



Do Not Become The Next Identity Theft Victim!

As we have discussed in previous articles, identity theft is growing daily and is costing victims billions of dollars every year. These thieves are working hard to get your personal information. We have very little ability to prevent identity theft, but we can take some precautionary steps to decrease our risks.

Here are some suggestions to minimize the risk of becoming the next victim.

Watch out for the phone solicitors – unless you have initiated the call, never give out your personal information over the phone. This ploy has become increasingly popular and the callers sound legitimate.

Shred all documents that contain personal information – pre-approved credit card offers, insurance quotes, etc... that you typically throw in the trash, needs to be disposed of properly. Shred instead!

Do not give out your Social Security Number – you must guard your SSN at all costs.

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Are You Proactive In Preventing Identity Theft?

Managing Your Former Co-Workers

Supervising friends and former coworkers has the potential to be one of the most productive work relationships that exists in the workplace. Sadly, it's not always the case. Whether supervising a long-time friend or being promoted to supervise your peers, it is critical that all new managers learn to overcome these four pitfalls.

Poor Performance – One of the most amazing dynamics when supervising friends is that they often will take you for granted, assuming that you will accept their poor performance because of your relationship. In fact, it often occurs that when the new manager is a friend; the employee begins to lessen their own standards of performance. Whether it's intentional or not, you must address it. The greater problem is in the response you receive when poor performance is addressed. Often, new managers feel their requests are ignored by friends they supervise. If this is a new supervisory relationship, it is absolutely critical that you clearly lay out the expectations in this relationship. They need to know for their sake (so other's will not gossip about them) and for your sake (so your team will not lose respect for you and your authority) that you must treat them the same as every other member of your team, and that the performance standards as well as the disciplinary standards will remain consistent.

Voicing Your Own Negative Feelings About the Organization or Your Supervisor – Whether you are at work, a company function or hanging out at friend's house, when you become a supervisor, there is a part of you that is always 'on'.

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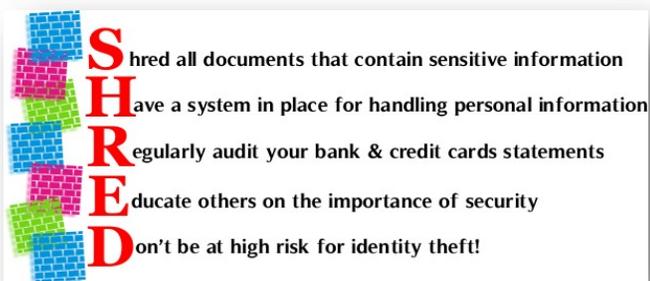
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Once your SSN falls into the hands of the wrong person, all havoc can break loose. Verify the reason before giving out your SSN. Why does the person need it? How will it be used? Will it be shared with anyone else? Verify, verify, verify!

Put your mail directly into a U.S. collection box or take it to the post office – mail that has personal information, checks, credit card info, SSN, etc.... should not be left unattended in your mailbox for pick up.

Secure your personal and financial records with a powerful password or in a locked storage container whether at home or at work – 12 percent of fraud victims knew the thief personally. In addition, never transmit personal or financial information over a public Wi-Fi internet connection. Utilize firewall software to protect your computer from being hacked. Keep virus and spyware software up to date.

Be proactive and monitor your accounts – carefully look over all financial statements and look for any suspicious activity. Contact your financial institutions immediately if you detect a problem. A fast response may help limit the damages / losses and enhance the possibility of law enforcement catching the fraudsters.



Shred all documents that contain sensitive information
Have a system in place for handling personal information
Regularly audit your bank & credit cards statements
Educate others on the importance of security
Don't be at high risk for identity theft!

Of course, there are many other ways to protect sensitive information and you need to take it seriously.

The more sensitive the information, the more important it is to have it destroyed securely. ♦

If you have any questions about this article, or about how we can help you with your current team building, performance, leadership, strategy, and / or hiring needs, contact us today!

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This means there are now topics you do not discuss and boundaries you do not cross. Even though you may have legitimate issues with the organization, or your supervisor, never express them to the people you manage. *First*, it can negatively affect them as employees, especially if they have similar concerns, and cause severe future consequences. *Second*, it puts them in a very uncomfortable position if they do not agree with your concerns. *Third*, it can create an environment that causes employees to vent and voice negative feelings even when you're not around, and sometimes about you. *Fourth*, it could very easily get to the wrong person and affect your reputation.



The key to this is you must find a new sounding board or confidant, someone who is at arms distance away from your job. Ideally this is someone who doesn't work with you and doesn't have any type of relationship with any one from your job, like a neighbor or relative. In some instances it can be a co-worker in another department or a mentor, but use caution when that is the case. The two of you need to agree that he or she should function as a "dead end" (someone you can tell delicate information to and it ends with them). Thus, when you voice your feelings, there is no chance of it getting to the wrong person or negatively affecting someone involved in the organization.

Manipulation – Of all the pitfalls that must be overcome, manipulation is often the most challenging. Manipulation occurs when another person leverages their friendship against you to get what they want. *First*, do not let this affect you emotionally. Don't be fooled. This is rarely just a normal conversation that leaves you feeling guilty and is being done intentionally. More importantly, it is also a sign of disrespect. The person believes you are weak and will succumb to emotional terrorism. *Second*, address this as early as possible. The more it occurs, the more it becomes a pattern. Addressing it early keeps you from building resentment. *Third*, don't beat around the bush.

