



# MINORITIES & SUCCESS

*Spring 2016*

**Building A Successful Business  
Attributes Of An Effective Life  
Welcoming Families Of  
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# 5 Signs Your Company Has a Strategy Execution Problem

By: Richard Lepsinger

In 1982, Walter Kiechel published a groundbreaking study, “Corporate Strategists Under Fire,” that found more than 90 percent of organizations were failing to execute their strategy. The majority of these companies’ executive teams spent less than an hour each month discussing it, and most employees didn’t have a basic understanding of what it entailed.

Unfortunately, not much has changed for many companies in the

last 30 years.

Worse, most companies don’t realize they have a problem.

That’s because they only see the surface-level warnings, the tip of a massive iceberg standing between their goals and their accomplishments.

Is your company seeing any of these five signs of strategy execution failure?

## Lack of Accountability

General Motors is a prime example that passing the blame can have tragic consequences. In a public relations nightmare that carried on for months, the automaker recalled as many as 26 million vehicles that have been blamed for at least 13 deaths.

An internal investigation found employees repeatedly failed to call attention to serious problems when

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they suspected something was wrong. It wasn't a deliberate cover-up; just the way GM had done business, with "no demonstrated sense of urgency" and "nobody (raising) the problem to the highest levels of the company," Barra is quoted saying in a recent Harvard Business Review article.

She described a "pattern of incompetence and neglect" throughout the company that resulted in the dismissal of at least 15 employees.

When employees are quick to point fingers, it's often a sign of a larger problem.

## Resistance to Change

Three years ago, Nokia went through a massive restructuring that was supposed to bring it back to life. Today, the former communications giant has been absorbed by Microsoft and lives on mostly as a case study on what happens when companies fail to adapt to changing conditions.

What did Nokia do wrong? For one, it failed to expand its market share in the United States in a timely manner and maintain its position as an innovator, according to Dan Steinbock, a research director of international business at the India, China and America Institute. Restructuring only made it worse as its market share continued to shrink.

Other examples abound. Despite being the first to develop the digital camera in 1975, Kodak failed to adapt to the digital revolution until it was too late, fearing it would cannibalize its film business. Blockbuster, too, struggled to add value to something that had become a commodity, giving customers no incentive to visit the store once they could access videos anywhere.

Companies resist change for many reasons-out of habit, out of fear or because a sense of "tunnel vision" prevents them from seeing where they fit into the big picture of their industry.

## Management Doesn't Clearly Communicate Strategy

Without a clearly defined vision, the blind are leading the blind and confusion abounds.

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Avon Products struggled with this under its former CEO Andrea Jung. There were attempts to move into department stores with a new line targeted to younger women, but it was at the expense of Avon's foundation of direct selling.

Clearly defining the strategy was the first step Avon missed, but managers must go beyond that. They need to tie the objectives to incentives that make sense for everyone, regardless of their department. If marketing employees were being judged on how effectively they promoted the new product line but the sales staff incentive structure was based only on direct sales, this disconnect would have made it nearly impossible for the two departments to support each other.

### Poor Decision-Making

Who has the final say when the boss isn't around? What's guiding your employees to make decisions when there's no clear answer? Do they make decisions based solely on speed or what has worked in the past? Who else is involved in the review process?

These are telling questions that gauge your organizational effectiveness.

When one person is singlehandedly making key decisions with little or no input, it almost certainly leads to shortsighted judgment calls.

We saw this at J.C. Penny, when the new CEO decided to market the department store chain as an upscale company without consulting customers to see if they were willing to pay more for merchandise perceived to have a higher value. Spoiler alert: They weren't, and Johnson was fired last year.

### Lack of Coordination

How often do you hear the phrases, "That's not my job," or "That's a low priority for us right now"?

Too many companies suffer from the "silo syndrome" of airtight departments that focus only on their own priorities, neglecting the big picture.

It's not only frustrating within an organization; it's also



detrimental to customers. If you're selling a software program, a client may interact with three different people from your company before making a purchase. They may respond to a marketing email that touts its benefits and ease of implementation. Then they'll be contacted by a sales person who follows a similar script but sets unrealistic expectations about the time it will take to install it. The software engineers who execute the job aren't aware of what was promised to make the sale; they're just focused on making sure everything works correctly, even if that requires some additional testing.

Wherever you have a lack of coordination, you'll see tension among departments, negative attitudes, miscommunications and missed deadlines.

These problems can be so entrenched within a company culture that it often takes a third party to bring them to light. An organizational consulting firm can ask the tough questions department heads avoid, helping them identify where silos exist and how they can be broken down.

If your company has struggled with inefficiencies, bad decisions or scattered failures that seem unrelated, we can help you connect the dots and close the gap between your strategy and its execution.

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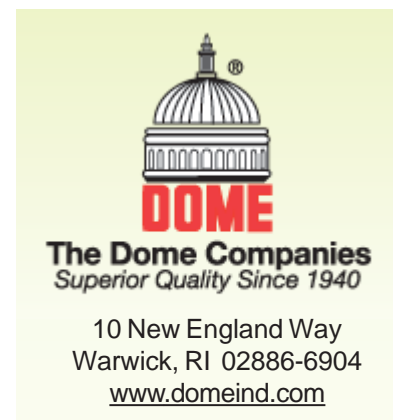
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# Building a Successful Business - How to Move Past the Need For Perfection

By: Michala Storm

A friend of mine is a very talented graphics designer. She has done numerous of work that really is outstanding within her field. However, sometime ago as business was slowing down she was made redundant by her boss. She has now decided to start up her own business.

The problem is, however, that my friend seems to be “the best kept secret in the world” that I know of. To start with she does not have a

webpage or a simple business card which does not make it easy for her to approach future customers. Moreover even if potential customers wanted her work they would not know how to find her.

So, why is my friend procrastinating something that she clearly wants and is capable of doing? The answer is very simple. My friend believes that her website has to be nothing less than perfect otherwise she will not want to get it out there. So far the result is not

what she wants. She has no customers. This is obviously not a situation that my friend or any other business owner wants to be in.

This is a very simplified example although from my experience as a coach I do not think my friend is very much different from a lot of other people who wants to start up their own business. Of all the reasons that are holding people back I have found the need for perfection to take first prize.

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**So what is this thing about wanting perfection?**

First let me state that from my point of view perfection is an illusion that mostly serve to hold us back. Please do not get me wrong. Like I said we all want to do a good job. That is honourable, it helps make the world go round and I highly respect that. However, the need for perfection is different from doing a great job. The need for perfection is to aim for something that simply does not exist and therefore a great way to hold yourself back.

**So what do I mean by saying that perfection does not exist?**

Well, in reality if something was “just perfect” it would mean that there was no room for improvement. This simply is not true. No matter how great a piece of work there will always be some room for improvement. You may choose not to improve your work but fortunately the room for improvement will always be there. The room for improvement is what motivates us and help us to develop further so that hopefully we continue to grow.

