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Under *the* Sun

N E W S L E T T E R



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A GIVE-BACK CULTURE

The entrepreneurial spirit that drives small business is all about finding ways to make things better. Mission statements typically talk about providing value and improving lives. Giving back to the community is a natural leap many business leaders take as part of that mission. If you're considering a formalized giving program at your company, here are just a few ideas to consider:

Adopt a Charity

Find a cause that's near and dear to your heart or the hearts of the people working at your company. Consider choosing a different cause each month, quarter, or year, and holding internal fundraisers or drives on behalf of those charities. That might involve holding a school supply drive in the late summer or early fall, or putting up a "giving tree" around the holidays.

Encourage Community Involvement

If time and budgets permit, allow employees to spend one day a month or one day a quarter volunteering with nonprofit organizations in the community. If you can't afford to pay for an entire

day, maybe start with an afternoon or a voluntary group outing on a Saturday. Spending an afternoon stocking shelves at the local food pantry with coworkers, including managers and supervisors, builds teamwork, encourages camaraderie, and boosts morale for everyone.

Allow Automated Payroll Deductions for Charitable Giving

Talk with your payroll provider about setting up automated payroll deductions for charitable donations. Many can accommodate this. Choose organizations in keeping with your values as a company, and offer a match or partial match, as resources allow, for any employees who opt in. 



4 Tips for Getting Started

1. Set a budget in terms of hours or funds available for starting out.
2. Put interested employees in charge of spearheading the effort and cheering it along.
3. Write guidelines that make it clear how the program will run and what will be expected of employees taking part.
4. Share stories of employees who give back in your internal communications and on your social media channels.

SIMPLE PRINT DESIGN TIPS

Looking to create a new brochure or print collateral but not sure where to start? Here are four quick tips you can use to make your next print piece stand out:



Pay Attention to Headlines

Compelling headlines draw readers in. When laying out your print piece, give your headlines visual pop. Choose a font size that stands out without overwhelming the page and spacing that makes your words easy to read and consume.

Direct the Flow

Pay attention to how your eyes move across the page and lay out your pages in a way that's conducive to that flow. Use visual cues such as callout boxes, bulleted lists, headlines, graphs, and charts to direct the reader along in a logical way, so they see your story the way you want it told.

Colors Matter

Pick a color palette that's inviting. Stick to one or two main colors for the text on your page. Avoid overwhelming readers with too many clashing colors. Same goes for the paper itself. Choose papers that complement your message, and that make it easy to read the message you're presenting.

Keep Resolution Sharp

Images are an excellent tool for drawing attention. Make sure you choose high-resolution images that are suitable for print. Lower-resolution graphics are fine for the Web but will look blurry and muddled on the printed page. High-resolution images provide a crisp, clean, professional feel. 



"Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it."

— Henry David Thoreau

"Don't let the fear of losing be greater than the excitement of winning."

—Joel Spolsky

"It's hard to do a really good job on anything you don't think about in the shower."

—Robert Kiyosaki

"Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door."

—Coco Chanel

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

—Maya Angelou

"When you find an idea that you just can't stop thinking about, that's probably a good one to pursue."

—Josh James

"I attribute my success to this: I never gave or took any excuse."

—Florence Nightingale

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."

—Arthur Ashe

"I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up where I needed to be."

—Douglas Adams

"Without the dark, we'd never see the stars."

—Stephanie Meyer

SUN DELIVERS VISUAL IMPACT AT MEMBER-BRATION

Sun's Grand Format team delivered the visual impact at Charleston Metro Chamber's Member-Bration. The event was held on Nov. 14th at Riverfront Park. Sun's team produced most of the displays for the event including the entrance display, signage for sponsors/honors/winners, tent signage, street signs, social experience display, and the main stage backdrop.



Featured Product

BILLING AND REMITTANCE ENVELOPES

When it's time for customers to put their checks in the mail, it's time for you to put your best foot forward, too.

Every connection you have with your customers is important. That includes your interactions with their accounts-payable personnel. Your billings are more than just a chance to get paid for the products and services you provide. They're an opportunity to reinforce your image and build your brand.

