - 81%
IT specialist - 78%
Engineer - 77%
Administrator - 76%
Retail worker - 75%
Secretary/Receptionist - 74%
Civil Servant - 55%



Coffee consumption unrelated to alertness

The stimulatory effects of caffeine may be nothing more than an illusion according to new research, which shows there is no real benefit to be gained from the habitual morning cup of coffee.

Tests on 379 people who abstained from caffeine for 16 hours before being given either caffeine or a placebo and then tested for a range of responses showed little variance in levels of alertness.

Approximately half of the participants were non/low caffeine consumers and the other half were medium/high caffeine consumers. All were asked to rate their personal levels of anxiety, alertness and headache before and after being given either the caffeine or the placebo. They were also asked to carry out a series of computer tasks to test for their levels of memory, attentiveness and vigilance.

The medium/high caffeine consumers who received the placebo reported a decrease in alertness and an increase in headache, neither of which were reported by those who received caffeine. However, their post-caffeine levels of alertness were no higher than the non/low consumers who received a placebo, suggesting caffeine only brings coffee drinkers back up to 'normal'.





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PAs have a Taste of Christmas at the Bavarian Beerhouse!



It's only June, but it's never too early to plan that important event: the company Christmas party! Discerning PAs who want to organise a Christmas party with a difference now have the opportunity to explore the idea of a Bavarian-style event.

The Bavarian Beerhouse is a unique combination of excellent food, outstanding

service, great German beer and fantastic rustic atmosphere. Most popular – apart from the beers – is the table service provided by charming waitresses in traditional Bavarian dresses “Dirndl”.

To get into the festive spirit and offer a flavour of a Bavarian-style Christmas, the Bavarian Beerhouse is organising a Christmas tasting on Tuesday, 7th September 2010.

The chef will talk attending PAs through a buffet featuring items they can choose for their own, customised corporate Christmas menu, including mouth-watering Bavarian specialties such as sausages, Schnitzel and Munich pork roast served with dark beer sauce.

There will also be typical Bavarian desserts, e.g. traditional apple strudel, Black Forest cake and German Christmas biscuits, as well as special winter cocktails such as ‘Heisser Apfelwein’ (hot apple cider) and traditional ‘Winter Apple Schnaps’ and original German beers served in huge one litre glasses (also known as Steins). Needless to say they will also be given a tour of the Bavarian Beerhouse’s function rooms, including the cosy ski hut.

The Bavarian Beerhouse’s Christmas Tasting for PAs takes place on Tuesday, 7th September 2010 at the Bavarian Beerhouse’s new venue at Tower Hill – The Arches, 9 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AU). Interested PAs can RSVP by sending an email to info@bavarian-beerhouse.co.uk

www.bavarian-beerhouse.com



Credit Crunch Lunch

Crunchlunch.co.uk is a UK based venture founded by James Nixon offering special offers and discount vouchers for eating out at top restaurants and eateries in the UK.

As consumers continue to feel the pinch through the recession the emergency budget promises to re-ignite the battle of the high street restaurant. Restaurant Vouchers have never been such hot property. With over 2 million vouchers downloaded per day, Britain's best known chains are fighting to ensure they have the winning offer for bargain hungry diners to enjoy.

In a Crunchlunch study of top UK restaurant chains, Pizza Express is named the Restaurant Voucher Kings of 2010, with a massive 33% of the online restaurant voucher market. Rustic Italian chain, Zizzi come in at second place with a more modest 15%, followed by GBK, ASK and La Tasca all taking a share of 8%. At the other end of the scale Pizza Hut and Slug & Lettuce took a measly 4% of total downloads.

Average disposable incomes have shrunk by over 30% in the past 2 years, with this set to continue now the emergency budget has come in. The one thing that refuses to shrink is consumer appetite for a great value meal out!.



Reach for the bottle... of water

Working in a hot office during the summer months can be tiring. With a stuffy atmosphere and dry air conditioning it is no wonder we struggle to perform to the best of our ability every day. However, new research shows that your loss of concentration at work can simply be due to thirst. A recent study undertaken by the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College, London, revealed that even mild thirst can decrease productivity at work by as much as 10%. Furthermore, hand and eye coordination can weaken at just one per cent dehydration. The human body is made up of 70% water and the brain is up to 85% water, so you should make that visit to the water cooler as often as possible to prevent the afternoon drop in energy and feeling of lethargy.

In addition to lower productivity, consistent levels of dehydration can be responsible for a number of common ailments including dry skin, aches, spots and headaches.

Top tips for staying hydrated

Water cooler providers, AquaAid, have put together some handy tips to help you consume more water during the warmer months and increase your overall health and wellbeing.

- Try switching from caffeine-rich coffee to a glass refreshing water at least twice a day
- If you dislike the taste of water bring in a bottle of squash or herbal tea bags to keep on your desk
- Be aware of the first signs of thirst which include excessive yawning, irritability, headaches and heat intolerance. Actually feeling thirsty means you are already dehydrated
- Keep a tally of how many glasses of water you drink during the day. A post-it note counting down eight to one can be ticked off to incentivise you to drink the recommended number of glasses per day
- Buy a two-litre bottle of water to keep on your desk to remind you to drink whilst at work. Remember, this bottle can be filled up throughout the week from the office water coolers so needn't become an additional expense
- Children at school can also be affected by thirst and easily lose concentration, so pack a sports-sized bottle of water in their lunchboxes. You could also freeze it overnight allowing it to defrost throughout the day and keep cool



For further information on the importance of water consumption visit www.aquaaid.co.uk

LIVE THE VIP LIFESTYLE WITH TOTAL ACCESS

Total Access is a recently launched private members' club with a 24-hour concierge service. Total Access offers members access to a VIP lifestyle with presence in the world's most glamorous cities. From LA to Hong Kong, this is the ultimate social planning service providing members with access to over 800 of the most exclusive worldwide establishments including the hottest bars, restaurants, members clubs, hotels and airlines.