**Following are a few questions that I suggest you ask yourself in order to move past your need for perfection:**

1. What exactly is my relationship to perfection?
2. Does this perspective serve me in getting my work done?
3. Are there other perspectives that would serve me better?

**I have found that the following perspectives have served me and others very well in creating great results:**

1. I choose completion over perfection
2. Done is better than perfect
3. Good enough quite often really is good enough
4. Good enough may be viewed “great” by others
5. Perfection is highly overrated growing is better

# 5 Things You Should Know Before You Start Your Own Business

By: Iyonna Woods

The US economy is very fickle. That proved very relevant in 2008 in the crash of the housing market, which had a domino effect on the entire job and stock market. Yes, the economy is cyclical and periodically corrects itself, which sometimes means that your job is at risk. What is the solution? Work for yourself or become an entrepreneur. While entrepreneurship is not an easy course of action, it may prove more rewarding than anything you've ever pursued.

Here are some things to keep in mind before you start your business:

## **1. Develop a relationship with a mentor.**

Just like anything in life, if you have never done it before you should listen to your mentor's advice. The insight that an experienced entrepreneur can offer you can save you time and money by helping you avoid mistakes early in your journey.

## **2. Be ready for the long haul.**

No success story happens overnight. An entrepreneur is able to learn from mistakes and not get discouraged. Remember why you got started on your journey and never give up. While it may seem easier to go back to your job, nothing worth having is ever easy. Your mentor will be there to push you when times get tough. A business owner's commitment to success is the distinguishing factor between businesses that stand the test of time and those that do not.

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### 3. Consider building a home based business before starting a traditional business.

One of the deterring factors of most is lack of start-up cash. A home based business, also known as direct sales or network marketing, gives you the opportunity to start a business for less than \$1000. The great thing about a home based business is that there are no caps or limits on the income you can earn. Eliminating the need for a small business loan. You can invest in yourself. Direct sales allows you to learn marketing techniques and other business strategies that you can apply to traditional business as well. Often referred to as “personal growth programs with a compensation plan”, some of the greatest business masterminds in America, like Donald Trump, Robert Kiyosaki, and Bill Gates, endorse direct sales. Network marketing also gives you a network of mentors that want to see you succeed while generating income.

### 4. You have to invest in your business.

Be it a traditional brick and mortar business or a home based business, you must invest before you see a profit. Your business is not a job where you get paid to show up. In entrepreneurship, you get paid when you produce results. You must invest time and money. Look at your business like one of your children. Much time, energy, and money goes into raising productive children. While raising your children, you believe in them and their potential even when they stumble. You keep encouraging and investing in them. You never give up on your children or consider them a lost cause. Do the same with your business.

### 5. There are no short cuts.

Fitness fanatics say that the results you want only come from discipline and hard work. Taking short cuts might get you results but they will not last. Listen to your mentor’s advice, then roll up your sleeves and get to work. Hard work will always beat talent, no matter the industry.

Entrepreneurship is an incredible journey. Before you get started, develop a relationship with a mentor. Be ready to go the distance to see success. If you have never started a business or feel like you don’t have access to the money required to start one, consider building a home based business first and using that income to invest in your business idea. You will have to invest in your business before you see rewards. Hard work and discipline is the only way to see success.

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# Starting Your Own Business - The Pros and Cons You Must Consider

By: Rhett Kniep

Starting your own business...

Just the sound of that phrase conjures up pictures in the mind of the entrepreneur. Freedom. Money. Fulfillment. Starting your own business is an opportunity available to millions in the great nation of America in which we live, but with every opportunity there come liabilities. As wise business people, we are compelled to consider the advantages... and disadvantages, of a start up business.

To begin, let's look at the pros.

**1. Freedom.** Is there anything more valuable than freedom? Since the presence of freedom allows for all the other benefits we find in life, it stands to reason freedom would have to be at the top of the list of pros for starting your own business. If you can pick your own trade or service, do it in the manner in which you choose (with few limitations), do it for as long as you choose, and then sell that business to someone else when you choose... you have

freedom, and freedom is not only the platform from which all other business benefits spring from, it is the greatest single benefit.

Freedom to make your own choices, work when you want to, vacation when you want to... what price freedom?

**2. Money.** More money has been made and can be made by self-directed enterprise than any other way of work. If you need proof of this, look to history. Read stories of

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entrepreneurs. You can go back hundreds of years, or you can look to your parent's generation. Either way, you will find the fortunes of this country have been built on the foundation of small business. There are massive fortunes in big business, to be sure, but every big business began as a small business; one or several individuals identifying needs and wants and seeking out ways to fill those needs and wants in a profitable manner. You may be able to secure a decent salary at a good company, but the money you can make in private enterprise dwarfs it many times over.

**3. Fulfillment.** Fulfillment is harder to define than the other more tangible aspects of business enterprise. While running a business can bring huge financial rewards, deeper and more meaningful are the personal development gains that come from it. Whether or not one makes a lot of money, if he or she can experience personal development and growth as a result of their business venture, they have profited. Some entrepreneurs find ways to build a lifestyle business, based upon what they love most and are talented at doing. Others find the very process of building a company of any kind brings out qualities in themselves they were not even aware of.

Starting your own business is a journey of personal fulfillment. There is more satisfaction in creating your own enterprise than in developing someone else's, because your business is of you, and about you, and for you.

Now, we take a look at some cons, the downsides to starting your own business.

**1. Time.** The precious, irreplaceable commodity of time. There is an overabundance of time shortage, and it's never gonna change. Unfortunately, starting your own business requires lots of time: time to create the perfect plan, time to investigate the market, time to build relationships with suppliers and subcontractors and affiliates, time to find workers and employees, time to market your goods...

When something takes time from your life, it means something (or someone) else is not getting it. This aspect of starting your own business keeps many people out of the venture. It's a high cost to pay.

**2. Stress.** Working for someone else can bring on plenty of stress: meeting the boss's expectations, dealing with



annoying co-workers, following someone else's schedule for you. All of these and more are a reality to people every day in the workforce. But the stress of starting your own business and running it successfully can be hellish. When you are boss, you pay the bills, you pay the suppliers, you pay the fees, and you have to make sure YOU get paid so you can pay everyone else. It isn't easy.

Stress is as much a part of starting your own business as is the freedom you gain. In life, there's no having your cake and eating it too. To have the benefits, one must be willing to deal with the costs.

**3. Insecurity.** The advantages of small business are many, but security is not one of them. Why? The lack of security is a cost you pay to gain a benefit: adventure (aka freedom). I have yet to find anything in life where you have adventure and security at the same time.

Think about it. When all is set, and every plan fulfilled, and every debt paid, and every loose end secured, where is the adventure? When we are medicated, fed, and comfortable, we are BORED. Yes, it's true, whether people admit it or not. There is no adventure in having everything perfect and secure.

You can see starting your own business creates a lack of security that a solid position at another company might not. When you are the captain, you know that if you don't perform and make it happen, the ship goes down. And no one else will plug the hole and make it float again. It's on your shoulders alone. That lack of security is a cost to pay when having your own business.