Billing Envelopes

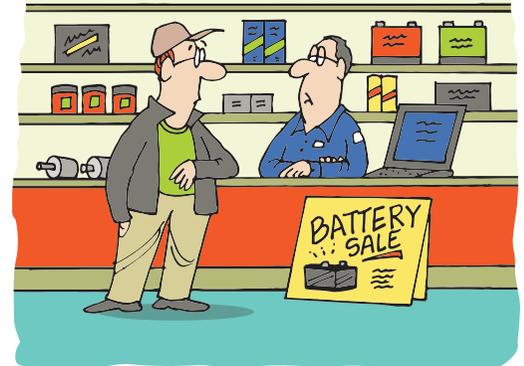
Making and maintaining a positive impression shouldn't end with the sale. Choose a quality envelope similar to one you'd use for any business correspondence. Window envelopes will save you the time of printing and affixing mailing labels. Security envelopes provide an added measure of privacy for protecting customer IDs.

Remittance Envelopes

Security is essential when receiving payments through the mail. Choose preprinted security envelopes branded with your logo and address information. A self-seal strip is a nice touch, too, and will be appreciated by your customers. ☺



AUTO PARTS



"Could you be more specific than 'one of those engine thingamajigs'?"

Customer Care

Let's Be Clear

Here are four strategies to avoid misunderstandings.

Speak Clearly

Make an effort to enunciate. Speak slowly and naturally, and avoid jargon as much as possible.

Listen Attentively

Avoid distractions or the temptation to multitask. If your mind wanders, stop and ask the customer to repeat what they said.

Ask Clarifying Questions

This is especially important if the customer is being vague, is reticent to talk, or if you aren't entirely sure what's being said.

Review Takeaways

Take time at the end of your conversation to summarize the topics that were discussed, review decisions that were made, and confirm the next steps agreed upon by everybody. ☺



Stand-up desks have become all the rage in offices across the country in recent years. A 2019 study from the Society for Human Resource Management found that 60% of employers now offer standing desks as an option for their staff.

Taking a Stand

The craze began in part as a response to several studies that found a correlation between sitting for long periods each day and an increased risk of health problems such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and even premature death. As the stand-up desk phenomenon has gained steam, additional studies have been done explicitly looking at the benefits a stand-up desk provides over its more conventional counterparts. Here are a few findings worth noting:

Stabilizing Blood Sugar Levels

One benefit found involves regulating blood sugar levels, especially right after lunch when standing has been found to hasten the return to normal blood sugar levels faster than sitting.

Reducing Back Pain

Studies conducted on people with chronic back pain have shown a significant reduction in pain after a few weeks using stand-up or sit/stand desks, with the pain returning after going back to a full-time sitting desk.

Improving Productivity

With increased energy and a better mood, it would stand to reason that productivity would improve as well. One study from 2016 found just that. Employees at a call center who used sit/stand desks were 50% more productive than their sedentary peers.

If you're considering making the switch, take it slowly. Don't try standing all day right away. Ease into it, and try alternating periods of standing with periods of sitting until you find the balance that's right for you. 🟢

Apps Scene



OurHome
Android, iOS & Web

OurHome makes the work of managing a household a little easier. The app offers a host of features any busy parent will appreciate. Shared shopping lists and calendars keep everyone in sync. Chore scheduling helps kids stay accountable. With OurHome, you can link chore completion to incentives such as screen time and allowances, set goals kids can work toward achieving, and let everyone see the role they're playing in keeping the house running smoothly. <http://ourhomeapp.com/>



Wallet
Android, iOS & Web

Wallet helps you track your spending, plan your budget, and stay on top of your finances. Start by selecting accounts you want to track. The software integrates with 3,500 banks worldwide and offers a manual upload feature. From there, you can add automatic payments and expected transactions, create a budget, and get a handle on where your finances sit anytime. <https://budgetbakers.com/>



Toggl
Android, iOS & Web

Tracking time for billing purposes or just to keep a handle on where your time goes throughout the day can be a hassle. Toggl seeks to make the process more worry-free. One-click timers let you start new tasks or resume existing ones quickly, and reminders alert you when you've forgotten to start logging. Switching between desktop and mobile is a breeze. Over 100 integrations allow you to add a Toggl button to many of your favorite apps. Paid subscriptions are also available. <https://toggl.com/>

GETTING MORE DONE AT WORK

We live in a world of near-constant distraction: social media, phone calls, emails, Slack messages, general office chatter. While eliminating distractions entirely might not be possible, here are some tips to make them less disruptive:

Implement Focus Time

Set aside an hour or two each day when you're uninterrupted. Mark the time off on your shared calendar, and let your coworkers know about it. Put your office phone, Slack, and other communication tools on Do Not Disturb, turn off notifications for your email, turn off your mobile devices, and get to work. Choose times when you feel more naturally productive, such as early in the morning or right before lunch. Avoid typically sluggish times to ensure success.

