

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT

supporting EAP professionals

More Than a Monday

Depression has Huge Impact on Bottom Line

Success at work depends on everyone's contribution — especially in an uncertain, global economy. That's why no one in the workplace can afford to ignore depression.

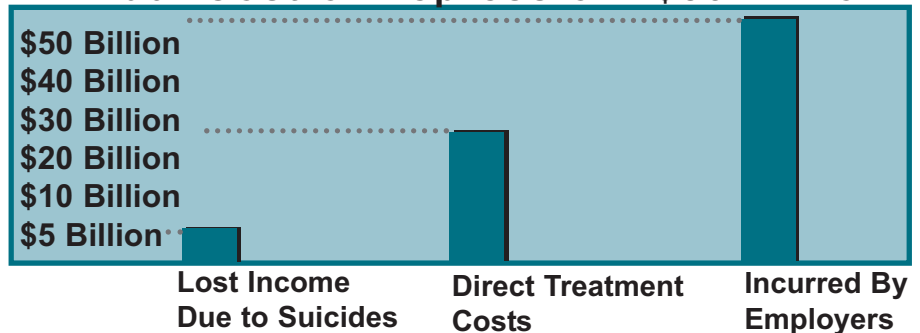
This year, more than 19 million American adults (nearly 10% of the population) will suffer from this often misunderstood disorder. It is not a passing mood. It is not a personal weakness. It is a major — but treatable — illness. No job category or professional level is immune, and even a formerly outstanding employee can be affected. Why should businesses be concerned? This is just a healthcare concern isn't it? Nothing could be further from the truth.

Cost of Depression

According to a 10-year study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, the annual cost of depression (including major depression, bipolar disorder, and dysthymia) was \$83 billion. Highlights from the 2000 findings include:

- \$52 billion incurred by employers as a result of absenteeism and reduced productivity of depressed workers. Furthermore, for every two depressed employees treated, an additional three remain untreated.
- \$26 billion spent on direct treatment costs, with dramatic shifts in the era of managed care toward

Annual Cost of Depression: \$83 Billion



less costly methods of treating depression. Between 1990 and 2000, there was a 19% reduction in the annual cost per case.

- \$5 billion in lost income due to depression-related suicides.

No business is exempt from the financial impact of depression. Symptoms, including reduced concentration, lack of motivation, moodiness, fatigue, and vague aches and pains, can contribute to absenteeism as well as performance impairment while at work. People with depression report more than three times the amount of lost productivity at work. Still more business costs result when an employee or colleague has a family member suffering from depression as disruptions, absenteeism, and decreased morale may decrease productivity.

Good News and Not so Good News

The good news is that, in more than 80% of cases, treatment is effective. It enables people with depression to return to satisfactory,

functioning lives. Treatment includes medication, short-term talk therapy, or a combination of both.

However, effective treatment is critical because patients who

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look ahead

UPCOMING EAR FEATURES...

- Addiction Survey
- Mentoring
- Substance Abuse

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- ▶ Payroll Stuffers

respond only partially to treatment frequently experience lingering symptoms, putting them at a higher risk for relapse or recurrence. While it is encouraging that more people with depression are seeking medical help, the services provided may not be enough to enable patients to become well. In order for treatment to be successful, it needs to be tailored to a patient's individual needs.

CRISIS magazine, the international journal of crisis intervention and suicide prevention, reports that mental health professionals can better detect suicide risk in their patients if they are alerted to early "warning signs" from patient health questionnaires. The study revealed that clinicians missed early suicide "warning signs" 57% of the time, but the rate dropped substantially when clinicians were made aware of the differences between their assessment and the patient's responses on the questionnaire.

Employee Assistance Professionals can also play an important role in altering the impact of depression in the workplace:

- Review corporate medical pro-

grams and employee health benefits.

- Make sure EAP staff are trained to recognize depressive disorders, make appropriate referrals, and provide other assistance consistent with the company's policies and practices.
- Increase management awareness.
- Educate employees by distributing information about depression, its symptoms, and available treatments.
- Work with local organizations to distribute information about depression at the workplace and provide employees with treatment referrals.

