

Randisi & Associates, Inc.

January 2009 Newsletter

Helping Employers Protect their Workforce, Clients and Reputation Through
Employment Screening, Drug Testing and Skills Testing

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Quotes That Inspire

Remember, it takes at least two people to carry on a quarrel.

It's difficult to remember, in the heat of a disagreement, that it takes two to quarrel. It may help to remember that no one can disagree with you while you are agreeing with them. This is not to suggest that you should compromise your principles. It is possible, however, to remain true to your beliefs while simultaneously searching for common ground that will enable you to work productively with others.

Let those upset with you know that you understand how they feel. Examine the problem from their point of view. How could it be resolved in a manner that would satisfy the interests of all involved? How have you contributed to the problem?

This month we present the following articles for your consideration:

1. Employers need to be concerned about the legitimacy of education degrees AND how the question about education degrees is listed on their application. Read this article to find out how to find accredited institutions and how to ask the question on your application.
2. Delegation - Do you know how to do it effectively? This article contains some basic steps to make the process more effective.
3. Some years ago, I watched a movie about an individual on a quest to discover the secrets of the universe. The secrets were held in one book guarded by formidable forces. After many arduous tests and competitions, the individual finally made it to opening the book. And, guess what the book contained? Read this article to find out.

Information in this newsletter is not intended as legal advice. Please consult legal counsel before taking any actions.

I hope you find this month's newsletter beneficial.

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When you try to find solutions instead of attempting to affix blame, others will almost always respond in kind.

Dr. Napoleon Hill To subscribe to Napoleons Hill's Thought For The Day please visit <http://www.naphill.org/tftd/join.asp>

Common Employer Mistake in Employment Screening

Relying exclusively on results of a national criminal conviction database search to find criminal convictions without confirming results at the jurisdictional level

According to ABC News on October 13, 2008, there have been dozens of lawsuits in the past two years alleging that background checks have cost people jobs because they were inaccurately identified as criminals when in fact they were not. The story focused on the use of massive criminal databases. See:

<http://abcnews.go.com/>

[TheLaw/story?id=6017227&page=1](http://abcnews.go.com/TheLaw/story?id=6017227&page=1)

The inaccuracies come in two varieties:

1. The criterion used in the database is name match only and reports a criminal record that in fact belongs to someone else. That is because such database searches may not always contain identification data,

Fraud Factories

Fake institutions and diploma mills that churn out bogus degrees could jeopardize your human resource strategy.

Summary of an article **By Bill Leonard**

Alan Contreras, administrator for the Oregon Office of Degree Authorization firmly believes that degree mills present a much bigger problem than employers are aware of and acknowledge. He estimates that nearly 700 diploma mill companies or organizations exist in the United States and as many as 3,000 mills are in operation worldwide.

All these degree mills issue thousands of bogus degrees every year, he says. So there are tens of thousands of people out there who are using these bogus degrees.

Online Proliferation

The number of college and graduate school courses available online can really leave you perplexed about which ones are legitimate, says Judy Lohmar, manager of learning and development for Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Little Rock. Resources to check authenticity are readily available.

Groups such as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in Washington, D.C., maintain lists of accredited colleges and universities. Employers may not be aware of these online lists, according to

such as date of birth.

2. The database contains criminal records that are outdated and should not be considered by employers, because something occurred after the data was obtained which makes the record non-reportable, such as a deferred adjudication, expungement, a judges order that records be sealed or some sort of judicial set aside under state law.

Creating Written Policies

Although many organizations have adopted written policies clearly specifying that only accredited schools qualify for tuition reimbursement, many have not.

Even a degree that seems to be from a top university may come from a degree mill. Contreras identifies two types of mills, ones that issue degrees from bogus or nonexistent schools and ones that sell fake degrees from legitimate and well-known colleges.

Employers need to say upfront and in writing that they confirm all degrees by checking college transcripts, Contreras says. However, while checking transcripts at well-known and accredited schools usually will reveal whether an employee or job candidate has a fake degree, transcript reviews won't reveal every fake credential.

Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that 463 federal employees had received bogus degrees from diploma mills

What To Look For

Experts say clues will help you spot questionable credentials on a resume or application. Look for:

Out-of-sequence degrees. Degrees take a traditional progression high school, followed by bachelor's, master's, and doctoral or other advanced degrees. Consider it a red flag if an applicant claims a master's or doctoral degree, but no bachelor's degree or a college degree, but no high-school or equivalency diploma.

Quickie degrees. It generally takes time to earn a college or advanced degree three to four years for an undergraduate degree, one or two years for a master's degree, and even longer to earn a doctorate. A degree earned in a short time, or several degrees listed for the same year, are warning signs.

Degrees from schools in locations different from the applicant's job or home. If an applicant worked full time while attending school, check the locations of the job and the educational institution. If the applicant didn't live where he went to school, check to see if the degree is from an accredited distance-learning institution.

Sound-alike names. Some diploma mills use names that sound or look like those of well-known colleges or universities. If the institution has a name similar to a well-known school located in a different state, check its credentials. Look for degrees from institutions

with prestigious-sounding foreign names; they call for homework, too. Researching the legitimacy of foreign schools can be a challenge, but consider it a warning sign if an applicant claims a degree from a country where she never lived.

Source: Federal Trade Commission.

How To Verify Academic Credentials

Contact the school. Most registrars will confirm dates of attendance and graduation, as well as degrees awarded and majors, upon request. If the applicant gives permission, the college may provide a certified academic transcript. If you aren't familiar with the school or are suspicious, don't stop your research just because someone answers your questions on the phone or responds with a letter. Some diploma mills offer verification services that send phony transcripts.

