

Management Ideas



FOR STILL BETTER

RESULTS

RELATIONS

REPUTATION

a monthly newsletter to key executive-leaders
on practices, possibilities and ideas generally
for stepped up performance

edited by

N. H. ATTHREYA MA PHD

author, educator & consultant

on problem-solving and creative ideas

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3512 LEST YOU MISS THEM
- 3513 MORE MILES FROM A LAPTOP
- 3514 WELCOMING GUESTS
- 3515 A ROLEPLAY REVOLUTION
- 3516 RESEARCH ON/FOR NEW MOMS
- 3517 LAUGHING MATTER?

3512
LEST YOU
MISS
THEM:

Reader Dr. O.P. Kharbanda writes: **The Economist** has a knack of 'distilling' the crux of an issue/subject, no matter how complex, into just one page.

The latest proof is the series of one page articles on five top management theories, namely Tom Peters (September 24), Peter Drucker (October 1), Michael Porter (October 8), Rosabeth Moss Kanter (October 15), and Kenichi Ohmae (October 22).

This is to draw this valuable information to the attention of **Management Ideas** Readers.

The Readers may also like to know that this valuable 150 year old British weekly will now be published from U.S.A. as well.

3513
MORE
MILES
FROM A
LAPTOP:

Diminutive, light, readable and user friendly, portable sporting Compaq, Toshiba, Dell, NEC, and other top labels are rapidly becoming standard equipment for business travelers.

But there's more to taking a PC on the road than stuffing it in your Pullman bag or briefcase.

Here's what computer makers and veteran users advise to help make your marriage to your laptop PC happy, if not blissful.

[] Figure out how you plan to use your portable before making your purchase. Will it be used for sales presentations where you want large, sharp graphics? For writing memos? Or just for jotting down facts and opinions on your trip?

"If you're doing presentations right on your laptop, get an active matrix display," says Compaq spokesperson Debra Globe. "You can look at it from any angle if you have a group standing or sitting around the machine." Note, too, that you can hook up a portable to a larger display screen in many corporate offices.

[] Know what you're getting in each portable product category.

In the mid-80's, portables were referred to as "transportables" or derogatorily as "luggables". They were heavy, ranging between 15 and 25 pounds. Today, though definitions of the different types of portables vary, the breakout runs from heaviest to lightest. Laptops weigh roughly 10 to 12 pounds; notebooks, six to seven pounds, and the very new subnotebooks, about four pounds.

Generally, you pay a premium for any kind of top-rated portable, compared to the prices for traditional desktop machines.

[] Remember that every portable is a compromise because of size and weight limitations. For instance, while computer makers are building more power and memory into ever-lighter machines, you may find the tight and limited keyboards on some notebooks not to your liking.

[] Factor in the battery life when choosing a computer.

Some last longer than others, so most experts suggest taking along a spare. (Compaq recommends Duracell NiMH batteries, partly because of their widespread availability.) But remember that batteries are among the behavior accessories that can help turn a portable computer into a luggable.

If you're taking notes out in the field on a marketing or engineering project or simply flying a long haul to Tokyo or Johannesburg - you'll need longerlasting batteries.

"Buy a notebook with power management and conservation features so you can extend battery life and run your machine more efficiently," Compaq says.

In any case, you can plug in your computer in almost any office, air terminal, airline-club lounge or hotel, avoiding the problem of batteries running down.

[] Don't count on getting much computing time aloft.

Between the new limits on operating electronic devices on takeoffs

and landings and the meal-and-movie interruptions on flights, you won't find keyboarding easy in transit. Considering the sardine seating on some planes - including seat in premium-priced business class that recline right into your lap - you may prefer a good book music on your head set to computing.

On domestic flights, most business travelers find transcom trips - like N.Y. to L.A. - the best times for computing while flying.

[] Book, wherever possible, hotels with guest-room phones that include dataports.