Starting your own business has great benefits, and great costs. People throughout history have scaled the rocky cliffs of challenge and difficulty and reached the summit of business success. This is capitalism, and it rests upon the willingness of entrepreneurs. You can be a part of this fulfilling adventure but you must weigh the pros against the cons to make sure you consider the payoff - worth the payout.

Rhett Kniep is a licensed real estate business broker and building contractor. For over a decade he has successfully worked in the real estate investment business, buying and rehabbing and selling investment homes, commercial real estate, and businesses. He enjoys sharing his learned insights in business sales and development with others.

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# Three Killer Mistakes in Government Contracting

By: Gloria Berthold Larkin

Owners of small businesses from all over the U.S. sold over 83 billion dollars of services and products to the U.S. federal government in just the last federal fiscal year. Of that total, those businesses that are certified as 8(a) sold \$10.3 billion in services and products.\* If you are not as successful in the market as you want to be, you may be asking yourself: “What do they know that I don’t?”

Even successful contractors will tell

you that they have made many mistakes learning the ropes in this market. After all, it is a tough, complicated and rigorous market that demands expertise, dedication and perseverance before success is achieved.

While all contractors have made mistakes when trying to enter or become more successful in the government market, successful

business owners have learned from their mistakes, make the necessary changes and move forward to greater business opportunities and larger contracts.

As you read through the top three killer mistakes listed here, note those that you recognize and make the changes now. You will start to see benefits and the doors that were slammed tight will start to open for your business.

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## Killer Mistake #1

Does Your Business Look Like a Risky Business?

This is a core issue with government contracting. Often we are talking about not just thousands or hundreds of thousands, but millions of dollars in contracts.

Contracting officers and other decision-makers have been trained to choose the least risky of options. As tax-payers, this is a good thing. And a business people who want to win contracts, once you know and understand this, you can take the steps needed to make your business stable, secure and as capable as possible.

## What Exactly Does a Risky Business Look Like?

A risky business has no track record. It has no customers that could be asked for a reference. It has no bank account. It has no credit history. It has no web site. The owners use AOL, Gmail, Yahoo and other free email services for government communications. The business has not been registered in CCR. There is no commercial phone number, just a cell phone. It has no employees and no record of making tax payments.

Since all government contracting officers are, by the nature of their jobs and their legal responsibilities, risk-adverse, the more steps you can take to mitigate the risks the better your chances are of being successful.

## Take These Steps to Mitigate Risk

There are specific steps you can take to make your business be as stable and secure as possible. First, know the requirements of being a government contractor. For instance, all federal contractors must be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), a federal government web site. When you successfully register at CCR (or with your state or local government if you choose to target them first), you show that you understand and have the legal basics required (company name, bank accounts, etc.)

If you have sold products or services to anyone else, you will want to ask three to five of your customers to be a reference for you. Contracting officers will check

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references and if your references are good, and are willing to say so, this makes you much less risky than those businesses that have no references (or even worse, have negative references!)

### Other Steps That Will Build Your Credibility

Create a professional web site describing your services and products and clearly define how you fit into the government market. You can use the Capability Statement format described in the previous issue of MEA if you need help with the recommended content. Use an email address containing your website name. Never use AOL, Gmail, Yahoo or other free email services for government contracting communications as they make you appear fly-by-night and unprofessional.

Use a commercial phone number listed in the name of your business. This phone number would be used as the main, or corporate, contact number. Government also wants a separate fax number as well. It is fine to use your cell phone as your direct line, but not as a main business number.

### Killer Mistake #2

#### You Do Not Understand the Language

Whether you are starting at the local city level, the state level or even the federal government level, every segment has its own language, processes and procedures. If you do not understand the conversations, the acronyms or procedures, you make it much more difficult on yourself.

#### Learn the Lingo

You will hear new terms and acronyms at every meeting, outreach session and conference. If you are unsure of what they mean, it is appropriate to ask. People involved in government contracting get very used to speaking in acronyms, technical terms and buzz-words and often do not remember that even they had to learn the terms at one point. If you prefer to research first and therefore feel more comfortable conversing with contracting officers, you can use resources such as [assba.gov](http://assba.gov) for study materials.

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**Example of Lingo: Purchase Vehicle**

Government entities most often do not buy products and services the same way consumers or other businesses may buy. In the private sector, when we sell something to a consumer, we often write up a receipt after they give us the money. If we sell in the business-to-business market, when we propose a complicated or high-cost service or product to another business we often use a contract that both parties will sign which includes all of the required information and payment process.

Government entities have a more complicated purchase process (with one exception). Most often, they will use something called a purchase vehicle. This vehicle is not something one would drive, but rather it is a tool or method used to buy something.

The good news is a vehicle may be as simple as a credit card. The bad news is that a vehicle may be as complicated as writing a two hundred page response to a formal proposal.

If you have heard of a GSA Schedule, that is a common purchase vehicle used by the federal government.

Essentially it is a pre-approved contract where your pricing structure, your legal business entity and your services and products are all analyzed and final prices negotiated until you and the government agree. A GSA Schedule is a five-year contract, and it is renewable for three more five year periods making it a total of a twenty year-long contract.

Once you have an approved GSA Schedule, you have not made a sale, but you do have a license to hunt; and an easy tool or vehicle for the government to use when they want to buy something from you. There are other types of purchase vehicles called Government-Wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs), Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) or Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts. These are also good examples of why acronyms are used so much in government contracting.

**Accept Credit Cards**

One of the best and simplest method or contract vehicle used is a government credit card. The government will make billions of dollars in purchases every year for all types of products and services simply by using a VISA or

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MasterCard credit card. If you accept these cards in your business, you can make many more sales. Check with your local bank for the steps needed to accept credit cards in your business.

### **Killer Mistake #3**

The third biggest mistake that business people make in government contracting is to not be prepared before asking for and meeting with decision-makers. Most government entities, and definitely the federal government, give you all the background information you need, however, you must do the research and homework first.

### **Do Your Homework...First!**

If you want to find out what opportunities the federal government has available right now, you would look at the web site: [fedbizopps.gov](http://fedbizopps.gov). While every opportunity is not listed, most over \$25,000 are shown and it is well worth your time and effort to use this site as a mandatory stop in your research process.

If you wish to learn what the federal agencies are projecting to buy during the rest of the fiscal year, but for which they have not yet created actual contracts, you can find each agency's Forecast of Contract Opportunities at their own web site, usually by searching for the "Small Business Office." This forecast is a "wish list" of what they want to buy, and a great place for you to determine if it is worth your time to pursue an agency as a target.

Another extensive resource available through the federal government is the Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation. This is a secure web site available to everyone at: [fpds.gov](http://fpds.gov). This is a database of all of the recent past government contract information. It is good for you to use to find the agencies that have already purchased what you sell. If they purchased it last year, there is an excellent chance they will need it again this year and next year too.

Eliminating these killer-mistakes will help you turn the corner to success in the government contracting market. Use these tips to build a healthy, stable and secure government contracting business.

