



The leading magazine for Education PAs & Admins

EDPA

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- ◆ From Assistant to Strategic Partner
- ◆ Take Better Control of your Email
- ◆ Set yourself some SMART goals
- ◆ Building Workplace Confidence
- ◆ Aiming for 'Well-Balanced'

**EDPA - helping School Personal Assistants,
Secretaries and Administrative Staff to move
towards being 'Outstanding' in their roles**

Welcome to EDPA's 53rd issue



Angela Garry - Editor

Hello to all our readers! Welcome to this term's issue of EDPA, the leading publication for PAs, Secretaries and Administrative staff working in education.

As always, we endeavour to bring you articles and pieces written by and for the PA, secretarial and admin community by school staff themselves plus worldwide experts and trainers, with the aim of bringing you articles to motivate, inspire, lead, teach, demonstrate, encourage and support you in your ever-increasingly busy roles in schools.

We welcome your involvement in the magazine. If you have a skill or some knowledge which you think would be of benefit to others, please share it with your fellow readers! Equally, if there's a topic which you would like us to cover, please let us know and we'll get onto it!

Meanwhile, it finally appears that the summer weather has arrived here in the UK - we've now had more than two days in a row where the sun has been shining, which is more than we've had in months! I hope you are all able to enjoy the weather, wherever you are...

Please send any suggestions to editor@picaurum.com.

Onwards & upwards!
Best wishes to all,

Angela Garry
EDITOR



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Contents:

2	Welcome / Contributors	16	Take Better Control of your Email
3	Ending the school year on a positive note	18	The EDPA cartoon / Set yourself some SMART goals
5	EDPA reader panel on Prioritising	22	Celebrating School PAs & Admins
6	From Assistant to Strategic Partner	23	50 Ways to Take a Break
8	School Administrator: 'Mrs T'	24	Building Workplace Confidence
10	MS Excel Shortcuts	26	Aiming for 'Well-Balanced'
12	'H' is for 'Helpful'	29	The EDPA Network & Website
14	Are you at the Right Pitch?	30	EDPA Editor's Update
15	Are you interested in your CPD or committed?	31	Food for Thought....
		32	CPD resources

The A-Z of this issue's contributors:

- **Sammi Caramela** is a freelance writer in New Jersey, USA, writing on business, mental health, lifestyle and more.
- **The EDPA Reader Panel** is made up of a dozen subscribers from all over the world. If you'd like to join them to give your views on various topics in future issues, please get in touch.
- **Rhonda Scarf** is a Professional Speaker, Trainer, Consultant and Author based both in Ottawa, Canada and Fort Myers, Florida.
- **Julia Schmidt** is an Executive Assistant in Oslo, Norway. She is the former National Chairman at IMA Norway .
- **'Mrs T'** is a School Administrator at a primary school in the north of England, who has chosen to remain anonymous.
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- **Shirley Taylor** is a former PA, originally from Sheffield, England, who now runs her own training business in Singapore.

EDPA Regulars:

- **Andy Case** is a cartoonist, illustrator and music mogul by night, and talented teacher by day. He is the author of a book for small children, and is working on more volumes for the near future.
- **Tandy Hanff** is EDPA's resident in-house IT guru and self-confessed geek, with 20 years' self-taught computing experience.
- **Michele Thwaits** was a PA for 36+ years, now International Facilitator / Trainer, in Johannesburg, South Africa—and is our valued proof-reader.
- **Angela Garry** is EDPA's editor, author of "Brave PAs" and "The PA & EA Circus", and a global PA Trainer, with 25 years' experience in admin & PA roles. She runs publishing house Pica Books www.picabooks.co.uk





Ending the school year on a positive note

We are almost at the end of the school year. Julia Schmidt writes on the importance of maintaining a positive mindset to the end, and in our planning for the year to come.

As everybody knows, time flies and there is nothing we can do to avoid that reality. However, the most important lesson I have learned from a life with endings and starts is that what gives me the energy to start a new school year is the ability to close a year with a positive mindset.

The art of being the best assistant is about letting leadership emerge from within. It is about discovering who you are, what compels you to do what you do, and what gives you the credibility to manage others. Mastery of the art of being the best assistant comes from the mastery of the self and the future you want

for yourself.

During my career, I have had the opportunity to work with great leaders. One of the most significant skills they all have is the ability to focus on the positive side of people and situations. Besides, they are all committed to creating a better future.

What shall we do to see a better future and imagine exciting future possibilities?

We have to start planning the new school year based on our accomplishments and best stories. That is what motivates and gives energy.

We have to nurture a “YES” inner culture that focuses on what we are conquering and building, rather than what we could not do or accomplish. Positive thinking nourishes new ideas, innovation, and proactivity. We create a better future by starting with what is right and is giving us happiness.

Bryan Sexton, associate professor of

psychiatry and behavioural sciences at Duke University explains that, as humans, “we are hardwired to remember the negative.” But the good news is that with practice, we can develop a more positive mindset.

You are in the best position to know how successful your school year has been for you. You are the one in the driver’s seat when it comes to leveraging your accomplishments to the best of your advantage; no one else will do it for you.

FINALISE THE SCHOOL YEAR WITH YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN MIND

Knowing your achievements and identifying the skills used to achieve them are essential elements for repeating satisfactory performance. Recalling these valuable experiences will increase self-confidence and enable you to feel encouraged. I recommend you to spend some time doing a self-assessment and identifying big or small, very impressive or rather simple accomplishments from the last

twelve months.

Ask yourself:

What did I enjoy doing?

What did I do well?

What gave me satisfaction and pride?

- Which effective systems did I develop?
- How many motivating meetings did I conduct?
- What new skills did I gain?
- How many projects did my team conclude?

VISUALISE A SUCCESSFUL NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Bring to the next year the enthusiasm of having achieved important goals during this year. Assume you have only the new year ahead of you to accomplish the next three most important goals in your life. Visualise how you would spend each month of the next year transforming your goals into actions, aligning your life to be congruent with those most important things, and effectively achieving the success you have visualised for the year.

Do as world-class athletes do:

- Visualise your peak performance, feel it and experience it.
- Create an inner comfort zone that will help you become familiarised with your victory. This feeling will keep you motivated and will be programming your brain, heart, and mind to be committed to the purposes you defined.

MAKE THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR THE START OF A GREAT MOVEMENT

Cheerful people, according to a Harvard study, are less likely to develop coronary heart disease than non-cheerful

people with the same physical risk factors. Men who are optimistic are three times less likely to develop high blood pressure compared to their more pessimistic counterparts. Besides, there is research also showing that a positive outlook can help protect against common cold.

With the bright spots in mind, happiness, and the best accomplishments we have collected, let's start the new school year full of energy. Positivity is key to creating engagement, increasing problem-solving and allowing us to see the big picture.

We will need the best of ourselves to be able to build a better future through our careers:

- Start with what's right
- Choose one of your acquired skills and transform it into an expertise
- Build new strengths based on the assets you already have
- Invite your followers to keep on supporting you in the new school year
- Create a vision of what is possible and start your movement.

We have no reasons to be unhappy about the end of a year in our lives. Let's keep the focus on our strengths and victories. I am sure that you and your teams have many successful stories to tell. The strong feeling that has to push us towards the new year is the happiness of being able to eliminate the negative, focus on the bright spots, and reinvent the baseline.

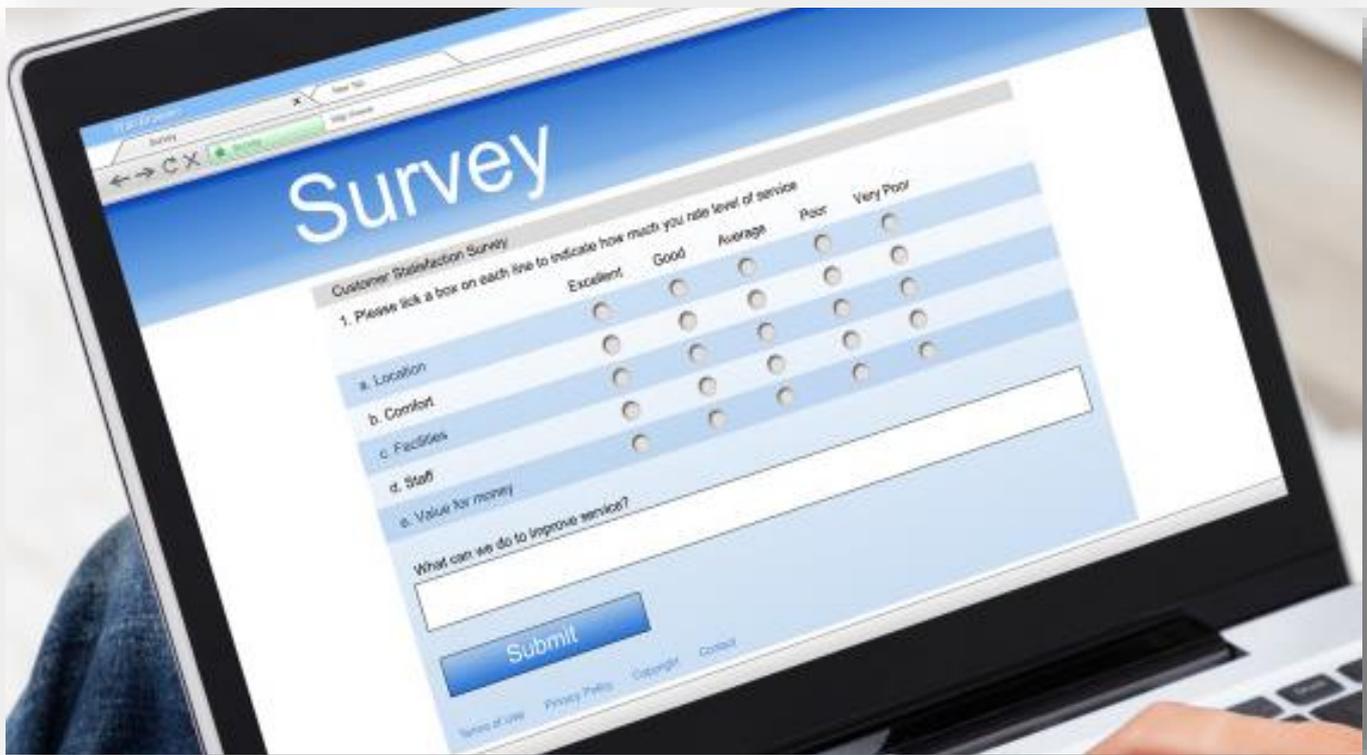
Julia Schmidt is an experienced Executive Assistant in Oslo, Norway. She is the former National Chairman at IMA Norway and has published many articles on LinkedIn and Eventopedia's blog The Proud PA.

I wanted a
perfect ending.

Now I've learned, the hard way,
that some poems don't rhyme, and some
stories don't have a clear beginning,
middle, and end.

Life is about
not knowing,
having to change, taking the moment
and making the best of it, without
knowing what's going to happen next.