You and your computer may get along fine, but when it comes to transmitting memos and data to your home office, you don't want to have problems "modeming" documents and data to your home office. In hotel guest rooms that aren't hard-wired, you can simply unplug the phone and connect your modem to the jack - if necessary.

If you're willing to pay a high price, you can now buy a cellular modem that, of course, allows you to transmit computer data over a cellular-phone network.

[] Don't be casual about security problems.

The real risk is theft at airport terminals and in hotel lobbies. Keep an eye on your portable if you set it down to make a phone call or get a snack. You should be more concerned overseas than in the U.S. because many computer models are unavailable in some foreign countries - and carry a high price tag on the black market.

Most baggage check points at airports here and abroad won't require you to set everything aside and open up your computer. But it can happen; so be prepared.

Source: Investor's Business Daily.

3514
WELCOMING
GUESTS:

Bharat Petroleum has a system of welcoming expected guests. As you identify yourself to the Reception, you are recognised and handed over a slip that reads:

Dear Shri _____.

We extend to you a very warm welcome. You have a prior appointment with Shri/Smt. _____ at _____ hours today. Kindly proceed to Room No. _____ on _____.

Thank you and have a good day.

3515
A ROLE-
PLAY
REVOLUTION:

It is not east or west, Japanese, German or Indian. It is what works - for you. To know that you should avoid swearing by any 'school' but build a rich range of repertoire. A case in point is the accompanying story of a Japanese businessman getting spectacular results by using a western approach to motivation.

Tetsuo Mizuno has some advice for fellow businessmen struggling to find ways to make their companies more competitive. Don't follow conventional Japanese ways.

Mizuno heads Square, a small video game software house in Tokyo that, in spite of the recession, has seen phenomenal sales of its role-playing games for Nintendo's electronic game hardware.

Three out of four games it released last year were hits, selling more than 1m per game. The unprecedented craze for Square's games prompted children and parents to line up outside toy shops, hours before the sixth in its best-selling series reached the shelves last April. The game sold out within hours, and Square posted sales of ¥25bn (£160.7m) in a month - almost equal to what it achieved during the whole of last year.

The company's break from traditional Japanese management of its employees appears to have been a factor in its ability to develop popular computer games. Its unconventional hiring policy is one of the underlying factors in its creative strength.

While most leading companies may be losing out on talent by limiting themselves to hiring university graduates, especially from top class schools, Square hires anyone as long as they are inventive and are competent. Some 80 per cent of Square's staff have held other jobs, including teaching, playing in rock bands and acting.

Other striking differences are the flexible working hours and the extensive holiday allocation. "Our business is entertainment. How can people have fun playing games made by workers who commute on a crowded train, wear blue suits and are constantly told what to do by their superiors," asks Mizuno.

Employees must touch base once a day, but as long as they are productive, do not need to keep set office hours.

Long holidays are rare in Japanese companies, which usually only allow employees to take one week off in the summer. Workers may be given a certain amount of paid annual holiday, but they are not really expected to take them.

Employees at Square, however, get one month's summer holiday, and an additional 20 days of paid holiday a year. The company encourages employees to travel, especially abroad, and from the second year in the company they can apply for special overseas trips.

Mizuno says he wants his employees to enjoy life and to experience different cultures in other countries. "Our games are based on adventures in castles, forests and caves. We want our staff to go and see what these places are really like with their own eyes," he says.

Square evaluates its employees by mixing the western merit approach and the Japanese life-time employment system. While those who help to create a popular game will be compensated, those that have not contributed see a pay rise equal to the cost of inflation.

The salary difference between employees who entered the company in the same year can amount to Y4m-Y5m. By providing incentives, the company attempts to increase productivity and morale. Says Mizuno: "You need to ask what people want to be doing in five years. How much they want to be living. If workers calculate backwards from such goals, it's clear what they need to do."

The company, which employs 250 staff, started as a software division of Denyusha, an electrical engineering company based in Tokushima in western Japan. However, the acute differences in management styles between the traditional Japanese engineering company and its almost radical computer game division prompted the company to split in two, forming a separate company based in Tokyo.

