

NEW ENGLAND REGION'S (FEW) "Mountain Air"

Proudly serving Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont,
Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island

Volume 4

Issue 8

March 2008



Climb the Mountain
of Opportunity
with



Dawn Nester, Regional Manager

PH: (603) 433-0560 (desk)

Fax: (603) 433-0780

we-mail: Dawn.M.Nester@irs.gov

PH: (603) 978-8361 (cell)

he-mail: Histrylady@yahoo.com

Are you a member of the T.E.A.M.?

What's Inside?

- ★ Membership Report, pg 2
- ★ Regional Training Program Update, pg 2
- ★ Greater Boston Chapter Update, pg 2
- ★ Greater Merrimack Valley Chapter Update, pg 3
- ★ National FEW News, pg 3
- ★ Legislative Report, pg 3
- ★ Diversity Corner, pg 4
- ★ Compliance Report, pg 7
- ★ Training Report, pg 7
- ★ National Training Program 2008 Update, pg 8
- ★ FEW Foundation for Education and Training, pg 8
- ★ National Training Programs, pg 9
- ★ Management Tips, pg 9
- ★ News You Can Use, pg 11
- ★ Printable RTP Registration Form, pg 14
- ★ Printable RTP Class Descriptions, pg 15
- ★ Application Form, pg 16

New England Region (FEW)
P. O. Box 444
Farmington, NH 03835-0444
<http://nerfew.org>

Regional Manager's Message

And to think I thought things were popping around the Region and National FEW last month! February has ended with a flurry of activity and March is picking up the pace!

I hope you have received your membership renewal invoice and are seriously considering being a member in 2008. If you've already renewed, "Thank you!" Everyone at the National, Regional, and Chapter level looks forward to meeting and working with you for another year of wonderful opportunities. I know I do!

If you haven't renewed yet, please contact your Chapter President or another member who has renewed to discuss perspectives. Talk to your Chapter President about what would make FEW the perfect organization for you. Chapter Presidents, please refer any suggestions you receive from members to me for sharing with the National Board of Directors, as appropriate.

And, speaking of the National Board of the Directors, by now, I hope you are aware that National FEW will hold an election later this year. There is and will continue to be more information on the National FEW web site on the Members Only section. If you haven't already, please log on to the National FEW web site and click on the Members link. There is a link there to request a password if you don't already have one or have forgotten yours.

I encourage you to read the update article about the New England Region's upcoming Regional Training Program. Your fellow FEW members who are serving on the committee are working hard for you.

Membership Report by Alice McGrail,
Treasurer



Talk about FEW to *everyone* you meet. All are welcome!

Alkins, Gloria	Hamilton, Nancy
Anderson, Freda	Hitchcock, Carol
Antunes, Rozella	Hung, Mary
Bracken, Patricia	Jackson, Rhoda
Briggs, Valarie	Laing, Karen
Cartwright, Merrie	Lampert, Debra
Cerretani, Karen	Madera, Brenda
Cousins, Jayne	McGrail, Alice 1/
Cutillo, Carrie	Michaud, Judith
Dickerson, Cheryl-lyne	Murray, Gail
Dunn, Gloria	Murphy, Joyce
Elwood, Elsie	Nasin, Catherine
Faye, Karen	Nester, Dawn 2/
Fletcher, Cathy 3/	O'Neal, Lillian
Foxx, Valerie 4/	Santos-Dwyer, Wanda
Garrasi, Maria	Satterlee, Karen
Gaughan, Lisa	Slayden, Tawonda
Gessay, Jeanne	Somefun, Marilyn
Gildersleeve, Eleanor	Sousa, Kathleen
Gray, Tina 5/	Spahr-Gughan, Cynthia
Hahnen, Mary	Stoner, Helen

1/ - Regional Treasurer, New England Region
 2/ - Regional Manager, New England Region
 3/ - Vice President for Diversity, National FEW
 4/ - President, Greater Boston Chapter
 5/ - President, Greater Merrimack Valley FEW Chapter

Regional Training Program Update
by the RTP Committee

The RTP Committee continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis. During our February 22nd conference call, we determined that each conference attendee will receive a well-stocked conference bag. The bags have been graciously donated to us by Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield's New England representative.

Registration for the RTP is now open. As you make plans to attend, please fax or mail your completed registration form to Dawn Nester,

Regional Manager, at (603) 433-0780 or (603) 433-0512. Then follow the fax up by sending a hard copy of the completed registration with payment to:

New England Region (FEW)
 Attention: Dawn Nester, Regional Manager
 P. O. Box 444
 Farmington, NH 03835-0444

The Planning Committee needs the faxed registration forms for information purposes so that we have enough food on hand for the continental breakfast and catered lunch, as well as handout materials from our presenters. We encourage you to let us know you plan to attend as soon as possible so that we have an accurate head count.