~ Gilda Radner ~



EDPA Reader Panel on Prioritising

Are you feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and burnt-out? Well, this is all too common a symptom for PA's. Most of this feeling can be overcome by following some simple prioritisation rules that will help you deal with the important things first.

The EDPA Readers' Panel gave their favourite tips.

- Try to do your planning at the same time every day. Use this time to review actions already completed as well as listing future things to do.
- Use only one planner to keep track of your appointments. Keeping a separate business and personal planner creates confusion.
- Write out a To Do list every day. Be specific about the event. Rather than "investigate conference venues" write "Select 2 conference venues to view".
- Separate your To Do list into A, B

and C priorities. "A" items are important. They are the ones you must do on that day "B" may be urgent but not as important and therefore they are ones that you could do on that day and "C" are those that would be nice to do if you get the time. Aim to do the important things first. Remember the 80-20 rule: 80 percent of reward comes from 20 percent of effort.

- Start with the A items. Don't work on a C just because it's easy to do. Also, break your A items into small manageable chunks, so they're easier to cross off your list.
- Cross off items as you complete them to give yourself a sense of Accomplishment
- Don't jam your day full of activities. Leave time for emergencies.

That's some basic tips on managing your time and your diary, here are some extra ones on handling paperwork that I hope you'll find useful.

- Firstly, block out time during the day to handle paperwork. Make

time in your diary and stick to it.

- Never handle a piece of paper more than once. Avoid the "I'll just put this here for now" habit. Do something with every piece of paper that reaches you and put it in its proper place not just back on the pile.
- Extra storage space ends up getting filled up quickly. Try reducing or throwing out extra paperwork collectors. Limit your stacking trays to two: one for incoming papers and the other for outgoing papers.
- Don't keep business cards tucked away in a drawer. Enter them on a contact manager database, such as Outlook and then throw out the card. It's much quicker and easier to find contacts stored on a database than having to rifle through a whole stack of cards. And if you use Microsoft Outlook remember to load the app onto your Smartphone so that whenever or wherever your boss calls you for a number you'll never be at a loss.

If you'd like to be part of our Reader Panel and to input on future topics, get in touch!



From Assistant to Strategic Partner

The days of taking dictation, personal assistance for each boss, and using an old-fashioned typewriter ended in the 70s. Rhonda Scharf explains why and how the secretary is gone.

From secretary, we moved to administrative assistant, executive assistant, personal assistant, and roles in which we were supporting professionals. We supported departments, headteachers, and everything in between.

We ensured that things moved forward by taking care of the little details that no one noticed such as scheduling, travel, expenses, and generally made life a lot easier for others.

And now, due to the use of artificial intelligence, a lot of those roles are disappearing entirely. Artificial intelligence; like Alexa or Google, can perform a lot of tasks that administrative professionals have typically done in the past (make appointments, confirm schedules, make calls, order supplies, even have a

pleasant conversation.) These devices are able to support, thereby eliminating a lot of the tasks we perform daily.

What we have left is the “strategic partner.” I’m not sure what the title will be, moving forward, but we no longer support the function of the school or the headteacher.

We work in conjunction with the department, the headteacher, or the school. We are autonomous.

And we are far more visible than we have ever been in the past. We are no longer invisible (or we should not be invisible); we are very much a part of the success of the department, headteacher, or school.

Working as a strategic partner requires a mind shift in terms of how we approach our profession. And note, it is a profession, not a job. This is not a stepping stone position. This is as important as the Project Manager, the HR professional, or the Payroll professional. This is a career. This is a calling. This is the future.

You will be your headteacher’s right-hand partner.

The same way the secretary and administrative professional was there to make their headteacher look good, you are there to ensure that they have not forgotten anything, they are not making mistakes, and to give a thumbs-up on what they’re doing. They

will look to you for validation. They will look to you to ensure they have not forgotten anything, and they will look to you when things go wrong. This isn’t about maintaining their schedule (Alexa can do that). It isn’t keeping them organized or booking their travel (they can do that themselves); it is about making sure that when they show up, they are 100 per cent ready for every meeting, every phone call, every emergency, and every event that occurs in the workplace.

You are their partner to ensure strategically they are exactly where they need to be.

The two of you are a partnership. You will succeed together, or you will fail together. Like a figure skating pairs couple (think Virtue and Moir in recent years, Torvill and Dean through the 1980s and 1990s, Wagner and Paul in

the 1950s and 1960s), you are working together for the long-term.

How are you going to embed yourself in your headteacher's mind to ensure that every I is dotted and every T is crossed in this new partnership?

- **Have open, honest, and transparent discussions**

Your headteacher needs to know what your boundaries are, and you need to make them clear. If it is unreasonable for you to be contacted after 8 p.m., you need to say that. Don't assume that this will be okay with your headteacher either, so be sure to clarify this immediately (in the interview if you can).

Many headteachers have given their hearts and souls to their job, and they expect that you will, also. If something goes wrong half way around the world, they want to know that their partner can jump in and help. If that isn't reasonable for you, that needs to be communicated to the headteacher.

Perhaps it is your headteacher who has more clarity on her boundaries. You need to know that, too.

This is like a marriage in that if something goes wrong at 2 a.m., we need to know who is getting up with the screaming baby. If you can't agree or respect each other's boundaries, the partnership will feel like work.

- **Identify communication preferences**

When my husband and I first started dating, I was much more of a text-based communicator than he was. I wanted a text in the morning asking how my night was.

I wanted to know he was thinking about me before he went to bed. But his brain did not operate that way at all! If we need to talk, he will want to speak on the phone.

And if we don't need to talk, a telephone call just to say hi doesn't need to happen, from his perspective. Email or text is not his go-to method of communicating, but it certainly is mine. I text one of

my best friends almost daily, but I have no idea what her phone number is. I never speak to her on the telephone

The same way we need to have that conversation with our life partner, we need to have conversations with our business partner, too. What is the best way for the two of you to communicate throughout the day? Text, instant messenger, email, telephone, Skype? There is no 'right or wrong' style of communication, but the faster you can figure out what works best for both of you, the better it will be. Should you book a standard appointment together, or just touch base as needed? Are you okay to get right to the point, or do you prefer someone to say good morning first?

Warren (my husband) still doesn't love to text, but he will if it makes sense (like when I'm sitting on an airplane and don't want the entire plane to hear my conversation, or when I'm in a taxi), and I am willing to give him a call if the situation allows it because that is what he prefers. We both have to be willing to compromise. I don't get the good morning text, and sometimes I want to call him even though nothing catastrophic has happened. We both compromise.

When I am working with a client and he texts me, I don't respond. If I do respond sometimes, it is typically a very curt and abrupt conversation. I do not intend to be rude; I'm just preoccupied. I made sure he realized that I wasn't intentionally being rude, I am just very direct when I am distracted. He learned that when I am with clients, I didn't want to text at all. It isn't personal; it's just a focus issue.

- **Set goals**

Warren and I have personal and professional goals together. He is my husband, and he is my strategic business partner (he is, in all senses of the word, my partner). We have personal bucket list items, and we have

very clear business goals. Together, we work on them to ensure we complete them. If he doesn't know what my business goals are, how can he help me achieve them? If I don't know what his business goals are, how can I help him achieve his goals? Partners, in business and marriage, need to communicate what is important to each other.

We know where we want to be in five years and will help each other get there. Have those conversations with your strategic partner. If this isn't a lifetime job for you (and who says it has to be?), be sure to be willing to have those conversations with your strategic partner.

Be comfortable speaking about what your next role in the department (or the school as a whole) will be. Find out what her goals and aspirations are. When someone moves on to another challenge, we should not take that personally, either. Help them get where they want to be, and they will help you get where you want to be.

Creating a strategic business partner relationship is very much like creating a life partnership. It isn't easy. Divorce rates are high (both personally and professionally). It takes commitment from both people, but when it is formed properly, respectfully, and with the school and personal objectives in mind, it works beautifully.

Stop thinking that are you are supporting the function of your school and start realizing that you are a strategic partner, invested in its success.

Rhonda Scharf is a well-recognized Professional Speaker, Trainer, Consultant and Author based both in Ottawa Canada and Fort Myers Florida. Since 1993 she has worked with tens of thousands of people dozens of countries. Rhonda specializes in helping others thrive in their work environment using her proven tools and strategies.

Rhonda's website is at www.on-the-right-track.com

**I'M THE
SCHOOL
SECRETARY
WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?**



School Administrator: 'Mrs T'

This issue, EDPA met a School Administrator in a small primary school in the north of England, who agreed to answer our questions about her role. She has asked us to keep her identity anonymous, so we've arbitrarily labelled her 'Mrs T'.

Briefly, what is your job?

"I have been a School Secretary for a number of years, and have recently been re-titled as School Administrator. Ours is a small primary school with only a small number of staff so on top of supporting the headteacher and doing all the admin functions required, my responsibilities also include doing whatever else needs to be done. I administer the school dinner money and chase attendance issues; book and arrange transport and tickets for school trips; dole out first aid to children with scraped knees; order stationery and any other supplies needed for the school, arrange for contractors to come in and service the alarm systems, complete repairs and pretty much anything else the head teacher needs me to do."

How did you get the role?

"I did office work before I had my children: I have a Business Studies qualification, O levels, secretarial qualifications and my ECDL and these are definitely necessary for the job. Jobs in school admin are popular with mums for obvious reasons and not always easy to come by but I had been the volunteer secretary for the school playgroup for a couple of years so I was already known to the school when I applied for my current job."

Did you always want to work with or around children?

"Yes. I've always wanted to work in a school (I was brought up reading Mallory Towers!) and thought of being a teacher when I was at school but I was too impatient to be out earning so that didn't happen. I went into office work and enjoyed it. I hope to stay at this school till I retire: I've no intention of working anywhere else, I love having the children around throughout my working day."

Can you describe a typical day for us?

"There is no such thing as a typical day! Today I started by sorting out the day's numbers for dinners, prepared the menus for next week's lunches and distributed them to the children. I made sure all the paperwork was ready for the school trip one class was going on. I helped with the on-going arrangements for the Summer Tea Party and the arrangements for the imminent arrival of two visitors from our partner school in Austria. I administered first aid to a child with a bleeding leg. I sorted out an issue for the head teacher with a file on their USB stick which had become corrupted (naturally, I had saved the file to our network before it had been loaded onto the USB), I had a few minutes' cuddle with the school cat and then I ordered a pile of stationery. In between all this I answered the phone, sorted out all the queries, dealt with various problems that parents came to me with and said a sad farewell to our French assistant."

You are clearly filled with enthusiasm for your role. What do you enjoy most about it?

"I love the fact that every day is different and nearly every day is fun. The children are lovely for the most part and I enjoy the contact with them while not having to actually teach them. Some days are challenging and need decision making on my

part when the Head is not there, other days are pure escapism - we hold several 'special event' days during the year (historical, geographical, books related, etc) where all the staff get to wear costumes all day and a week ago I dressed up as a superhero (the Super Secretary!) and visited the Reception Class to thank them for finding my cape and to tell them a story and answer their questions."

And the least?

"I honestly can't think of anything I don't like about my job. I look forward to going in every day."