EA professionals need to make companies aware that not tackling depression head-on in the workplace can result in a staggering loss in productivity that's potentially even more damaging to a business's bottom line than the cost of providing adequate care.

Businesses need to assess the types of treatments available to their employees to ensure that neither health nor long-term profits is being sacrificed to keep short-term costs down. ■

Sources: Analysis Group, National Institutes of Mental Health.

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MARKETING MATTERS

Birthday Lists

Andrea Nierenberg, author of *Nonstop Networking: How to Improve Your Life, Luck and Career*, says that in today's competitive career/work environment it is very important to separate yourself from others by remembering important personal details about people in your network. One way to stand out is to remember your contacts' birthdays.

Advice for setting up a birthday card list:

- Establish a birthday list folder for each month and add each person on your contact list.
- Keep track by adding your new contact's name to the birthday list after you enter their basic information into the database.
- Once a month print the list for that month, look up addresses for

each person on the list, and mail each a birthday card.

- If you have a software program that does this for you, great, otherwise the above "low-tech" system works efficiently.
- Go for paper cards and avoid the electronic ones. Cards in the mail are more personal and warm, and definitely will keep you "top of mind" for the people receiving them. ■

Corporate Executives Unaware Of Incidental Absence Costs And Lack Tools To Manage It

Disability Management Employer Coalition Survey Shines Spotlight on Large and Growing Issue

Incidental absence — unscheduled, illness related employee absences of one to five days — accounts for 30%-50% of all lost work days. According to the results of a recent survey released today by the Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC), 54% of employers are unaware of the cost incidental absence inflicts on their own companies' bottom lines. Even more significant, 62% of those surveyed say they lack the tools to address incidental absence. Incidental absence is a central part of a total employee absence problem that, according to Gallup, costs American employers nearly \$300 billion a year in lost output and related costs.

"Incidental absence is a significant and growing drag on corporate output and productivity, costing the US economy tens of billions of dollars a year," said Sharon Kaleta, DMEC's CEO. "That a majority of employers do not know what this problem costs their companies in revenue and profitability, and lack the tools to address it, should be a wake up call to corporate management."

Noticing increased interest in Incidental Absence among its Fortune 1000 employer members, DMEC commissioned Nucleus Solutions, a provider of Absence Management technology, to conduct a "snapshot" survey of the more than 400 attendees at DMEC's 8th Annual National Conference in July. According to DMEC and Nucleus Solutions:

- 51%, or only slightly over half,

of respondents surveyed said they track incidental absence.

- 36% of respondents believe leadership does not recognize incidental absence as a drag on productivity.
- 40%, or fewer than half, of respondents feel senior corporate

"Incidental absence is a significant and growing drag on corporate output and productivity, costing the US economy tens of billions of dollars a year,"

***— Sharon Kaleta,
DMEC's CEO***

leadership believes incidental absence is manageable.

Based on these results and the overwhelming interest of those surveyed in learning more (94%),

DMEC will conduct an in-depth Incidental Absence study in the coming months with results to be published in late fall.

"The bad news is, a majority of employers do not know the costs of incidental absence, barely half have implemented a systematic approach to track it, and only 16% have the necessary tools to reduce it," added Kaleta.

"The good news is, more than 9 in 10 of those on the front lines believe incidental absence should be part of a total employee absence program. Our survey indicates incidental absence is the 'undiscovered territory' that could yield significant improvements in output and profit for those who invest the time and resources to conquer it." ■

Source: DMEC is headquartered at: 6343 El Cajon Boulevard, Suite 110, San Diego, CA 92118. Telephone: (800) 789-3632. Fax: (619) 749-7872. Web site: www.dmec.org.

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Workplace Is No Place For A Cold

Colds and flu are wreaking havoc in the workplace this time of year. In fact, more than 58 million sick days a year are lost to colds alone. While the flu can be a serious illness, even the common cold can have far reaching implications such as decreased employee production and performance as well as staffing issues and lost wages. It can also cause an office-wide epidemic and lead to serious secondary illnesses such as upper respiratory infection and pneumonia. Knowing the difference between cold and flu viruses can help the entire office get on the road to recovery faster.

Diagram A shows the key differences between the cold and the flu.

