



Julie Bartkus Presents

Motivate Teachers™

The Leadership Resource for
Attracting & Retaining Great Staff

August 2011



Create The Positive and Productive Workplace That You Desire and Deserve!

Open Door Policies – Making Them Effective

A leader told a new staff member: “I have an open door policy. Please feel free to come to my office any time you need to discuss an issue or if you have an idea you would like to propose.” The new staff member says to herself: “This is great! I have a leader who’s approachable, personable, and cares about her team. I’m going to like working here.”

It’s true an open door policy helps leaders become visible – which helps them project a leadership style that’s approachable and personable. However, there are a few guidelines that one should put in to place when implementing an open door policy - guidelines that will help make open door policies as effective as possible.

In many organizations I’ve worked with, I’ve found that open door policies are being used inappropriately. Staff members utilize the time to vent, complain, or to chat about their personal lives. Some staff members seek to get therapy about personal problems. While other staff members use the time to gossip about co-workers. And then staff get frustrated with their co-workers when they “run and tell” their leader about a situation before an effort is made to resolve the problem directly with the other parties involved. This often causes the organization’s morale to be much lower than it can be. And leaders who experience these situations feel an insurmountable amount of stress and frustration.

To help you make your open door policy as effective as possible - here are a few guidelines for you to consider communicating with your team.

1. During “open door” times please talk to me about the health, safety, and/or education of the children, a difficult situation with a parent, a difficult situation with a co-worker. This can include ideas and issues.
2. Before you come see me with an issue, write it down on a piece of paper. (This will help team members identify if there really is an issue that needs to be resolved or discussed.)
3. When you come to me with a problem, I will ask you about the solutions you’ve contemplated. So please have some recommendations ready. If you’re totally in the dark about what to do – I will help you brainstorm for solutions. (This will help empower team members to think – so eventually they can resolve more issues without your help. Yes – this eventually frees up more of your time!)
4. Do not come to me with a problem someone else is having – unless someone’s health and safety is in jeopardy or if it’s another crisis situation.
5. Since time in our profession is very valuable and it’s hard to get enough coverage in classrooms so that everyone can see me individually, save issues that can be addressed during a staff meeting for our next staff meeting. If you don’t feel comfortable bringing up the issue or topic, write me a note with the issue or topic and I’ll add it to the agenda.

Leader Spotlight



Kelly Boerder

Member since February 2007

Owner, Thomas Learning Centers, Colorado

I've been in ECE for 28 years. I started as a Kindergarten teacher, moved on to work with school-aged programs and now I own a couple of centers.

My passion is providing high quality care for the working poor who often cannot afford it and doing what I can to enable staff to grow in the field, and continue in the field.

Web Site:

www.ThomasLearningCenters.com

Favorite Movie: Bull Durham

Favorite Color: Purple or Green – it’s tough to decide.

Favorite Publications: Child Care Information Exchange

Favorite Saying: "Promise me you'll always remember - you're braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think"
Christopher Robin to Pooh (A.A. Milne)

Celebrating: NECPA Accreditation

Here's To Your Health



Honey vs. Sugar – Which Is Better for You?

More and more health-conscious people are casting aside sugar as a sweetener and replacing it with honey. But is honey really better for you, or is this just a myth?

Although health experts are quick to remind us of the calories in sugar, in fact honey contains more calories than the regular granulated sugar that most of us use – 46 kcal per tablespoon of sugar compared to 64 for the same amount of honey. Honey, however, is sweeter than sugar, so people typically need to use less of it, which could mean consuming fewer calories.

But consuming fewer calories is not the only potential health benefit of honey. The process of manufacturing commercial sugar destroys or extracts the natural vitamins, proteins, fats, enzymes, organic acids and nitrogen elements from sugarcane, leaving just empty calories. But raw, unpasteurized honey in particular is a powerhouse of nutrients that provide a number of health benefits.

