Word from the Vice President: Using Information for Success

Here at Penn, faculty and staff members are surrounded by valuable information. Understanding that information and knowing how to apply it can help you achieve your goals at work and beyond. That’s why Human Resources offers many tools and programs to help you make the most of information in key areas of your life.

Penn’s Bi in the Know biometric screenings, available now through November 20, provide you with a quick check on the numbers that are linked to good health, as well as information that can help you understand how those numbers relate to your wellness. Professional development programs, such as Developing Emotional Intelligence on November 10 and 11, can build your awareness of factors that will motivate you and your team to succeed. And with winter approaching, we’d like to remind you of Penn’s upcoming recognized holidays so you can plan accordingly.

As we progress through the fall term, we encourage you to stay informed and use what you know to full advantage.

Sincerely,
Jack Heuer, Ed.D.
Vice President for Human Resources

Recognized Fall and Winter Holidays Reminder

Even though the first frost hasn’t hit yet, you may already be planning for the upcoming holiday season. Travel arrangements and other scheduling might not wait until November. So here’s a reminder of Penn’s upcoming holiday observances to help you get ready.

The following holidays will be observed by the University of Pennsylvania on the dates listed below:

- Thanksgiving, Thursday and Friday, November 26 and 27, 2015
- Christmas Day, Friday, December 25, 2015
- New Year’s Day, Monday, January 1, 2016
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 18, 2016

Each year, the President, Provost and Executive Vice President assess the feasibility of observing Penn’s traditional Special Winter Vacation. Thus, the Special Winter Vacation granted to faculty and staff will be December 28, 29, 30 and 31, 2015.

For a complete list of this fiscal year’s holidays and details on policies regarding work over Special Winter Vacation, visit the Almanac online at www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v61/n33/recognized-holidays.html.

Reading Emotions at Work

You may be fluent in many languages, including a couple of ancient ones. Or perhaps you’re a brilliant programmer. You may even be able to tell when a motor needs repair just by listening to it hum, but how well can you read emotions? Awareness of emotion—yours as well as your coworkers’—can have a real impact on your success.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI), developed by doctors Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer and made popular by Dr. Daniel Goleman, has influenced education and business for decades. Emotional Intelligence involves self-awareness, self-regulation, the ability to manage your thoughts and feelings, and to use what emotions tell you about different interpersonal situations. Researchers have shown connections between emotional intelligence and achievement in many arenas, but perhaps the most amazing thing they’ve discovered is that your EI can be improved.

In Developing Emotional Intelligence, you’ll identify personal strengths and limitations using the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory. You’ll learn how to apply your understanding at work to improve your performance and relationships with colleagues. Finally, you’ll discover how you can continue to develop your emotional intelligence going forward.

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When you register for Developing Emotional Intelligence on Knowledge Link, your department will be charged a nominal fee of $75 for the complete program.

For more development opportunities, visit the Learning and Development website at www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/learning.
Better Health by the Numbers

When you register for an on-campus biometric screening as part of Penn’s Be in the Know campaign, you can expect to have your blood pressure, blood sugar, and non-fasting cholesterol (total and high density lipoproteins) checked, but what’s really being measured? Here’s a quick guide to the biometric screening measures and why these numbers matter to your health.

Blood pressure

What Is Measured: Blood pressure readings give two numbers: systolic and diastolic. Systolic pressure is the higher number and measures the pressure in the arteries at the moment the heart beats. Diastolic pressure, the lower number, measures the pressure in the arteries between beats, or when the heart muscle is at rest and refilling with blood. A single high reading doesn’t indicate high blood pressure. High blood pressure is diagnosed by a healthcare provider over time.

Why It Matters: High blood pressure is sometimes called the silent killer because it has no symptoms. Left untreated, it can weaken and damage the arteries and cause serious damage to the heart and other organs. Keeping tabs on your blood pressure can help you detect a problem and reduce your risks.

Blood sugar (glucose)

What Is Measured: A blood glucose test measures the amount of a sugar called glucose in your blood. Glucose is a major source of energy for most cells of the body, including brain cells. The body quickly turns carbohydrates found in fruit, cereal, bread, pasta, and rice into glucose, which is why blood glucose levels change depending upon when, what, and how much you’ve eaten.

Why It Matters: High glucose levels are most commonly associated with type 2 diabetes. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause damage to blood vessels and nerves, as well as to the heart, kidney, and other organs. High glucose may also be caused by severe stress, infection, or some medications. It’s also important to be aware of low blood sugar levels, which can signal other health conditions that need attention.

Non-fasting cholesterol (total and high density lipoproteins)

What Is Measured: Cholesterol is a fatty substance found in all of the cells in the body. Some cholesterol is made by the body and some comes from the food we eat. Your total cholesterol is a measure of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), low-density lipoprotein (LDL), and other lipid components.

Why It Matters: HDL cholesterol is considered “good” because it removes LDL or “bad” cholesterol from your blood. LDL is referred to as bad because it can build up in the walls of your arteries and increase your chances of developing heart disease.

You can learn your health numbers at a free, confidential biometric screening through Be in the Know now through November 20. Register today and take the first step to understanding your current health – and to earning up to $180. You must be a full- or part-time benefits-eligible faculty or staff member to participate.

Quality of Work Life Workshop Highlights

These free workshops offer information and support for your personal and professional life challenges. For a complete list of workshops and to register, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/registration or contact Human Resources at 215-573-2471 or qowl@hr.upenn.edu.

Be in the Know

For details, contact qowl@hr.upenn.edu.

Better Care for the Caregiver; 11/13; 12pm – 1pm; free.

Self-Care for the Caregiver: 11/13; 12pm – 1pm; free.

This workshop is designed to assist caregivers with developing skills to better help their loved one – and themselves – cope with the many stages of caregiving. Participants will learn some specific techniques to better care for loved ones and emphasize ways of coping with the personal and emotional challenges caregivers face.

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