The workplace has become a major site for the transmission of the cold virus. This stems from the maximization of office space which has led to more people in smaller spaces and less fresh air. The close quarter environment makes offices ideal places for the transmission of respiratory illnesses such as the common cold. Combine that with cramped commuter favorites such as carpools, subways and buses and the typical workday is ideal for the transmission of the cold virus.

Members of the workforce try every remedy imaginable in an attempt to battle back, and many rely on their own cure-all therapy. Unfortunately there is no vaccine, no antibiotic, and no surefire solution. Every precaution can be taken and still the cold virus can enter the

body. However, there are many ways to decrease the likelihood of catching a cold and get better faster. Here are some tips...

- **Wash your hands.** Washing your hands is the single most effective way to keep from catching a cold or spreading one to someone else. Both colds and the flu can be passed via

Diagram A

Common Cold	Influenza
Low-grade fever	Fever of 102 to 104 comes on suddenly, Last 3-4 days
Headache uncommon	Headache prominent
Mild fatigue & weakness	Extreme fatigue & weakness
Mild aches & pains	Severe aches & pains
Stuffy nose common	Stuffy nose sometimes occurs
Mild to moderate cough	Cough common and can become severe
Sore throat common	Sore throat sometimes occurs

inanimate objects such as doorknobs and telephones. If you come into contact with a contaminated surface and then touch your nose, mouth, or eyes, the virus can enter your body.

- **Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.** Giving germs a powerful launching pad into the air makes it easier for them to spread and infect. Using your handkerchief or a tissue as a barrier will help keep germs contained.

- **Practice healthy habits.** Eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising can help you maintain a strong immune system to keep illness at bay.

- **Avoid sharing with people who have colds.** Sharing food, drinks, utensils, dishes or cups with anyone who has a cold will greatly increase your chance of getting the virus.

- **Getting better faster.** To reduce the amount of time you have a cold,



Pro-Tool

EARnet
Poster
Collection—
Volume I



This **Poster Collection** contains 12 posters that can be posted at your workplace and used to promote the use of your employee assistance program. Topics include: work relationships, kids, holidays, stress, difficulty dealing with change, stuck in a rut?, career direction, back to school, relationship rockies, positive effects of humor in the workplace, and workplace violence. All 12 posters are also stored on a user-friendly CD and organized by category and type for your convenience. **Call 715-258-2448. ITEM #104 Price: \$48 (USD)**

10% Off for EAR Network Subscriber/Members

attack it early with Zinc Gluconate Glycine. This can be found in products such as Cold-Eeze lozenges and nasal spray.

These simple measures can be the difference between catching a cold and staying healthy. In the workplace, the importance of the latter cannot be underestimated. ■

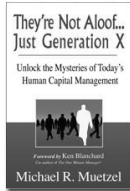
Source: Dr. Mark Roberts, occupational medicine specialist and former Medical Director for several Fortune 500 companies.

Aimless. Unmotivated. Lazy. These are just a few of the adjectives used to describe that atypical age group known as Generation X. Many opinions have been expressed about this generation — most of them negative. But the simple truth is, these “aimless slackers” are the senior managers of tomorrow, and they are quickly making their way up the management ladder.

In his new book, *“They’re Not Aloof... Just Generation X: Unlock the Mysteries of Today’s Human Capital Management,”* management consultant Michael Muetzel aims to change these stereotypes and provide companies with the tools and techniques necessary to turn Gen X managers and employees into the MVP’s of their companies.

Due to Gen Xers lack of trust in corporate America, they have limited loyalty to the companies that employ them. This employee base changes jobs every 24-36 months. And the cost of turnover for a middle-management position will conservatively run a company between \$35,000 and \$40,000 just in replacement costs and expenses.

In *“They’re Not Aloof... Just Generation X”*, Muetzel clearly and succinctly identifies the major differences in cultural ideology between senior level Baby Boomers and Gen X managers and employees in order to bridge the gap between these discordant schools of thought. More than this, Muetzel asks managers to pull out their “Magical Management Mirrors” as he breaks down the four major management styles, redefining them like never before. The final section of the book offers real solutions to keep companies ahead of the curve by increasing employee productivity



Resources

📖 *On the Wings of the Dawn* by Sharon Callister is a devotional book for women experiencing breast cancer and their supporters. Beaver Pond Press, \$16.95, 248 pages, ISBN 152980201.