Many of us have experienced the soothing effect of honey on a sore throat or a troublesome cough, and it is also known to have significant antibacterial qualities, with some types of honey having been shown to inhibit the growth of bacteria that even antibiotics are unable to kill off. And dark-colored honeys have been shown to have anti-cancer properties. No wonder honey is known as “nature’s healer”!

Too Serious To Laugh?

Have you ever faced a situation that you felt was just too serious to laugh about? Many people feel that some things in life are just too serious to laugh about. But did you know that laughter is a way to relieve stress and a way to cope with life’s tough challenges?

Laughter in itself has been reported to have miraculous healing powers. Norman Cousins, author of *Anatomy of an Illness*, writes that laughter played a major role in restoring his health and mobility after being almost completely paralyzed from a life threatening disease. Norman’s story is fascinating one.

Dr. Lee Berk and Dr. Stanely Tan, two California scientists who research the effects of humor and laughter, state that many positive benefits can be gained by incorporating humor into daily life. Laughter helps control pain and stress, lowers blood pressure, helps fight diseases, and is aerobic, providing a workout for the diaphragm. In a study conducted by Hajime Kimata, MD, PhD from Japan, humor was determined to be effective with relieving allergy symptoms for up to four hours by patients who suffered with dermatitis.

Sandra Baker had cancer and tells us that laughter helped heal her. Following are several strategies she recommends to help people laugh more.

- Read funny cards at stores.
- Do something for yourself every day.
- When you get frustrated with someone or something – perhaps a parent – get a roll of toilet paper and write all the things that frustrate you on it. At the end of the week, flush all of the toilet paper that you wrote on (and your negative feelings) down the drain and out of your mind.
- Draw a cartoon of your frustrating experience.
- Look at the pictures on cards and think of something funny to say about the picture.
- Have fun and laugh every day that ends in y.
- Keep a book filled with pictures, cards, or other positive things that you can review to help lift your spirits.
- Watch funny tapes. Sandra watched *I love Lucy* videos during her chemotherapy treatments.
- Attend a comedy show. The day Sandra found out she had breast cancer she went to a comedy club and laughed the night away. So what do you do if you find there’s nothing funny to laugh about?

Well, studies have shown that if you simply force yourself to laugh for several minutes you will still reap many benefits. Humor increases your body’s ability to utilize oxygen and increases your immunity to infections by instantly increasing a flood of disease-fighting cells and proteins into the blood.

Can’t force a laugh on your own? Try tape recording children laughing and play the tape to yourself when you need a laugh. I bet you’ll at least crack a smile. Remember, it takes only 26 muscles to smile and 62 to frown.



Julie's Expert Interview:



Minimize Absenteeism and Tardiness!!

Many factors contribute to employees being late and absent according to HR expert, Linda Bailey. They include the amount of stress one carries, the organization's lack of vision, the behaviors modeled by leaders, negative working relationships with co-workers, leaders, and parents and one's own personal inclination to be late.

Leaders can start the process of eliminating absenteeism and tardiness by using appreciation to help team members become aware that their being on time or present for work is noticed. Too often employees become actively disengaged at work. It may feel like they come in when they feel like it and simply go through the motions to get through another day. Believe it or not employees sometimes think it doesn't really make a difference if they're on time or not.

Effective appreciation can include verbally praising team members, affirming the difference each employee makes, paying attention to individual employees and their needs, setting a team goal to minimize absenteeism and tardiness (if it's a major problem) and then having a success celebration when a goal has been achieved.

It's important to identify those people who are inclined to be late for work before you hire them. Be careful of hiring someone who has given you clues that they might not be the most punctual person. Clues might include arriving late for the interview and not following up on requested pre-employment tasks.

This audio is the latest to be mailed out to our Gold and Platinum Members. Upgrade or Join Julie's Inner Circle Today and get a copy of this audio program and the transcripts. Visit www.MotivateTeachers.com and click on Join Today!

Have a Pizza Party On Us!