The Total Access card, at a cost of £245 a year, is a must-have for those who want to stay in the know by tapping into the extensive knowledge and expertise of the Total Access team.

Members benefit from exclusive services including flight, hotel and dinner reservations, VIP table bookings, theatre bookings and access to the world's most glamorous events from London Fashion Week to Oscar's week in LA plus invitations to elite sporting events and film premieres. Member events so far have included partying with P Diddy on his yacht at the Cannes Film Festival and Lady Gaga in St Tropez.

Upon joining, members are given a designated personal Account Manager who are on hand 24-hours a day, seven days a week to advise on the best entertainment choices, no matter what city or what time zone members find themselves in. Whether it's a shopping weekend in New York with friends or a business trip to Dubai, Total Access provides the passport to the best life has to offer.

www.totalaccessworldwide.com

Holiday Compensation Claims: A Short Guide

By Mark Walters

Every once in a while you go on a holiday and are disappointed. The hotel just was not what you expected. The service was poor. You might expect the tour operator to offer you some money back on the hotel or perhaps give you some sort of a payment to make up for the unexpectedly unsatisfying trip. Surprisingly, this does not happen much, but there are reasons why companies do not reimburse dissatisfied travelers as you would hope that they would do. First of all, tour operators and hotel management are as worried about the economic downturn as you and I. At this point, it's easier to worry about money than it is to worry about whether you will provide them with repeat business and don't want to give back money they may very soon be needed. Secondly, more people are making their own travel arrangements rather than relying on travel agencies or tour operators. Should you be dissatisfied with

accommodations or such, an agency or operator can certainly attempt to pressure the hotel to hand back some money. If you're booking yourself, it's unlikely that you'll have the clout that an agent has. This does not mean that you should just "roll over and play dead." If, for some reason, you have been led to believe one thing but were faced with another, or if you were not treated well by an agency, the law is with you and there are things you can do to get some money back. Follow these steps and you may soon find yourself with some compensation.

If the person that you are dealing is being unreasonable, and is unwilling to appropriately deal with your grievances, then you are well within your rights to proceed with legal action against them. You can take them to court and have a judge decide on the amount of compensation that should be paid to you. If you have followed

the steps set out above then your chances of success are extremely high and you can expect to receive a sum that will adequately cover the losses and inconveniences that you have suffered.

www.excalibursolicitors.co.uk

Top Tips

- Don't wait until you've gone home to complain. Speak up quickly so that the individual or company involved can take care of your complaint while you're still on holiday.
- Make sure you take notes, pictures and videos and call witnesses if needed.
- Don't make the complaint too elaborate. State your problem simply and succinctly.
- Keep your message simple and tell whoever you feel is at fault what the problem is.
- Be calm. If you stay calm you will appear to be the reasonable one, particularly in a court or mediation setting.



Urgent or Important?

Learn to Prioritise Information

"It's urgent!". "I want it now!".
"Hurry, it's late!". "I want it
yesterday!" Sounds familiar?

These days, it seems, everything is urgent. Ding! You got email. You shouldn't, but you start reading it. You are in the second sentence, when the phone rings. Guess who is calling? Yes, the person, who just sent you the email. "Did you respond to my email yet?" - he asks. Crazy, but not far-fetched, is it?

First, let me make a bold statement: urgent, most of the time, does NOT equal important. By the way, urgent is not to be confused with an emergency. The latter is a different story altogether.

More often than not, something becomes urgent, because somebody (or you) neglected to do something in time, or didn't plan for making it happen.

Urgent tasks are deadline-related and often driven by others.

Important tasks are related to your goals and you want to do them.

So, how do you deal with all the "urgent" stuff, without losing your sanity?

Consider the following steps and best practices:

- 1 Write down your top (3 or 4) business and personal objectives.
- 2 Use the above as a gauge against which to evaluate all tasks (to-dos) and/or requests coming your way.
- 3 Anything, which supports your (business or personal) goals, is important.
- 4 Once you know what's important, it's time to prioritize. a. Urgent and Important = Priority 1 b. Urgent but NOT important = Priority 2 c. Not urgent but Important = Priority 3 d. Not urgent and not important = Priority 4
- 5 Everything being equal, you may give higher priority to a task if its completion (or performance) impacts your personal or your business' reputation. I.e.: you made a specific commitment to deliver or perform.
- 6 Once you identified your priorities for a given day, you must write them in your calendar, reflecting the actual time required for their completion.
- 7 If it's not in your calendar (with all the intention to do it), there is a 75% chance it won't be done.
- 8 Of course, there are interruptions. But, they occur to the extent you allow them to occur. If you must allow them, then you must also leave extra time in your calendar for interruptions.
- 9 Real life situations don't necessarily fall into nice, "black & white" categories. Urgent tasks do pop up or come your way. However, if you prioritize systematically, plan your tasks pro-actively and with reality, you should be able to accommodate urgent tasks and interruptions.
- 10 Learn to say no!