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Subtlety is not effective in this situation. If you feel someone is leveraging your friendship against you, address it immediately. One of the most common phrases new managers hear as they are being manipulated is, "I thought we were friends!" a great response to this is, "In reality, if we were the friends I thought we were, you wouldn't put me in this situation in the first place." This helps to express that true friendship is not one sided and should not be used for the purpose of manipulation.

Favoritism or Perception of Favoritism – You should expect to be accused of favoritism when you manage a friend. Avoiding the previous four pitfalls will help to minimize any legitimate complaints a worker could have regarding favoritism. However, in reality, even when you do your absolute best to make certain that all associates are treated based on their work, you must realize some may still accuse you of favoritism. Many people do not take responsibility for their own performance. When was the last time you heard someone say, "I didn't get that promotion because I wasn't qualified?" Most would rather find someone to blame or rationalize with a statement like "It's not what you know, but who you know." Don't let it get to you. This is just a combination of blame shifting and manipulation. Address the issue by letting your entire team know there is no favoritism and that every one is being held to the same standard.

Although these techniques may seem simple, it doesn't mean they are easy, but when you overcome the emotional challenge of the 'friend – supervisor dynamic', success is assured. ♦

If you have any questions about how we can help you with your team building, leadership, and /or hiring needs, contact us today!

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The Youngest U.S. Presidents In History

(By age upon taking office)

| | Years | Days |
|-----------------------|-------|------|
| 1. Theodore Roosevelt | 42 | 322 |
| 2. John F. Kennedy | 43 | 236 |
| 3. Bill Clinton | 46 | 154 |
| 4. Ulysses S. Grant | 46 | 236 |
| 5. Barack Obama | 47 | 169 |
| 6. Grover Cleveland | 47 | 351 |
| 7. Franklin Pierce | 48 | 101 |
| 8. James Garfield | 49 | 105 |
| 9. James K. Polk | 49 | 122 |
| 10. Millard Fillmore | 50 | 184 |

*"Nothing can stop the person with the right mental attitude from achieving their goal; nothing on earth can help the person with the wrong mental attitude."
~ Thomas Jefferson*

Note: Roosevelt was sworn in after the assassination of William McKinley in 1901, making Kennedy the youngest president actually voted to the office. At 69, Ronald Reagan was the oldest president to take office. ♦

Sources: infopleas.com, history1900s.about.com, & Wikipedia.org



One Minute Ideas

Tips To Make This The Best Year Ever...

Create a vision for your company – A vision statement crystallizes what you want your company to look like in the future. It is a clear image of the end result. *(Even though you may never really have an end)*

Create a vision for yourself – Describe your future the way you would like it to be. Avoid slipping into the negative of what you think your future may really be. Allow yourself to dream big. Now write it down!

Set personal and professional goals – Set goals that will take you closer to your vision statements. Start with only 4 or 5 goals for each personal and professional vision statement. Make sure each goal is necessary and sufficient. Also, each goal needs to be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, realistically high, and Time bound. And again, *write it down!*

Have fun – I have never heard anyone laying on their death bed saying: "I wish I would have worked more." Take time for yourself, family, and friends. Enjoy life! ♦

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I want Life Balance and Still be able to get ALL the Important things done. Is there Hope?

First, define the term balance. So often, people seeking “balance” end up with a life something like both sides of a scale dragging the ground behind them. I suggest thinking of work-life balance as a Teeter-Totter, which is certainly possible to balance but is much more fun when it “seesaws” back and forth. In fact, that is the purpose of a teeter-totter!

My clients become less concerned with balance and more concerned with Purpose and Focus. Purpose comes from service, and you may have more than one purpose, for each of the vital few key roles you serve in life. When you have done the work necessary to discover your purpose then, and only then, it becomes possible to have an *On-Purpose* day. Purpose gives your day focus and meaning; it shapes your goals, your decision-making, and your use of time. Your purpose throughout the day may be to focus on the needs of your customers, then in the evening shift to the needs of your spouse, getting kids to hockey and dance classes, then to reading from a great book before bedtime.



Once you are clear on your purpose(s) in life, focusing on JUST the important things becomes possible – and it’s fun! ♦

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“Life is like a ten-speed bike. Most of us have gears we never use.” ~ Charles Schulz, Cartoonist



Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

| Course Title | Date(s) | Time | For More Information/Registration |
|--|---|-------------------|--|
| SHRM Learning System® is the preparation course for the HR Certification Exam <i>(Every other Saturday)</i> | Every Other Saturday 2/22/2014 – 5/03/2014 | 8: 30AM – 4: 30PM | www.cbu.edu/shrm |
| The Accountability Experience™ is a one-day workshop that helps participants discover the powerful personal and organizational benefits of individual accountability. | TBD | 8: 30AM – 5: 00PM | Click here to Register |
| The Coaching Clinic® is a two-day workshop for executives, managers and leaders to experience and learn coaching skills and competencies. | TBD | 8: 30AM – 5: 00PM | www.harmonycc.net/coaching-clinic.php |



Happy New Year

