



advantage



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APRIL FOOLS

For those of you readers who are new to the HR Answers, Inc. newsletter, we thought we would share with you and remind others that the April issue is always (11 years now) our humor issue. HR is a very serious component of any organization, and we take our work very seriously, too (with all the new regulations, compliance, and employee issues we are encountering), but so many funny things happen along the way and this is the time we get to share some of those funnies with you.

To set the tone, remember that there are many benefits to smiling. So forget about Prozac and St. John's Wort. A genuine smile increases the production of serotonin, the happy hormone. It's a bonding agent. Smiling builds bridges to other people around us. It keeps us from remaining aloof and separate from one another. And that's a good workout! One smile uses more than 16 muscles.

Enjoy, and Happy April Fools Day!

WORDS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Because he was lonely, a man wanted to get a pet and was perusing the classified ads in the newspaper when he read this: Purebred Police Dog For Sale: \$50. The man thought this price was a bargain and he figured the dog would be intelligent and good looking since it was a purebred. So he picked up the phone and told the seller he wanted to buy the dog. The seller offered to deliver the man's new pet to his home. The man was delighted.

When the police dog arrived, however, the man was taken aback by the way it looked. It was definitely not the good-looking dog he had pictured in his mind. Instead, the dog looked like nothing more than a mangy mongrel.

"How in the world can you get away with calling that dog a purebred police dog?" the man asked.

The seller answered: "Don't let his looks deceive you. He's working undercover."

* * *

An applicant for a receptionist position included with her application and resume a photocopy of a brochure, "NRA Certified Instruction in Safe Firearms Operation and Marksmanship." The class listing included pistol, rifle, and shotgun shooting, and personal protection.

We guess that she wouldn't take guff from any callers!

BEST "OUT OF OFFICE" AUTOMATIC EMAIL REPLIES

We all use email as a communication tool. When people are out, it's very helpful to have people use their "out of office" tool so as to communicate appropriate expectations about response times to those sending notes. Here are some enjoyable versions:

1. I am currently out of the office at a job interview and will reply to you if I fail to get the position. Please be prepared for my mood.
2. You are receiving this automatic notification because I am out of the office. If I was in, chances are you wouldn't have received anything at all.
3. Sorry to have missed you, but I'm at the doctor's having my brain and heart removed so I can be promoted to our management team.
4. I will be unable to delete all the emails you send me until I return from vacation. Please be patient, and your mail will be deleted in the order it was received.
5. Thank you for your email. Your credit card has been charged \$5.99 for the first 10 words and \$1.99 for each additional word in your message.
6. The email server is unable to verify your server connection. Your message has not been delivered. Please restart your computer and try sending again. (The beauty of this is that when you return, you can see who did this over and over and over...)

7. Thank you for your message, which has been added to a queuing system. You are currently in 352nd place, and can expect to receive a reply in approximately 19 weeks.
8. Hi, I'm thinking about what you've just sent me. Please wait by your PC for my response.
9. I've run away to join a different circus.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF LOOKING AT THINGS (OR THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE)

A little boy went up to his father and asked: "Dad, where did my intelligence come from?"
The father replied, "Well, son, you must have got it from your mother, cause I still have mine."

* * *

"Mr. Clark, I have reviewed this case very carefully," the Divorce Court judge said, "and I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week."

"That's very fair, your Honor," the husband said. "And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself."

* * *

After examining a woman who had been rushed to the Emergency Room, a doctor took the husband aside and said, "I don't like the looks of your wife at all."

"Me neither, Doc," said the husband. "But she's a great cook and really good with the kids."

* * *

An old man goes to the Wizard to ask him if he can remove a curse he has been living with for the last 40 years.

The Wizard says, "Maybe, but you will have to tell me the exact words that were used to put the curse on you."

The old man says without hesitation, "I now pronounce you man and wife."

* * *

A traveler calls Delta Airlines, and asks, "Can you tell me how long it'll take to fly from San Francisco to New York City?"

The agent replies, "Just a minute."

"Thank you," the traveler says, and hangs up.

* * *

Two detectives were investigating the murder of Juan Gonzalez. "How was he killed?" asked one detective.

"With a golf gun," the other detective replied.

"A golf gun! What is a golf gun?"

"I don't know. But it sure made a hole in Juan."

* * *

A man is recovering from surgery when the Surgical Nurse appears and asks him how he is feeling.

"I'm O. K. but I didn't like the four letter-words the doctor used in surgery," he answered.

"What did he say," asked the nurse.

"Oops!"

* * *

Editor: Deborah Jeffries, PHR, CPC. Advantage is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations, HR practices and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resource and employee relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, questions about your subscription, or if you need additional Advantage binders, please give us a call at (503) 885-9815 or e-mail djeffries@hranswers.com.