About the Author

Alex Revai, president of Productivity Solutions (<http://productivity-solutions.com>), is a professional organizer, who helps companies, businesses and professionals improve profit, productivity and peace-of-mind.



Excel 2007:

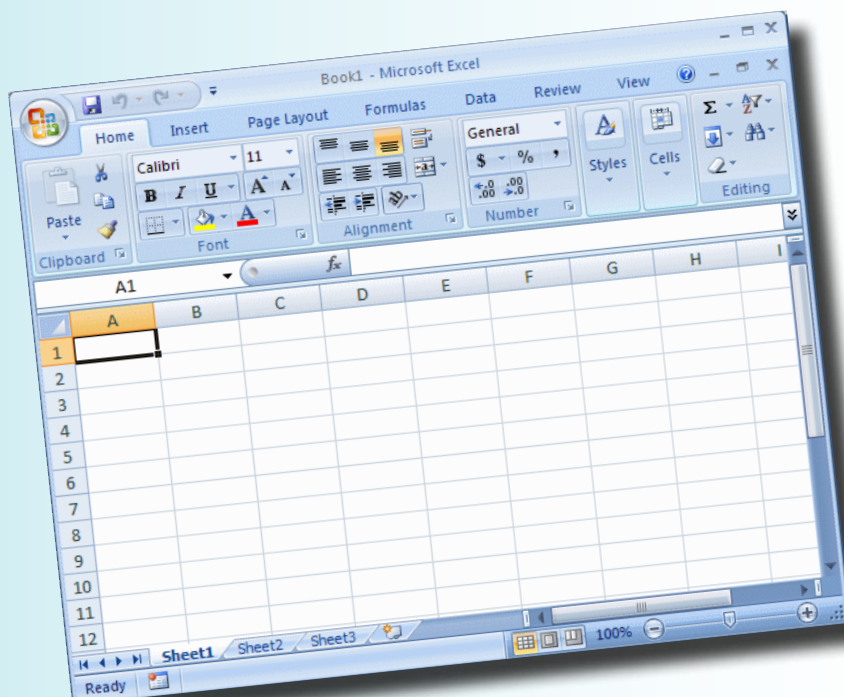
Finding & Correcting Errors in Calculations

Hurray! A way to check to make SURE those formulas are always right! Sometimes mistakes happen and an error of some sort finds its way into your formula. Well, the newest version of Excel has an easy way to find the source of the errors in your formulas by identifying the cells used in a given calculation and describing any errors that have occurred. This process is described as AUDITING.

Excel finds errors in various ways. One is to fill the cell holding the formula with that pesky error code I know you've seen at least once. Another audit would be ensuring the appropriate cells are providing the values needed. For that you'd use a trace of the cell's Precedents to identify which are the cells with values used in the active cell's formula. Excel highlights the cells and draws a blue tracer arrow from the precedent to the active cell. Or you audit the worksheet by identifying cells with formulas using a value from a given cell -- known as Dependents.

Great you say, but how do you do all that?

In the Formulas tab in the **FORMULA AUDITING** group there



are a series of functions to use to find and correct errors in your calculations. They are:

TRACE PRECEDENTS: Let's say cell D8 has a value (and is a subtotal) telling you that it equals C3:C7. The Trace Precedents will show you that it really does -- encloses the box and draws a blue arrow from the box to cell D8.

TRACE DEPENDENTS: Let's say you know that your D8 subtotal is going to be a total in the worksheet somewhere. Click the cell, and Trace Dependents and the blue arrow will show you where the total is D8's value is part of the correct total calculation.

REMOVE ARROWS: That's self-explanatory.

SHOW FORMULAS: Also self-explanatory.

ERROR CHECKING: For this function you will want to be in cell A1 and then click on Error Checking. This function takes you

to the error code. Then click the Error Checking button down arrow and click Trace Error. Now you know that you entered a blank cell for part of the formula instead of one with a value.

EVALUATE FORMULA: After you've fixed the error, click on Evaluate Formula and the dialog box opens with the formula for that cell, click thru each of the steps for the formula's elements then click Close.

So, how's that for help checking all those fun formulas?!

©Research compiled and written by Liz LaClair, President of Virtually Helps, LLC

About the Author

Liz LaClair is the President of Virtually Helps, LLC (a virtual administrative assistant services company). Go to her site, www.virtuallyhelps.com and download her free ebook: Tid Bits of Help for Microsoft Office.

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Making it Work:

Balancing Career and Family

By Natalie Bonthuys

A common obstacle that parents in the UK face is a lack of flexibility in the workplace. According to a recent CBI study, only 20% of companies in the country have family-friendly policies. The rest, it seems, are focusing on the bottom line instead of the individual needs of their staff.

UK labour law does give certain parents the right to request flexible working, including those with children under the age of six or disabled children under the age of 18. However, employers are not obliged to agree to these requests, but must consider them seriously, reports the BBC.

New maternity and paternity leave laws

In order to provide more support for working parents, the government is introducing new legislation, which will give parents more choice and flexibility as to how they use their leave.

According to Harriet Harman, Minister for Women and Equality, mothers will be able to transfer the last six months of their maternity leave to the father, with three months paid.

"This gives families radically more choice and flexibility in how they balance work and care of children, and enables fathers to play a bigger part in bringing up their children," she said.