As a reminder, the registration form and class description is available through the New England Region's web site (<http://nerfew.org>) under the Regional Training Program link. Our classes will be:

- Goal Setting, presented by Valerie Foxx, President, Greater Boston Chapter
- Taking the Work out of Networking, presented by Diane Danielson, Founder of the Downtown Women's Club, Boston, MA
- FEW's Focus Areas, presented by Cathy Fletcher, Vice President, Diversity, and Dawn Nester, Regional Manager
- Practice Safe Stress, a webinar presented by Mark Gorkin, the Stress Doc

We look forward to meeting you for this exciting, career-enhancing training opportunity.

Greater Boston Chapter Update by Valerie Foxx, President

Maria Garrasi recently sent members an electronic invitation to our March 12th Chapter meeting. Due to member time constraints, this will be a short business meeting. Please RSVP to her that you can attend.



"This meeting will now come to order..."

Greater Merrimack Valley Chapter Update

February has been an exciting and busy month for our new Chapter. We had an Officer Training class along with the Swearing In of our Interim Officers. One of our new members, Debra Lampert, took on the role of Correspondence Secretary and was later sworn in by Dawn. Thanks to Debra's involvement, we now have the ideal number of officers: five. We've been recruiting like crazy and one of our newest members, Lisa Lombardi, agreed to be our Legislative Liaison. She has experience in this area and will truly be a great asset to our Chapter.

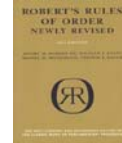


L to R: Joyce Murphy; Tina Gray; Debra Lampert; Dawn Nester; Karen Laing; and Lisa Lombardi.
Not shown: Jayne Cousins

As a marketing tool, we created three large poster boards to be placed at the two employee entrances and one at the meeting site doorway. These posters have our mission statement, logo, meeting agenda and Lunch N Learn (LnL) topics. Check it out!

We hosted six Lunch N Learn sessions offered to three of our IRS office locations. In Andover, there were 66 people in attendance. In Methuen, there were 23 people and in Lowell, there were 17. We invited a representative from the Social Security Administration to discuss the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. During the course of these LnL's, the Methuen employees became interested in starting their own Chapter. Lisa Lombardi and I are working on this.

Five members from our Chapter have agreed to work on the RTP committee. Jayne Cousins even recruited her teenage daughter to help out with onsite Registration. We attend the bi-monthly conference calls and take action on our assigned tasks. We are getting the word out to our co-workers about this valuable training and expect a good turnout.



"Our first order of business is..."

National FEW News (<http://www.few.org>)



1666 K Street, N.W., Suite 440
Washington, DC 20036

The National Board of Directors continue to focus on the upcoming national election of officers, submission of award nominations, and participating in regional and chapter training programs around the country.

Legislative Report



FEW.ORG



Cecelia Davis
Vice President for
Congressional Relations

Hello All,

I am checking in on everyone as we move closer to the 2008 presidential election on November 4, 2008. We are about to elect a new president and vice president, members of congress, governors, and

Legislative Report (cont.)

local officials. As mentioned in one of my earlier articles, this is a very exciting and unique political period. I strongly encourage all members to participate in the voting process. As a bit of history, the right to vote was established over 200 years ago. However, the battle to extend this right to all Americans would take place over many years. Many people have struggled and suffered, including women, to ensure that all people have the right to vote. So, don't take this right for granted and participate in the process and vote on November 4th.

Historical Milestones in US Voting

The 15th Amendment – the right of citizens of the US to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the US or by any State on account of race, color or previous condition or servitude.

The 19th Amendment – the right of citizens of the US to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the US or by any State on account of sex.

The 26th Amendment – the right of citizens of the US, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the US or by any State on account of age.

FEW is a bipartisan organization and does not endorse political candidates; however, we truly applaud the diversity in the current election. As an organization that focuses on diversity, FEW examines the demographics of the workforce according to age, race, sex, ethnic background, religious affiliation, disability, and sexual orientation. It is truly a pleasure to see that our slate of candidates represents a diverse mixture. This year's election is a historical event. We hope to see this continued diversity in future campaigns. Along with the diversity, we are happy to see the huge participation of our young voters in the 2008 presidential election.

As Government employees, we are reminded that we must adhere to the Hatch Act, which identifies the political activities that are

permitted and prohibited. The Hatch Act information is posted on FEW's website at www.few.org/legislative-focus.asp as guidance. If you need clarification on a specific issue, check with your agency's legal counsel. As FEW members, we have a great resource through the advocacy tool, CAPWIZ (www.few.org/legislative-focus.asp), to assist us in conducting research on political issues and the candidates who want to serve as our representatives. We encourage each of you to be a part of this year's election by voting on November 4, 2008!!!