Use Caution when Choosing Background Noise

Many people work better when they're able to tune out the outside world and focus on the job at hand. Listening to music through headphones can help with this. However, sometimes the very things we use to mask distractions become distracting. Avoid background noise that involves talking (TV, podcasts, news/sports radio, etc.) and requires active listening. Choose familiar music you know well enough that you can listen to it passively without much thought.

Prioritize Your Tasks

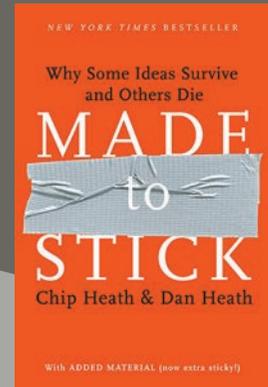
Start your day with a look at all the tasks that lie ahead. Prioritize your list, and save high-concentration tasks for times when your concentration level is naturally at its best. This could mean working on a less critical job first, and that's okay. The goal is to get the most done in the best way possible, so planning is essential. If you have trouble getting started in the morning (or on a particular day), tackle a simple task first to get you in a groove with a quick and easy win.

Stick to One Task at a Time

Sometimes it's easy to let pending tasks distract you from completing the task at hand. That's another reason prioritizing is so important. When you're working on a task, focus on that task exclusively. Stop worrying. If you've forgotten a task or have an idea that will help complete it, stop and jot it down, then get back to work on your current assignment. Your other responsibilities will wait while you work to get the current one done. 



Books in Review



Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die

by Chip and Dan Heath

Why do some ideas stick, while others are easily forgotten? Why do we remember urban legends so well but have trouble remembering things that are far more important?

Brothers Chip and Dan Heath spent years studying these and similar questions, from both a practical and academic perspective. The answers they found form the foundation of their book, *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*.

Through research and interviews, the brothers discovered that sticky ideas share several common traits. They also abide by six core principles: simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, credibility, emotions, and stories.

Successful ideas are presented through stories that engage the audience and pull them in. Stories of underdogs beating the odds, connections forming across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines, or people using creativity to make breakthroughs are common among the stickiest ideas. 





Knowledge and knowledge transfer are critical for the ongoing success of any organization. As new employees come on, you rely on their more seasoned peers to show them the ropes and set them on a path to success.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM TIPS

If you're thinking about formalizing this process through a mentorship program at your company, here are some quick tips to consider.

- » **Set your guidelines.** Before you start lining up mentors and mentorees, lay down some basic rules and expectations you have for the program and anyone who chooses to take part. What exactly are you hoping to accomplish? What measurables can you use to gauge its success?
- » **Start small.** Begin with a pilot program, matching up perhaps one or two sets of mentors and mentorees, so you can get a feel for what works and what doesn't work before opening the program up more widely.

- » **Identify your mentors.** Look around your office for people you think would make excellent mentors for their less-experienced colleagues. Approach them with your vision for the program and what you want of them, and gauge their interest.
- » **Identify mentorees.** Once you have your mentors on board, look for candidates whose personalities, skills, and needs align with the mentors you have in place. Ask your management team for suggestions, or open it up for applicants.
- » **Check in frequently.** Have regular meetings with your mentors and mentorees. Find out how things are going. What's working? What isn't? Then make adjustments on the fly as they're warranted. 🕒

January Birthdays

Joyce Antley	01/03	Matt Kowalski	01/11
Dee Snider	01/03	Jeremy Johnson	01/12
Joyce Tillage	01/06	Sabrina Battle	01/16
Tom Johnson	01/09	Sammy Cook	01/28
Chaz Cipolla	01/09	Steven Manning	01/28

January Anniversaries

Penny Bullock	5 years	Rob Hoffman	20 years
Chris Morgan	5 years	Wendy Essick	20 years
Dave Robinson	15 years		

*Please note that anniversaries are recognized beginning at 3 years, followed by 5 years and then onward in increments of 5.

SUN SOLUTIONS IS PROUD TO BE A



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