The scheme is due to start in April 2011. At present, however,

Balancing a job and a family has always been a challenge for working parents. During the downturn, however, this has become even more of a juggling act as pay freezes, increased workloads and redundancies pile extra pressure on parents' time and earning capacity.

statutory maternity and paternity payments are less than the minimum wage, which means a lot of fathers and mothers from low-income households are going back to work sooner than they would like.

Working out of necessity rather than choice

The CBI reports that over 70% of mothers in the UK return to work after taking maternity leave. While it could be said that these working mothers 'have it all', a significant number of them are choosing flexibility over job satisfaction.

In fact, a recent study by WorkingMums.co.uk found that a staggering 88% of mothers who work have opted for roles below their skill level. Around 63% said they were putting their career aspirations on hold and choosing jobs that allow them more flexibility to balance work and family life.

One respondent reported giving up a job as a finance manager after having her third child because she could not afford full-time childcare and her employer allowed no flexibility in her position. She now works for the same company as a part-time administrative assistant. Others were more fortunate. One

said that after taking an 8-year career break to concentrate on being a mum, she found a job in her chosen field that offered flexible hours.

"I have also been approached by a previous employer and have been able to negotiate a 1-day a week equivalent on a consultancy basis," she said.

Family-focused workplaces

As an alternative to flexible working hours, some family-friendly workplaces offer on-site childcare facilities, which allow their employees to follow their careers and still be there for their children.

Vikki Grimes, a training manager at Microsoft, said having her sons at her firm's on-site crèche, which is just 50 yards from her desk, made her life easier.

"They know where you are and if they need you, you can be there in seconds," she explained.

American Express UK is another company with on-site childcare and a family-friendly approach. Around 30% of the company's employees have flexible working arrangements and parents on staff benefit from enhanced pay for maternity, paternity and adoption



88% of mothers who work have opted for roles below their skill level.

leave. As a result, the firm enjoys a return-to-work rate of almost 90% (up from 75% in 2007), reports HR Magazine.

Today's childcare options

Around 340,000 parents in the UK currently benefit from tax breaks on childcare vouchers, which equate to a 31% saving on the first £243 spent on childcare costs each month for basic rate taxpayers, or 51% for higher rate ones.

However, the government is planning to put an end to this tax relief scheme by 2015. The reason for ending the programme is to use the money to provide 40% of two-year-olds with 10 hours of free

childcare a week on a means-tested basis.

The Press Association reports that more than 22,000 parents are calling on the government to abandon this plan.

According to Simon Moore, managing director of Computershare Voucher Services, the UK's largest provider of vouchers, said the outrage expressed by working parents has been "phenomenal".

"These vouchers are a real benefit to hundreds of thousands of hardworking parents... I am not at all surprised that parents are protesting against this cut," he said.

While certain families are set to benefit from this move, the remaining parents will have to reassess their childcare options.

Nanny-share schemes

While most people believe that hiring a nanny is a privilege reserved for an elite few, a growing number of working parents are defying this assumption by entering into nanny share schemes. These involve two or more families pooling the cost of hiring a nanny instead of sending their children to a nursery or giving up work to care for them.

The nannies either share their hours between the families, or bring all the children together in the same house. This means parents pay less for the same amount of childcare hours and nannies benefit from a higher combined income.



"I looked at having a nanny but realised it would cost half my salary, so I decided to share."

According to the Guardian, agencies that specialise in matching nannies to a pair or group of families have seen a boom in business during the downturn.

Nannies are welcoming the trend, too. Lisa Wilkins, a nanny working in South London, said she prefers sharing her time between two families and added that a wider variety of families could now afford her services. "More people can have the best type of care for their child," she said.

Fiona Jull, a mother who lives in Wandsworth, opted for a nanny-share arrangement when she returned to work.

"I looked at having a nanny but realised it would cost half my salary, so I decided to share. I found a family - through a website - around the corner. I drop my son off two days a week and he's here two days a week," she said.

Are children of working parents at a disadvantage?

Adding to the pressures of being a working parent is the guilt that

one's children are not getting a balanced upbringing.

A recent study conducted by Institute of Child Health, found that five-year-olds whose mothers worked part- or full-time were more likely to consume sweetened drinks between meals, watch more television, use their computers more often, and catch a lift to school instead of walking or riding their bikes when compared with those children who had 'stay-at-home moms'.

Professor Catherine Law, who led the study, told the BBC that fathers were not taken into account as their employment levels had not changed, whereas the numbers of working mothers had increased significantly in recent years.

"Our results do not imply that mothers should not work. Rather they highlight the need for policies and programmes to help support parents," she added.

Experts have called for more research on the subject and numerous working mothers insist it is possible to earn a living, feed one's children healthy food and ensure they exercise - all it requires

is a healthy attitude.

Lorraine Candy, Editor-in-Chief of fashion magazine Elle, believes that working parents raise well-balanced children.

"I work in an industry populated with young people - many of them the proud produce of working mums. They are smart, ambitious, intelligent and grounded. They are inquisitive and engaged with the world. They are, above all, super-confident... Many of those I work with cite their parents as role models, especially their working mums," she said.

It seems as if a significant number of mothers and fathers in the UK are managing to earn a living and find innovative ways to provide their children with all the care, attention and guidance they need - and these working parents deserve more support from their peers, employers and government.

About the Author

Natalie is a regular contributor of career advice and jobs news for leading UK Job Board www.careersandjobsuk.com

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Turbulence Training: the key to fat loss

By Otto Roberto

Do you have questions about Turbulence Training? How it works? What's in the workouts? Or even what does it mean? One of the UK's top trainers, Paul Mort from PrecisionFitness.co.uk, wanted the low-down on the Turbulence Training system.