Are you a natural organiser, great at multi-tasking and ready to deal with whatever is thrown at you?

"I think any good administrative assistant has to be. There's no way we could juggle all the tasks that are expected of us if we weren't. Sometimes you have to be ready to just drop everything to deal with an emergency, but the important thing is to be able to return to the previous tasks and get them finished once the emergency is over."

What are the common misconceptions that people have about the work you do?

"Unless they know me really well, I think a lot of people tend to assume that all I do is typing and answering the phone but those are probably the smallest part of my job. They are usually amazed to find out at how much is involved in running a school and how much of that involves me, especially in a small school like ours."

What are the main skills you need to work as a school secretary?

"Apart from the obvious office based skills, I think you definitely need a sense of humour, willingness to take on any task, an ability to prioritise, to be efficient and well organised and to be able to think on your feet and adapt to whatever a particular day calls for. Good interpersonal skills are essential as you have to deal with children, parents, staff, governors, visitors, sales people, contractors - the list is endless and you need to be able to form and maintain good relationships with them all."

Tell us a little about the benefits with your role.

"An obvious benefit, particularly when my children were younger, was being able to have the school holidays off work. I don't have as much time off nowadays as my responsibilities and my contracted hours and weeks have all increased to fit the needs of the job, and my children have now moved on to Sixth form and University. Being in a job-hungry world, I like that I have a feeling of security as the school will always need admin staff. For me the main benefit is the enormous job satisfaction, the involvement in the life of the school which in turn means involvement in the community."

What advice would you give someone wanting to break into this career?

"There is understandably a lot of competition for jobs in schools because of the hours, holidays etc so apart from

the usual office qualifications and experience I would say that if you can demonstrate an interest in school life or working with children e.g. volunteering with your local PTA or playgroup, Brownies, Guides, church group, sports team etc. It will give you an advantage over other candidates."

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

"I am old enough to be retired in 10 years' time but I very much hope I will continue working in my little school until that time comes. It's the best job I have ever had."

And just for fun, the 'quick-fire round'...

First in the office or last to leave?

"First in and (apart from the Head) last to leave."

Tea or coffee?

"Coffee."

School canteen or packed lunch?

"Packed lunch unless I was feeling lazy, then it's school lunch."

The lift or the stairs?

"We only have stairs."

Out after work or straight home to bed?

"Neither - straight home to housework, catching up on 'Game of Thrones' (I became addicted to it recently and am currently binge-watching the earlier series) and dog walking!"

Paper diary or computerised?

"Now you've caught me! I use a computerised diary but I do also like to keep a paper diary, there's something about it!"

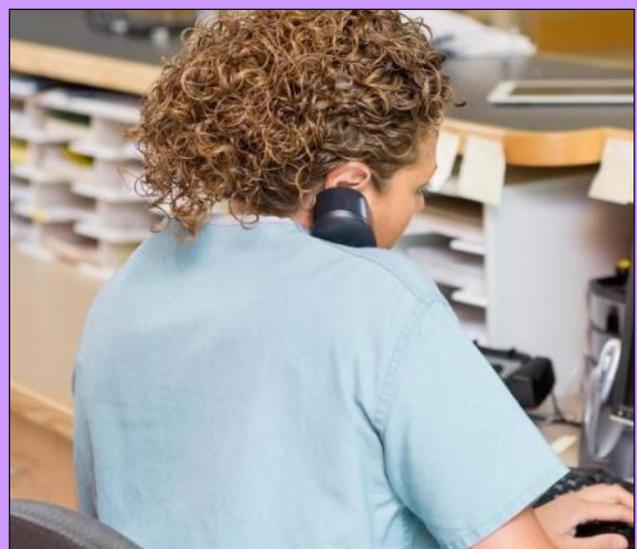
What would your head teacher say about you?

"I hope it would be that I give my all to the school."

And what would you say about them?

"Best person to work for, ever. 'Nuff said."

If you'd like to feature in one of our PA and Admin interviews, please get in touch!



MS Excel Shortcuts

Do you know your <Ctrl+B> from your <Alt+F6>? EDPA's resident IT guru Tandy Hanff has found some useful keyboard shortcuts for Microsoft Excel 2016, the most commonly used spreadsheet package amongst our readers.



We often receive emails and phone calls here at 'EDPA Towers', asking for help with computer queries: "how do I...", "is there a function that does xyz", "where is ...", "is it possible to ...", and such like.

Each time a new version of the Office suite is adopted by a school, the queries are often relating to "where has the abc function disappeared to, it used to be in the 123 menu or on the xyz ribbon, but in this new version of Excel I can't find it."

In fact, Microsoft's Support Staff attest to this: some of the most common queries they receive are about how to find particular functions in the page.

Whilst the menus and the ribbons and the look of the package may have changed substantially over the years, many of the functions are accessible via keyboard shortcuts which have remained the same all along.

So if you take some time to learn some of the following keyboard shortcuts, you can carry the knowledge forward when the NEXT version of the software comes out—plus you can also use them on previous versions on other PCs.

Getting Started

The File tab opens Backstage view, which contains commands for working with your files like Open, Save, New, Print, Share, and Close.

Create a Workbook: Click the **File** tab and select **New** or press **Ctrl + N**. Double-click a workbook.

Open a Workbook: Click the **File** tab and select **Open** or press **Ctrl + O**. Select a recent file or navigate to the location where the file is saved.

Use Zoom: Click and drag the zoom slider to the left or right.

Cell Address: Cells are referenced by an address made from their column letter and row number, such as cell A1, B2, etc. Find the address of a cell by looking at the Name Box to the left of the formula bar.

Select a Cell: Click a cell or use the keyboard arrow keys to select it.

Select a Cell Range: Click and drag to select a range of cells. Or, press and hold down the **Shift** key while using the arrow keys to move the selection to the last cell of the range. Use the **Ctrl** key to select non-adjacent cell ranges.

Select an Entire Worksheet: Click the **Select All** button where the column and row headings meet.

Change Program Settings: Click the **File** tab and select **Options**.

Change Views: Click a **View** button in the status bar. Or, click the **View** tab and select a view.

The Excel 2016 Screen

Preview and Print a Workbook: Click the **File** tab and select **Print**.

Undo: Click the **Undo** button on the Quick Access Toolbar.

Redo or Repeat: Click the **Redo** button on the Quick Access Toolbar. The button turns to Repeat once everything has been re-done.

Close a Workbook: Click the **Close** button in the upper-right corner.

Keyboard Shortcuts

General

Open a workbook	Ctrl + O
Create a new workbook	Ctrl + N
Save a workbook	Ctrl + S
Print a workbook	Ctrl + P
Close a workbook	Ctrl + W
Help	F1
Activate Tell Me field	Alt + Q
Spell check	F7
Calculate worksheets	F9
Create absolute reference	F4

Navigation

Move between cells	↑, ↓, ←, →
Right one cell	Tab
Left one cell	Shift + Tab
Down one cell	Enter
Up one cell	Shift + Enter
Down one screen	Page Down
To first cell of active row	Home
Enable End mode	End
To cell A1	Ctrl + Home
To last cell	Ctrl + End

Editing

Cut	Ctrl + X
Copy	Ctrl + C
Paste	Ctrl + V
Undo	Ctrl + Z
Redo	Ctrl + Y
Find	Ctrl + F
Replace	Ctrl + H
Edit active cell	F2
Clear cell contents	Delete

Formatting

Bold	Ctrl + B
Italics	Ctrl + I
Underline	Ctrl + U
Open Format Cells dialog box	Ctrl + Shift + F
Select All	Ctrl + A
Select entire row	Shift + Space
Select entire column	Ctrl + Space
Hide selected rows	Ctrl + 9
Hide selected columns	Ctrl + 0

Edit a Workbook

Edit a Cell's Contents: Select a cell and click in the Formula Bar, or double-click the cell. Edit the cell's contents and press **Enter**.

Clear a Cell's Contents: Select the cell(s) and press the **Delete** key. Or, click the **Clear**  button on the Home tab and select **Clear Contents**.

Cut or Copy Data: Select cell(s) and click the **Cut**  or **Copy**  button on the Home tab.

Paste Data: Select the cell where you want to paste the data and click the **Paste**  button in the Clipboard group on the Home tab.

Preview an Item Before Pasting: Place the insertion point where you want to paste, click the **Paste**  button list arrow in the Clipboard group on the Home tab, and hold the mouse over a paste option to preview.

Paste Special: Select the destination cell(s), click the **Paste**  button list arrow in the Clipboard group on the Home tab, and select **Paste Special**. Select an option and click **OK**.

Move or Copy Cells Using Drag and Drop: Select the cell(s) you want to move or copy, position the pointer over any border of the selected cell(s), then drag to the destination cells. To copy, hold down the **Ctrl** key before starting to drag.

Insert a Column or Row: Right-click to the right of the column or below the row you want to insert. Select **Insert** in the menu, or click the **Insert**  button on the Home tab.

Delete a Column or Row: Select the row or column heading(s) you want to remove. Right-click and select **Delete** from the contextual menu, or click the **Delete**  button in the Cells group on the Home tab.

Hide Rows or Columns: Select the rows or columns you want to hide, click the **Format**  button on the Home tab, select **Hide & Unhide**, and select **Hide Rows** or **Hide Columns**.

Basic Formatting

Format Text: Use the commands in the Font group on the Home tab, or click the dialog box launcher  in the Font group to open the dialog box.

Format Values: Use the commands in the Number group on the Home tab, or click the dialog box launcher  in the Number group to open the Format Cells dialog box.

Change Cell Alignment: Select the cell(s) you want to align and click a vertical alignment  button or a horizontal alignment  button in the Alignment group on the Home tab.

Wrap Text in a Cell: Select the cell(s) that contain text you want to wrap and click the **Wrap Text**  button on the Home tab.

Basic Formatting

Merge Cells: Select the cells you want to merge. Click the **Merge & Center**  button list arrow on the Home tab and select a merge option.

Cell Borders and Shading: Select the cell(s) you want to format. Click the **Borders**  button and/or the **Fill Color**  button and select an option to apply to the selected cell.

Copy Formatting with the Format Painter: Select the cell(s) with the formatting you want to copy. Click the **Format Painter**  button in the Clipboard group on the Home tab. Then, select the cell(s) you want to apply the copied formatting to.

Adjust Column Width or Row Height: Click and drag the right border of the column header or the bottom border of the row header. Double-click the border to AutoFit the column or row according to its contents.

Basic Formulas

Enter a Formula: Select the cell where you want to insert the formula. Type = and enter the formula using values, cell references, operators, and functions. Press **Enter**.

Insert a Function: Select the cell where you want to enter the function and click the **Insert Function**  button next to the formula bar.

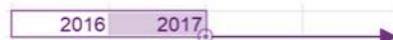
Reference a Cell in a Formula: Type the cell reference (for example, B5) in the formula or click the cell you want to reference.

The Sum Function: Click the cell where you want to insert the total and click the **Sum**  button in the Editing group on the Home tab. Enter the cells you want to total, and press **Enter**.

