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NewzBreakTM

The Workplace Newsletter That's Both Informative and Fun!



I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!

Louis J. Costanzo
CEO

Time for those lovely daffodils!

It might get too cold in Washington, D.C. for the cherry blossoms.

But as March moves into April, expect the lovely and hardy daffodil to appear, bright yellow or white, peeking its trumpet head through the snow or cold to ring in the spring.

Those dependable spring blooms all have a history. Someone planted them to perk up a corner in the garden or trim a fence. And they grow, whether that home or garden or that person is there or not. In fact, they can grow undisturbed for decades, even centuries in the same plot, according to The Washington Post.

Their secret hardiness comes from a thick skin that shelters the inside of the bulb, where the leaf and flower are developing in late winter. The bulb itself keeps growing year after year, continuously absorbing nutrients all year round.

It is a flower known for thousands of years. First mention of them comes from a Greek botanist around 300 BC. They were brought to Britain by the Romans and grew freely in northern Europe.

Plant daffodil bulbs in the fall (especially October), three times deeper than the size of the bulb. Separate bulbs in the spring, but let their yellowing stems remain to support the bulb.



The best ways to express gratitude

How much do recognition and reward matter in business?

According to research by consultant O.C. Tanner, 79 percent of employees who quit their jobs say their work was unappreciated. And about two-thirds of Americans say they weren't recognized even one time in the previous year.

These numbers suggest a huge deficit in the need for their work and efforts to be appreciated.

There may be times when zipping a memo to employees about their good work is needed. But here are the best ways for employers to express gratitude, according to Fortune.

1. Make it personal. Notes to a group are nice, but a specific note to a person who contributed something especially helpful is best.
2. Make it timely. A pat on the back for work done during the last five years is nice. But what would be great is thanks for a difficult job completed now.
3. Make it sincere. Tell an employee how they contributed to the company's success or culture. Tell him or her why it meant something.
4. Make it relevant. One company, recognizing that employees have struggled to homeschool their children during the COVID-19 pandemic, created a complimentary tutoring program.

Recipe for a healthy, happy life

There are no magic pills or secret elixirs to create a healthy, happy life. There are mainly just small decisions we make every day.

Maintain a schedule. For most, work frames our schedules. Within that frame, however, it's important to have routines. Have a time to relax, exercise, to touch base with other people. Go to bed at the same time and get 7 to 8 hours of sleep, according to the Harvard Health letter.

Get out and about. Even if you have a desk job, take frequent opportunities to get up and walk, even just to get a drink of water. Movement maintains flexibility, balance, and strength. Even a little movement in spurts of 15 minutes or so is better than none. Take the stairs. Park away from the store entrance.

Eat well. Many doctors recommend a plant-based diet of vegetables, nuts, seeds, and fruits added in healthy proportions to animal-based foods. Eat in moderation.

Silence, meditation, prayer. Take a moment every day to clear your mind and rest in silence. According to Harvard Health, a research review published in JAMA Internal Medicine in January 2014 found meditation helpful for relieving anxiety, pain, and depression. For depression, meditation was about as effective as an antidepressant.

Forge community and family. Friendships and community can be found in social, religious, or other groups with shared interests. Friendships can grow from activities. Family usually forges the most long-lasting relationships. But whatever path is open to you, remember that strong social connections increase your chance of longevity, and may even help you recover faster from illness.

Do You Know...

... someone that could use our services? Perhaps a colleague, friend, family member, or networking buddy?

When a new client signs up for regular cleaning services at your recommendation; you will receive \$100!

If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them, and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send your \$100 Bonus!

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!

Thanks a Bunch!



Get organized now for the 2021 tax year

Each year, millions of Americans scramble to locate every receipt, form, pay stub and scrap of documentation they need to maximize their income tax refunds, or at least minimize the amount that they owe to the United States government on April 15.

If this sounds like you today doing your taxes for the 2020 tax year, it's time to adopt a new way to prepare for the 2021 tax year now.

According to Turbo Tax, the best way to maintain a good record of receipts and expenses is to handle them regularly, so you can avoid tracking down months-old materials. They recommend color-coded folders in an easy-to-access location. Folders might include home and office expenses, vehicle expenses and mileage, education costs, childcare expenses, medical expenses, and other items, such as charitable donations, work uniform purchase and cleaning costs (for work-only attire) and work-related expenses. Turbo Tax also recommends that you scan each receipt and maintain both electronic and paper copies.

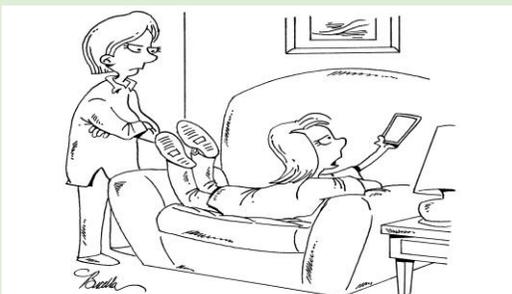
If the multi-folder system sounds like too much hassle, The Motley Fool recommends a simpler three-folder tax filing system.