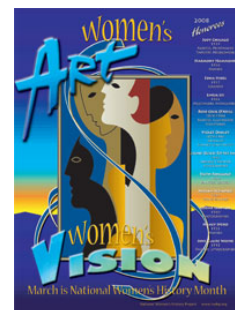


Diversity Corner



Cathy Fletcher
Vice President for Diversity

March is Women's History Month. This year's theme is "Women's Art, Women's Vision."



Visit the National Women's History Project for resources to help plan your celebration! Their web site is located at <http://www.nwhp.org>.



On a local level, Consuelo Northrup Bailey (1899-1976) was recently recognized by the Vermont Commission on Women.

Diversity Corner (cont.)

Consuelo Northrup Bailey was a national Pioneer among women in public service. Born and raised in Fairfield, VT, and a 1921 graduate from the University of Vermont, she was the first woman in America to serve as a state's attorney, as Speaker of a state house of representatives, and as Lieutenant Governor. She also served as Vice-chair of the Republican National Committee from 1952 to 1956.



I encourage you to visit your local library for more information about women's firsts. A few books you may wish to check out are:

"A Woman's Place, the freshmen Women Who Changed the Face of Congress," by (former) Congresswoman Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, including an interview with Hillary Rodham Clinton

"American Women's History, an A to Z of People, Organizations, Issues, and Events," by Doris Weatherford

"The Encyclopedia of Women's History in America," with information about more than 300 years of movements, breakthroughs, legislation, court cases, and notable women. This compendium was compiled by Kathryn Cullen-DuPont

"Parlor Politics, in which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government," by Catherine Allgor

"We Shall Not be Moved, the women's factory strike of 1909," by Joan Dash

"American Women, their Lives in their Words," by Doreen Rappaport

"Women in the Military, an unfinished Revolution," by Maj. Gen. Jeanne Holm, USAF (Ret.)

"Libby, the Alaskan Diaries and letters of Libby Beaman, 1879-1800," as presented by her Granddaughter Betty John

"Farm to Factory, Women's Letters, 1830-1860," second edition, edited by Thomas Dublin

This is an incomplete list of books and reference works you can study to learn more about women's history, of course. However, they will give you an idea of the depth and breadth of information that is available to both the casual reader and serious student of women's history. Happy reading!



Federal Workforce Growing More Diverse, says OPM by Alyssa Rosenberg, GovExec.com, February 14, 2008

The federal government's workforce grew more diverse in fiscal 2007, but women and Hispanics still are underrepresented when compared to the civilian labor force, according to a new report from the Office of Personnel Management.

"Once again, this year's report shows the federal government is committed to building a high-performance workforce drawn from the strengths of America's diversity," OPM Director Linda Springer wrote in the introduction to the annual report on the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program.

The study, which analyzed agencies with 500 or more permanent workers, found that 32.8 percent of federal employees were minorities in fiscal 2007 as compared to 28.2 percent of the civilian labor force.

African-American representation grew in government by 0.2 percent, from 17.6 percent to 17.8 percent, between 2006 and 2007, while representation in the civilian labor force stayed constant at 10.1 percent. The number

Diversity Corner (cont.)

Federal Workforce Growing More Diverse, says OPM (cont.)

of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans rose by 0.1 percent in both the federal and civilian workforces. Asian/Pacific Islanders made up 5.3 percent of the federal workforce and 4.3 percent of the civilian labor force in 2007, while Native Americans were 2.0 percent of the federal workforce, and 0.7 percent of the civilian labor force.

But the federal government lags behind the civilian labor force in the employment of Hispanics. Just 7.8 percent of the permanent federal workforce is Hispanic, OPM found, as compared to 13.3 percent of the civilian labor force. That gap widened between 2006 and 2007; Hispanic participation in the civilian labor force rose 0.5 percent during that year, while rising 0.2 percent in the federal workforce.

Women also are underrepresented in the federal workforce, though by a smaller margin – 43.9 percent of the federal workforce was female in 2007, compared to 45.7 percent of the civilian labor force. Women’s employment in the federal government did not grow from 2006 to 2007, though in the civilian labor force it rose by 0.3 percent.

OPM has found that the number of Hispanics in General Schedule grades 13 through 15 declined 2.8 percent from 2006; the number of women in those grades decreased by 4.2 percent; and the number of African-Americans in that group fell by 3.3 percent. That drop is attributed, in part, to promotions of candidates to senior positions. But greater representation among females, Hispanics, and African-Americans in senior jobs make up only a portion of the overall decline in their

representation among the GS 13 to 15 ranks. For all other minority groups, the increase in senior position representation exceeded the decline among GS grades 13 to 15.