The Min and Max Functions: Click the cell where you want to place a minimum or maximum value for a given range. Click the **Sum**  button list arrow on the Home tab and select either **Min** or **Max**. Enter the cell range you want to reference, and press **Enter**.

The Count Function: Click the cell where you want to place a count of the number of cells in a range that contain numbers. Click the **Sum**  button list arrow on the Home tab and select **Count Numbers**. Enter the cell range you want to reference, and press **Enter**.

Complete a Series Using AutoFill: Select the cells that define the pattern, i.e. a series of months or years. Click and drag the fill handle to adjacent blank cells to complete the series.



Insert Objects

Insert an Image: Click the **Insert** tab on the ribbon, click either the **Pictures**  or **Online Pictures**  button in the Illustrations group, select the image you want to insert, and click **Insert**.

Insert Objects

Insert a Shape: Click the **Insert** tab on the ribbon, click the **Shapes**  button in the Illustrations group, and select the shape you wish to insert.

Hyperlink Text or Images: Select the text or graphic you want to use as a hyperlink. Click the **Insert** tab, then click the **Link**  button. Choose a type of hyperlink in the left pane of the Insert Hyperlink dialog box. Fill in the necessary informational fields in the right pane, then click **OK**.

Modify Object Properties and Alternative Text: Right-click an object. Select **Edit Alt Text** in the menu, and make the necessary modifications under the Properties and Alt Text headings.

View and Manage Worksheets

Insert a New Worksheet: Click the **Insert Worksheet**  button next to the sheet tabs below the active sheet. Or, press **Shift + F11**.

Delete a Worksheet: Select the sheet you want to delete, click the **Delete**  button list arrow in the Cells group on the Home tab, and select **Delete Sheet**. Or, right-click the sheet tab and select **Delete** from the menu.

Rename a Worksheet: Double-click the sheet tab, enter a new name for the worksheet, and press **Enter**.

Change a Worksheet's Tab Color: Right-click the sheet tab, select **Tab Color**, and choose the color you want to apply.

Move or Copy a Worksheet: Click and drag a worksheet tab left or right to move it to a new location. Hold down the **Ctrl** key while clicking and dragging to copy the worksheet.

Split a Window: Activate the cell where you want to split the window. Click the **View** tab and click the **Split**  button in the Window group. Or, press **Alt + WS** (one at a time).

Freeze Panes: Activate the cell where you want to freeze the window, click the **View** tab on the ribbon, click the **Freeze Panes**  button in the Window group, and select an option from the list.

Select a Print Area: Select the cell range you want to print, click the **Page Layout** tab on the ribbon, click the **Print Area**  button, and select **Set Print Area**.

Adjust Page Margins, Orientation, Size, and Breaks: Click the **Page Layout** tab on the ribbon and use the commands in the Page Setup group, or click the dialog box launcher  in the Page Setup group to open the Page Setup dialog box.

Recover Autosaved Versions: Click the **File** tab on the ribbon and select **Info**. Select an autosaved version from the versions list. Or, click the **Manage Workbook** button and select **Recover Unsaved Workbooks**.

'H' is for 'helpful'

Free sample chapter

Free sample chapter

Lindsay Taylor shares with us a chapter from her award-winning book "A-Z Pearls of Wisdom for Executive PAs".

When I ask my clients for a skill and attribute beginning with "H", "Helpful" always appears top of the list and that's understandable.

It's understandable because the very nature of the role of an Executive PA is one of assisting and helping others out to ensure the manager(s), office and organisation are operating as smoothly as possible.

I know. I've been there.

As a former EA working for a team of attorneys in a busy legal department in the US, I was "helpful" personified.

I also kept an objective view that being helpful doesn't necessarily mean we say "yes" all the time.

Image: 'H' is for 'Helpful'



Lindsay Taylor



"Delivering Pearls of Wisdom"

A – Z Pearls of Wisdom for Executive PAs

We are not being helpful to ourselves, our sanity and wellbeing if we always say "yes".

We need to be really clear about where our work priorities lie – what the boundaries of our role are in order that we concentrate our

time and energy on the right things.

It's okay to say "no" and that, in itself, is an art form.

Helpful ways to say "no" (without actually saying the word "no"!)

Use the "no" that fits best with your situation.

As general guidance, remember someone has probably asked you to help them because they believe you are capable and able to do it.

Thank them for asking you.

Help the other person understand your point of view and perspective by saying "I'm sure you will appreciate...".

1. The "Final Word" No

"Thank you for asking me. I would prefer not to do this. As I'm sure you will appreciate I have a

deadline to meet for preparation of the management meeting packs."

2. The Rescheduling No

"Whilst I can't do it now - I could certainly help you later".

Make sure you keep your promise to the person you have agreed to help out.

Make a diary note or set a reminder.

This will maintain your credibility and professionalism in the workplace.

3. The Problem Solving No

"I'm not in a position to help you, have you considered phoning technical support?"

Suggest an alternative solution to the person asking for your help.

We've all worked for the manager who states "Come to me with solutions, not

problems" and this "no" satisfies this practice.

4. The Negotiating No

"If I help you with x, then I would really appreciate your help with y. Is that okay?"

Get the others person's agreement to this negotiation.

This is a great opportunity to help each other out by tapping in to each other's expertise, skills and love for doing a particular aspect of work.

5. The Reprioritising No

"I'm happy to do this, however I'll have to reprioritise my workload a bit. What would you suggest?"

6. The "One Last Time" No

"I know I've helped you in the past and I'll help you again this time..."

"As I'm sure you will appreciate, with my demanding workload

my priorities need to be with xxxxx so from now on could I suggest you ask technical support / follow the printed procedures I've produced. Is that okay?"

Get the other person's agreement to this suggestion.

In some situations you can produce an "operators manual" or typed instructions / procedures that can easily be followed without interrupting your time.

This will ensure the other person can do this themselves ongoing.

The 'H' Pearl of Wisdom:

"Be a fence jumper instead of a fence sitter"

Robert V Taylor

Lindsay's book pulls together her 26 blog posts "Pearls of Wisdom" in a useful A-Z format which Executive PAs and Admin Professionals across the world find not only useful and beneficial – but essential in today's demanding business environment.

Lindsay Taylor is a former PA—and a former Teaching Assistant too— and is the author of "A-Z Pearls of Wisdom for Executive PAs" which won "Best Book for PAs" at the PA-Assist.com Members Voice Awards.

Lindsay leads Your Excellency Limited, a provider of leading edge personal and organisational development coaching and training for PAs, EAs, Secretaries and Admin Professionals.

She specialises in delivering down-to-earth, fun and beneficial learning to PAs and Administrative Professionals.



Are you at the Right Pitch?

EDPA Editor Angela Garry on how the pitch of our voice can have an enormous affect on our role, and our future development.

When I work with Administrative Assistants in schools I often hear a few common challenges, including:

1. They need to provide information which is easy to understand to pupils' families, particularly where families may not have English as their first language.
2. They need to speak with parents, staff, governors etc in a professional manner.
3. They need to be able to handle questions and difficult issues with more confidence, and without getting side-tracked.

These are communication issues which can occur for both men and women. But there's one request that I hear about exclusively when I'm asked to work with a female admin, which is "can I help them to sound older and gain more respect from those they talk with?"

It is often the case, particularly in certain countries or cultures, that women have a sing-song tone of voice, speak in a breathy way, speak in a high-pitched squeak, or that their sentences end in a questioning tone (often referred to as "upspeak") – all of which are associated with girls rather than adult women. The impact is that the woman isn't perceived as having the gravitas or executive presence necessary to command respect, grow in her role or advance her career.

I can give a few examples.

I recently watched several games in the women's World Cup, and was interested to listen to the voices used by the players to communicate mid-game. Some shouted – or rather, screeched – in high pitched voices, whilst others projected their voices in a lower pitch. These deeper pitches gave a resonance of authority and strength, whilst the screeches and screams sounded chaotic and unorganised. Female politicians have been known over the years to work on their pitch, taking on a lower sounding voice in order to project further or to echo the men around them. I've also worked in two different organisations where the receptionists had thin, high-pitched voices – and in one of those organisations a request for promotion was declined as the woman was told that she sounded "too young to deal with clients on anything more than handling where their calls go".

Helping women to sound less like girls and more like women is complex. Why is it that some of us have



naturally lower voices whilst others sound much younger in tone? Part of it is physiological, part is cultural, and part is learned behaviour. Men and women have different vocal fold sizes, and the shorter vocal folds of women makes their pitch higher. Furthermore, some women simply have more naturally higher-pitched voices than others.

Anne Karpf, author of 'The Human Voice' mentions some eye-opening cultural differences regarding pitch:

- ⇒ Women in almost every culture and country around the world speak in deeper voices than Japanese women.
- ⇒ American women's voices are lower than Japanese women's.
- ⇒ Swedish women's voices are lower than American's voices.
- ⇒ Dutch women's voices are lower than Swedish women's voices.

She notes that Dutch society doesn't significantly differentiate between its image of the ideal male and the ideal female, and that there are few differences between their male and female voices.

Biology and culture are unlikely to change (even with professional coaching), but what can be addressed and altered over time is the learned behaviour that is contributing to the problem.

Karpf states three reasons why grown women sometimes sound like little girls:

1. To minimize their power. Too often, women at work still struggle with the authority they have earned, in both their relationships with men, and with other women. By speaking like a little girl, they divest themselves of one of the most outward signs of power - a commanding presence - in an attempt to level the playing field. It's overcompensating by under-compensating. In addition, by using a tone of voice that goes up at the end, a woman can

leave people with the impression that she is simply asking questions or making suggestions rather than deciding. While it may make colleagues feel less intimidated, it undermines a woman's professionalism overall, and may have a negative impact on future advancement opportunities.

2. To stave off assertive input from others. When a woman makes herself sound younger and more vulnerable, she is broadcasting to her colleagues, direct reports, clients and supervisors that she can't or won't defend herself, so don't be tough on her. Who wants to be the big bad wolf who makes a woman cry at work? She is, in essence, protecting herself from challenging conversations, negative performance feedback, and difficult news -- all of which every leader needs to engage in in order to grow and develop. By shielding herself from the tough stuff in the short-term, she is putting up a barrier to her long-term career development.

3. Because it works in prevents them from having to take on major responsibilities, Many women are unaware of the fact that they're using this softer, sing-song-y tone of voice. However, they are smart enough to know that something in their communication system IS working for them, preventing difficult conversations and direct feedback, and not being held accountable for tough decisions. What may temporarily boost their confidence may undermine their credibility down the road.

Once women hear themselves the way others hear them, see how their learned behaviours may be both serving them and holding them back, and then master the mindsets and skills needed to lead with confidence and conviction, their voices can begin to reflect that confidence and conviction too.

If you feel that your voice is possibly holding you back from progressing in your role, speak with someone about it – either your manager or a colleague, or a friend or family member. Changing the tone of your voice can be learned – singing a simple song should show you that you do have the ability to make different and lower tones.

You just need to find your method of using those tones in your speech. One method could be: in private, speak a few words out loud in your normal tone, then repeat them one note lower, then another note lower, as if you are singing scales. Don't attempt to suddenly drop an entire octave (eight whole notes, to the uninitiated!) Just changing down by one or two notes can make a marked difference in how people react to your words and instructions.