While shopping for vacation clothes, my husband and I passed a display of bathing suits. It had been at least 10 years and 20 pounds since I had even considered buying a bathing suit, so I sought my husband's advice.

"What do you think?" I asked. "Should I get a bikini or an all-in-one?"

"Better get a bikini," he replied. "You'd never get it all in one."

He's still in intensive care.

WORTH PONDERING

"If it's sent by ship then it's a cargo, if it's sent by road then it's a shipment."

- Dave Allen

"You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on my windshield that said "Parking Fine."

- Tommy Copper

"I used to think I was indecisive, but now I'm not so sure."

- Anonymous

"Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way when you criticize them, you are a mile away from them and you have their shoes."

- Jack Handey

"If the minimum wasn't acceptable it wouldn't be called the minimum."

- George Muncaster

BIGGEST DUDS EVER HIRED

Here are some stories about some real duds... real life hires who turned out to be turkeys.

Direct Deposit. We hired a woman to do our accounts receivable, and after a few days, we noticed that there had been no deposits made to our bank account. We discovered that she did not know how to fill out deposit slips or deposit money, so she decided to file our clients' payments instead.

Dressed for Success. I worked for a large public retail chain that embraced the casual dress code. I hired an accounts payable clerk who had a perfect background and experience for the job. After an hour of orientation, she spent a couple of hours with her trainer in AP. Before noon, she came to me and told me that she couldn't work here because she wasn't comfortable with our dress code. She wanted to wear suits and dresses every day, and others wearing jeans made her uncomfortable.

I See Sick People. As the director of HR for a hospital, we hire a lot of employees. The biggest turkey we have ever hired was a registration clerk for our Emergency Room. On her first day at work and after observing another registration clerk for four hours, she came by the HR office and asked me if she could go home. I asked why she wanted to go home, and she said, "There are sick people over there!" I asked her, what she expected in an Emergency Room, and whether she had a problem being around sick people. Her reply was, "No. I've been around a lot of sick people, but this is just too much work to be around sick people." She left, and we have not heard from her since. I guess working in a hospital isn't as easy as she thought it was going to be.

Just Say No. I worked for a small organization that had just opened a satellite office. The owner's son hired a young woman because he thought her looks would please the clients and he hoped to eventually move her into sales. She had no experience in our market, and it was my job to train her. As a certified trainer with years of success in that area, it was no problem for me. However, the new employee kept getting up in the middle of our on-the-job training and going out to her car for a few minutes because she "forgot something." When she returned, she would sit at her computer and fall asleep in the middle of keying in the material I was training. The day she was told she must go for her required drug screening, she left and never returned. The owner's son still insisted she would have worked out except that I probably bored her with my training techniques.

A Fashion Emergency. We had an employee who took a cell phone call during our mandatory staff meeting, said she had to leave for a family emergency, and later came back to the office with a new haircut and a department store shopping bag.

All's Well That Ends Well. We hired a woman to be a traveling trainer on our software. She was told up front that the job entailed about 50% travel. Her first day in the office, she spent four hours online on her hotmail account. When her director spoke to her about it, she complained to her co-workers, whom she had just met, about being called on the carpet. After a week, she didn't show up and e-mailed us saying that she didn't think the job was for her because she had pets and couldn't travel.

A Close Call. While on a recruiting contract this summer, I had a "second interview" with a potential sales manager. He arrived late, talked on the phone using his Bluetooth earpiece the whole time he was in the waiting room (while my receptionist tried to help him), and was generally obnoxious. I watched the performance from the window in my office, before going out and introducing myself to him. He put a hand up to me, while he said good-bye to whoever was more important on his phone.

Another day, I would have invited him to leave, but I was feeling playful and thought this would be a great story. It was. I led him to the office to sit down, and he tried to pull out a chair for me. He put his sunglasses on his forehead—and left his earpiece for his phone in his ear. He said something along the lines of being overly qualified, but he wanted to give us a chance. I asked a few of my normal questions until... his phone rang. Again, he put up his hand to me, answered the call, spoke a few sentences and then told me I could continue. I dramatically closed my folder and said we were done. As we walked to the door, he told me that he looked forward to working with us and asked when the next training class would be and when he would be starting. TBNT (thanks but no thanks); I told him we'd be in touch.

All the Right Moves. We hired a gentleman (term used very loosely) who was given the organization's policy on relocation reimbursements before his acceptance of our job offer. In order to be eligible for reimbursement, receipts were required. He created his own handwritten receipts and attempted to gain reimbursement for time he spent packing his own boxes, at a rate of \$25.00/hour (not permitted by our policy). Note: his salary was only \$20.55/hour. Apparently he felt that he was worth more packing his apartment than actually performing the work we hired him for. Alas, he was let go after torturing us with other manipulations of our policies.