Would you like to help us spread the word about our Motivate Teachers Membership Community and the fantastic resources we have (Monthly Audios, Coaching With Julie, Members Only Discussion Forum and our Forms Resource Library) - - and have the opportunity to get some great FREE goodies?

For the past several months we have been surveying our members to see what kind of referral program we can put into place so that our members and followers are inspired to help us spread the word around about our Motivate Teachers membership community. Many great giveaway ideas were shared! All of the YUMMY details can be found at www.MotivateTeachers.com.

There are monthly, quarterly and annual prizes. Here's a sampling of what you can receive every quarter as your referrals accumulate:

- 15 referrals - Pizza on us at your next staff meeting
- 20 referrals - Spa Day For You
- 30 referrals - IPOD & Docking Station With Speakers
- 50 referrals - 46" Flat Screen TV



5 Simple Steps To Help You Manage, Motivate and Retain Great Staff!



Presenting:

The Motivate Teachers Retreat

Join Julie for this one-of-a-kind leadership event just for child care directors, administrators, managers and owners. During this 3-day event, you'll discover 5 simple steps to help you manage, motivate and retain great staff.

Additionally, we're going to put plans of action into place so you can facilitate staff meetings that sizzle, break the gossip chain and help your staff resolve conflicts and issues directly by establishing a conflict resolution system.

During these 3 days, you're also going to have a lot of fun, make great connections and leave feeling rejuvenated. WooHoo!!

Dates: October 14-16
Location: Lake Geneva, WI
Investment: **FREE for Gold and Platinum** members of Julie's Inner Circle. \$997.00 early bird for non-members.

****Seating is limited!! To register visit: www.MotivateTeachers.com.**

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Connect With Us:
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Boost Morale In Minutes Without Spending A Buck: Quick Tip

Unite your team through establishing a common goal that can be worked on and obtained in the next several months. Set a time frame for this goal and get everyone excited about accomplishing it. Break the goal down into small achievable steps and celebrate when small accomplishments are made.



Create The Positive and Productive Workplace That You Desire and Deserve!

Our Newest Members:

Anthony Briggs	Brooklyn, NY
Doreen D'Amico	New York, NY
Marta Felty	Hamilton, OH
Katie Pihl	Mankato, MN
Debra Pulcinella	Sarasota, FL
Susan Lyle	Katy, TX
Joan Schwertle	Westlake, OH
Patti Sheldon	Silverdale, WA

5-Year Anniversary

Sonja Raymond	Stowe, VT
Jeanne Chapell	Essex, MA
Suelaine Poling	Keene, NH
Linda Gilgen	Logan, UT

1-Year Anniversary

Anna Lahmy	Caulfield South Victoria
Marie Balistrieri	Milwaukee, WI
Kristin Ritchie	Holland, MI
Stacy Idema	Holland, MI

150 Logins!!

Karen Marsh	Poplar Bluff, MO
Jackie Tyson	Whispering Pines, NC



Time Management

For Early Care & Education Leaders

Evaluate how your time is spent. Utilize a time tracking log for a week. A time tracking log is simply a piece of paper with time broken down into 15-minute increments. Next to each 15-minute time increment is a space for you to record your activities. Record your activities for a week to help you evaluate how your time is spent and then develop a plan of action to more effectively manage your time.

Group like activities. After your evaluation is complete you can see if there are any activities you can group and work on at the same time of the day. Perhaps you notice that staff come and ask you “non-urgent” questions throughout the day. This interrupts your train of thought and much time is spent refocusing (you ask yourself often: *Where was I?*). So now you have a set time during the day when staff can ask you all those non-urgent questions. Or perhaps you have a set time of the day when you follow up with your staff. What are the activities that you can group?

Delegate. Is there anyone on your staff who deserves a new challenge and would grow from learning more about what you do? If you answered yes, then it may be a good time to delegate some of your work to the appropriate staff. The important thing to remember when it comes to delegation is that delegation is different from “dumping” something on someone so you don’t have to deal with it. I’ll share more about delegation in future tips.