🔗 *HealthyPlace.com* — A community of people providing mental health information, support and the opportunity to share experiences helpful to others. Real Player Videos: “What is Depression and How is it Treated?” Job Stress — “How to Keep Your Cool.” Audio on “Dealing with Depression at Work:”

Listen to a show on depression in the workplace with the authors of “Working in the Dark.”

Guests Include:

- Fawn Fitter, is a journalist and co-author of “Working in the Dark: Keeping Your Job While Dealing with Depression”
- Beth Gulas, management consultant and licensed mental health counselor and co-author of “Working in the Dark”
- Pat Shiu, attorney at the Employment Law Center.

For more information, contact www.healthyplace.com.

📄 Wallet card provides perspective, inspiration and key phone numbers for obtaining help. The card serves as an action plan for people who have or might have suicidal thoughts. The card is available by calling **800-826-3632, Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance.**

and reducing costly turnover.

“They’re Not Aloof... Just Generation X” teaches managers to deal with Gen Xers by:

- Understanding the significant cultural differences;

📖 *An Unquiet Mind* by Kay Redfield Jamison, 240 pages, paperback, \$10, ISBN: 0679763309.

📖 *The Freedom from Depression Workbook* by Frank Minirth, MD, 237 pages, paperback, \$11, ISBN: 0840762070.

📖 *Life Strategies: Doing What Works, Doing What Matters* by Phil McGraw, “Dr. Phil”, CD, 5 pages, \$22, ISBN: 0743500598.

📖 *In the Jaws of the Black Dogs: A Memoir of Depression* by John Bentley Mays, 234 pages, hardcover, \$7, ISBN: 0060192887.

📖 *Undoing Depression: What Therapy Doesn’t Teach You and Medication Can’t Give You* by Richard O’Connor, PhD, 368 pages, paperback, \$11, ISBN: 0425166791.

📖 *How to be Happy at Work*, by Arlene S. Hirsch, second edition, \$14.95, ISBN: 1-56370-980-5.

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- Learning progressive leadership techniques;
- Re-defining employee equity; and
- Establishing truth in management. ISBN II 0-9740700-2-5, Steel Bay Publishing, September 2003, \$19.95. ■

March on the Move

www.nmha.org

National Mental Health Association has a fact sheet on depression in the workplace and an opportunity to be screened for depression. Depression affects employees at all levels of the corporate ladder.

www.wps.org

Workplace Solutions Conflict & Crisis Prevention is a nonprofit consortium of professionals in the fields of conflict resolution and crisis management who have pooled their experience, skills and insights to ensure employee health and workplace safety.

www3.seton.com

Workplace Safety Resource Center provides compliance news, regulatory information and offers fact sheets on how to be ready for an OSHA inspection and how to have an effective safety committee.

www.benefitsalert.com

Benefits Alert contains top benefits news and executive briefings, features a sister site AHI's Employment Law Resource Center, offers several benefits reports; FAQs on flexible benefits, employee leave laws, the legal Bermuda triangle, and a tip for today.

www.familymanagement.com

All Family Resources is a resource guide of information and services for all families containing over 1,000 pages of resources plus thousands of links to other sites.

www.psychpage.com

Family Resources from Psychpage is a resource with articles about children, parents and links on children and families and a parent tip.

www.twosocks.ces.ncsu.edu

CYFERnet, Children, Youth and Family Education and Research Network features an exhaustive amount of topics on children, youth, and family.

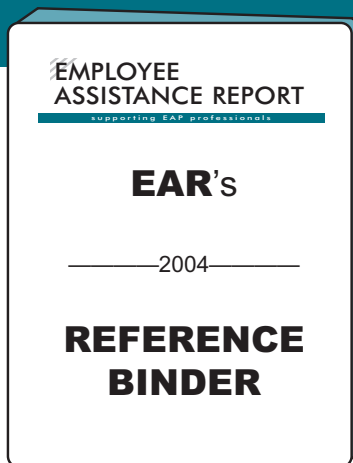
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Never Lose Your EAR Issues Again!