Q First, can you tell us the basics about Turbulence Training?

Turbulence Training is the result of years of study in the gym and in the research labs and library. From personal experience, I've found there is only one way to get the most fat loss and workout results in the least amount of time - you must increase your training intensity.

With the right workout, you can get more fat loss results in less workout time. That is the one and only goal of this training program. A better body in fewer workout sessions, and shorter exercise bouts.

That means:

- Shorter interval workouts instead of long slow cardio workouts
- More challenging strength training exercises, such as advanced bodyweight exercises and some traditional strength training free weight exercises

If you have two hours to spend in the gym every day, you can feel free to stick to the same relatively ineffective and inefficient program of long cardio and light weights. But if you are like most men and women and have 45 minutes (or less) on only three days of the week to workout, then Turbulence Training will work wonders for you. Male or female, almost everyone

I see in traditional fitness centers could benefit from increasing the challenge in their workout. And they can also benefit from getting in and out of the gym faster.

So that's what led me to Turbulence Training. It's simple, just-the-basics, results-oriented training. You

burn X calories over 30 minutes in the gym doing cardio, but don't boost your post-exercise metabolism, you're wasting the other 23.5 hours to burn a lot more calories.

And that's what happens with slow, steady workouts that never change. Sure you burn a few calories in the gym, but there is no "turbulence" on the body to increase your metabolism outside of the gym.

Instead, by using challenging

don't need fancy gym machines or even an expensive gym membership. If you have a bench, a ball and some dumbbells at home, you are set.

Q Okay so we're clear it's a training program package that will melt bodyfat fast, what makes it so effective?

Most people are so hung-up on burning a specific number of calories on a cardio machine, that they don't care how long they spend in the gym. If you



It's simple results-oriented training. You don't need fancy gym machines or even an expensive gym membership. If you have a bench, a ball and some dumbbells at home, you are set.

strength training, and choosing intervals over monotonous cardio, research has shown that your post workout metabolism is significantly greater. And an increased metabolism for an entire 24 hour period is what gives people results. And Turbulence Training workouts are more enjoyable than staring at a TV (or worse a wall) when "doing your time" on a cardio machine. You can get this great "metabolic turbulence" in a boot camp, with bodyweight, at home with dumbbells, or even in a busy gym. Nothing is more effective than Turbulence Training if you only have 45 minutes, three times per week to workout.

Q In my opinion, resistance training, both with free weights and bodyweight is the key to losing bodyfat, for our readers that are still unsure about this could you give me your opinion on my this statement?

Strength training is just one key for fat loss, it is essential to maximize your metabolism, and it is

absolutely, positively paramount to building the best body of your dreams.

For those that doubt, start with bodyweight training. Not only is this method of strength training effective at helping you sculpt your body, but it is also empowering to your self-confidence and 100% applicable to your daily living.

Research from the 2001 meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine showed that female subjects boosted their post-exercise metabolism to a greater level when they did 8 reps per exercise, rather than 12 reps. So low rep, strength training is best for boosting metabolism. It will get you more results in less time because it will continue to work while you recover.

Q I'm always telling people that aerobic exercise is useless for fat loss, does you agree with this? And why?

Aerobic exercise is certainly inefficient for fat loss.

By that I mean, the benefits pale in comparison to the fat loss you can achieve in less time with interval

training. Most people would be able to cut their workout time in half simply by using intervals rather than aerobic exercise.

Next time you go to the gym, do this admittedly un-scientific test... Take a visual survey of the "cardio" area and the strength training area. Where are the best bodies?

In the strength training area, no doubt.

And in fact, we can also find a lot of beautiful bodies in the Yoga and Pilates area. Why? There's certainly no "fat burning" cardio zone going on there. So what gives? In a word - nutrition.

Nutrition is the number 1 factor in fat loss. It trumps any fat loss program, no matter how good it is. Yes, even my beloved Turbulence Training will not be 100% effective if someone continues to eat chips and pints as their meals.

Eat for fat loss, and do some form of strength training to sculpt your body. When you take care of your nutrition, your body will be like modeling clay in your hands...and the exercises you choose to do with sculpt it. If someone continues on with aerobic exercise, the improvements will be negligible.

Q What about somebody that isn't a member of a gym? Can they still benefit from Turbulence Training?

Absolutely. As mentioned earlier, all you need is a bench, a Stability Ball (aka -

Physioball), and a set of dumbbells. A pullup bar would be a bonus, if you are strong enough to use the pullup and chinup exercises.

I've done many of the bodyweight exercises outside, as obviously you don't need any equipment to do many of the novel ab, leg, and pushing exercises.

And good nutrition certainly doesn't need a gym membership.

Q And lastly, I meet a lot of people who seem to have tried every diet going, tried classes, gyms and DVDS, what makes Turbulence Training different from these?

Most people train in their comfort zones. And while a lot of programs require a lot of effort, most programs lack an effective level of intensity – working closer to your maximum level of effort.

Sure, a set of 15 repetitions to failure for triceps pressdowns is tough, but it's not truly intense. Compare that to doing a set of 8 pushups - which for many people is much more intense - and now you are using your entire body a lot harder. Thus, the turbulence on the body is much greater. And your body will have to work harder after training to recover - and that's what increases your metabolism - and allows you to burn fat all day, rather than just for 20-30 minutes.