APRIL IS NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH

Let's get serious for a minute! During National Donate Life Month, could you do at least one thing to make April about donation?

Be a partner in a national initiative called the Workplace Partnership for Life. Make a commitment to make others aware that organ donors save lives and to let them know how to become a donor.

Today, more than 100,000 men, women, and children are on the national waiting list for a transplant. You can give them hope –and help.

- Display a Donate Life Poster.
- Send an email to everyone you know and ask them to celebrate April by signing up to donate life.
- Ask your local organ procurement organization to arrange a donation registration for your office or organization.
- Invite a transplant recipient to speak at a brown bag luncheon – you can believe that speaker will know what life's all about!
- *Or share Brian's story...*

Brian waited almost two years to receive a liver transplant, spending most of that time lying on a couch, too sick to play with his young daughter, often too sick to talk to his wife. After his transplant, Brian's family gave a party to celebrate his first six months of good health. To a group of happy but tearful friends, Brian said: "Without a donor, I'm not here today." Then he announced, with a huge grin, "But next week, I'm going back to work!"

Six years later Brian continues to serve his community as a fireman/medic, to compete in the National Transplant Games, and to participate in rides and other events that promote donation awareness and donor registration. He never forgets that he can do all this thanks to the incredible generosity of a stranger.

For information on how to register as a donor, visit: organdonor.gov

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF A YOUNG ONE

The Johnny Stories

Little Johnny's at it again. A new teacher was trying to make use of her psychology courses. She started her class by saying, "Everyone who thinks they're stupid, stand up!" After a few seconds, Little Johnny stood up. The teacher said, "Do you think you're stupid, Little Johnny?" "No, ma'am, but I hate to see you standing there all by yourself!"

* * *

Little Johnny watched, fascinated, as his mother smoothed cold cream on her face. "Why do you do that, mommy?" he asked. "To make myself beautiful," said his mother, who then began removing the cream with a tissue. "What's the matter?" asked Little Johnny. "Giving up?"

* * *

The math teacher saw that little Johnny wasn't paying attention in class. She called on him and said, "Johnny! What are 2 and 4 and 28 and 44?" Little Johnny quickly replied, "NBC, FOX, ESPN and the Cartoon Network!"

* * *

Little Johnny's kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station, where they saw pictures of the 10 most wanted criminals, tacked to a bulletin board. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

"Yes," said the policeman. "The detectives want very badly to capture him."

Little Johnny asked, "Why didn't you keep him when you took his picture?"

* * *

Little Johnny attended a horse auction with his father. He watched as his father moved from horse to horse, running his hands up and down the horse's legs and rump, and chest. After a few minutes, Johnny asked, "Dad, why are you doing that?" His father replied, "Because when I'm buying horses, I have to make sure that they are healthy and in good shape before I buy."

Johnny, looking worried, said, "Dad, I think the UPS guy wants to buy Mom."

PUNS INTENDED

For anyone who likes a good play on words.....or just to play with words!

1. The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
2. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.
3. She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.
4. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.
5. The butcher backed into the meat grinder and got a little behind in his work.
6. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
7. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
8. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
9. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.
10. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
11. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.
12. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
13. Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other, "You stay here. I'll go on a head."
14. I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.
15. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: "Keep off the Grass."
16. A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, "No change yet."
17. A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

18. The short fortuneteller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
19. The man who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.
20. A backward poet writes inverse.
21. When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion.
22. Don't join dangerous cults: Practice safe sects!

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE (BUT IT IS):

A freshman at Eagle Rock Junior High won first prize at the Greater Idaho Falls Science Fair. In his project he urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide." And for plenty of good reasons, since it can:

1. Cause excessive sweating and vomiting.
2. It's a major component in acid rain.
3. It can cause severe burns in its gaseous state.
4. Accidental inhalation can kill you.
5. It contributes to erosion.
6. It decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes.
7. It has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.

He asked 50 people if they supported a ban of the chemical. Forty-three said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew the chemical was *water*. The title of his prize-winning project was, "How Gullible Are We?" He was attempting to show how conditioned we have become to alarmists practicing junk science.

HR STRANGE BUT TRUE! JOB INTERVIEW FAUX PAS

Phone Calls that Could Have Waited

- "I had an applicant go through a drive-thru and place an order while she was on the phone with me during a phone screening."
- "A person left a voice message asking if we had any employment opportunities for him with our organization. I could hear him tinkle and then flush the toilet while he was leaving the message. I wanted to wash my ears after listening to his message."