When you next have a conversation with someone, pause for a second before you talk, to give yourself mental time to drop your tone down those one or two notes. Then speak. Practice this at home with friends or family, then introduce it at work. Once you get used to doing it, you'll find you don't need to take that pause before speaking – and you will start to notice a difference in the effect on those around you.

Are you Interested in your CPD or Committed?

“THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTEREST AND COMMITMENT.

WHEN YOU'RE INTERESTED IN DOING SOMETHING, YOU DO IT ONLY WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT.

WHEN YOU'RE COMMITTED TO SOMETHING, YOU ACCEPT NO EXCUSES; ONLY RESULTS.”



Take Better Control of your Email

Shirley Taylor is a leading trainer for PAs and Admins in Asia. Originally from the UK, she has lived in Singapore for over 20 years. She has written several books on business writing skills, and here offers her advice on handling your email inbox.

Change Your Mindset To Manage The Email Overload

For many people, email is the bane of their professional life.

Despite the fact that it's one of the oldest Internet technologies (it's been around since the 1970s), many people still struggle with managing it effectively. It's not unusual to see email in-boxes with hundreds – and sometimes even thousands – of

messages, which causes the owner stress, frustration and hours of lost productivity each week.

Some people simply give up and declare “email bankruptcy”, deleting everything and starting again, assuming that if something was important, the sender will follow up anyway.

However, this is only a short-term solution, and before long the empty in-box fills up again.

The most important first step to managing your email is to change your mindset.

Rather than seeing it as a necessary evil that's inevitably going to harm your productivity each day, treat email as a powerful communication tool that can improve your productivity.

Of course, that's easier said than done. However, I firmly believe that

the problem is not with email itself; it's with the kind of email we receive, the way we perceive email, and the way we manage email:

- We receive some email that's unnecessary, unwanted, inappropriate, unproductive and unimportant – and that gets in the way of the worthwhile email.
- We often perceive email as being more urgent than it is, and that means we don't get our important work done.
- We don't have techniques to manage it, so we feel stressed and overwhelmed by it.

If those problems sound familiar to you, start by adopting these three key principles, which will help you change your attitude towards these problems:

1. **Don't let your in-box set your priorities.**
Your in-box represents other

people’s priorities, not yours. So never use it to decide how you’ll plan your day. Be clear about your priorities first, and don’t vary from them unless absolutely necessary.

2. **Use email for important, not urgent, issues.**

Email is a deferred communication tool, which means you shouldn’t expect others to read your email immediately, and they shouldn’t expect it of you. Use it for important issues, but use other communication tools for urgent issues.

3. **Treat email as just one of many communication channels.**

There’s no law that says you have to do everything by email, and there’s no law that says a conversation that starts by email has to continue that way. Be flexible and willing to switch to

other communication channels as needed.

Adopting these principles means changing your attitude towards email, and I hope that this immediately helps you see email in a more positive light.

© Shirley Taylor.

Shirley is a high-energy, high-content speaker who is passionate about motivating individuals to make a real difference in our automated world. With inspiring stories and a fun style, she engages audiences quickly, and encourages them to embrace high-touch as well as high-tech so they can connect with heart.

Shirley has been a trusted member of the professional speaking and

training community for many years, and has received several awards for her services in leadership. She served as Asia Professional Speakers Singapore President 2011-12 and as Global Speakers Federation President 2017-18. She has spoken in almost 20 countries all over the world.

Author of 12 books published by international publishers, Shirley has established herself as a leading authority in workplace communication, business writing, and email. Her international bestseller Model Business Letters, Emails & Other Business Documents 7th edition has sold over half a million copies worldwide and been translated into 17 languages.

If you would like Shirley to speak at your next event, visit shirleytaylor.com.

E-MAIL LIKE A BOSS

@danidonovan

<p>I TOOK A WHILE BUT YOU CAN DEAL</p> <p>✗ SORRY FOR THE DELAY</p> <p>✓ THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE</p>	<p>MY SCHEDULE MATTERS TOO</p> <p>✗ WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU?</p> <p>✓ COULD YOU DO __: __?</p>	<p>YEAH, YOU'RE WELCOME</p> <p>✗ NO PROBLEM / NO WORRIES!</p> <p>✓ ALWAYS HAPPY TO HELP!</p>
<p>I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING</p> <p>✗ I THINK MAYBE WE SHOULD __</p> <p>✓ IT'D BE BEST IF WE ____</p>	<p>WORDING THIS IS HARD</p> <p>✗ *REWRITING E-MAIL FOR 40 MINUTES*</p> <p>✓ IT'D BE EASIER TO DISCUSS IN PERSON</p>	<p>DO YOU GET IT?</p> <p>✗ HOPEFULLY THAT MAKES SENSE?</p> <p>✓ LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS</p>
<p>WHERE THE HECK ARE WE ON THIS?</p> <p>✗ JUST WANTED TO CHECK IN</p> <p>✓ WHEN CAN I EXPECT AN UPDATE?</p>	<p>I MADE A SMALL ERROR</p> <p>✗ AHH SORRY! MY BAD. TOTALLY MISSED THAT.</p> <p>✓ NICE CATCH! UPDATED FILE ATTACHED. THANKS FOR LETTING ME KNOW!</p>	<p>I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT</p> <p>✗ COULD I POSSIBLY LEAVE EARLY?</p> <p>✓ I WILL NEED TO LEAVE FOR ____ AT __: __.</p>

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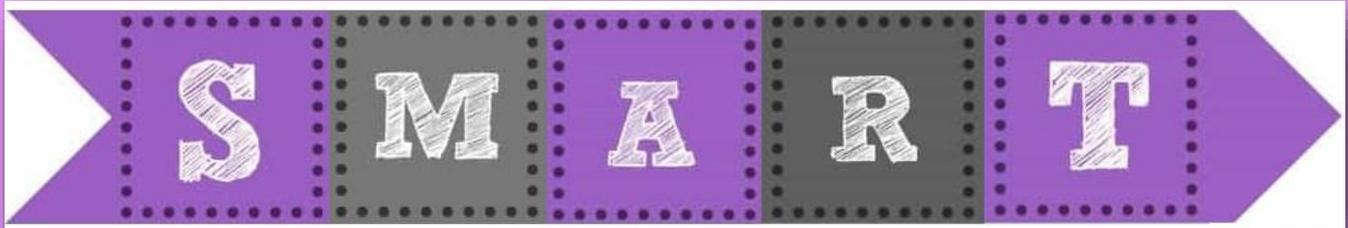
The EDPA Cartoon

Here's the latest in our series on the life and times of a school PA, by talented teacher and illustrator Andy Case.

Our PA has learned the benefit of leaving some non-urgent, non-important tasks til the summer holidays....

**Andy
Case**
Studios
andycasestudios@gmail.com

God's Right Hand by Andy Case



Set yourself some SMART goals

EDPA's IT and Coaching guru Tandy Hanff looks at a great route to successful planning—maybe for a project, or for the next school year, or to increase your skills in the workplace.

Success isn't something that simply happens overnight. It's a long process that takes serious effort and organisation. Think of success as a

house which you are in charge of building. You can approach the project in any way you want but it is your responsibility.

Perhaps you are slow to get started and then rushed to get finished. You don't create an overall plan for the structure before you start building and so the process is confusing and messy. It runs over budget, you use every scrap of resources available, and it leaves you exhausted. When

you're done, it ends up being a dumpy, poorly made structure that will likely crumble to pieces in the first windstorm.

On the other hand, consider what it would be like to be in charge of something as big as building your own home. Perhaps you find it exhilarating and thought provoking. Maybe it inspires and motivates you. The process is organized, fast paced (but not hurried) and in the end, the

structure you create is sturdy and beautiful. Just like a house, success that is built overnight typically will not last.

Conversely, success that is built with a clear vision, an organized plan, and a lot of careful attention will be permanent and the process will be enjoyable. Remember that the creation of your success is a large project of which you alone are in charge. In order to build the vision you have for yourself, you must do the work.



Start at the beginning, with the foundation. Then, build a solid structure using an organised plan. And when you've finished your project, don't forget to do the long-term care and maintenance needed to ensure your success is permanent.

Laying the Foundation

The "foundation" is the basis on which you create your personal vision of success. It's the bottom layer of you, the professional. Building a strong, solid foundation involves working on yourself - personal action items that will help support you in any professional role.



Visualise your goals

Setting appropriate professional goals is the most fundamental step to creating a strong foundation. You can't create success without knowing what it means to you. Success is a very subjective concept. Goals are more than just ideas of what you'd like to do. They should be comprehensive, clearly defined and measurable.

Use the acronym SMART to help you:



- What do you want to achieve? How will you achieve it? Why is it important to you? Clearly define the outcome you want.
- Establish concrete criteria for measuring your success. Use actual numbers, target dates, or specific events to indicate when your goal has been achieved.
- Your goals should push you past your comfort point but you should still be able to attain them with effort and commitment.
- Your goals should be important to you and the outcome should impact your development. Likewise, you should have the ability to directly impact them. Don't set goals that aren't significant or that you can't do anything to impact achievement.
- Your goals should have a time element established. This will help keep you on track and will prevent you from simply pushing a goal off infinitely into the distant future.

It's not enough to simply know your goals. You must see them, feel them, and breathe life into them. Once you have created SMART goals, write them down and post them in a visible place where you will see them every day. Constantly visualize what achieving the goals will look like. Imagine how it will feel to achieve them. See the attainment of the goals so clearly and vividly that you simply can't help but achieve them.

Have you set your goals yet for the next academic year, whether for new responsibilities or duties, for your learning and development, or to help achieve a strategic aim for your school? Overleaf are two worksheets that could assist you in setting your SMART goals.

SMART GOAL PLANNING

Today's Date: _____ Target Date: _____ Start Date: _____

Date Achieved: _____

Goal: _____

Verify that your goal is SMART

Specific: *What exactly will you accomplish?*

Measurable: *How will you know when you have reached this goal?*

Achievable: *Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Have you the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?*

Relevant: *Why is this goal significant?*

Timely: *When will this goal be achieved?*

SMART GOAL PLANNING

This goal is important because:

The benefits of achieving this goal will be:

Take Action!

Potential Obstacles

Potential Solutions

Who are the people you will ask to help you?

Specific Action Steps: *What steps need to be taken to get you to your goal?*

What?

Expected Completion Date

Completed

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Celebrating School PAs & Admins

In June the United Federation of Teachers held their 33rd annual Awards Lunch for School Secretaries of the Year from around the USA. The lunch also included UFT officers and staff.

"You are the glue that keeps schools together, always there and taking care of things," UFT President Michael Mulgrew said in his opening remarks at union headquarters in Manhattan.

Chapter Leader Franco Scardino called School Secretary of the Year Tina Marie Kendall, a secretary at Townsend Harris HS in Queens for 18 years, "the most consistently active chapter member and the most valuable member of the consultation committee."