It is uncertain whether Square can preserve such a flexible management style once it grows into a bigger organisation. Mizuno doubts that it will become too big, because of the cost of games software. A computer game costs about Y10,000 and consumers seem willing to spend about Y40,000 to Y50,000 a year on games. He says the chances of the company growing larger than 400 people is slim.

One problem that the company's management has yet to solve is that its role-playing games have failed to cross the cultural barriers, and have not seen good sales in Europe or the US.

"I think we need more people who are multilingual, who know what's interesting for everyone all over the world. We need to start making games like Steven Spielberg films," says Mizuno.

3516
RESEARCH
ON / FOR
NEW
MOMS:

Economic and social reasons compel women in the corporate world to abide by common rules. That world provides for the reality of motherhood only in a token fashion. The sufferer? The child and the mother. In what Robert Theobald calls "the compassionate era", successor to the industrial era, the findings of a recent research (as reported in the accompanying article in the Financial Times) should be provided for:

As a nurse, Carol Ann Friedman thought she knew what to expect during her own postpartum recovery:

If she had a Cesarean section, she would need eight weeks to heal. If she had a vaginal birth, six weeks. By then, she figured, her life would be back to normal. She would be rested, ready to return to work, adjusted to her baby, with the household running smoothly.

Right?
Wrong.

"It took me much longer than eight weeks," she recalls. "I felt better about the eighth month."

Having spent her career nurturing others back to health, the irony of the situation didn't escape Friedman, a certified lactation consultant in Pasadena.

The vast majority of women would categorize having a baby as a joyous event, full of rewards and moments of sheer delight. But when the tears flow, it's often because society's benchmark for when new mothers should be recovered--six weeks to eight weeks--is unrealistic for many.

"A joke," says one woman, aptly. "Ridiculous," says another. "It's almost brutal," says Friedman.

Scientific studies--and new mothers themselves--attest to a much longer adjustment period, something akin to a fourth trimester. In a study published last year, researchers found that most women need months--maybe as much as a year--to fully recover from childbirth.

One month after delivery, women still complained of breast problems, fatigue, hemorrhoids, poor appetite, constipation, increased sweating, acne, hand numbness or tingling, dizziness and hot flashes.

Three months after delivery, many of these symptoms continue, the study reported, while 40% of mothers also reported pain during sexual intercourse, as well as respiratory infections and hair loss at three to six months.

Even at nine months postpartum, many women said they experienced vaginal discomfort and constipation.

And 20% reported problems related to sexual function one year after childbirth, says researcher Dwenda K. Gjeringen of the University of Minnesota.

Moreover, as many as 10% of women suffer postpartum depression in the months following childbirth, other research has shown. Postpartum depression is a severe mood disorder linked to changing hormones in which stress and fatigue can play a major role.

Even without experiencing such a serious postpartum illness, "Recovery from childbirth often requires more than the six weeks traditionally allotted," Gjeringen says.

+ Baby is now 2 months old and signs are everywhere that Mother should be up to speed. At six or eight weeks, disability payments usually stop, a not-so-subtle hint that a woman should now be ready to return to work.

Yet, according to Gjerengen's study, the postpartum adjustment period is especially hard for women who return to the work force--about half of all new mothers--soon after childbirth. The average working woman takes eight weeks off for childbirth, according to 9 to 5, National Association of Working Women.

At six weeks, the last visit with the obstetrician takes place. That is when, according to medical textbooks, the uterus has returned to its non-reproductive state.

Using that as the benchmark of recovery, physicians pronounce most of their patients fit and ready to resume sexual relations. Never mind that the typical patient is still 20 pounds overweight, exhausted and sore. There is also a tacit assumption in many quarters that the mother should have her baby on some kind of schedule at six weeks. After all, when are the in-laws ever wrong? In truth, the postpartum adjustment period differs greatly among women, and recovery cannot be predicted or planned, experts say.