Representative Danny Davis, D-Ill., has warned that without diverse “successor pools,” the Senior Executive Service could become less diverse as the retirement wave hits the federal government and there are not enough minority candidates at agencies to replace departing executives. Davis has introduced a bill (H.R. 3774) that would promote diversity within the SES.¹

Equal Employment Opportunity Commissioner Christine Griffin² said it was past time for OPM to begin tracking the employment of disabled people in the federal workforce. “I would hope that since people with disabilities are included in [H.R. 3774] that there will be some acknowledgement that EEOC’s data will be relied on to measure success of the diversity efforts or that there will be some other way of collecting that information,” she said. Davis’ bill also would require OPM to regularly track diversity data and include disability as a diversity category.



IMPORTANT NOTE: Remember to turn your clock back one hour on March 9th.

Dates to Remember in April 2008:

1-30	Alcohol Awareness Month
1-30	National Autism Awareness Month
1	April Fool’s Day – beware!
19	Passover begins at sundown (Jewish)
22	Earth Day
24	Take our Daughters and Sons to Work
25	Arbor Day
27	Easter

¹ This is the legislation that FEW has been actively involved in securing. If you have not already, please contact your elected officials in Congress from your home computers to encourage their support this legislation.

² Ms. Griffin was a speaker at NTP 2007’s “FEW Friday” event.

Compliance Report



Bernice Waller
Vice President for Compliance

As a reminder to all members, if you have issues or concerns regarding EEO matters, I am here to serve you. As the Vice President of Compliance, I serve as your first resource to direct you to the appropriate person(s) to contact, explain any and all EEO issues, and guide you through the initial stages of the process. I will encourage you to contact your EEO office and file the necessary paperwork. It is important to note that FEW is not in the business of providing legal counsel, formal advice, etc., on any EEO issues or situations.

Also it is important to note that FEW is concerned that equal treatment and proper advice is given to all Government employees. In addition, each chapter president should appoint a compliance committee chair to assist me. If your chapter does not already have a compliance committee chair, please appoint one as soon as possible and provide me her/his contact information. If a FEW member needs help and or information they should be directed to the compliance chair of the chapter and/or to the VP for Compliance at the National level to ensure they are being directed in the proper direction.

Indeed, because of this inability to provide qualified guidance, FEW entered into a memorandum of agreement with Shaw, Bransford, Veilleux, and Roth, bona fide law firm. As a member of FEW, when you have concerns and want to discuss your issues with an attorney, you may contact Shaw, Bransford, Veilleux and Roth. Per their agreement with National FEW, you will receive two (2) 30-minute free consultations per year. Shaw,

Bransford, Veilleux, and Roth can be reached via web site at <http://www.shawbransford.com> or by phone at 202-463-8400.

All of the National Board members are here to serve you, the member. It is up to you take advantage of their experience and expertise. If you have any other questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via e-mail at b.f.waller@att.net or by the phone at (301) 567-3119.

Training Report



Arlena Fitch-Gordon
Vice President for Training

Time Management, Responsibility, Accountability, and Leadership are all major aspects of "Maintaining Excellence in a Changing Environment."

As an intricate part of the excellence equation, you have a responsibility. Be aware of the culture of your own agency. Do you know the top-level management of your agency? If you do not, you should make it your business to find out whose names are at the top of your organizational charts.

From the beginning of time, we have all lived in a changing environment. It is safe to say that for the duration of our lives, we will continue to live in an ever-changing environment.

Things are changing so quickly. Children today are growing up taking for granted things that we adults have had to learn. How many of you remember eight tracks, 45's, and 78's? How many of you have Electronic Fund Transfer, ATM cards, cell phones, iPods, notepads, and Blackberries?

We get to work and we hear, "We've always done it that way." Or, "If it's not broken, don't fix it."

Training Report (cont.)

Sometimes we drag our heels when it comes to work, but why would you think the workplace would remain stagnant?

We must keep up with current news and be aware of the competition.

You have to get better or be beaten. I once heard retired Air Force Brigadier General Mary L. Saunders say, "Promotions are for the perceived ability to do more, and if you just do your job, you're already getting paid for that. For a promotion, something more is expected."

To maintain excellence, as a FEW family, we all have to learn to build a winning team by learning how to navigate our way together through the journey of continuous change.

In "Maintaining Excellence in a Changing Environment," you must focus on the importance of taking advantage of any training that is available.