Research the school online. Check to see if the school is accredited by a recognized national agency. Accredited colleges and universities undergo rigorous review. Many diploma mills claim to be accredited, but the accreditation is from an official-sounding institution the school invents.

You can use the Internet to check a new database of accredited academic institutions posted by the U.S. Department of Education at www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation. Keep in mind that there are some legitimate institutions that have not pursued accreditation.

Check the list of recognized national and regional accrediting agencies maintained by the Council for Higher Education

Accreditation at www.chea.org.

Look at the school's web site. But note that it's not always easy to pick out a diploma mill based on a quick scan of its site. Some mills have slick sites and a dot-edu web address to suggest legitimacy. Nevertheless, the site can be a source of information. Federal officials say it may be a diploma mill if:

- Tuition is charged on a per-degree basis, rather than per credit, course or semester.
- There are few or unspecified degree requirements, or none at all.
- The emphasis is on degrees for work or life experience.
- The school is relatively new or has recently changed its name.

Tap other resources. There is no comprehensive list of diploma mills on the web because phony credentialing sources arise all the time. However, the Oregon Student Assistance Commission's Office of Degree Authorization maintains a list of organizations it has identified as diploma mills at www.osac.state.or.us/oda. Another way to check up on a school is to call the registrar of a local college or university and ask if it would accept transfer credits from the school you are researching.

Source: Federal Trade Commission.

KEY POINTS IN DELEGATION

Your ability to delegate successfully is key to your success in completing this step in preparing your time budget. These are key

points to remember when you delegate a task.

1. Pick a person to perform the task who has the basic aptitude and who is motivated to perform it.

2. Invest in training. Plan to take the time necessary up front to ensure that he or she acquires the necessary skills to complete the task successfully.

3. Use a try-out period. Instead of delegating the entire task, begin with delegating just a portion of the task. With a try-out period, you minimize your risk-there is less they can do wrong-and you increase the likelihood of their success since they learn to complete the task in small stages or steps.

4. Finally, be patient. No one will perform the task exactly right the first time, and they will probably never perform the task exactly the way you do. Remember, it is the timely and accurate completion of the task that is important, not necessarily the precise execution of steps according to your personal "one best way."

Now you have a list of recurring activities reduced by those tasks you have decided you can delegate. Your next step in developing a time budget is to transfer this information to a calendar. Any type of calendar will do, but you will probably find it easier to work with a large daily or weekly format.

Your calendar is a visual picture of the time available to you. All of the recurring business activities you have listed, plus non-recurring activities, have to be on this calendar. In addition, you have to allow for your personal

time-to sleep, eat, be with your family, enjoy the holidays, take that vacation. As you review your business list and the time you need for your personal life, don't be surprised if your "large" calendar appears to shrink. Now you are beginning to face the real problem. There is just so much time available.

How much time are you willing to devote to running your business? Now is the time to make your decision. Cross out blocks of time on your calendar that you plan to reserve for your personal life. The time that remains is your total business time budget. Within this budget, you must plan for your recurring activities and still leave at least half of your business hours (or more) available for nonrecurring activities.

To fill in your business calendar, begin by allocating time to the recurring activities you have listed. For example, if you need two hours a week to prepare the weekly payroll, block out that time on your calendar when it must occur. In recording your recurring activities, first enter those that have specific deadlines, then enter other activities that can be performed at any time during the day, week, month, etc. Also, try to reserve the first and last half hour of each day and approximately 50 percent of the total time for nonrecurring tasks, since you will need these blocks of time for your daily (short-term) plan.

excerpt from *The Competitive Edge* by Fran Tarkenton & Joseph Boyett

The Person in the Mirror

Some years ago, I watched a movie about an individual on a quest to discover the secrets of the universe. The secrets were held in one book guarded by formidable forces. After many arduous tests and competitions, the individual finally made it to opening the book. And, guess what the book contained? There were pages and pages with nothing on them except mirrors.

When we look in the mirror many times daily do we see ourselves or simply the reflection of outward appearances? What does it mean to really look at yourself and know that you are connecting with your true essence, the eternal you that is capable of living a life of abundance and beauty?

Normally speaking, too much self-awareness can be hard to process when we rise in the morning and catch a glimpse of our passing selves. Day in, day out we repeat actions and never really take the time to catch a glimpse of our true nature - that eternal self which is timeless and ageless. Maybe it is time that we face the man or woman in the mirror and look deeper than simply outward appearances.

Dr. Napoleon Hill has the prescription for an ailing spirit and waning self-esteem. He pulls back the office curtain in his famous story about an encounter with a tramp, and directs the tramp to really look at the only person who is capable of making a positive change in his life - himself! The eternal truth is that the only person who can change us is ourselves. Sometimes this message is not easily received because it is too easy for

people to rely on others to fix what is broken in their lives. Problems are too often given to parents, spouses, teachers, employers, agencies, organizations, governments, friends, co-workers, pastors - you name it - to fix for us, when the very answer we seek lies dormant in ourselves. Until we accept the fact that both the problem and the cure are within us, no critical change can or will occur.

In Dr. Hill's story, the tramp leaves in a rush after facing the mirror and it is assumed that he is insulted. Months later, however, the man returns and thanks Dr. Hill for making him see reality. By really looking in the mirror at himself, he determined that it was he who was causing the problem and that only he was the one who could fix it. This is applied psychology at its best.

Ask yourself what the person in the mirror has to do with who you are and how you live your life. If a change is in order, begin right now, today to make the change that will place you on the road to success that is already there inside of you. You are the treasure, the ultimate gift, the perfect outcome, the buried gold, and the shining star. All this is there for you to see as you look in the mirror!

The above is a summary of commentary by Judy Williamson on Napoleon Hill's writings.