Folder number one: Income.

Folder number two: Expenses and deductions

Folder number three: Investments.

Maintaining a year-round system for tax documents may sound annoying, but it pays off big. In 2015, taxpayers left about \$1.4 billion in tax refunds on the table with failure to file returns and other tax mishaps, according to CNBC.



"We have it easy? Your generation didn't have to worry about having to document every minute of your life."

Chickpea Pantry Pasta: A fun meal as winter gives way to spring

During the last weeks of winter, when decent seasonal produce becomes increasingly scarce and slushy, and miserable weather keeps us stuck inside, we all still wrestle with one age-old question: What should we make for dinner? Don't stress -- easy pantry pasta is quick, simple, forgiving and lets us flex our creative muscles for an affordable and fun meal. And most ingredients keep well in the pantry or are available year-round at most grocery stores. This recipe creates a salty, cheesy, bright, and filling meal in no time, and can be adapted to feed yourself or a crowd.

Ingredients:

- 1 box dried pasta (large tube-shaped works best)
- 1 can (14 oz.) chickpeas
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bunch kale, cleaned and chopped
- 1 bunch fresh rosemary (dried also works)

- 4-5 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium-sized lemon
- Preferred cooking oil or fat
- About one cup dry white wine or white wine vinegar and water
- Parmesan or other hard aged cheese, grated (half a cup or so, depending on your preference)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Optional add-ons: 5 minced pitted Kalamata or Castelvetrano olives; 1 tablespoon capers

A few minutes ahead of time, start heating a pot of salted water for your pasta. Then, in a medium-sized sauté pan over medium-high heat, bring about a tablespoon of cooking oil up to temperature until shimmering. Dump in the whole can of chickpeas and cook until the chickpeas take on some color, stirring every so often. Add a generous pinch of rosemary leaves, making sure to break in half to release flavor, and add salt and pepper. Continue cooking until fragrant, adding more oil or butter if needed. When chickpeas are hot and smelling great, dump in the small onion and cook until softened, then add the garlic and cook until fragrant. With a wooden spoon, scrape any fond that may have collected on the bottom of your skillet, then dump in about half of the wine to de-glaze.

If your water is boiling, this is a good time to start cooking your pasta. While the pasta cooks, add the chopped kale to the skillet and a little fresher rosemary. Add capers and olives if desired, as well. Cook in the wine until the kale is soft and cooked through, adding more wine or water as needed.

When the pasta is cooked al dente, scoop about half a cup of pasta water out and set aside, then drain the pasta and add to the skillet. Turn the heat up, add in around half of the reserved pasta water, a little more wine, a tablespoon or two of butter. Stir constantly while sprinkling grated cheese into the pan. This is where the magic happens -- the pasta water will combine with the butter, wine and melting cheese to create a creamy, glossy sauce. Continue cooking until the sauce is your desired consistency, adding more liquid or cheese to your tastes. There's really no wrong way to do this! Salt and pepper your pantry pasta before plating. Slice your lemon and spritz your pasta with fresh lemon juice to serve.



Trivia Teaser – Big and Little

1. Who wrote about her childhood near Pepin, Wisconsin in the 1870s in the novel "Little House in the Big Woods"? a-Louisa May Alcott, b-Laura Ingalls Wilder, c-Willa Cather, d-Helen Keller.

2. Which comic strip character was the subject of the first Big Little Book published in 1932? a-Tarzan, b-Flash Gordon, c-Dick Tracy, d-Lil' Abner.

3. Which actor played the character Jack Crabb, from age 16 to 21, in the 1970 movie western "Little Big Man"? a-Dustin Hoffman, b-Gene Hackman, c-Marlon Brando, d-George Peppard.

4. Which U.S. city is nicknamed "The Biggest Little City in the World"? a-Atlantic City, New Jersey, b-Green Bay, Wisconsin, c-Reno, Nevada, d-Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

5. Which of these actresses did not play a main role on the HBO series "Big Little Lies"? a-Nicole Kidman, b-Reese Witherspoon, c-Meryl Streep, d-Robin Wright.

6. Which woman did Abraham Lincoln refer to as "the little lady who started the big war"? a-Harriet Beecher Stowe, b-Harriet Tubman, c-Clara Barton, d-Julia Grant.

7. In which U.S. state would you find Big Pine Key and Little Torch Key? a-Washington, b-Maine, c-Minnesota, d-Florida.

8. Who was the host of the junior talent TV show "Little Big Shots"? a-Ed Asner, b-Steve Harvey, c-Jeff Dunham, d-Andy Richter.

9. Which 2012 song was the first number one hit for the country group Little Big Town? a-"Redneck Yacht Club," b-"Little Toot," c-"Pontoon," d-"Buy Me a Boat."

10. What was the last name of pro baseball brothers Lloyd and Paul, nicknamed "Little Poison" and "Big Poison"? a-Waner, b-Dean, c-Aaron, d-Wheat.