\* Source: FPDS.gov

# What Does Your Office Say About You?

By: Rick Johnson

What does your office say about you? Are you organized, precise, orderly, confident and do you maintain control. Your office may be telling the world something different about you. As a “Strategic Advisor” to numerous CEO’s one of the many things I look at in determining how challenging providing value may become for this person is the condition of their office. I know, I know, it’s an old cliché - “Cleanliness is next to Godliness”. That’s not exactly what I am talking

about. What I question is simply what message does the condition your of office send. It may just be saying something about you personally.

## Take an Inventory

Look around. Does your office décor look like you are “Lost in the Fifties” or is it up to date with modern furniture and a fresh crisp look? Are you a “Clutter Bug”? Do you have files sitting on every flat surface? Does the cleaning person need a tetanus shot

before entering your office? Don’t laugh; I have seen a few offices like that. Have you ignored the fact that a simple thumb drive has more storage space, more flexibility and more power than the technology on Apollo 13?

Are their cobwebs in every corner? If you were to dig down to the bottom of those stacks of paper are you afraid you might find “The Lindbergh Baby” or some other missing person? Do you proudly say - “I know exactly

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where everything is". You are delusional! And, so what if you do? Wouldn't it be better if whatever you were looking for wasn't in the midst of a stack of crap papers two feet high? Wouldn't it be better if it were in a secure file or better yet on that thumb drive that has a 32 Mega Bite storage capability in your pocket or your top desk drawer?

People with desks that are a total mess argue that point, "But I know where everything is." That is not the problem. The problem is that the stack of paper is shouting at anybody who looks at it saying — "This guy is disorganized! This guy has weak leadership skills! This Guy or Gal is a PIG!"

The only thing that should be on your desk, and even that could be on your laptop, is what you are currently working on at that moment in time. Not what you did yesterday or what you will do tomorrow or even in an hour. Only what you are working on NOW! Why? Because everything that is cluttering up your office is also cluttering up your mind! Everything that is cluttering up your office is cluttering up your sub-conscious. It affects your psychic because it not only shouts at anybody that walks by but it continuously shouts at you telling you to do something with it.

### **The Real Questions**

It's really not just about what your office looks like. It's not just about sanitation and cleanliness. What it is really about is exactly what your mess, your clutter says about you as a leader. Think about this:

- Does it say anything about character?
- Does it say anything about integrity?
- Does it say anything about leadership ability?
- Does it inspire confidence, trust?

How many of you have walked through a vendor's manufacturing plant or a customer's warehouse and either got a feeling of confidence or a feeling of concern about their ability to meet your needs. It is often an intuitive judgment you made based on how their plant looked. Was it clean? Was it orderly? Does it look efficient? You made these judgments simply by observing. The same holds true for anyone visiting your office.

"Exactly what does your office say about you?"

Does your office paint a picture of a true leader, a winner or does it cloak your skills with a “Cloud of Loser Laziness”?

The most effective CEO’s in industry today have learned the art of letting go of the things that clutter their minds and interfere with visionary thought. Some use meditation or an avid hobby to de-clutter the mental process clearing their mind and their body in building their personal leadership models.

If your office looks a little like the aftermath of Katrina, you need to use that same technique and de-clutter your office.

### **Technology is Your Ally**

With the technological advancement we have made in the 21st century there is absolutely no excuse for holding on to those hard copy memos and other keepsake business correspondence that some of us fall in love with. There is no document that exists today that can’t be saved electronically. In fact, you can carry the last ten year history and more of any project you ever were involved with around in your pocket. In fact, many companies now run a complete paperless system.

### **De-clutter Your Leadership.**

“We all need to learn the art of letting go of the things that are simply cluttering up our minds and our work area’s unnecessarily;” Clearing the Body, Mind, and Soul in the Leadership Process. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Hire someone that is good at it. You don’t have to do it alone. An old friend/colleague of mine coined a phrase I live by religiously — “Do what you do best and hire the rest.

If I have described your office in this article, don’t despair. That doesn’t mean you are a poor leader. It doesn’t mean you have no integrity or that your character is questionable. Sometimes we just get caught up in the burning forest and we let things get a little out of control. No... it doesn’t say you are a loser. It simply means you need to work on it. You may need to get some help. At the very least... It should be telling you to refocus and think about your own personal image.

Remember, your image does matter.

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# How to Become a Home Health Care Nurse

By: Michael V. Gruber

## Home Health Care Nursing Information and Overview

Home health care is allowing the patient and their family to maintain dignity and independence. According to the National Association for Home Care, there are more than 7 million individuals in the United States in need of home health care nurse services because of acute illness, long term health problems, permanent disability or terminal illness.

## Home Health Care Basics

Nurses practice in a number of venues: Hospital settings, nursing homes, assisted living centers, and home health care. Home health care nursing is a growing phenomenon as more patients and their families desire to receive care in their homes. The history of home health care stems from Public Health Nursing where public health nurses made home visits to promote health education and provide treatment as part of community

outreach programs. Today academic programs train nurses in home care and agencies place home health care nurses with ailing individuals and their families depending on the nurse's experience and qualifications. In many cases there is a shared relationship between the agency and the academic institution.

Many changes have taken place in the area of home health care. These include Medicare and Medicaid, and Long Term Care insurance

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reimbursement and documentation. It is important for the nurse and nursing agency to be aware of the many factors involved for these rules and regulations resulting from these organizations. Population and demographic changes are taking place as well. Baby boomers approaching retirement and will present new challenges for the home health care industry. Technology and medical care in hospitals has lead to shorter inpatient stay and more at-home rehabilitation. Increases in medical outpatient procedures are also taking place with follow-up home care. This has resulted in the decrease of mortality rate from these technologies and medical care has lead to increases in morbidity and chronic illness that makes the need for home health care nursing a greater priority.

## Home Health Care Nurse Job Description

Through an array of skills and experience, home health care nurses specialize in a wide range of treatments; emotional support, education of patients who are recovering from illnesses and injury for young children and adults, to women who have experienced recent childbirth, to the elderly who need palliative care for chronic illness.

A practicing nurse must have the skills to provide care in a unique setting such as someone's home. The nurse is working with the patient and the family and must understand the communication skills for such dynamics. Rapport is evident in all nursing positions, but working in a patient's own living space needs a different level of skill and understanding. There is autonomous decision making as the nurse is no

longer working as a team with other nurses in a structured environment, but is now as a member of the "family" team. The host family has cultural values that are important and are different for every patient and must be treated with extreme sensitivity. Other skills include critical thinking, coordination, assessment, communication, and documentation.

Home health care nurses also specialize in the care of children with disabilities that requires additional skills such as patience and understanding of the needs of the family. Children are living with disabilities today that would have resulted in mortality just twenty years ago. Genetic disorders, congenital physical impairments, and injury are just a few. Many families are familiar with managing the needs of the child, but still need expert care that only a home health care nurse

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can provide. It is important that a home health care nurse is aware of the expertise of the family about the child's condition for proper care of the child. There are many complexities involved, but most important, a positive attitude and positive reinforcement is of utmost importance for the development of the child.