"She's the mother of the school," was how Bronx Borough Representative Mary Atkinson summed up School Secretary of the Year Laura Beltram's work as secretary at New Directions Secondary School in Claremont Village.

"She's the best," is the way her principal described School Secretary of the Year Elizabeth Cruz of PS 158 on the Upper East Side, a 28-year veteran. "Go see Lizzie, if you've got a question," added UFT District 2 Representative Jessica Harvey.

The luncheon was a festive affair attended by more than 100 colleagues and family members of the eight award winners.

"I've seen what we can accomplish when we work together as a team through our union," said School Secretaries Chapter Leader Doreen Berrios-Castillo after congratulating this year's award winners.

At the pre-luncheon reception, Betsy Perez, a veteran payroll secretary at the Queens HS of Teaching, Liberal Arts and the Sciences, and Wendi Allocca, a payroll secretary for four years at the School of Cooperative Technical Education in Manhattan, recalled how they met at a functional chapter weekend organized by the UFT in March. They have kept in touch since.

"I'm learning, so when I'm not sure, I



get in touch and she helps me," Allocca explained. "It's nice to have someone outside your school to turn to, and Betsy's been an amazing help."

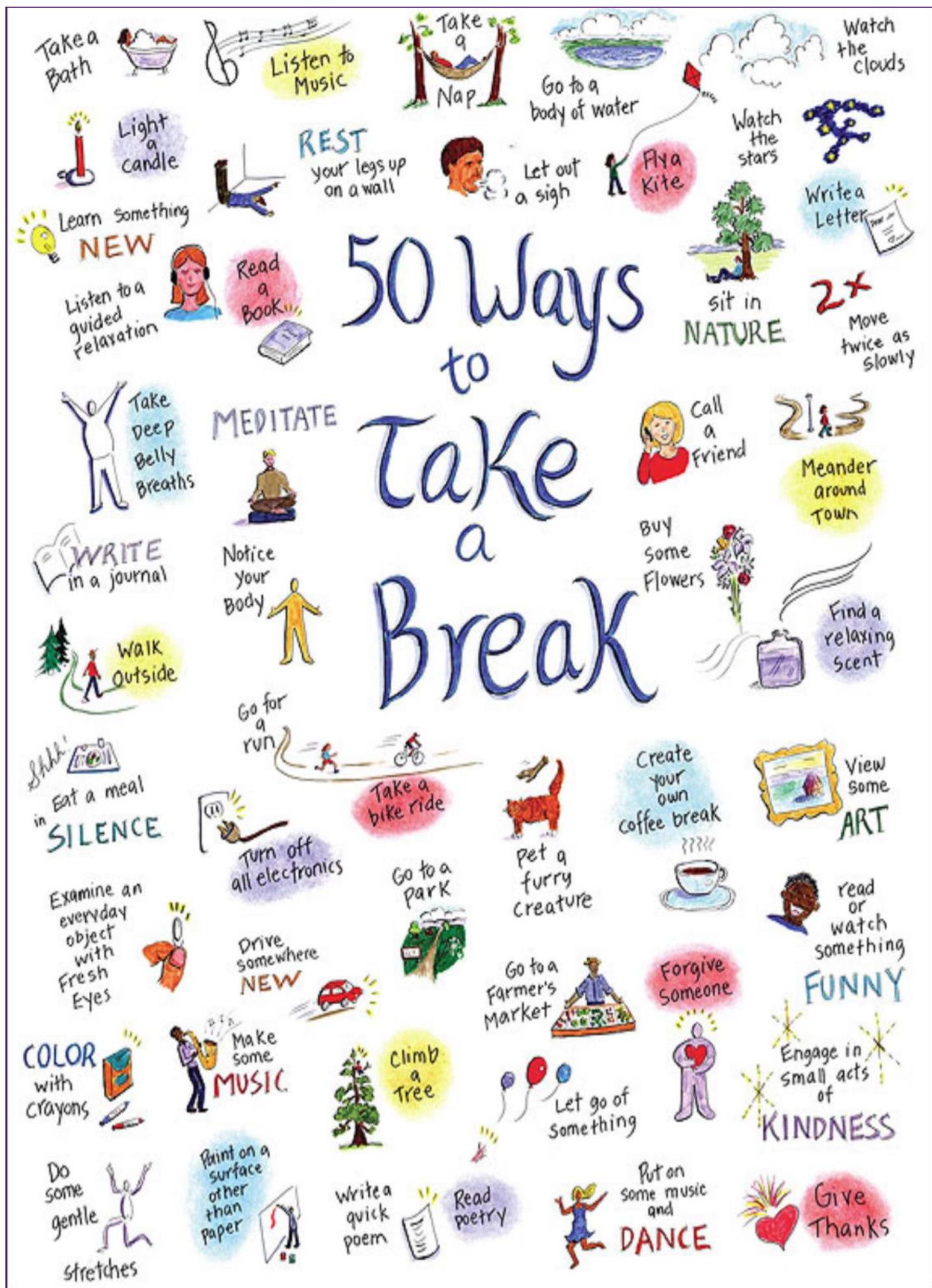
In the background, the Jazz Ensemble from Brooklyn HS of the Arts, under the direction of teacher Beavin Lawrence, added a sophisticated musical note.

In accepting the Goldie Colodny Award, the event's highest honor, Rita Segarra, a secretary at PS 66 in Morrisania, the Bronx, thanked the union for "everything you do for us." The UFT, she said, "is a union of fighters who never give up."

Mulgrew spoke of all the help he received from Patricia O'Reilly, the winner of the Annette Carlucci Celebration of Life Award, when he was the chapter leader and she was the secretary at William E. Grady Career and Technical Education HS in Brooklyn.

"She is a gift to the people at her school, a gift to the UFT and a gift to me personally," he said.

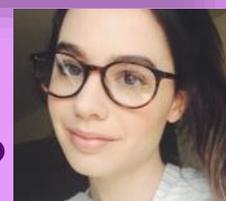




What have you achieved this school year, that you didn't think you could?



Building Workplace Confidence



Sammi Caramela writes on building your confidence at work, in this piece reproduced with permission from BusinessNewsDaily.com

Some workers seem to have it all together. You know the type: the peppy employee always ready to share their ideas or take on new assignments.

They manage to convince those around them, including themselves, that they're an asset.

There's one feeling they embrace that many struggle to find: confidence. Confidence in the workplace is a crucial advantage, and a huge factor in career development. But some workers instead find themselves crippled with doubt and fear, unable to take necessary risks or voice their insights.

This is a dangerous path to walk, and it shouldn't be an ongoing one.

Here are five confidence killers and how to beat them.

- **Perfectionism**

High-performing employees often pressure themselves to reach ridiculous standards, and

sometimes become discouraged when they fail to achieve them, said Helene Lerner, author of "The Confidence Myth" (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2015) and founder of WomenWorking.com, a career website for women.

Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. Every time you fall short on a project, ask yourself if you gave it your all. If you did, know that you are human and cannot do everything perfectly – and accept that. "We have to stop the negative chatter and tell ourselves our best is good enough," Lerner said. "Make it an inner mantra."

- **Micromanager bosses**

Being micromanaged can make a person feel like their work isn't good enough. Why else would the boss be nit-picking and telling you exactly how to complete a task?

But in most cases, you probably aren't doing anything wrong. Lerner noted that fear is usually underneath controlling behaviour.

"[Your boss's] micromanaging probably has more to do with how that person feels about him or

herself, not you," she said.

If you're truly confident, no one can tear you down. A micromanager might strike some insecurities in you, but you have to be the one to fight back and remind yourself just how far you've come, and where you want to go.

- **Disengagement at work**

One of the most common reasons for feeling disconnected from your job, and therefore lacking confidence in it, is doing work that doesn't leverage your skills.

Everyone has talents and abilities, and if you're not using them at your job, you may want to consider other opportunities, Lerner suggested.

Another option is to maintain an optimistic and encouraging attitude toward your performance at work. If you're feeling indifferent, try a different perspective or approach.

Maybe you fell into a rut or a routine that drains you.

Switch it up; take a different approach that hones your passions. What can you do differently that

might make your job more enjoyable?

Don't be afraid to discuss this with an employer.

• **Fear of failure**

Everyone experiences fear – some more than others. As common as it is to experience the nervous stomach and sweaty palms, it's crucial to push through and face fear head-on.

"Fear can be so crippling that it holds people back in ways they don't even realize," said Heather Monahan, founder of career mentoring group #BossinHeels and author of new book "Confidence Creator" (Boss in Heels, 2018).

"Whether it be fear of speaking up in meetings, so the employee is seen as someone who doesn't contribute much value, or fear of being yourself, instead trying to emulate a boss and never learning to really own what is unique and special about you."

Of course, you want to "get it right" in your career; but you shouldn't let the fear of failure stand in your way of trying something new. A project may not turn out as planned, and you may make mistakes.

As long as you learn from those experiences, you haven't truly failed, Lerner said.

• **Uncooperative or critical colleagues**

Working with rude, arrogant or

otherwise unpleasant individuals can really lower your job satisfaction, especially if their negativity is directed at you.

As with micromanagers, Lerner urges professionals not to take the behaviour too personally, but she also advises making an effort to work things out with your colleague.

"Clean up your side of the street," she said. "Is there anything you are doing to contribute to the [negative] situation? If so, take appropriate action."

Keeping your confidence high

Lerner said people who want to beat these confidence killers and advance their careers need to take risks that enable them to accomplish their goals, even if they don't feel ready to do so. For example, she advised offering thoughtful suggestions in meetings, stepping in to help without being asked and seeking a trusted second opinion that encourages you to make a move you'd been considering. "To build confidence at work, you need to use your voice," added Monahan.

"Whether that means contributing your ideas in a meeting or letting someone know you are speaking when someone is attempting to talk

over you, there are countless opportunities in any day to build your confidence."

Monahan advised being mindful of how you speak and what you say. For instance, rather than apologizing, try saying "excuse me" or "thank you." When pitching an idea, instead of saying, "I feel this will work," say, "This will work because ..."