You should ask yourself these questions:

- Where am I?
- Where do I want to be?
- How do I get there?
- What will be the future positions?
- Who will be the new hires?
- What will be the technology and skills?

Four areas are the cornerstone to any organization's "Maintaining Excellence in a Changing Environment."

- Training and Professional Development.
- Leadership (every individual should lead with dedication, style, grace, panache, and passion). Lead with integrity (make the touch calls). (Leave a diverse pipeline of future leaders to lead FEW for the next decade.
- Recruitment and Promotions.
- Quality of Work Life and Retention.

Job skills change, technology changes, and trends change. You need a mentor to help you adapt to the new changes. You have to move past average and invest in yourself. My personal philosophy regarding training is, "Training is an investment that never loses interest: it only pays dividends."

I understand the New England Region of FEW is offering a one-day Regional Training Program on April 25, 2008, at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, MA. This is an excellent opportunity for you to put into practice exactly what I am writing to you about: take advantage of any training that becomes available. Even if you can't attend the full day's training, there is an option to sign up for the last class as a webinar. What a great way to demonstrate you are technology savvy and willing to distance learn!

National Training Program 2008 Update

by Patricia Wolfe and Jeanette Miller, Co-Chairs

We are very pleased to announce that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has provided Rhonda Trent, National President, with its approval letter for the NTP. You can access a copy of this letter from the NTP web site at <http://www.fewntp.org> and clicking on the link. If your agency depends on this letter to approve requests for out-service training, please direct the appropriate persons' attention to the web site. You should also have begun to receive your hard copy registration through your home mail.



FEW Foundation for Education and Training

by Patricia Wolfe, President

<http://www.fewfoundation.org>

I am pleased to announce the acting appointment of Dawn Nester to the Board of Trustees as Secretary. Her permanent placement on the Board of Trustees is dependent on the approval of the FEW National Board of Directors, which will meet again in July during the NTP. In the meantime, we welcome Dawn as our acting Secretary.

FEW Foundation for Education and Training (cont.)

I also send appreciation out to Becky Fasulo, our immediate past Secretary, for the work and dedication she exhibited as we brought the FEW Foundation into being. She will be missed on the Board of Trustees.

In addition, Jack Kenner, Jane Morgan, Dawn Nester, and myself met via conference call/webcast with CharityAdvantage.com, a web site development company that supports non-profit organizations. We will take the information provided back to the full Board for a vote on using this company to refresh our web site. Keep watching this column for updates.

The Memorandum of Understanding with National FEW was finalized and signed during the Executive Committee meeting in Las Cruces, NM, in January-February 2008.

We are pleased to announce that we will once again be able to offer a full four-year scholarship through our partnership with Grantham University, a totally online university.

A 2008 Scholarship Committee has been named. They will begin work on the scholarship application and announcement so that you can apply. Check the website often for updates in the NEWS link.

Keep watching e-mails, newsletters, and web sites for information about the Foundation's efforts on our members' behalf.

National Training Programs

The NTP 2008 web site has gone live! Check it out at <http://www.fewntp.org>. For those considering attending the NTP, check out the opportunities when serving as a volunteer.

Future NTPs will be held:

- 2008 – Anaheim, CA (hotel to be determined)
- 2009 – Orlando, FL, at the Orlando World Center Marriott
- 2010 – New Orleans, LA, at the New Orleans Marriott
- 2011 – Philadelphia, PA, at the Marriott
- 2012 – Detroit, MI, at the Marriott at the Renaissance Center

Keep these dates in mind when talking with your manager about training needs.

Management Tips

How to Get Out of Your Own Way: 5 Strategies for Thinking Outside the Box by Kimberly Wiefeling

There are plenty of challenges in our lives, however some of them are of our own making. We undermine ourselves, make assumptions about what's possible that restrict our choices, and let our fears stop us from even trying to reach our goals and dreams. Like a fish that is unaware of the water he is swimming in, being stuck in old ways of thinking keeps us blind to the many opportunities that surround us.

How can we get unstuck? Not by thinking and doing things the same old way! Here are seven strategies for gaining new insights into your situation and opening up new possibilities for your work and your life.

Generous Listening

Most conversations are like two TVs facing one another. Talking seems to be the primary focus of our communication. However listening is even more powerful. Not the kind of listening we normally experience: listening for what's not going to work, listening for what we don't agree with so we can advocate our perspective, listening for a break in the communication so we can begin talking! Generous listening can

Management Tips (cont.)

How to Get Out of Your Own Way: 5 Strategies for Thinking Outside the Box (cont.)

completely transform the quality of our conversations and our relationships. And it is as simple as the words we choose and the attitude we bring to our conversations.