"I really liked the article in *Employee Assistance Report (EAR)* about personal financial management, but I can't seem to find it. I also enjoyed the Brown Bagger they ran on healthcare, but I was too busy to hold a seminar on this topic at the time, but now I can't seem to track that one down, either!"

Let's face it — the way months fly by it's pretty easy to think that an article ran two months ago, when in fact it ran six months ago. *Employee Assistance Report* can help with an **easy to use 2004**

Reference Binder. With the **Reference Binder**, you will be able to store your 2004 issues of *EAR*, *Brown Baggers*, *Payroll Stuffers* and *Posters* in **one easy-to-find place**.

Each month, just insert your newest issue of *EAR* in the appropriate, three-hole punched space. Place the *Brown Bagger* insert in that three-hole punched section. Store *Payroll Stuffers* and *Posters* in transparent sleeves. Each section — *EAR* newsletter, *Brown Bagger*, *Payroll Stuffers* and *Posters* — has a specific tab for your convenience.

To further add to convenience, in January 2005 you will receive the article archive for 2004 to also place in your binder. We've included last year's (2003) article archive in this issue.

Cost for the **2004 Reference Binder** is just **\$15.00** postage paid. That's just a little over **\$1** a month. Isn't that a pretty small price to **never** lose your newsletters or inserts again? ■

New Workplace Laws in Effect

New laws for California workplaces:

• *Paid family leave*

The law establishing this program was passed in 2003, but it takes effect this year.

The first impact, will be an increase in workers' paycheck deductions for State Disability Insurance, which will administer the program. Beginning next year, the overall SDI deduction will be 1.18% of pay on the first \$68,829 a worker earns. A small portion of that — about \$55 of the \$812 paid by a worker who makes the maximum or more, will be earmarked for the family leave program.

Workers who take time off to care for a seriously ill family member or to bond with a new child will be able to get partial pay for up to six weeks of leave beginning July 1.

• *Protection for whistle blowers*

Employees who report legal violations by the company they work for are now protected from retaliation by their employers. Attorneys who represent employers are concerned that the details of the law, which will force the employer to prove in some cases that it didn't retaliate, could make it difficult for employers to defend themselves against suits alleging retaliation.

• *Employees' right to sue for labor-code violations*

This law will allow workers who sue their employers (or former employers) for violations of laws governing wages to recover not only

any wages they are owed but also a portion of any penalties the employer has to pay. In the past, only a state agency could sue for penalties.

• *Third-party sexual-harassment protection*

Employers will now be responsible for sexual harassment of workers by people who don't work for the

company, such as contractors or customers.

• *Protection against discrimination based on gender identity*

This bill expands the definition of sex discrimination to include transgender individuals. ■

EAR Conferences

• **Informatics Summit**

Date: March 1, 2004

Place: New Orleans, LA

Contact: 301-984-6200; www.nccbh.org/neworleans

• **Legal Aspects of Child Sexual Abuse**

Date: March 4, 2004

Place: Milwaukee, WI

Contact: Rogers Memorial Hospital, 800-767-4411, ext. 566; www.rogershospital.org/seminars.htm

• **21st Annual Employment Law & Legislative Conference**

Date: March 8-10, 2004

Place: Washington, DC

Contact: 1-800-283-SHRM

• **EAPs: The Silver Lining**

Dates: March 9-12, 2004

Place: Charlotte, NC

Contact: North Carolina Chapter of EAPA, Margaret Larrea, 717-821-5579 or Melissa Holmes, 704-355-5021

• **SHRM Global Forum: 27th Annual Conference & Exposition**

Dates: March 22-24, 2004

Place: Bal Harbour, FL

Contact: SHRM: 703-548-3440;

shrm@shrm.org

• **American Association of Suicidology; Working Together to Save Lives**

Dates: April 14-17, 2004

Place: Miami, FL

Contact: www.suicidology.org

• **Society for Human Resource Management: 35th Annual Conference & Exposition**

Dates: April 19-21, 2004

Place: Washington, DC

Contact: SHRM: 1-800-283-SHRM (U.S. only);

