

HUMAN RESOURCES

Walking, running and biking to good health

By Nurse Dale Thomas

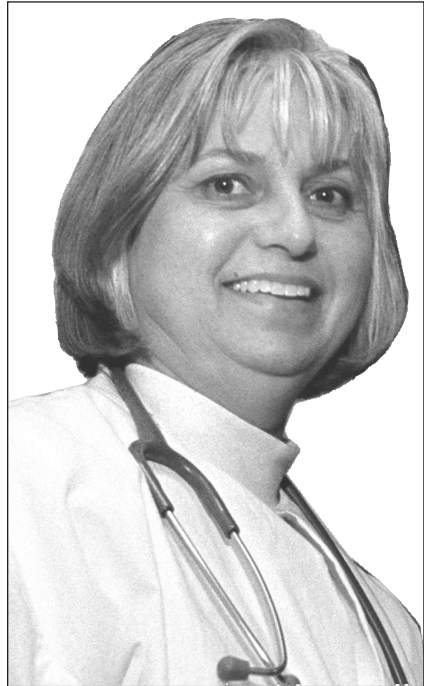
Regular exercise, including walking, running and biking can decrease your risk of premature death, heart attacks, high blood pressure, stroke, cancers, depression, anxiety and obesity.

Just walking improves overall health, lightens mood, helps improve osteoarthritis, diabetes and boosts good cholesterol (HDL) levels.

Information through the National Institute of Health shows that taking daily walks, running, biking or following another simple exercise routine a few times a week may help your immune system fight off simple bacterial and viral infections.

There are several theories regarding exercise boosting your immune system; Physical activity may help flush bacteria from the lungs (decreasing the chances of cold and flu "bugs") and may flush out carcinogens by increasing waste output such as urine and sweat.

Another theory is that exercise increases the rate of circulating blood triggering the release of hormones that warn immune cells of intruding bacteria and viruses. Also, exercise slows down the release of stress-related hormones. Stress



increases the chance of illness, so physical activity could reverse this factor.

Studies have shown that long periods of time with little or no physical activity can result in a loss of bone mass. This can put people at risk for osteoporosis or broken bones.

Weight-bearing activities, such as walking or running are one of

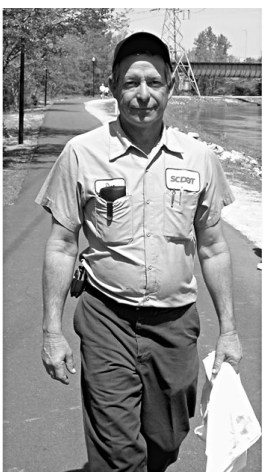
the best forms of physical activity for bones because it makes your bones work harder. A weight-bearing physical activity is one in which your feet and legs carry your weight. The impact of this weight on your muscles helps build stronger bones.

If there are no medical conditions that contraindicate exercise, walking is an excellent and inexpensive form of exercise. Thirty minutes of physical activity (such as walking) on most days is recommended by the Surgeon General. A 30-minute brisk walk can burn about 200 calories. A slow walk for 30 minutes uses about 100 calories.

It is not known exactly how and why exercise increases your immunity to certain illnesses, but it is known that exercise helps. Walking, running, biking, and other physical activity may help us avoid those nagging coughs and colds and decrease chances of developing heart disease.

Exercise can help us feel better about ourselves, just by making us feel more energetic and healthier. So go ahead, get started and go for that walk.

Enlist and challenge friends and coworkers to walk with you. Then advance to "walkathon," "bikeathon" or "marathon" activities in your work and community areas.



Can you name the SCDOT employees?



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT employees participated in a wellness walk during lunch on April 11 at the Canal Park in Columbia.

Beneficiary Assist® Coping with loss, grief, legal and financial counseling

After a loss, employees or their families may need help in dealing with complex personal issues. For example, those who have lost a working spouse can find themselves suddenly forced to assume new responsibilities and make difficult financial decisions.

To provide the support people need at a time of loss — in addition to a check — The Hartford offers Beneficiary Assist, a service that combines grief, financial and legal counseling. Beneficiary Assist is included with all group life and accident plans.

Services are available to:

- Beneficiaries of an insured person who dies;
- Insured person who qualifies for an accelerated benefit from a group life insurance plan;
- Insured person who qualifies for benefits from a group accident policy

Thoughts on change

By Dianne Coleman, Interim Director of Human Resources

There's one thing about change . . . you can count on it!

Whether at work or in your personal life, you are bound to encounter change...repeatedly. Your experiences here at SCDOT are no exception.

However, regardless of the change at hand, there are a few things that apply to all situations.

First, it's important to recognize that change is a normal and necessary process, but some people handle change better than others.

Second, communication is crucial to an effective change. Good communication can help alleviate so many of the fears or apprehensions associated with an upcoming change. As a general rule of thumb, you can never over-communicate when it comes to change.

In an article by Scott J. Simmerman, Ph.D., in which he is comparing change to the process by which butterflies are created, he writes, "One cannot become a butterfly by remaining a caterpillar."

How true this statement is, yet so many of us resist change instead of embracing it or, at least, "going with the flow." In our resistance, we increase our stress level. Understanding our own reactions to change is essential to learning to accept a change. When faced with the prospect of doing something new or different, take time to consider why you support or do not want a particular change.

At SCDOT, as we move forward in our mission, we may find ourselves on unfamiliar turf. At these times, think to yourself, "What can I do to embrace this change and help others to do the same?"

Note: If Change is a topic on which you would like more information or training in the future, please add this to your Training Needs Assessment.



Dianne Coleman

Fix the future now

THE TIME SPAN from the moment I take my seat on an airliner to the moment the plane leaves the runway has always been stressful for me. Time stands still.

On a recent trip, I looked out the window and caught sight of the plane at the gate next to mine. I was disturbed by what I saw.

It was the same carrier and the same model as my airplane. The finish on the neighboring jet, however, had flaked away. Huge sections of paint had peeled off, including a large portion that marred the airline's logo.

I was struck by an irrational fear: If the airline couldn't afford the maintenance on the outside of the plane, what was it ignoring on the inside of the plane?

Federal regulations require that maintenance on commercial aircraft be conducted on a rigid, regular schedule, which should have made me feel better. It didn't. Meeting minimum requirements does not equal creating a quality product.

Tough financial times for businesses and organizations force many difficult decisions about resources. Vital programs and initiatives get delayed, forgotten, or scrapped. And that leads me again to one of my favorite topics: the future.

In so many ways, the future of business and commerce seems bright. To get to that future, however, requires a commitment to making things work today. Make the case for workplace learning today to ensure the enterprise will thrive tomorrow. Don't let the paint peel on your organization.

What are you, as a workplace learning professional, doing to ensure your own future inside the organization? Furthermore, what are you doing to ensure the success of your organization? Are you providing a road map for the future or are you just along for the ride?

Rex Davenport, Editor T+D Magazine
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