1-b, Laura Ingalls Wilder
2-c, Dick Tracy
3-a, Dustin Hoffman
4-c, Reno, Nevada
5-d, Robin Wright
6-a, Harriet Beecher Stowe
7-d, Florida
8-b, Steve Harvey
9-c, "Pontoon"
10-a, Waner

Answers to 'Big and Little'

AKA Sparrow Grass

Across

1. Order between "ready" and "fire"
4. Milky gems
9. Can. neighbor
10. 1990 Madonna hit
11. Tide type
12. Wear away
13. Leaning
15. Alternatively
16. Spooky
18. Exists
20. Spheres
23. TV, radio, etc.
25. ___ few rounds
26. Used a crowbar
27. Calendar abbr.
28. Flippant
29. ___ publica

Down

1. Surrounding glow
2. Wife of Osiris
3. Syrup flavor
4. Prepared food designation
5. "Merchant of Venice" heroine

6. In the past
7. Form of pachisi
8. Soothsayer
14. Homes for hawks
17. "Pomp and Circumstance" composer
18. Little devils
19. Antitoxins
21. Pained expression
22. Droops
24. Insult, in slang

S	E	R		Y	S	S	V	S
G	U	V		D	E	I	R	P
A	O	G		A	I	D	E	M
S	M	L	A	R	E	S	I	S
		E	I	E	E			
R	O		T	N	V	L	S	V
E	D	O	E	R	P	R	I	R
E	U	E	V	O	A	S	U	
S	L	S	A	P	O	M	A	I

The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

Staying safe with nanomaterials

Nanomaterials are a concern for a variety of workers and business owners, from construction to janitorial services

Defined as objects that are less than 100 nanometers in diameter, nanomaterials are found in cosmetics, cement, paints, fabrics, and electronics. Nanomaterials in dust or mist can easily be inhaled and absorbed.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, says workplaces that may use nanomaterials include chemical or pharmaceutical labs or plants, manufacturing facilities, medical offices or hospitals and construction sites.

Consider the following ideas for staying safe with nanomaterials and consult your city and state laws and guidelines for more information.

- * Wear a respirator. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter and/or use a wet method to control dust. Avoid compressed air and dry sweeping.

- * Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

- * Work in well ventilated spaces with HEPA filters

The World Health Organization published a 96-page guide about nanoparticle safety in 2017 and recommended assessing health hazards of various manufactured nanomaterials (MNMs), risks related to exposure and controlling exposures.



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About Our Company

MAFS is a Commercial Janitorial and Floor Care company. Since 2009 we have built a solid reputation for quality and dependable service.

We offer Commercial cleaning, Post Construction cleaning and Floor care services, designed to fit the needs of the customer. Our flexible cleaning schedules and cleaning programs are guaranteed to fit most budgets.

Why these abbreviations?

Mrs. - Stands for Mistress, the opposite of Master, which is what a married woman would be called. In some American language traditions, the R is pronounced: Mizrez.

lb. - Pound. Comes from ancient Roman era in Britain: Libra Pondo: A pound by weight.

oz. - Ounce. Originated with the Roman Latin word uncia. In Italian, the word became onza and shortened to Oz.

stat - Immediately. Heard on medical TV shows. It comes from the Latin word statium.

Staff Members Making the News



Keith Taylor has been with MAFS for 6 years. He's dedication and hard work earned Keith our Employee of the Month. Congratulations Keith!

How to say no

An old adage says that the most successful people aren't those who say yes most often, but those who say no.

It makes sense: "No" is a means of prioritizing one's time (or even money), deciding where it's best spent and with whom. Yet "no" can be really difficult in a culture that seems to value those who add to their plates instead of lighten them.

And while some people will advise you that "No is a complete sentence" -- meaning, we don't always need a grand excuse, explanation, or disclaimers -- it's still a good idea to be polite. So how can we get in the habit of politely declining requests that come our way?

Here are some tips:

* Keep it clear and concise. You want to avoid being hounded, and the people asking likely want to avoid being the hounder.

* Avoid the silent treatment. Have you ever wished someone would have just said no rather than avoiding you? Yeah, that stinks. Don't be that person.

* Offer an alternative. In business, this can mean a referral elsewhere. At work, it can be a suggestion for how to get something done another way. In your personal life, perhaps another day or location is better.

* Set ground rules for yourself in advance. It's easier to say no when you've established boundaries for yourself and don't have to take each decision on a case-by-case basis. For example, you might decide that you always work out first thing in the morning -- so your calendar is already blocked off and you've mentally committed yourself to something.

* Say thank you. This isn't a must, but it's often appreciated. A thank you for the offer, the opportunity, for thinking of you, etc. -- followed by a polite decline.

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\$400 minimum purchase

Includes office chairs and upholstery covered partitions (up to \$100 value)

Schedule by March 30th

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410-793-7172
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Take the Trivia Challenge and Win a \$25 Gift Card to Applebee's!

The first <##> people who call our office with the correct answer will be entered into the drawing!

How much in tax refunds were left on the table by taxpayers in 2015?

- a. \$2.5 M b. \$1.0 B c. \$14 M d. \$1.4 B

HINT: The answer is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.