• **Evidence Based Practices: Reducing the Use of Restraint**

Dates: April 22-23, 2004

Place: Plano, TX

Contact: Telephone: 972-495-0755; www.mandt-system.com

• **Innovative Practices for Suicide Prevention**

Dates: May 4-7, 2004

Place: Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Contact: www.suicidology.org

• **Treatment Update on Eating Disorders: Case Illustrations and Panel Discussion**

Dates: May 7, 2004

Place: Oconomowoc, WI

Contact: Rogers Memorial Hospital, 800-767-4411, ext. 566;

www.rogershospital.org/seminars.htm

• **Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network (SPAN)**

Dates: May 6-7, 2004

Place: Sacramento, CA

Contact: www.suicidology.org

• **Social Workers Making a Difference: The Power of Social Work**

Dates: May 19-21, 2004

Place: Brookfield, WI

Contact: 608-257-6334, website: naswwi.org

• **Michigan AADAC Annual Conference**

Dates: May 21-22, 2004

Place: Michigan

Contact: 734-254-9333

• **Boundaries and Ethics**

Date: June 11, 2004

Place: Oconomowoc, WI

Contact: Rogers Memorial Hospital, 800-767-4411, ext. 566;

www.rogersmemorialhospital.org/seminars.htm

• **Society for Human Resource Management's 56th Annual Conference & Exposition**

Date: June 27-30, 2004

Place: New Orleans, LA

Contact: Society for Human Resource

Management (SHRM), 703-548-3440;

shrm@shrm.org

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I'm Important, You're Important, We're All Important

20 Down-to-Earth Ideas for Building Self-Worth in Your Workplace

By Tom Terez

When I spent two years interviewing people about their work and workplaces, the concept of “self-worth” came up time and again. “I don’t feel important.” “I’m a worker bee.” “I’m just not valued.” Worth emerged as such a dominant theme that it’s on my list of the 20 keys to a meaningful workplace.

No, worth can’t be measured. But it sure as heck can be increased. Below are some thought-provoking ideas for nurturing a stronger sense of self-worth among employees in your workplace.

- 1 Those hallway hellos really do matter. Make them count.
- 2 Someone somewhere in your organization has the answer to that problem you’ve been struggling with. Turn off your computer, and surf the sea of knowledge that surrounds you.
- 3 We’re obsessed with knowledge, skills, and abilities. Shouldn’t we also tap into our deep interests?
- 4 Internal competition always produces at least one loser, which is one too many, especially when we’re the loser.
- 5 The fancy award dinners and wall plaques aren’t essential. This is: thank you.
- 6 Let’s have a month when everyone is named employee of the month.
- 7 Co-creation may be the most time-intensive, frustrating, exhausting, and surest way to foster true empowerment and a deep sense of worth.
- 8 People are moved by compelling missions — not by run-on mission statements.
- 9 Plenty of organizations have complaint departments, complaint forms, and complaint-resolution personnel. Will someone please create a compliment department?
- 10 Who should have easy access to all customer input? Easy answer: everyone.
- 11 Employee attitude surveys are an exercise in tree-killing unless they’re used to generate rich dialogue and focused action. Save a tree: Just say no to employee surveys that are destined for a dusty shelf.
- 12 It’s a cliché, but it’s so true: Respect takes years to nurture but can be destroyed in seconds.
- 13 Can you cite one example of a performance evaluation that truly informs and inspires?
- 14 Few people expect high pay. Everyone expects fair pay.
- 15 For years, we’ve used terms like boss, subordinate, my people, your people, and upper-level. Should we be surprised that some employees feel like second-class workplace citizens?
- 16 Space matters. If some people are jammed into tiny cubicles while others get cavernous offices, what kind of message is being sent?
- 17 If you don’t think Dilbert is funny, you need to worry.
- 18 If you think you’re turning into Dilbert, you really need to worry.
- 19 If your workplace is a Dilbertesque universe, engage in random acts of positive change management. Focus on the one positive thing you can do instead of the 100 things you can’t do.
- 20 If you’re unwilling to do a thing about it, stop off at the local office-supply store, buy some resumé paper, and get busy. A better situation awaits — but only if you seek it out and seize it. ■

Source: Tom Terez — MeaningfulWorkplace.com. Write to Tom@MeaningfulWorkplace.com, 614-571-9529.