What is a generous listening attitude? It's the view that we are there to mine the gold in what the other person is saying, and to reflect back their wisdom so they can hear themselves more clearly. It's not merely replying "So what I hear you saying is . . .", and it's not asking a bunch of questions to further clarify what they are saying so we understand perfectly what they mean. It's simply listening to them so they can hear themselves better, with the entire focus on them.

How do we listen generously? First, avoid the questions "How?" and "Why?". These are great questions when appropriate, but they can shut down conversation instantly when you'd rather keep the conversation flowing and growing. There is nothing more futile than asking "How?" when one does not yet know "What," and generous listening is getting at the "What" in the other person's mind. And "Why?" sparks defensiveness, and even when appropriate, it may be better asked as, "Help me understand your thinking on this . . ."

Instead, use the following phrases to listen generously and expand a conversation:

- That's a great idea!
- Say more about that.
- Interesting! What else?
- What would that make possible?
- What would that allow for?
- Tell me more . . .
- What would make that possible?
- Help me understand . . .

When we ask questions such as, "What would make that possible?" instead of, "What could go wrong?"

an entirely different conversation results. Try it! You'll be amazed how simply listening for the gold in someone else's speaking and using these simple phrases will completely change the character of your communications.

The Power of Negative Thinking

Barbara Sher advocates having a "Hard Times Session" to get our negative thoughts out in broad daylight where they won't seem big and scary. What is the most negative interpretation of your situation? Put on your negative thinking cap and share this with a friend. Tell them that you are going to whine and complain for 2 or 3 minutes, and you just want them to listen, not help or try to solve your problem. Use the three "C's": Criticize, Condemn, Complain! You'll be amazed at how silly your negative interpretation sounds when you speak it and how much better you feel after you get that off of your chest.

Expert Advice

Like fish blind to water, we're surrounded by the answers to our problems and paths to fulfilling our goals, but unable to perceive them. However, when we start looking for answers and guidance, it miraculously appears. One source of random wisdom for our lives is to "Ask an Expert." This can be a fun game, and also quite illuminating. Do this with a friend. Choose a profession for them, such as gardener, doctor, astronaut, jazz drummer, shepherd, used car salesman, pirate, butcher, policeman, or bartender. Then ask them to advise you on your situation as a person in that profession might. Listen for nuggets of wisdom and insights that can help you. The magic of this technique is that we give others permission to be creative in assisting us, and we focus our attention on finding useful insights.

We can see what we seek. Try this and you'll find surprising insights!

Survival Fear vs. Stage Fright

One way we get in our own way is to stay stuck due to fear. What fears are stopping you from achieving your dreams and goals? Are they survival fears or stage fright? Survival fears are helpful—they warn us of dangers that can cause serious or permanent

Management Tips (cont.)

How to Get Out of Your Own Way: 5 Strategies for Thinking Outside the Box (cont.)

damage to ourselves, whether physical, mental, spiritual, social or other. Respect those fears! Take action to mitigate the chances of these things happening. And then there is stage fright. That's the "butterflies in the stomach" anxiety, with no real risk of serious or permanent damage. What should you do about those fears? Feel the fear and do it anyway! If you wait until there is no fear, you'll miss out on many opportunities. In fact, most people have stage fright over many types of situations. The difference between someone who is taking action and someone who lets stage fright stop them is that the person taking action is probably doing so while being afraid!

Ask yourself, "What's the worst that can happen?" This often shrinks fears down to a manageable size and allows you to prepare for any downside possibilities. Then, make a commitment to act—and do it!

Creative Whack Pack

A great way to find answers is to use Roger von Oech's "Creative Whack Pack." This pack of cards is associated with von Oech's book, *A Whack on the Side of the Head* (Warner Business, 1998). Simply choose a card at random from the Creative Whack Pack and then ask how this card gives you insights into your chosen issue.

Your Commitment

Vision without action is only a hallucination. Until we put our thoughts into action, they remain dreams. What action will you commit to take on behalf of your vision? Rest assured that no confidence is required to move in the direction of your goals, only your commitment. Choose an action that you will take this week, and then take it! Like a boat moving through the water vs. floating adrift, once you create

forward momentum in your life you can more easily steer in the direction of your goals.

No one can give you what you deny yourself. Apply these seven simple techniques to transform your life and achieve your goals and dreams. Get out of your own way and be ready to let the universe amaze you.

Kimberly Wiefeling, M.S., Founder and Principal, Wiefeling Consulting. Kimberly is a program management and business leadership consultant with over 15 years of experience helping companies lead more effectively and develop successful products with greater predictability and fewer nasty surprises. Contact Kimberly at Wiefeling Consulting www.wiefeling.com. See her site for workshops and newsletters related to this article.