Maybe Not the Right Job for You?

- "A job candidate who was asked what he liked least about accounting said, "The numbers. I really hate working with numbers.'"
- "A candidate arrived to interview for a management job at a Blenz Coffee shop while drinking a fresh coffee purchased down the street at a Tim Horton's Coffee shop."
- "We had an applicant interview for a receptionist position. One of the questions asked was what the candidate liked least in their last position. The candidate without hesitation said, "I hated answering the phone.'"
- "When asked to describe their experience as a bartender, several people who I interviewed for a bartending job said that they were very good at drinking so that is why they could be a bartender."
- "While interviewing an applicant, I asked the question, "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?" The applicant answered, "The CEO of a bank." He was applying for an assistant's position at the corporate office of a shoe company...."

Talk About Your Flexible Schedules

- "When discussing schedules, a candidate said that she didn't like to be tied down to a schedule and found it too constricting to have to be at a certain place at a certain time."
- "A candidate asked how many vacation and sick days a year she would get, because her kids were always sick and she would be taking time off to care for them a lot."

That First Impression

- “One job candidate came in accompanied by a woman with hair curlers and fuzzy house shoes. She started filling out his application for him and there was, apparently, some disagreement about what she should write down. This escalated into a near melee with the applicant jumping up, knocking over the desk, grabbing the woman by her hair curlers and drawing back on her. Luckily, several burly male employees came running when they heard the ruckus and prevented him from actually striking her. Needless to say, he was not considered for the job opening.”
- “A young man applied for a position with my prior employer. When he arrived for his interview, he was dressed with low slung long shorts and a long shirt. After the interview, he got up to leave my office and his shorts fell down! Thank goodness for long shirts....”

‘Um, hello?’

- “When asked what his number one accomplishment thus far has been, the candidate hesitated before responding, “I guess it would be my 23 bug tattoos.” He proceeded to stand up and remove his shirt to show me his entire back covered in bug tattoos (with their Latin names underneath each one). I was so stunned I couldn’t speak!”
- “Keeping a basket of candy on my desk, I always ask the candidates if they would like a piece. One candidate took the basket and proceeded to take handfuls and stuff his pockets.”
- “In the interview, the applicant took out a piece of paper, folded it into a paper airplane and flew it around the room. Believe it or not, he also asked each of the interviewers if they wanted to arm wrestle him.”
- Fifteen years ago, I wore my hair in a bun on top of my head, as I do now. The candidate was interviewing for an engineering position. Right at the beginning of the interview the candidate said, “Can I ask you a personal question?” I was naturally wary and said, “I don’t think that would be appropriate.” He then blurted out, “I just have to ask. How long is your hair? Yours must be very long. I just love long hair!”

ATTORNEYS – ENOUGH SAID

These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who suffered the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn’t it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn’t know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the twenty-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: He’s twenty, much like your IQ.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Are you sh—— me?

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

advantage

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town, I'm going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral.

ATTORNEY: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

WITNESS: Are you qualified to ask that question?

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

And the best for last:

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your Daytimers, computer calendars, Palm Pilots, and of course those Blackberries. The following is a look at upcoming events, special days and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and get scheduled. To register for our workshops, please call any of our offices, send an e-mail to [Melissa Sambuceto at MSambuceto@hranswers.com](mailto:MSambuceto@hranswers.com), or simply register online at www.hranswers.com and click on the “Workshop Registration” tab at the top of the homepage.

APRIL

Celebrate Diversity, National Humor, Prevention of Animal Cruelty, Stress Awareness, and National Donate Life Month (see article too).

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| April 2-
May 7 | HRA Series (Tualatin)
Beginning Supervision Series
8:30am – 12:30 pm |
| April 8 | HRA Workshop (Tualatin)
EFCA – Being Pro Employer
8:00am – 10:00am |
| April 10 | National Sibling Day |
| April 16 | International Moment of Laughter Day |
| April 21 | HRA Workshop (Tualatin)
What’s Your Unemployment Costing You?
7:30am – 9:30am |
| April 22 | Earth Day |
| April 30 | National Honesty Day |

MAY

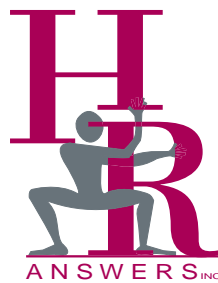
To help you plan ahead, here’s a look at what we have planned so far for May.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| May 7 | HRA 5th Annual Provider Night (Tualatin) |
| May 13 | Advantage Plan “Roundtable” |

ON MY SOAPBOX

Soapbox will return next month. Have an amazing April!

- Judy Clark, President



"Whatever the Question"

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.HRANSWERS.COM