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**Small Business Counseling**

The Marion County Development Partnership continues to partner with Jones Junior College to offer small business counseling. Anyone interested in starting a new business or those interested in information for their current business, may make appointments with Mr. Gary Suddith, Small Business Development Center Director, Jones County Junior College. Mr. Suddith is at the MCDP office the second and fourth Wednesday of every month. To schedule an appointment, call the MCDP at 601.736.6385.

**Welcome New Members**

Action Properties  
A.G. Helton  
110 N. Jerry Clower Blvd.  
Yazoo City, MS

Bennett & Son Custom Mill Shop  
Larry H. Bennett  
228 Faithway Road  
Bassfield, MS

Dr. K. C. Crawley  
440 Broad Street  
Columbia, MS

Media 3  
1056 Jones Blvd.  
Milan, TN

RD Graphics  
Nik Ingram  
708 Main Street  
Columbia, MS

Town & Country Feed Store  
Dennis Adams  
510 Lumberton Road  
Columbia, MS

**How to get more work done—today**

Do you ever leave work and wonder what you accomplished that day? Lack of productivity has many causes. Here are some you can easily eliminate.

**Lack of priorities.** Your to-do list is useless if you don't know what to tackle first. Talk with your supervisor to identify what's really important. If you're the person in charge, devote some time to deciding which tasks add the most value to your organization so you don't waste time on nonessentials.

**Procrastination.** Time disappears quickly when you put off necessary tasks. Try breaking tasks into small segments so they're easier to get started, especially for large-scale projects, which can intimidate many people into delaying action. Schedule unpleasant tasks early so you can get them out of the way and focus on other jobs.

**Interruptions.** You can't shut yourself off completely from co-workers and your boss, but you can minimize time-wasting interruptions. Close your door if you have one; if not, hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your cubicle, or wear some headphones that block noise. Let people know you sometimes need to concentrate, but that you're available in case of legitimate emergencies.

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412 Courthouse Square  
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WS: www.mcdp.info

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## New Businesses

T & M Fabrics & More  
Angel McElroy  
802 Main Street  
Columbia, MS

Mr. Rapid Tax Service  
Rosa Moody  
712 Lumberton Road  
Columbia, MS

JMH Graphics  
Judy Spiers  
413 S. High School Ave.  
Columbia, MS

United Guard Agency  
Timothy M. Spiers  
518 S. High School Avenue  
Columbia, MS 39429

Southern Belle BBQ  
Robbie Rogers  
515 S. High School Avenue  
Columbia, MS

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## A Recipe For Workplace Success

Being good at your job is only part of the recipe for success at work. To heat up your career, remember to add these key ingredients:

- **Positive attitude.** Managers and co-workers alike appreciate the support of someone with an upbeat outlook. Show some enthusiasm about your job and the organization you work for. Look for opportunities, not problems, and find the bright side of the challenges you face.
- **Integrity.** Be honest with people. When you don't have an answer, say so. Admit your mistakes (and concentrate on not repeating them). Keep your promises, and meet your deadlines. All this shows your respect for other people and demonstrates your reliability.
- **Willingness to try.** Don't be afraid to stretch out of your comfort zone. Volunteer for new tasks and extra responsibility. Take risks—be realistic about what you can and cannot do, of course, but do not back away from a challenge because of the possibility of failure. Ask the right questions so you know what's really going on, regardless of whether you will appear "ignorant."
- **Co-operation.** Be a team player—help your colleagues with their priorities, and share information instead of keeping it to yourself. Know what your manager wants, and support him or her to the best of your abilities. Offer your support when people need it, so they know you are not just out to get ahead for your own benefit.

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## 10 Ways to Reduce Stress

Take deep breaths.

Take a walk outside the office.

Say no to what you do not have time to do.

Leave work on time.

Lower demands you put on yourself.

Ask questions of and talk with co-workers.

Take care of taxing tasks in the morning to get them out of the way.

Look at large projects as a series of steps to complete one by one.

Laugh at least once a day.

Live in the moment. Do not dwell in the past or worry about the future.

## MS Scholars Program– Preparing for the Future

The MCDP Education Committee, chaired by Dr. Jan Sears, has taken the initiative to sponsor the MS Scholars Program. The MS Scholars Program is designed to encourage and motivate all high school students to complete a defined, rigorous academic course of study that prepares them for success transition to college, university coursework, or vocational and technical training necessary to enter today's competitive job market. Seniors who have completed the requirements will be recognized as a MS Scholar at an upcoming banquet hosted by the MCDP Education Committee. Support from businesses and individuals is needed to make the program successful in Marion County. Those interested in contributing may make donations to a scholarship fund through the Columbia-Marion County Development Foundation, Inc. (Not for Profit 501(c) 6.) This scholarship will be awarded to students meeting MS Scholars criteria. To make your contribution totally tax deductible, write your check to the Columbia-Marion County MS Scholars Scholarship Fund at P.O. Box 272, Columbia, MS. You will receive recognition at the up-coming banquet.

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## Bring change to life— with help from your workforce

Survival these days depends on your organization's ability to change quickly and that depends on your employees. Memos and new mission statements won't produce results on their own--change has to come from within your workforce. Ideas to bring your people on board:

- **Tell them why.** You've got to set the stage for people. If employees don't know what's happening in your company and in your industry, they won't see any reason to do things differently. Share as much as you can about your finances, the problems your organization is facing, and what's likely to happen if you all do nothing.
- **Focus on the long term.** Change is a process, not a single event. Emphasize that it will take time, and to be successful people will have to look to the future, not to short-term gains and losses. And remember that performance won't be transformed overnight. Once you've restructured, implemented new systems, launched new strategies, a learning curve will slow down the progress you're looking for. Don't be so impatient for results that you sabotage your efforts and those of your work force.
- **Solicit and listen to feedback.** Change works best when it's a collaborative, interactive process. Consider everyone who'll be affected, from front-line employees to high management, as well as customers and other stakeholders. Provide them with updates on your progress. Ask them how it's going, and what could speed things along. If you've done a good job of selling the change, and giving them the facts they need to bring it to life, their insights and opinions will prove invaluable.

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## Conflict in the workplace means less commitment in the workforce

Can't we all just get along? Human resources managers report that they spend anywhere from 24 to 60 percent of their time trying to resolve workplace conflicts, according to a survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). SHRM says that almost 60 percent of survey respondents have seen violent incidents in their workplace over the last three years, with "personality conflicts" as the main cause.

More troubling results, from researchers at the University of North Carolina:

- 53 percent of workers have lost time at work over worries about a previous or potential confrontation with a colleague.
- 28 percent have lost work time in their attempts to avoid confrontations.
- 37 percent are less committed to their employer because of a hostile workplace altercation.
- 22 percent say they're putting less effort into their work due to conflicts at the office.

## *Calendar of Events*

### **April**

- 8 **Ambassadors' Meeting**
- 21 **Administrative Professional's Day**
- 30 **Relay for Life**
- 30 **"Catchy Friday"**

### **May**

- 20 **Ambassadors' Meeting**
- 28 **"Catchy Friday"**
- 31 **Memorial Day**

### **June**

- 17 **Ambassadors' Meeting**
- 25 **"Catchy Friday"**

### **FYI**

#### **Columbia Sales Tax**

February 2010

\$257,080.63

February 2009

\$322,884.28

#### **Unemployment Rate**

Marion County: 13.2%

Mississippi: 12.0%

U.S.: 10.4%