News You Can Use



TSP Tech Upgrade Progressing, Officials Say by Brittany Ballenstedt, GovExec.com, February 19, 2008

An upgrade to the Thrift Savings Plan's aging information technology systems and capabilities is coming along, said officials overseeing the program on Tuesday.

Mark Hagerty, chief information officer for the TSP, said at a monthly meeting of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board that a two-year plan to upgrade the TSP's technology capabilities is on track. The plan involves replacing mainframe computers with newer technology offering more memory and faster processors, consolidating and replacing servers, modernizing IT networks and improving storage capacity.

"The most important thing for us is to make sure the security of these systems is able to keep up with the growth of this plan," said Andrew Saul, chairman of the TSP board. "The plan has doubled in asset value and has more than 3.8 million participants."

News You Can Use (cont.)

TSP Tech Upgrade Progressing, Officials Say (cont.)

Hagerty said that, so far, progress includes the procurement and installation of new mainframe computers at the TSP's primary and backup sites and the acquisition of new network monitoring software. Additionally, the agency has boosted security by conducting penetration tests of its systems and by moving forward to buy fraud detection and mitigation software and an anti-phishing service, Hagerty said.

In September, the board backed a 24 percent increase in the agency's budget for fiscal 2008, largely to support the systems modernization. While officials said the current technology had performed well handling an influx of transactions, Hagerty recommended "skating ahead of the puck" by making upgrades before they become urgent.

The upgrades will allow the encryption of data "at rest" -- data stored in computer databases or file systems -- and enable a mandatory switch to the next generation of the Internet, known as Internet Protocol version 6. The modernization also is expected to help decrease the time needed to transfer operations if a system fails.

"While we do not expect significant overruns to this initiative, we do anticipate a long-term financial obligation to support the increased software maintenance costs associated with the major performance improvements," Hagerty said.

The update of the tech upgrade came as the Labor Department presented its annual audit of TSP operations to the board. While Labor concluded that most of the TSP's plans and policies were consistent with a 1986 federal

employee retirement law, the agency recommended TSP strengthen information security over laptops and portable devices.

To boost security, auditors said TSP officials should encrypt all hard drives on agency-issued laptops, consider strengthening the password composition rules for portable devices and enforce the use of virus scanning for all external laptops before they're allowed to connect to the agency's network.

Meanwhile, officials touted the benefits of the plan's lifecycle funds, which shift investments from risky to more conservative blends as participants grow older. Officials noted that even in January, a volatile month for the markets, the L funds experienced significantly lower losses than the underlying funds. The returns on the L 2040, 2030 and 2020 funds also have surpassed all equity funds besides the international fund since their inception, officials added.

"This is what I was waiting for; I wanted to see how the L Funds would perform when the markets took a big hit," Saul said. "Those who are not sophisticated investors should really take a look at the L Funds. It's a really good way to diversify investments."

Officials also said they plan to publish in early March interim regulations that would restrict to two the number of TSP transfers participants can conduct each month. The regulations will be available for public comment for 30 days, officials said.

"If there's a better idea out there, we'll modify our approach," said Gregory Long, executive director of the Thrift Savings Plan. "Assuming there is not a significant change, we'll be making this active in April or May."



<http://www.tsp.gov>

News You Can Use (cont.)

Federal Women's Program Council Annual Training Conference, South Burlington, VT from an e-mail from Vicki Wells

The Federal Women's Program Council of Vermont will be holding its annual training conference, "If Not Now, When?" on Thursday, March 20, 2008 from 8:00am-4:00pm at the Sheraton Hotel in South Burlington, Vermont.

A spectacular day is planned with the following presentations:

- Live Fit-Live Green-Live Strong;
- The Five Greatest Challenges of Today's Digital Age;
- Working Remotely; Office Ergonomics;
- Child Protection/Safety Awareness; and,
- a Personality Workshop.

The keynote speaker will be Martha Rainville, Major General USAF (ret.), and there will also be a comedian just before lunch and an awards presentation.

All federal (and contract) employees are welcome. There will be door prizes and each participant will receive a zippered cloth document bag with the FWPC logo.

The registration deadline is March 7th.

For more information, please call Vicki Wells at (802) 660-5002 or email her at vicki.wells@dhs.gov.

[Regional Manager's Note: If I cannot attend personally, I will provide FEW information for a table; however, I am hoping to be able to attend in person.]

Women at Work Museum Events, March and April 2008 from their February flyer

Envision – Women Engineers: March 19, 2008, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Attleboro High School. Join us as we welcome our keynote speaker, Dr. Karen Panetta, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, Tufts University. A panel of women engineers from various disciplines will discuss career choices, challenges, and opportunities for young women interested in the field.