The same goes with the cardio vs. intervals. If you switch to intervals, you'll notice changes in days. And that's not hyperbole. I've heard it time and time again from TT users...they feel and see changes within 48 hours once they switch their workouts and start using the TT Fat Loss Nutrition Guidelines.

About the Author

For more info: <http://fatburningexercisinfo.4useful.com>



Your body will have to work harder after training to recover - and that's what increases your metabolism - and allows you to burn fat all day, rather than just for 20-30 minutes.

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How to make a delicious Chicken Curry

By Uma Wylde

In the course of creating new recipes, I get to taste and test out many chicken dishes but I can honestly say, none of them come close to this one. It is my all time favourite chicken dish. What you get is plump and juicy chicken strips served in a hot, spicy sauce. Basmati rice and a crunchy Asian slaw work beautifully alongside. The rice is perfect for mopping up all the delicious satay sauce and the Asian slaw has an incredibly clean and refreshing taste that balances perfectly both in texture and taste with the hot creamy peanut sauce, guaranteeing to make this a meal to remember!

Serving Size: 2 generous portions

Preparation & Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Effort Level: Easy

Shelf Life: 2 days in fridge, 3 months in freezer

Ingredients:

2 plump chicken breasts
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2-4 red bird eye chillies
4 fat cloves garlic
4 heaped tbsp powdered coconut milk
2 tbsp smooth peanut butter
3 spring onions
2 tbsp fish sauce
1 lime
2 tsp ketjap manis
1 tbsp sweet chilli dipping sauce
125g basmati rice

For The Asian Slaw:

100g cabbage
100g carrot
15g coriander leaves
2 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tsp fish sauce
1 garlic clove
1 inch piece of fresh ginger
1½ tbsp caster sugar
½ lime

N.B.: In this recipe I'm using coconut powder as I prefer using it canned coconut milk. However if you can't get hold of it use a 400ml can instead and add a little water if necessary to thin it down.

Here's What You Do:

Boil 1½ litres water in the kettle then pour 1 litre into a medium saucepan. Place over a high heat and add 1 tsp salt. Cover and bring to a rapid boil.

Rinse the rice under cold running water and add to the boiling water. Leave to cook uncovered for 12 minutes stirring occasionally.

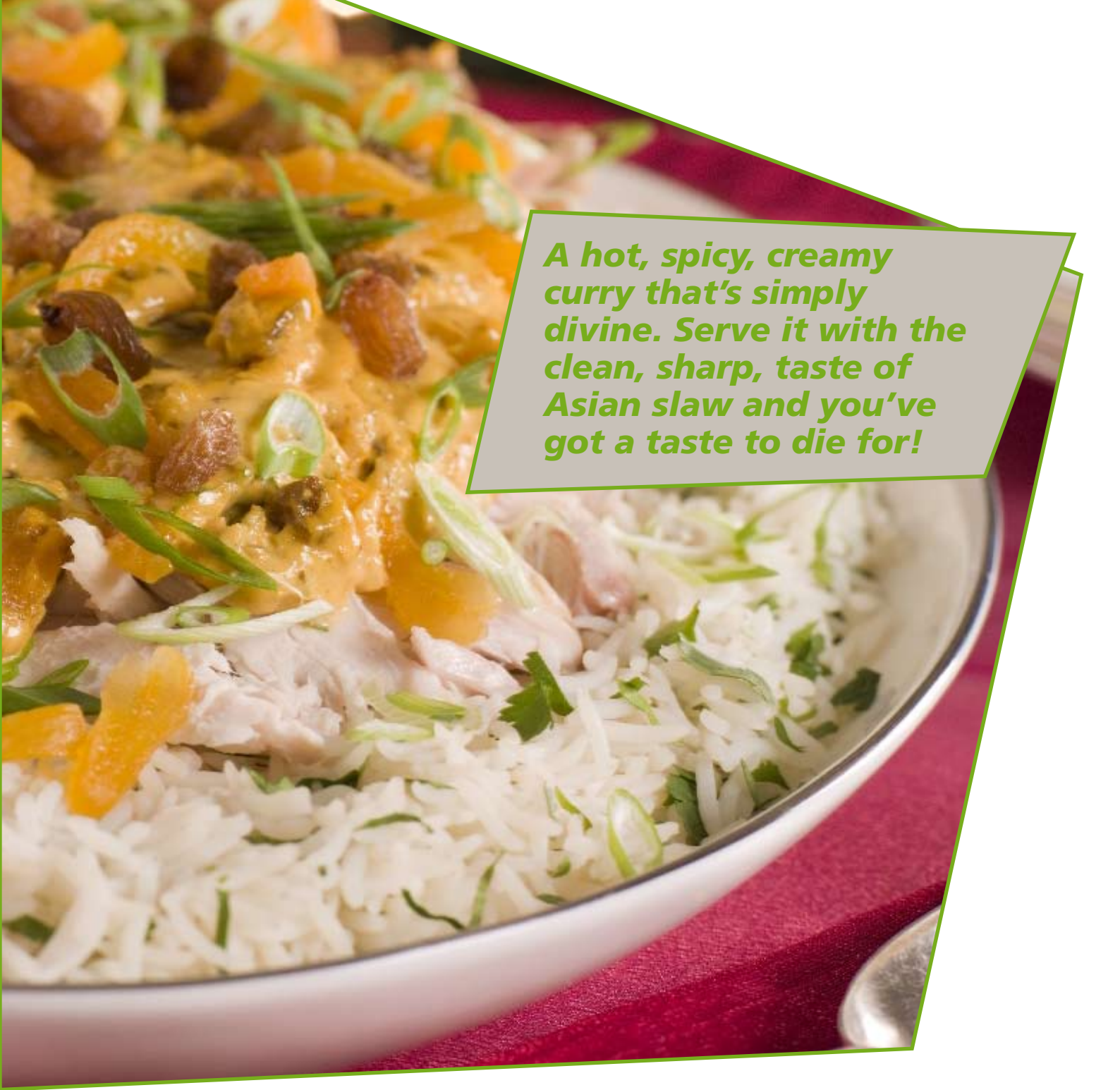
For the coleslaw: Peel and grate the carrot and tip into a salad bowl. Finely shred the cabbage and add to the carrot. Finely chop a handful of coriander leaves and add to the coleslaw. Cut 3 spring onions in half and finely chop the white part (reserve the green stems for later) and add to the coleslaw.