"A lot of it depends on whether the baby is an easy baby or not," says Sandy Hill, the owner of an Orange County parent-care service called After the Stork. For example, some babies have health problems, develop colic, are hard to feed, sleep fitfully or are ill-tempered.

"Women often say, 'What's wrong with me? I'm not adjusting. Why is this so hard?' But it's usually because the baby is a difficult baby," she says.

+ Physically, too, recovery varies widely. "The physical recovery is usually much slower than what people expect," says psychologist Georgiana G. Rodiger, a mother of five and founder of the Rodiger Center in Pasadena. "Childbirth is much more traumatic--especially for a first birth--than most people care to describe. And one of the worst parts is you don't get sleep. That goes on for months."

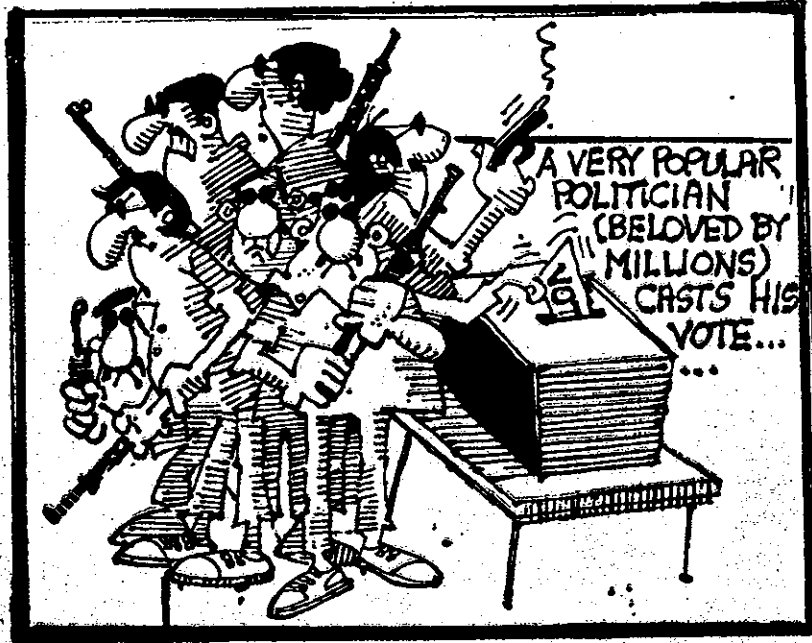
Some new mothers also feel pressure to lose all their added weight a couple of months after childbirth. If a woman is returning to work at six weeks, she's lucky if her regular clothes even fit, Friedman says.

"Most of us have body-image issues at that time," she says. "But it's very natural not to have lost the weight at that point." Postpartum recovery is clearly on the fast track these days, beginning from the moment of birth.

It is common now for women who have an uncomplicated vaginal birth to be discharged in one day and women who undergo C-sections in three days. And, under some insurance policies, childbirth is just a pit stop: Women with vaginal births go home in eight to 12 hours. "These mothers are still in a fog," Friedman says. "I'm trying to tell them how to change a diaper and they're saying 'What?'"

To be continued in the next issue.

源隆行
林炯焯
林曾焯
林焯焯
林焯焯
林焯焯
林焯焯
林焯焯
林焯焯
林焯焯



3517
LAUGHING
MATTER?

Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

Frohe Weihnachten

שנה טובה Buon Natale

God Yule Felice Anno Hauskaa Joula

С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ Bonne Année

Zalig Kerstfeest SRETNA NOVA GODINA

መልካም : ዓመታዊ : ደገልጋ ። Joyeux Noël

From

The Editorial Staff

MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Edited, Printed & Published by N.H. ATTHREYA of MMC SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
3E1, Court chambers, New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020.

Photo offset by DAKES COPY PVT. LIMITED, Bombay 400 023.

Annual Subscription Rs.190/-.