Medication coordination between the home health care nurse, doctor, and pharmacist, ensures proper management of the exact science behind giving the patient the correct dose, time of administration, and combinations. Home health care nurses should be familiar with pharmacology and taught in training about different medications used by patients in the clinical setting.

Many advanced practicing nurses are familiar with medication regimens. They have completed graduate level programs. Home health care agencies believe that a nurse should have at least one year of clinical experience before entering home health care. Advanced practicing nurses can expedite that training by helping new nurses understand the home health care market and teaching.

### **Employment and Salary**

According to the United States Department of Labor, there were 2.4 million nurses in America, the largest healthcare occupation, yet many academic and hospital organizations believe there is a gross shortage in nursing staff. The shortage of nurses was 6% in 2000 and is expected to be 10% in 2010. The average salary for hospital nursing is \$53,450 with 3 out of 5 nursing jobs are in the hospital. For home health care, the salary is \$49,000. For nursing care facilities, they were the lowest at \$48,200.

### **Training and continuing education**

Most home health care nurses gain their education through accredited nursing schools throughout the country with an associate degree in nursing (ADN), a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing (BSN), or a master's degree in nursing (MSN). According to the United States Department of Labor, in 2004 there were 674 BSN nursing programs, 846 ADN programs. Also, in 2004, there were 417 master's degree programs, 93 doctoral programs, and 46 joint BSN-doctoral programs. The associate degree program takes 2 to 3 years to complete, while bachelors degrees take 4 years to complete. Nurses can also earn specialized

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professional certificates online in Geriatric Care or Life Care Planning.

In addition, for those nurses who choose to pursue advancement into administrative positions or research, consulting, and teaching, a bachelor's degree is often essential. A bachelor's degree is also important for becoming a clinical nurse specialist, nurse anesthetists, nurse midwives, and nurse practitioners (U.S. Department of Labor, 2004).

All home health care nurses have supervised clinical experience during their training, but as stated earlier advanced practicing nurses hold master's degrees and unlike bachelor and associate degrees, they have a minimum of two years of post clinical experience. Course work includes anatomy, physiology, chemistry, microbiology, nutrition, psychology, and behavioral sciences and liberal arts. Many of these programs have training in nursing homes, public health departments, home health agencies, and ambulatory clinics. (U.S. Dep. of Labor, 2004).

Whether a nurse is training in a hospital, nursing facility, or home care, continuing education is necessary. Health care is changing rapidly and staying abreast with the latest developments enhances patient care and health procedures. Universities, continuing education programs, and internet sites, all offer continuing education. One such organization that provides continuing education is the American Nurses Association (ANA) or through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

## Conclusion

There are many rewards to becoming a home health care nurse. Some rewards include the relationship with a patient and their family, autonomy, independence, and engaging in critical thinking. The 21st Century brings with it many opportunities and challenges. We must meet these challenges head on - there is an aging baby boomer population, a growing morbidity factor due to increased medical technology and patient care, and the growing shortage in nursing care.

Becoming a home health care nurse today is exciting and an opportunity to make a difference one life at a time. With clinical experience and proper education, a home health care nurse will lead the future of medical care.

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# Attributes for an Effective Life

By: Raymond Gerson

## INTRODUCTION

In the process of acquiring an education, we learn about many important subjects such as math, science, and history. I believe our educations should also present ideas that help us develop into the best human beings we can become. To fulfill our potential, we need values and attributes that enrich our lives and the lives of others. These qualities, the result of our inner

development, will allow us to mature emotionally and spiritually.

This article contains my ideas regarding ten attributes for living an effective life. These traits will help you be more effective in school, work, relationships, and other areas of your life.

Developing these ten attributes builds character, which serves as a springboard for dynamic action.

Character is the foundation from which we can live effective lives.

## BALANCE

We can live a balanced and fulfilling life by focusing on spiritual development as a top priority, and by devoting time to the other areas: physical, mental, career, financial, family, and social/recreational.

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We can provide balance in our lives by maintaining our health and vitality; developing a clear mind and a positive mental attitude; discovering our talents and making a contribution in a meaningful career; meeting our financial needs and obligations; taking care of our responsibilities to family; taking time out for fun; and building meaningful friend-ships.

Both time alone and time with others are needed for mental and spiritual well-being.

## FAITH

Belief in ourselves and trust in a Higher Power can help us through difficult times.

An attitude of surrender, “Thy will be done,” is the highest form of prayer.

“Letting go and letting God” enables us to accept and appreciate life in all its variety.

Faith in a Higher Power gives us stability and peace.

## FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness comes from a compassionate heart.

We can find the courage to forgive ourselves and others.

Revenge and violence are often the result of a lack of forgiveness.

A forgiving attitude gives us peace of mind.

## HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Being honest gives us self-respect and faith in ourselves. According to Shakespeare, “No legacy is so rich as honesty.”

We can be honest without injuring the feelings of others.

Honesty is what we do when no one is watching as well as when others are present.

Integrity includes honesty and involves adhering to our

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By: Raymond Gerson

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values and principles.

Persons of integrity do not compromise their principles for money, comfort, or quick results.

Integrity requires courage and the strength of one's convictions.

There is congruency of thought, word, and action in the person of integrity. This person serves as an admirable example for others.

### INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Positive relationships revitalize us and increase our enjoyment of life.

Relating well with others reduces feelings of loneliness.

We grow and learn about ourselves through our relationships.

Perceiving the good qualities in others and showing appreciation are keys to better relationships. According to William James, "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated."

Listening to others is one way to let them know they are important to us.

As our ability to listen and communicate improves, so does our effectiveness in building successful relationships.

Although we may disagree with someone, we can choose words that show respect for that person's point of view.

Learning to relate effectively with others is a skill that can be acquired.

### LOVE

When love is awakened in us, other good qualities—such as joy, inner peace, and courage—develop automatically.

Love is courageous and forgiving.

Our soul is love. God is love. Love is our essential nature.

Love enables us to see that all of us are children of one

God.

Now, while we have them in our lives, is the time to love and appreciate others.

Saints experience the highest form of love: Divine love. They demonstrate our potential to love.

## MOTIVATION

To achieve anything in life, we must desire a goal and then take positive action to attain it.

Motivation begins with a strong desire from within oneself. Abraham Lincoln once remarked, "Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing."

To make a wholehearted effort toward our goals, we must be strongly motivated.

Visualizing our dreams will increase our motivation to achieve them.

Strong motivation, combined with the will to take action, removes barriers that block our potential.

## PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance enhances our ability to accomplish goals.

Perseverance is powerful, like the sustained winds of a hurricane removing obstacles in its path.

Inner growth and personal transformation require perseverance. John Ruskin put it this way: "The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it but what they become by it."

Our minds are our greatest hindrance. Life's hardest battles are fought within ourselves. We need courage to win these battles within our mind.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility implies that we respond to the needs of the

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situation at hand.

We need to determine the difference between unnecessary obligations and appropriate responsibilities.