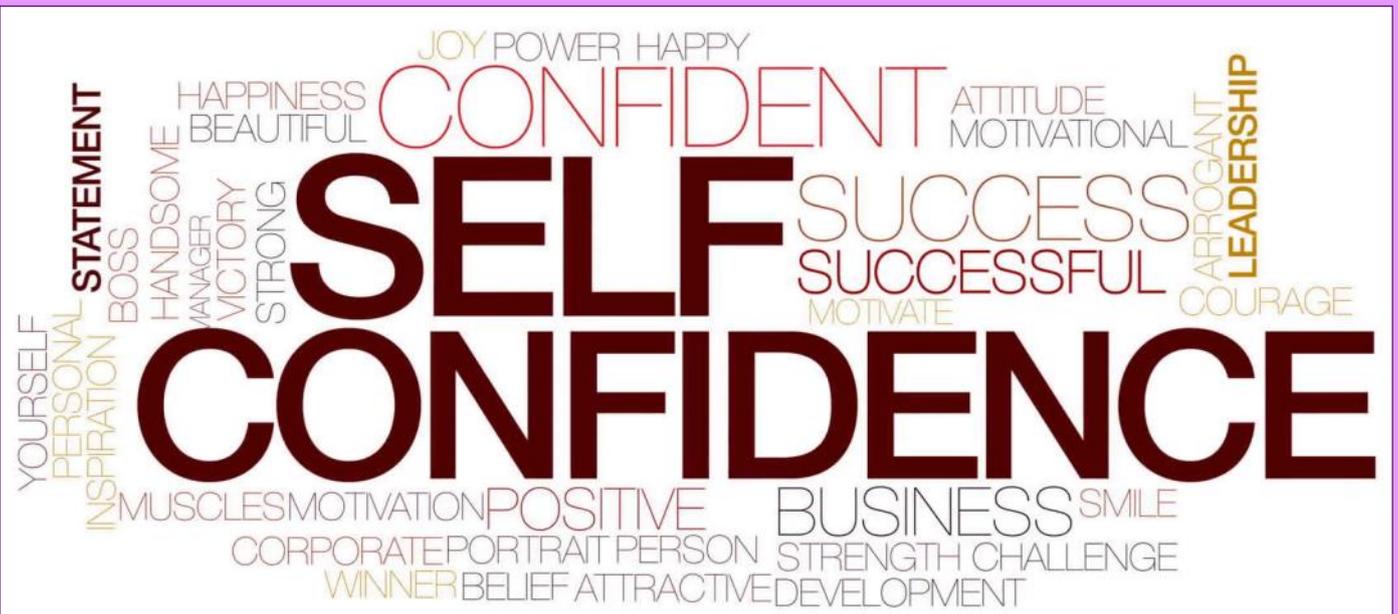
"Firing certain expressions from your vocabulary will create a quick shift for you," Monahan said. Also, she added, there's no need for self-deprecating humour. While it might seem innocent and even healthy to laugh at yourself, it actually hurts your confidence.

"Confidence is something that is created, not given," said Monahan.

"The sooner you accept responsibility for creating yours, the faster you will change your life and begin to create a future you will be excited about. In any moment, you are either chipping away at your confidence or building it. You decide."

Sammi Caramela is a freelance writer in New Jersey, USA, writing on business, mental health, lifestyle and more.

Business News Daily's goal is to help entrepreneurs build the business of their dreams and to assist anyone working in a small business make smart decisions about products, services and ideas.



Aiming for “Well-Balanced”

Free sample chapter

Free sample chapter

We bring you a free excerpt from Angela Garry’s book “The PA & EA Circus - integrating the many parts of the Personal and Executive Assistant” - for PAs, EAs, Secretaries and Admins.

Maintaining a healthy work / life balance is crucial to being a great PA / EA. If you are permanently exhausted, think that you are at the end of your rope, feel unwell or are ‘stressed out’, you need to take time for you, to make sure that you have adequate time in your ‘real life’ outside of work to stay focused and well balanced.

Do you take all of your annual leave entitlement? Many PAs and EAs don’t.

Do you turn your phone off when you are away? Again, many don’t.

And if you are ill, do you struggle into the office because you are so indispensable that you cannot stay home for a day’s rest?

It is paramount that we pay attention to our own lives outside of work, and that we pay attention to any health issues. As detailed in another chapter, many PAs and EAs are giving away two working months of their time each year – for free – by working extra hours in the office. This means it is particularly important to make sure that you actually take time off at some point and give yourself time to breathe and to regroup.

In any busy environment it can be very tempting to leave certain tasks for ‘quieter’ times (perhaps

when the boss is away on holiday), when you will have fewer interruptions. However, not only is this bad planning, because it often means that the task becomes urgent because it has been deferred for so long, but it can also lead to you staying at your desk for longer than you need to and not taking off appropriate time for you during the break.

So, make sure you schedule some time off, and then make sure that you actually take it!

Before you go on your annual leave, it is wise to create a pre-holiday checklist to make sure that you are fully prepared, and aim to finish up whatever tasks you can before you go – to a reasonable extent. Don’t work ridiculously long hours in order to clear everything from your desk before you head off for your week on the Costa Blanca or Skegness ...

Here are some tips for your taking time-off checklist.

Delegate

If you are a senior-level administrator, distribute tasks among your staff – you will already know who can handle what. If you don’t supervise other staff, seek assistance from a colleague you trust, and reassure them that you will return the favour when they go on their annual leave.

Keep a note of which tasks you have delegated to whom, which tasks you have completed and which tasks you haven’t, so you will know what needs immediate action on your return. There is bound to be more to add to this list when

THE PA & EA CIRCUS

Integrating the many parts of the Personal and Executive Assistant



ANGELA GARRY

The world’s most connected Personal Assistant and PA Trainer

you get back, but at least this will give you a starting point and will help you plan your first week or so.

Organise minor aspects of your role

If your Executive is going to be in the office while you are away, make sure that you fill up the paper trays on the printers, replace any low toners and order fresh supplies – and let them know where spares are stored and how to change them.

It might be second nature for you to pop the printer open, change the toners and clean the print heads, but when your boss is suddenly inkless it is important that they know how to cope on their own! You might also want to leave a list detailing where you keep office basics like staples, pens and folders.

(I say this from experience, having received ‘urgent’ text messages from bosses in two of my previous jobs, one asking me how to replace the photocopier toner and the other enquiring where the spare teabags were kept!)

Calendars

Make sure your boss’s calendar is up to date, and that papers for any forthcoming meetings are in a

prominent place, ready for them to take with them. Ask a colleague to keep an eye on the calendar for you – give them a paper copy of it before you go.

In your absence

Update your boss last thing before you go on leave to let them know what has been set up to take place in your absence.

Schedule a return meeting for when you get back, so that you can catch up on what happened when you were away.

Then head for the hills (or the airport!) ...

Tidy up

Neaten your desk space. While you are away things will be dumped on it by other people, so it will make it easier on your return if you have cleared your work out of the way first.

The Unicyclist: finding that all important "work / life balance"

Reduce incoming emails

Without doubt, you will find a very full inbox of emails when you return. There are a few things you can do to alleviate this problem:

- Unsubscribe from any email lists you are a member of, or set your account to 'no mail' on those lists.
- Send fewer emails in the last few days before your holiday – and hence get fewer responses.
- Empty your inbox before you go – file incomplete items in appropriate folders ready to be dealt with on your return.
- Set up an 'out of office' reply on your account that thanks the sender for their message and indicates that you are away and the date of your return. Include alternative contacts should they require immediate assistance.
- Put a similar message on your voicemail on both your desk phone and your work mobile phone, if you have one.

On your return, allocate yourself a reasonable amount of relatively quiet time to go through the messages that have piled up. Basically, take ownership of your email inbox – don't let it own you!

While you are at it, try to SWITCH OFF your home computer / iPhone / Blackberry while you are away.

I used to find this really difficult as I'm a sucker for technology and gadgets and the internet and Facebook and keeping in touch with my friends and reading my email and taking photos and so on...

I would take my smartphone on holiday and connect to free Wi-Fi whenever I found it to upload photos to my Facebook account.

I'd then end up checking my personal emails to see if there were any messages that needed my attention, and then I would find myself thinking, 'Oh, and while I'm doing that, I might as well check my work email account too ...'

It is an all too common story: many of us spend part of our holiday time doing more work.

Does this sound like you too? I would love to advise you, 'Put your hands in the air, and walk away from the tablet, iPad, iPhone or Blackberry. You are on holiday!'

It is apparent, though, that this isn't always practical or possible. You worry that the boss might need something urgently, so you just do a quick check – and before you know it, you have spent an hour or so of your holiday time on work-related emails.

So, should you or shouldn't you check your emails while you are on leave?

These questions remain hot



topics judging by recent press coverage.

Some PAs are convinced that their bosses need them constantly and that today’s 24/7 way of life means that you should be available at all times.

Others firmly believe that no one can really switch off and get the benefits of being on holiday if they are constantly online, so they wouldn’t dream of checking their work email when they are away.

How available do you allow yourself to be?

The 2014 UK National PA Survey asked PAs about their holiday habits:

Do you stay in touch with the office when you are on holiday?

- 14.9% *Yes, I check in daily*
- 29.5% *Yes, I check in occasionally*
- 33.6% *I am available if an emergency arises*
- 22.0% *No*

This means that nearly 45% of PAs either phone in, pop in or check their office email accounts when on holiday, whilst a further third are available for emergencies. Only a fifth of respondents said they kept their holidays completely separate from their work. So what’s the best thing for you to do?

It is not just about deciding whether you log in to your work emails when you are away. In fact, both you and your Executive need to be absolutely clear about what is reasonably expected of you.

It could be argued, for example, that you have been given a staff mobile phone expressly so that you can be reached at all times, in which case you need to leave the phone at work so another colleague can cover your role completely when you are away. Be brave. Set some boundaries.

If you or your boss are really convinced that something might occur that is so urgent that you need to be contacted when you are away, and

you truly believe that you cannot say, ‘No, I will definitely not be available when I’m away,’ then go for the middle ground.

Set up a system with your boss before you go, whereby you give your personal email address to your Executive and tell them that it can be used in cases of emergency or extreme urgency only.

So, for anyone who emails your work email address you will be unavailable, but your boss can reach you if absolutely necessary.

However, if you have followed the various tips outlined in this chapter, then there shouldn’t be any emergencies because you will have fully briefed your boss and a trusted colleague to take on tasks in your absence.

Have a great holiday!

“The PA & EA Circus” is available from Amazon worldwide.





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Counsellor / Therapist. Retiree!

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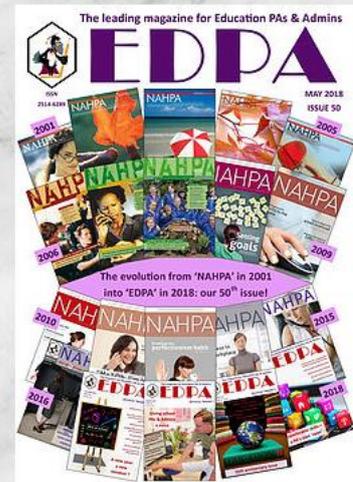
'EDPA' MAGAZINE

FOR PAS, EAS & ADMINS WORKING IN EDUCATION

EDPA is the only professional development publication specifically written for PAs and Admins working in education.

Articles are sourced from PA Trainers, Educational experts, Motivational Authors and the magazine's readership, and are written specifically with school and college PAs and Admin staff in mind.

Three issues are published each year. The magazine is now in its 17th year of publication - it was first published in 2001 under the name 'NAHPA', and was renamed 'EDPA' in 2016 for Education PAs.



THE AIMS OF EDPA MAGAZINE:

www.edpa-magazine.com

A reminder: the new EDPA website is up and running as part of a new portal site, with Subscriber only content and direct links to Pica Aurum training and Pica Books.

The site is www.edpa-magazine.com and is much more streamlined than previously.

If you need a reminder for your headteacher or Finance department on why you should be continuing your subscription to the magazine—or why another PA or Admin within your multi-school group or trust should take out a new subscription, there is a page of information for you to show them.