Peel the ginger and 1 clove garlic and rub both through a microplane into a small bowl. Add the juice of half a lime, 2 tbsp rice vinegar, 1 tsp fish sauce, and 1½ tbsp caster sugar. Mix well to dissolve the sugar then stir into the coleslaw.

Finely chop 4 cloves garlic and tip into medium sized saucepan. Thinly slice 2-4 chillies (depending on how much heat you like, plus the seeds if you like it really hot) and add to the saucepan. Add 1 tbsp sunflower oil and place on a high heat for 1 minute.

Now add 350ml boiling water, 4 heaped tbsp coconut milk powder, 2 tbsp smooth peanut butter and mix with a whisk or fork until smooth.

Add the juice from 1 lime, 2 tbsp fish sauce, 1 tbsp sweet chilli



A hot, spicy, creamy curry that's simply divine. Serve it with the clean, sharp, taste of Asian slaw and you've got a taste to die for!

dipping sauce and 2 tsp ketjap manis and reduce to a low heat.

Place 2 large bowls in a low oven to warm through. Drain the rice and return to the pan and cover with a lid to keep warm.

Now flatten the chicken breasts with the heel of your hand or use a pestal until they have an even thickness of 1 cm. Cut each breast into long thin strips approximately 1½ cm-wide.

Bring the peanut sauce to a gentle rolling boil by increasing to a medium heat. Add the chicken strips and cook for 3½ minutes.

Whilst the chicken cooks finely chop the reserved green spring onion stems and tip into the sauce. Taste the sauce and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Take the 2 warmed bowls out the oven.

Check the chicken. It should be just cooked through so take off the heat.

Add a portion of rice to each bowl along with the peanut chilli chicken and a serving of Asian slaw on the side. Serve and enjoy!

About the Author

Uma Wylde is a natural born cook. She specialises in creating stunning tastes. If you're having trouble getting food to taste the way you want it to or are just bored cooking the same old things, try following some of her carefully explained recipes at www.umawylde.com. Unlike traditional recipes, which often leave you dangling, hers show you how to bring the whole meal together, so everything turns out perfectly.

Blackberrys and Meetings do not mix!

By Marsha Egan

We've all done it. The meeting is going on and on. Your boss is rambling. You "get" the gist of the concept. You're bored. Your mind drifts. Hmmm. Wonder what newfound treasure has appeared in my PDA? Who will notice if you sneak a peek?

Your boss will. Others in the meeting will. Don't do it. You could be committing career suicide.

Robert Half & Associates recently conducted a study of 150 senior executives, which showed that 31 percent of them found it inappropriate for employees to check PDAs during meetings. Despite this finding, 86 percent of the senior executives polled had witnessed people engaging in this behavior.

So, if nearly one out of three execs in the study saw that behavior as inappropriate, the odds are against you. And the others in the meeting, who could be future executives, could also have an impact on your professional future.

Behavior in meetings can be career enhancing or career busting. People draw conclusions about people's leadership styles, preparedness, communication, and value by how they participate in meetings.

So if you want to short cut your career, just pull out that PDA.

Why can the quick check of that PDA be so hurtful?

Consider this. We've all been in conversations with people who look elsewhere while talking with us. It's irritating because it appears that they're looking for someone more