Self-improvement is a responsible and unselfish action; it is a prerequisite to effectively helping others. We cannot make a significant contribution to others if we avoid helping ourselves.

Being true to ourselves and to our commitments is a form of being responsible.

## SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self-confidence means that one believes in oneself.

Self-confidence grows as we discover and utilize our strengths and talents to make a positive difference in the world.

Experiencing a series of small, incremental successes is an excellent way to overcome fear and build self-confidence.

Faith in a Higher Power can enable us to face life with greater courage and self-confidence.

As our self-confidence grows, we increase our ability to attain our dreams and enhance our joy of living.

Believing that we are worthwhile makes life worth living. William James stated: "These, then, are my last words to you: Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact."

## CONCLUSION

Developing these ten attributes enables us to live effective and fulfilling lives. I believe each of us has enormous potential. Each of us is a unique child of God, who is an unlimited source of love, energy, joy, and creativity. We possess vast inner resources from which we can make a contribution. Drawing upon these resources, we can develop ourselves into the best human beings we are capable of becoming. Our lives, therefore, become a blessing, not only for ourselves, but for all the people whose lives we touch.

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# Grants For Minorities

## - Are You Eligible For Free Money?

By: *Melissa Sabella*

Grants for minorities are a type of government funding given to deserving individuals belonging to any particular minority group. Commonly known groups eligible for minority grants include but are not limited to Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Women, Single Mothers and the disabled or mentally handicapped. Although there are many more minority groups one can fall into, those are most commonly known. The funds may be for the purpose of fostering education, benefiting a

community where most of the population is made of minorities, and generally facilitating development in every avenue.

Minority owned small businesses are a very popular among private and government agencies that distribute minority grant money. A minority owned business can generate a profit and create jobs for other minorities which essentially drives the economy and builds up the minority community. It's a good investment for the government to award minority grant

money in our communities. The profit trickles down to them in taxes down the line anyway.

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce has reported that minority run businesses grew in excess of four times as fast as all U.S. companies overall. Within the past twelve years, these businesses have increased 0.6 million new minority owned companies. It has become quite apparent that one of the main reasons for this unexpected and remarkable increase is attributed to

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the government's willingness to make a larger amount of grants for minorities available to US minority residents.

Minority small business grants have proven to substantially assist in starting a new business, expanding an already existing business, developing a home based business and much more. Just falling into the minority category guarantees your eligibility for some form of minority grant money. There are several small business grants available to those individuals considered minorities.

These groups not only include the most commonly acknowledged minorities such as African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans, they also include the disabled, elderly, mentally challenged and women. And the list goes on. American minorities who are small business owners or have the drive, determination and desire to become one, should seriously consider trying avail a small business minority grants, or even several, before pursuing any high interest bank loans.

Again, grants for minorities are not a loan. t never needs to be repaid, and with the help of government minority agencies and private grant agencies, American minorities can be well on their way to achieving "The American Dream" and growing their businesses to the fullest of their potential.

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# Over-Identification of Minority Children in Special Education - What Can Be Done?

By: JoAnn Collins

Are you concerned about the amount of minority children that are being diagnosed with disabilities in your school district? Are you worried about the large numbers of African American boys receiving special education services? Are you concerned about your child who is in a minority group and being found eligible for special education! Much has been written in the past several years about the increased numbers of poor African-American children receiving special education services. This article will discuss this issue,

and also underlying causes of this.

In 1975 when the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed Congress found that poor African-American children were being placed in special education much more often than other children. These difficulties continue today. In the Findings section of IDEA 2004 Congress stated about the ongoing problems with the over-identification of minority children including mislabeling the children and high drop out rates.

About 9% of all school age children are diagnosed with a disability and receive special education services. But African-American children receive special education services at a rate about 40% higher than the national average across racial and ethnic groups at about 12.4%. Studies have shown that schools that have mostly white students and teachers, place a disproportionately high number of minority children in special education.

Also, rates of mental retardation and

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emotional/behavioral disturbance are extremely elevated within the African-American population, roughly twice the national average. Within the African-American population the incidence of mental retardation is approximately 220% higher than other ethnic groups. For emotional/behavioral disturbance the incidence is approximately 175% higher than other ethnic groups.

Factors that may contribute to disabilities include:

1. Health issues like prenatal care, access to medical care, child nutrition, and possible exposure to lead and other pollutants.
2. Lack of access to good quality medical care as well as services for any mental health disorders.
3. Cultural issues and values or stigma attached to disability
4. Discrimination along the lines of class and race!
5. Misdiagnosis of the child's behavioral and academic difficulty.

A few ideas that could help decrease the over identification:

1. Better keeping of data to include increased information about race, gender, and race by gender categories. More detailed, systematic, and comprehensive data collections would provide a better sense of demographic representation in special education that could better help understand this issue.
2. More analytic research is needed to improve our understanding of the numerous factors that independently or in combination contribute to a disability diagnosis.
3. More people that are willing to help advocate for children in this situation. I believe that some of this issue, is related to the inability of some special education personnel to understand cultural differences.
4. Better and clearer guidelines for diagnosing disabilities that could reduce the potential for subjective judgments that are often cited for certain diagnosis.
5. More improvements are needed in general education to help children learn to read and keep up with their grade and age appropriate peers.

I hope over time this issue will get resolved so that all children receive an appropriate education.

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# College Planning:

## 5 Great Tips to Find College Scholarships

By: Susie Watts

Finding scholarships for college is a subject that seems to be high on the list when it comes to college planning. Most families know that in order to pay for college, they are going to need a combination of financial aid, work-study, and scholarships. Too many families believe that college scholarships are only for students with outstanding grades and test scores, or those who are talented athletes or musicians. You may think you are just an ordinary student, but chances are there are some scholarships that could be a good fit for you.

College scholarships are basically free college money. It takes time to find them, do the essays that may be required, assemble the necessary documents, and meet the deadlines, but it is worth the effort. If may not be a large amount of money, but \$500 can help pay for books or other expenses.

schools automatically consider you for a scholarship once you have applied. Others have a list of scholarships for which you can apply that can be used toward your college tuition. Many of these scholarships are merit based, but there are also some for leadership and community service.

### 1. START WITH THE COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING

Contact the financial aid office at the colleges you hope to attend to see what scholarships are available. Some

### 2. GO INTO YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE

Every high school should have a list of scholarships available to students

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who are graduating and going onto college. Sometimes this list is posted on their website. Check through the list and see whether you meet any of the eligibility requirements. Also pay attention to what is required and when the deadlines are. Check to see whether clubs you belong to in high school like FBLA or DECA offer awards. Some scholarships may require a teacher recommendation and others may need someone, like your principal, to recommend you.

### 3. SIGN UP FOR SOME SCHOLARSHIPS SEARCHES

There are some good scholarship searches on the internet that are worth signing up for. They are reliable and will provide the names of scholarships that could apply to you. Usually, you will need to fill out information about your academics, interests, career plans, talents, and anything that makes you unique as a college applicant. A few searches that I recommend are: Fast web, Broke Scholar, and Scholarships 360. Don't be lured in by a scholarship scam.