Subscriber only content

At the foot of the main EDPA page, there is a link to reach the Subscriber pages. You need to enter the password **EDPA18Subs** to log-in to these pages. Please keep this password to yourself, and do not share it with non-subscribers. New content will be added

to these pages regularly, so do log-in from time to time.

At the moment, the Subscriber content includes a range of free books which can be downloaded in pdf format—ideal for reading on your commute to or from work if you use public transport, or to read during your lunch break. Don't laugh at this point—we know here at EDPA Towers that the vast majority of you don't actually TAKE a lunch break, but you SHOULD.

Also included are some links to online training courses, ebooks which you can buy, training providers, and training / admin related videos. There is also a link to a box which contains several items—all of which are hosted on one particular website. You need to register (for free) on that site to access the items—and this will then allow you to also access around 5,000 other free resources on a huge range of topics.

We'll be adding more links to the Subscriber pages in due course—and

if you have any items you would like to share, please let us know so that we can add them.

Our LinkedIn group

We have a dedicated private space available for readers to connect online—in the “EDPA Magazine” discussion group on LinkedIn. To access this, you need to register for free on LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com), then join the group. Anything you choose to post in the group is private within the group—in that the group is “unlisted” on LinkedIn and the content of discussions is not viewable to anyone other than its members.

To join, click the Subscribe link on www.linkedin.com/groups/8230909. We will then confirm your membership against the magazine's subscriber database and you'll receive an email to confirm your membership.

You can then use the group space to post questions, send details of resources, share expertise and knowledge, and reach out to your peers in other schools.



The beach at Oliva, on the east coast of Spain



EDPA Editor's Update

Angela Garry reports on her work as an author, book & magazine editor, and PA trainer since the last issue of EDPA.

As I left off at the end of the last issue of EDPA, I was excited as I had put an offer on an apartment in Spain.

Well, I've done it—I've bought it! It's all mine, ready to move into as soon as I have finished sorting and selling my house in England.

I can't begin to tell you how excited I am now feeling—I flew over to finalise the paperwork in May and to get the keys, and I spent two nights in the apartment. And it was, to borrow from Craig Revel-Horwood on 'Strictly Come Dancing', FAB-U-LOUS.

On every trip over there, I have felt the effects of the warm sea air, and I'm absolutely positive that this will be a good move for me.

I'm now really looking forward to getting things finished up here in England and moving over to start the next chapters of my life in a warmer climate which will be so much better for my health.

Meanwhile, I've been working on a

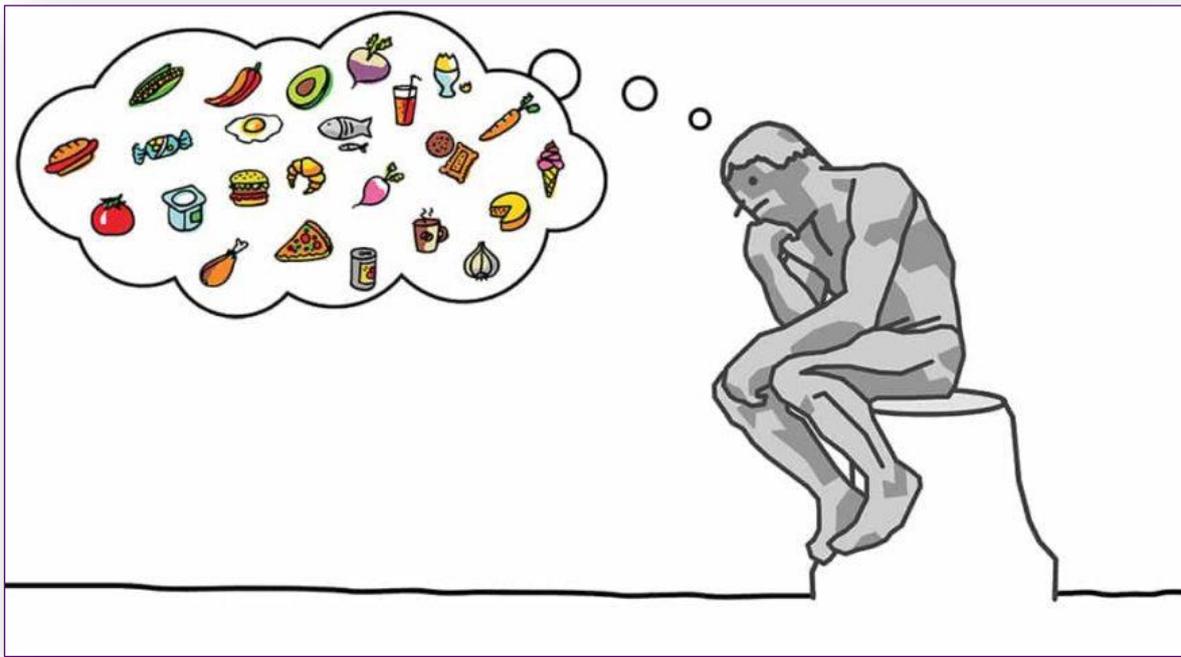
number of books—"so what's new?", I hear you ask... Books at various stages of development at the moment are: a trilogy of books on the late author Helene Hanff; two therapeutic fiction books for children and teenagers; two books on handling stress and illness in the workplace; a 'patients' experiences' book for survivors of blood clots, deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolisms; three storybooks for small children; and a new book for PAs and Administrative staff.

I'm also developing a new training programme, which I hope to be marketing towards the end of this year, once I'm settled in Spain. My plan would be to offer the training in several venues across Europe, including the UK. Maybe I'll see some of you there?

See you all in November - have a great summer break in the meantime.

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS!





Food for thought...

Did you know you could eat your way to a sharper mind? There are a number of foods which are scientifically proven to be good for your brain.

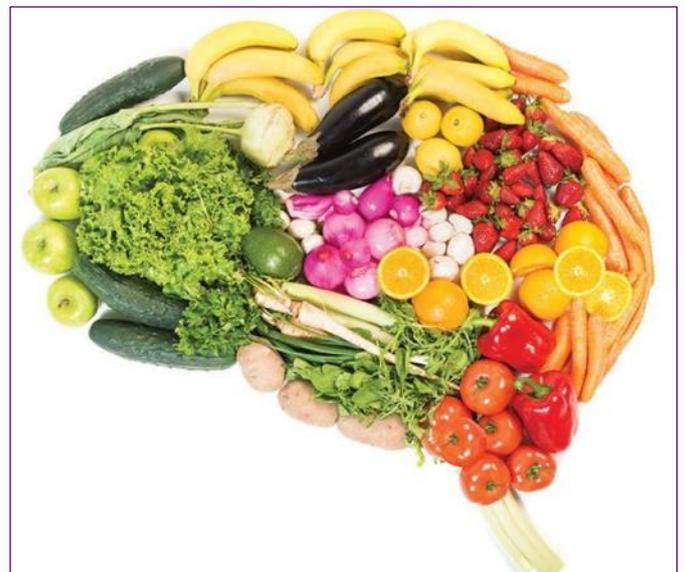
A school chef in the UK shares some easy fixings to quicker thinking, better concentration, total recall, better processing and clear cognition.

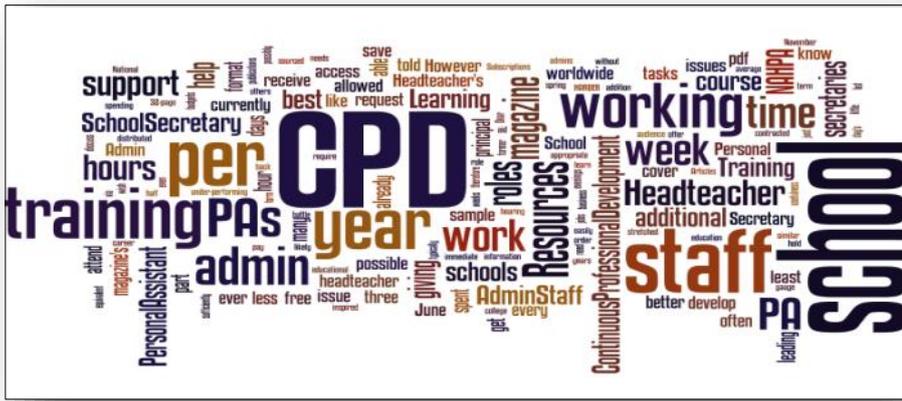
GOOD SNACKS TO BRING TO WORK

1. **Walnuts, sunflower seeds** and **dried cherries** have anti-inflammatory agents that improve brain function to boost learning and memory. Combined, this makes for an easy trail mix to snack on during the day.
2. **Chickpeas** are rich in B vitamins which help reduce brain cell shrinkage and offer a source of carbs that help to keep your mind focused. **Turmeric** adds antioxidant and anti-inflammatory to enhance brain performance and fight Alzheimer's. Drain chickpeas, toss with turmeric and oil, bake at 425° for at least 15 minutes on a baking sheet and enjoy your healthy snack to boost concentration.
3. **Hardboiled egg** and **horseradish** combined are key to maintaining memory due to choline, an essential nutrient found in yolks and vitamin D which is a necessity

for neural function. The horseradish adds zing and extra support for cell growth.

4. **Yogurt** and **blueberries** provide potassium, which improves blood flow, probiotics, which promote healthy belly bacteria and protect the gut's lining, along with potent flavonoids that delay mental aging by up to two and a half years.
5. **Avocado** and **whole wheat crackers** provide good-for-you monounsaturated fats, increase blood flow to the brain and supply an anti-inflammatory punch plus B vitamins which battle mental decline.





mentoring and coaching sessions on a one-to-one basis, via telephone, email and / or Skype.

BOOKS

“Brave PAs: the ultimate guide to being outstanding in a tough job” by Angela Garry, £12.99

The only CPD book written specifically for PAs, EAs, secretaries and admin staff working in education. Available from Crown House Publishing, Amazon and selected bookstores. Kindle edition also available.

“The PA & EA Circus: integrating the many parts of the Personal and Executive Assistant” by Angela Garry, £12.99

CPD book for PAs, EAs, Secretaries and admin staff in ANY industry. Available from Amazon in paperback and Kindle edition.

CPD Resources

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

www.picaaurum.com

EDPA Editor Angela Garry’s training company offering a variety of courses for PAs and Admins working in both education and corporate settings. With a growing list of 50 topics,

bespoke courses are also available - put together a timetable to suit you and your colleagues.

A distance learning option is also available: buy a course book and work through it at your own pace. Your purchase includes two hours of

Please forward details of any Resources you’d like to share with readers.



“Have a great summer and please do not throw your books in the air or run through the halls -- wait until the students have left the building.”

EDPA

Education PA - the leading publication for PAs, Secretaries & Admin staff in schools

The aims of EDPA are:

- to inspire and motivate PAs and Admins working in education,
- to offer relevant training information,
- to look at challenges faced by education PAs and Admins,
- to encourage PAs and Admins to share their experiences and learn from others,
- to point subscribers in the right direction for useful resources for CPD, and
- to highlight the importance of the role of PA and Admins so that the roles get the recognition they deserve as being truly professional.

Best wishes to all - Angela Garry