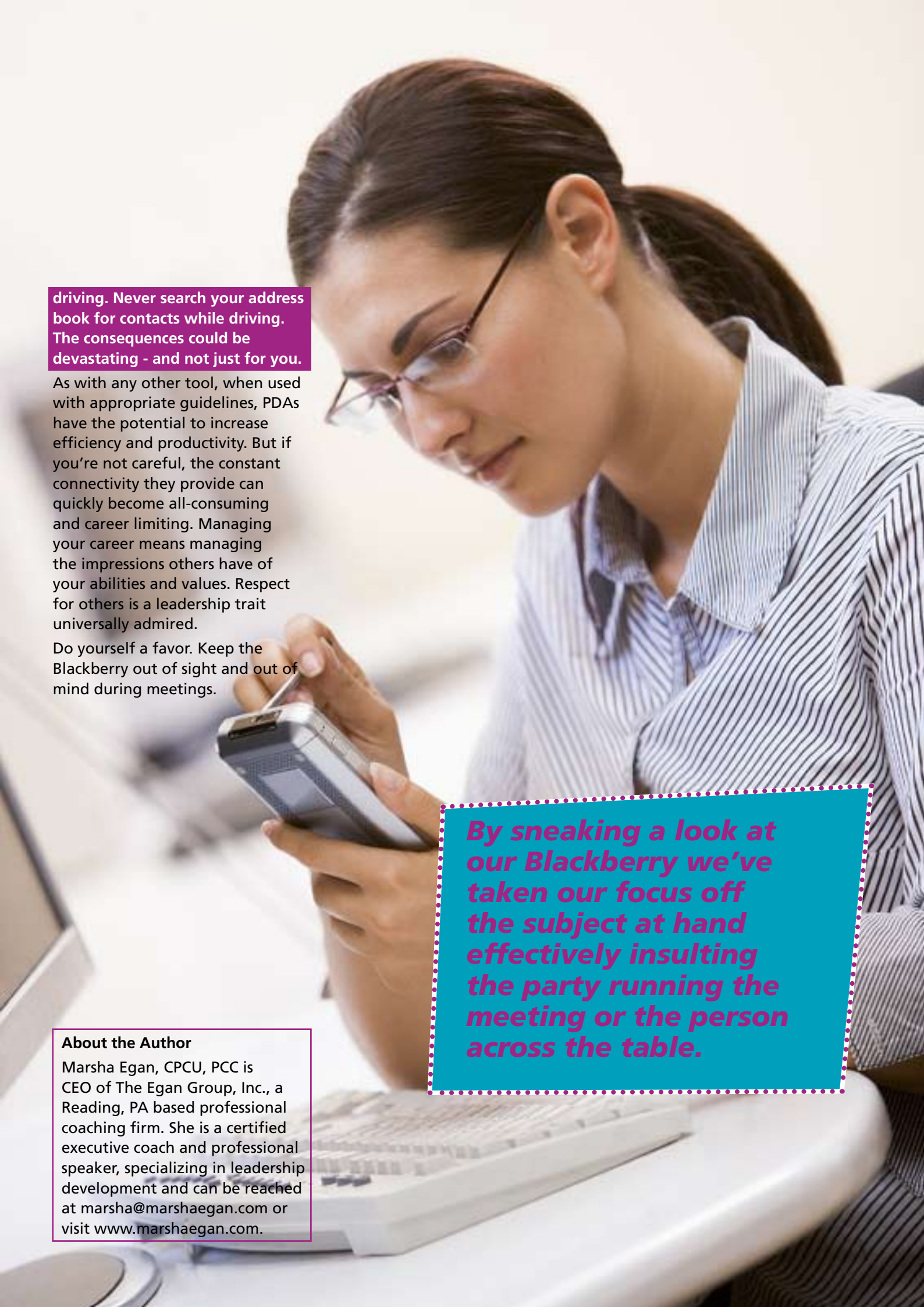
important to meet, or just plain aren't focused on the conversation at hand. It's rude. Translating this to the sneak check of the Blackberry, we've just done the same thing. We've taken our focus off the subject at hand effectively insulting the party running the meeting or the person across the table.

PDAs are no different from any other new technology, and guidelines as to expectations and usage must be set. The constant access provided by PDAs means that they can easily lead us to become consumed by work during all hours. By not encouraging people to maintain a good work-life balance, productivity suffers, and employees become so involved in responding to messages that they may act in ways that can be career-damaging - and potentially even hazardous. Checking and responding in meetings is not the only PDA career blunder. Here are some others:

- **Placing the PDA on the meeting or dining table.**
- **Having sound reminders that go off while in meetings or public events.**
- **Having long sound reminder themes that play loudly - no one needs to hear a full song every time you receive an email.**
- **Reading email while attempting to have a conversation.**
- **Playing videos and other sounds loudly.**
- **Typing while you are walking or driving**

If you follow a clear set of guidelines, however, PDA technology becomes a powerful ally that can enhance your career:

- **Show respect for meeting organizers and avoid annoying your colleagues by turning off your PDA before the meeting starts and keeping it out of sight.**
- **If you waiting for an urgent call or email, inform the meeting organizer in advance that you may have excuse yourself for a moment to attend to an urgent matter.**
- **When in a meeting, having a one-to-one conference, or at a restaurant, do not put the PDA on the table or check it in the middle of a conversation - it gives the impression that the PDA is more important than with the subject at hand.**
- **When you need to type a message, excuse yourself and find a private place to do it. Set the ring tone volume only as high as you absolutely need, and avoid ring themes that are lengthy or annoying.**
- **Turn all ring tones off when the lights go down whether you're at the movies, at a concert, or at any other a public event.**
- **Take control of your PDA, not the other way around.**
- **Decide when you are going to turn it off so that you can focus on your family, your hobby, or your spouse - and leave it off.**
- **Never text while driving.**
- **Never check or read email while**



driving. Never search your address book for contacts while driving. The consequences could be devastating - and not just for you.

As with any other tool, when used with appropriate guidelines, PDAs have the potential to increase efficiency and productivity. But if you're not careful, the constant connectivity they provide can quickly become all-consuming and career limiting. Managing your career means managing the impressions others have of your abilities and values. Respect for others is a leadership trait universally admired.

Do yourself a favor. Keep the BlackBerry out of sight and out of mind during meetings.

By sneaking a look at our BlackBerry we've taken our focus off the subject at hand effectively insulting the party running the meeting or the person across the table.

About the Author

Marsha Egan, CPCU, PCC is CEO of The Egan Group, Inc., a Reading, PA based professional coaching firm. She is a certified executive coach and professional speaker, specializing in leadership development and can be reached at marsha@marshaegan.com or visit www.marshaegan.com.