### 4. CONSIDER BUSINESSES AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Do you have a parent who works for an employer who provides college scholarships? For example, any student who is a dependent of an agent, associate, or retiree of one insurance company may qualify to receive an award ranging from \$3,000 to \$8,000. Are you a member or do you know of a member of the local Rotary Club, Elks, Kiwanis or other civic organizations? Do you have a religious affiliation that could provide some help?

### 5. THINK ABOUT SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If you have a specific major in mind, you may find some scholarships that are for engineers only, for example. If you are a minority, look for scholarships for Hispanic, Native American or Black students. If you are a teen who owns or operates your own business, you may qualify for an entrepreneurial scholarship. If you have been passionate about community service, there are many opportunities to find some free money for college.

Scholarships for colleges are available. It's time to get busy and see what you can find.

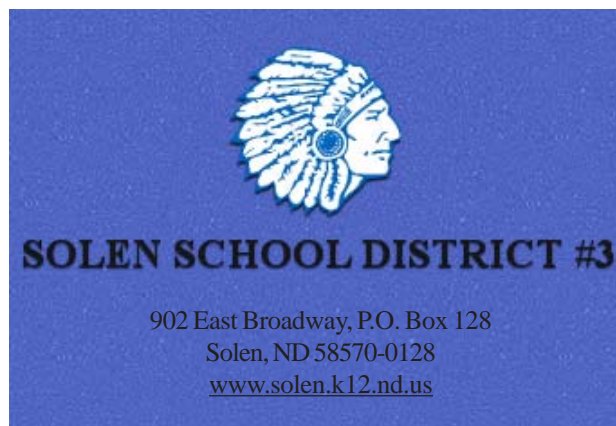
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# Welcoming Families Of Different Cultures

*By: Carol Davis and Alice Yang*

One of the enduring truths about teaching is that to teach children well, we have to know them: what they're passionate about, what worries them, where they are in their development.

We also have to understand something of their family culture — that world outside the school that has such a huge effect on how well children do in school.

As many teachers know, the U.S. school-age population is becoming increasingly diverse. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000, 3.4 million U.S. children ages five through seventeen (about one in fifteen) spoke little or no English. And by 2020, nearly half of all U.S.



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children will be of color; about one in four will be Hispanic. This increasing diversity means that more than ever, we need to be attentive to how students' family cultures can be very different from the dominant culture of the school.

No doubt this can be hard work. It takes time and effort to learn about unfamiliar cultures. It takes stretching our powers of empathy and creativity to adjust teaching practices to fully include families of different cultures.

But this hard work can also be exhilarating. As teachers, we come into the profession because we find joy in seeing children learn. When we build bridges to families of non-mainstream cultures, we're making sure that their children, not just the children of mainstream cultures, can do well in school. We're also opening up exciting new worlds of

learning for all children. Just think of how much children can grow socially and academically when our teaching reflects the traditions and contributions of all the cultures in our schools. In the words of parent Bekki Lee, "To have a teacher affirm and embrace all cultures, especially those that our society most under-represents or misrepresents, is incredibly powerful. Teachers shape how our children see the world and each other, and it's never too early to begin."

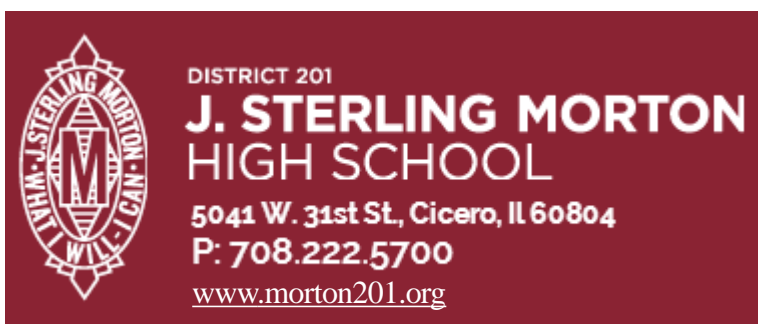
Many resources — books, websites, community groups, and families and children themselves — can suggest practical ways to welcome families from diverse cultures (see page 8). Rather than adding more such ideas, this article offers instead one overarching goal and one fundamental belief to keep in mind while taking those practical steps to reach out.

## THE GOAL: HELPING CHILDREN LEARN

The goal in working with parents — all parents, no matter what their culture — is to enable them to support their children's learning. It sounds simple, but in the process of finding innovative ways to include all the cultures of our students, it's sometimes easy to lose sight of this goal.

Educator Sonia Nieto observes that many schools believe they're offering multicultural education when they're actually implementing "little more than ethnic additives and cultural celebrations." She writes, "Curiously missing from discussions in most schools that claim to 'do' multicultural education are statements having to do with student learning." Nieto recalls telling a friend about a multicultural education initiative in a nearby school system. The friend's reservations about the project were

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evident when she asked, “But are the kids learning?” During a similar discussion, another friend asked impatiently, “But can they do math?” (Sonia Nieto, *The Light in Their Eyes*, page xvi).

“Are the children learning?” needs to be the question that we continually keep in the forefront as we work with all parents. Activities such as celebrating holidays from various cultures and decorating a bulletin board to reflect diverse cultures are worthwhile. But we need to ask whether such efforts, by themselves, help children learn math, reading, science, cooperation, responsibility, empathy — all the things they’re supposed to learn in school.

In addition to keeping the classroom focus on learning, we can have practices that enable the children’s parents to help them learn. That means making the small but critical everyday efforts to reach out in ways that help parents understand and be part of their child’s classroom. For example, we could look for people at school or in the community to translate letters and other school-to-home communications. Whenever possible, we could invite interpreters to join meetings with families. These efforts can help parents feel heard, welcomed, and comfortable asking questions and voicing opinions about their children’s education.

### A FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF: DIFFERENCES, NOT DEFICITS

How we view families from cultures different from our own deeply affects how we work with them. All families have had different sets of experiences. We can best help students learn if we believe their family experiences are neither better nor worse than our own, but simply different.

Literacy professor Victoria Purcell-Gates writes about this “difference” versus “deficit” view of family backgrounds. As teachers know, children come to school with widely varying experiences in reading, writing, and other literacy activities at home. Even English speakers come speaking different dialects. But, Purcell-Gates point out, if the family is poor, undereducated, or speaks a “nonstandard” dialect, we’re more likely to interpret a child’s uniqueness as an inherent deficit or flaw rather than a mere difference in experience.

When we do this, Purcell-Gates says, we risk lowering our expectations for the child and writing the child off as less teachable or even unteachable. By contrast, when

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we truly believe that all children can learn and that they vary only in their experiences, we're more likely to maintain high expectations of all children and nonjudgmentally build on the experiences they have had to help them learn at their best. (Lisa Delpit and Joanne Kilgour Dowdy, eds., 2002, *The Skin That We Speak*, New York: The New Press, pp. 121-139).