Single-Minded Financial Education Series: April 16, 2008, 6:30-8:00 p.m., Women at Work Museum, 35 County Street, Attleboro, MA 02703

Clara Barton Tea: May 17, 2008, 1:00-4:00 p.m., Women at Work Museum. This tea will focus on Worcester's Abby Kelley Foster. Travel back to 1854 and enter Abby's world. Hear her emotionally-powerful orations against slavery and prejudice, which changed the hearts and minds of many. Tickets on sale now for \$20.00 per person. Seating is limited.

Visit the museum online at <http://www.womenatworkmuseum.org>.³

Condolences to a FEW Sister, e-mail from Joyce Hageman, Secretary, February 2008

Karin Biega, National Bylaws Chair, lost her mother recently. Thoughts and prayers may be sent to Karin at:

Karin Biega
801 Del Rio Way, #403
Merritt Island, FL 32953

Our sincere sympathy goes out to Karin and her family in this time of sorrow.

³ FEW participated in their 2007 exhibit with its own FEW Members at Work exhibit. If you would like to reserve the exhibit for display at an event in your chapter/region, please contact Carolyn Malone at cmFEW@roadrunner.com or by phone at 216-292-3147.



Climb the Mountain
of Opportunity with



Registration
New England Region (FEW)
EIN: 14-1975132
Regional Training Program
"Make Every Grain of Sand Count!"
April 25, 2008

Name (please print or type):

Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

Home phone:

Work phone:

Fax number:

E-mail:

Title:

Employer:

Employer's Address:

Chapter Name (Required, if a member):

FEW Member Number (required):

Student ID Number (required, if a student):

Name of School attending:

Name of agency contact for billing:

Phone number of agency contact for billing:

Please identify any special need for accommodations (e.g., interpreter, special diet, wheelchair, other):

Please check registration and payment type:

Payment Type

Student
Registration \$20

Cash (on-site registration only)
 Check (personal)

Member
Registration \$35

Cash (on-site registration only)
 Check **personal** **government**
 Government Training Form

Non-Member
Registration \$50

Cash (on-site registration only)
 Check **personal** **government**
 Government Training Form

Make checks payable to New England Region/FEW. Cancellation Policy: NO REFUNDS

SUBMIT by USPS to: New England RTP, c/o Dawn Nester, P. O. Box 444, Farmington, NH 03835-0444.

SUBMIT by fax to: New England Region RTP, Attn: Dawn Nester, (603) 433-0512.

If you have any additional questions, please contact Dawn by e-mail at Dawn.M.Nester@irs.gov or by phone at (603) 433-0560.



Climb the
Mountain of
Opportunity with



New England Region (FEW)
EIN: 14-1975132
Regional Training Program
"Make Every Grain of Sand Count!"
April 25, 2008

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

"Goal Setting," presented by Valerie Foxx, President, Greater Boston Chapter, Federally Employed Women (USPS)

A workshop designed to teach you the essential steps to goal setting:

- How to Set Goals
- The Elements of Goals
- The 3-Step Process
- Goal Achievement
- The 3 Steps to Ensure Success



"Take the 'Work' Out of Networking," presented by Diane Danielson, Downtown Women's Club

This workshop is geared to reluctant networkers and anyone who needs a fresh take on networking. The focus is on strategy and attitude with basic pointers and tips for finding your own comfort zone and networking style.



"FEW Focus Areas," presented by Cathy Fletcher, Vice President for Diversity, and Dawn Nester, Regional Manager, New England Region

FEW's direction each year is based on recommendations made by the members at the Annual Membership Meeting held during the National Training Program (NTP) and adopted by the Board of Directors at the first meeting following the training program. The following are areas of ongoing program concerns: Compliance, Diversity, Training, and Legislative. Each program area has its own elected Vice President. This workshop will introduce you to the functions of the Vice Presidents, provide contact information and other resources to assist the attendee, and demonstrate how each program area fits into FEW's overall strategy for the future.



"Practicing Safe Stress," presented by Mark Gorkin, the "Stress Doc"

Through dynamic fun-filled presentations and exercises, participants will learn to identify personal stress signals and to recognize their vulnerability for burnout.

There will be a "Meet the Trainers" insert in your conference bag to learn more about our presenters.

Select one:

I wish to join the _____ Chapter as a regular member (*enclose prorated amount above*)

I wish to join as a Member-at-large (*enclose prorated amount + \$10.00*)

Payment (\$300.00) is enclosed for a Lifetime Membership

Referred/Recruited By (one name only):

Recruitment Event (If applicable):

Contributions or gifts to FEW are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes.