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**WORDS NEVER HEARD IN THE WORKPLACE**

**By Patience Pantperhog**

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Today's modern workplace is awash in buzzwords, bafflegab, and all manner of blessed bumpf to wade through or digest over a morning latte with a dab of whipped cream and chocolate sprinkles on top.

The never-ending drive to increase profits means employees everywhere must hunker down with their noses to the grindstone or else hustle their bustles out the door every day in search of new business.

So, it's not surprising to hear some strange murmurings emanating from boardrooms and bosses' offices the world over not to mention the odd cubicle and cubby-hole or two.

Rest assured, these verbal vaunts and zippy zingers likely have never seen the light of day. But, if by chance those walls really did have ears...here's a saucy sampling of what might be heard:

--- "Love your color-coordinated blue and red spandex bodysuit with sparkling smiley face cape ... but we don't hire "yes-people" in this company."

--- "My doctor told me I had an infinitesimal brain, do you have any openings for a low-maintenance plant to decorate your lobby?"

--- "It's "Casual Friday", so by all means wear your fishnet-stockings, leather leggings or even loincloths if you wish."

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-- "George, I know we need to celebrate "2005 – The Year of the Rooster" ...but frankly we've got too many frigging cock–a–doodle–dos in this barnyard already!"

-- "'Eager Beaver' is my middle name...so I'd love to sink my glistening white, tartar–fighting buckteeth into lots more work today."

-- "I'm Your #1 TEAM – The Easy Answer Man - at your service."

-- "Hey, I'm all pumped up, so where do we register for that trial balloon course?"

-- "My last performance evaluation said that I'd make a great scapegoat - do you need one in your department?"

-- "By the way, is that "arm candy" job posted on the notice board in the executive dining room still available?"

-- "The latest corporate communications audit shows we've got nothing but the highest quality, 360 degree closed feedback loop rating in the industry ... so what's new at the virtual watercooler and whistleblower pit stop dude?"

-- "Okay, so Neptune's in Capricorn and Mercury's gone retrograde, but I still need one more defensible position why we didn't meet quota last month."

-- "Princess Poohbah, if I honor your request for an engraved nameplate on your powder–room door, then will you play 'Kick the Can' with me?"

-- "Let's see, the most influential management book I've ever read ...hmmm...that would be Discovering the World of the Three–Toed Sloth by John Hoke...and a close second would be, Fish Who Answer the Telephone by Yury Petrovich Frolov."

Patience Pantperhog, an inveterate litterbug and whimsical wordwatcher at the "Wonder–Worker Weekly", provides an amusing analysis of ludicrous life as a libertine (in the Court of the Quipping Queen -- [www.quippingqueen.blogspot.com](http://www.quippingqueen.blogspot.com)).

### **Dealing with Workplace Stress**

**By Trevor Dumbleton**

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One of the hardest forms of stress to avoid is workplace stress. After all, you need to go to work and there are plenty of things to worry about once you get there. However, that does not mean that workplace stress is unavoidable. Just like other kinds of stress, there are ways to manage workplace stress and there are ways to avoid it. Maybe you cannot avoid it entirely, but that is no reason not to

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try.

Workplace stress usually takes the form of everything needing to get done right now. You know the situation, there are a dozen things on your plate and they all need attention, but there are only so many hours in the day and you cannot attend to everything all at once. On top of that, the boss is breathing down your neck, asking you where the report/plan/program is and he also has a pile of other tasks for you once you finish that. It is a never-ending cycle, but it can be managed.

The first thing you need to do to avoid workplace stress is to focus on one task at a time. Do not try to multi-task, as it jars your system. Switching gears between projects does make demands on your brain and it takes a moment to change your thoughts from one place to another. Instead, if you focus on one project, you can keep your thoughts and energy in one place, preventing you from having to shift gears too often.

However, the big problem with trying to keep your focus is your coworkers. They will always be asking you for a quick minute or they will want you to answer their question, or they will want you to come over and help them on something. Try to deflect these as much as possible, as these can distract your focus. Thus, you must learn to say, "no." This is a highly effective word, though you may want to change it to, "No, not right now," or, "As soon as I am done with this." These little phrases can at least buy you some time to finish what you are doing, then switch comfortably to the needs of your coworkers.

There is another cause of workplace stress that can also cause you all manner of difficulty and that is when your concentration runs out. Oftentimes, you may find yourself focusing on the same page or the same computer screen for minutes at a time and you still have no idea what it is supposed to mean. This is not good, as it means that you are not being effective, your brain has shut down and the deadline is looming over you and you just need to get through this. Your best plan at this point is to walk away from your desk. Get up, get a cup of coffee (but not too often, as caffeine can heighten stress), go to the bathroom, anything. Walk the corridors for a minute or two and clear the cobwebs. This is highly effective both for ensuring that you are getting work done and for keeping workplace stress to a minimum.

Another way to prevent workplace stress is to learn some desk exercises. These can be simply squeezing a stress ball, or performing a few stretches while you are at your desk. By working your muscles at your desk, you can improve your circulation and help you keep alert and aware at work. Obviously, you are not going to get a full body workout while you are pecking at a keyboard, but it can help you at least keep your mind focused.

Finally, while you are at work you should examine your environment to see if it is right for you. How is the noise level? Is your desk set up properly? Are you comfortable? Is everything set up so that it is ergonomically correct? Your body needs to be comfortable if you want to work without distraction and distractions can lead to workplace stress. Thus, your work area needs to be set up for you. Take care of the little things around you and you will be able to work confidently and work well.

Workplace stress is, in many ways, part of working. However, by managing workplace stress properly,

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you can at least keep it to a minimum. And by doing that, work will be much more pleasant and you will be much more productive. So take care of yourself and the area around you and workplace stress will not control your day.

Trevor Dumbleton is the owner of <http://www.LowerYourStress.com/> a categorized resource directory for everything to do with stress.



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