The "difference" versus "deficit" view also comes into play in areas beyond language and literacy. Early in her career, Bonnie Baer-Simahk, a teacher of K-6 English language learners in Massachusetts, was surprised to learn that many Southeast Asian students didn't like to take their completed schoolwork home because their parents would throw it away. "I was so upset, thinking that the message the parents gave their children was that their schoolwork was not valued," she recalls. "Later I saw that I was quite wrong." The same parents who never displayed schoolwork welcomed Bonnie into their home to talk about their children's progress in school, came in to help out whenever invited, and urged Bonnie to tell them if their children weren't doing good work in school. Clearly, these parents valued their children's school efforts. Why, then, didn't they display their children's schoolwork?

"I suspect it was a combination of things," says Bonnie. Maybe the parents didn't understand the significance of the papers or the teacher's comments on them. Maybe they expected their children to work hard and thought that positive efforts didn't require any special acknowledgment. Whatever the reason, the point is that the parents' behavior reflects a difference in experience and norms, not a lack of concern for their children.

A further point is that once we recognize differences, we need to respect them. Children from diverse cultures and their families can succeed in American schools without surrendering the customs of their home cultures. For example, Bonnie didn't try to change the Southeast Asian families' customs around taking home and displaying schoolwork. She simply accepted that these families had other ways of showing pride in educational effort.

Whatever we're trying to understand about students from other cultures, we can teach best when we hold fast to the "difference, not deficit" mentality. In doing so, we're more likely to see intelligence, talent, and caring, even if these are expressed in ways that we're not used to. We can then build on these assets to teach the children what they need to learn in school.

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# *Contract and Relief Teachers and Their Responsibilities, Some Advice for the Head of Department*

By: Richard D Boyce

Relief and contract teachers often come into a school which is completely new to them in every respect. So, as head of department, it was my responsibility to induct them into my department. One of my initiatives soon after I was appointed was to create a department handbook to record our policy and procedures. This handbook was updated each year with each teacher being given an updated version annually. This handbook was also part of my induction program for relief and contract teachers.

This article contains the information in that handbook for the benefit of relief Teachers and temporary teachers on short contracts.

“During your stay with us you are considered part of our team and are accordingly required to adhere to the professional duties of teachers at this department as outlined below:

## **1. Times of Duty**

Our working conditions require us all

to be at school no later than 8.35am.

However, it would be desirable, for routine days to arrive at school by 8.25am and leave not before 3.15pm.

At regular or at ad hoc times, staff meetings and briefings are held and all teachers are required to attend these meetings. Apologies must be given to the Principal.

At the time of printing, this involves every second Tuesday morning (alternative whole school briefings)

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and every second Monday afternoon for a full staff meeting.

Maths Departmental Meetings will be called as required, usually at 8.15am on a morning which best fits into the school calendar.

If students require extra help, teachers should, wherever possible, be prepared to stay back or arrive early to assist these students.

## **2. School Policy**

School Policy must be followed at all times. Please read the school staff handbook the deputy principal (staff) would have given you as soon as possible.

If you have any queries or suggestions about school policy, there are avenues at staff meetings or with the Principal to discuss possible changes. However, in the meantime, the policy needs active and full support regardless of one's own point of view.

## **3. Lesson Plans**

For contract teachers, Unit Plans and Lesson Plans have been developed ahead of time for your use. If there are any problems for you, please discuss these with the Subject Coordinator of that Year Level and/or the Head of Department.

Supply Teachers must endeavour as much as is possible to follow the Lesson Plans left for them on the day of their appointment.

If you have any difficulty with ideas or knowledge involved in any of these lessons, please do not hesitate to confer with the Head of Department. A high standard of preparation results in better student learning and management.

## **4. Code of Conduct of Staff and Students**

There is a Code of Conduct that all members of the school community are expected to adhere to. Please adhere to this and to the Behaviour Management Policy. You will find these in the School Staff Handbook.

Refer students to the Head of Department only if you are unable to deal with the matter yourself. Heads of Department may enter your room at any time as required.

## 5. Assessment

Assessment is a part of the teaching process and all staff must be involved in the setting, marking and recording of quality assessment items as required.

Please ensure you record all assessment results on Student Profiles immediately after you have marked these items and store students' scripts in their manila envelope where necessary.

Teachers must appreciate the weight of responsibility on them to prepare students for assessment and to assess the students fairly and rigorously.

Senior subjects require considerable preparation for the outside educational authority and all teachers are required to contribute to this process as required by the subject coordinator and Head of Department.

## 6. Professional Collegiate Contribution

All new staff members are asked to contribute to the amicable and professional atmosphere that is already evident in our school. This requires willingness to contribute to the group and to demonstrate initiative, responsibility and support for each other.

You can look forward to a pleasant and fulfilling time at our school where your efforts will be appreciated and support is guaranteed”.

“Best Wishes for a happy and fulfilling stay with us”

In conclusion

Each school subject department may have specific extra items to note for these temporary teachers. In the practical subjects such as Art, Home Science, The Manual Arts and Science, there may be information about equipment and consumables while physical Education may have safety issues to highlight. This article is designed primarily to give the new head of department a starting point just as I was given one from an experienced head of department when I was first promoted.

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# How Test Prep Might Get You Into College or Keep You Out

By: Susie Watts

Eric had a decent GPA and was looking at some competitive colleges. His first ACT score was a 22 but he had not done any test prep before the test. His parents encouraged him to take a six week course to see if he could improve his score. The class only had seven students and Eric learned some good test-taking and time management techniques that helped him bring up his score to a 25. This put him in a pretty good position for a number of colleges he was considering.

Peter on the other hand, decided that his SAT scores were good enough and he wasn't interested in taking the test again. One of his first choice colleges suggested he do some test preparation and re-take the SAT. He didn't want to waste another Saturday morning and decided he would go with the score he had. He was not accepted by that school.

You wouldn't take the driver's test without studying first would you? You probably wouldn't take an important history exam without knowing what to

expect. Preparing for the SAT and ACT should be no different. Studies show that test prep reduces test anxiety and helps students improve their scores. When students prepare for the SAT and ACT they will perform better because they are more confident.

Students should look for a course that has small classes and an experienced SAT and ACT tutor. You don't need to go to Kaplan or the Princeton Review to find some great test prep near you. If you feel that

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individual tutoring might be a better bet, Google in “test prep + your city” to find what options are available. Whatever you choose should be affordable as well as effective.

Good test prep teaches students useful strategies to use when they take the SAT and ACT. Students also learn how to manage their time and pace themselves throughout the tests. They will know how to approach each part of the test and which questions they need to answer first.

Even though the SAT and ACT are far from perfect tests, they do allow a college or university to see how a student performs on a standardized test. Since high school courses and grades vary so much from one school to another, these tests can be an important measure of how students might be expected to perform their first year of college. Colleges want students to be academically successful and that is why these tests will never go away.

Test prep can improve SAT and ACT scores. Helping students improve their test scores can increase their chances for college admission. Better test scores can also lead to scholarships and merit aid. Who couldn't use more money to help pay for college?

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