

Employee FRONTLINE

A newsletter from the WA State Employee Assistance Program

Punching through the “Plateau Effect”



Almost anyone who tries to lose weight will discover at some point the body’s natural desire to resist further loss even with additional effort. This is called “hitting a plateau.” There’s nothing wrong with your weight loss program or your body. Instead, you’ve encountered a

phenomenon called the “plateau effect.” The plateau effect applies to every aspect of our lives because it’s a natural law just like gravity. When additional effort to achieve more of the same result no longer works, the plateau effect is in play. Examples of the plateau effect include hitting a ceiling in your career growth, boredom in a relationship, slowed growth of a business, burnout from overwork, the flattened price of a stock, and even a falling rock reaching its terminal velocity. Everything can plateau. The good news is that winning strategies exist that can help you overcome the plateau effect when it appears in different areas of your life. Your library and the Internet have lots of information about identifying and overcoming it.

June Is National Safety Month



Reduce your risk of having an accident, not just by thinking safety, but by understanding what “thinking safety” means. Become aware of the natural human tendency to relax around familiar risks or procrastinate in taking preventive measures to avoid accidents. Start thinking on “defense,” and you’ll employ more safety measures to protect yourself and others. You may

know the majority of automobile accidents happen within 25 miles of home, but the reason why is that not only is there more frequent travel within this range, but familiarity with the driving area and less inclination to drive defensively. Familiarity increases our complacency in other areas of our lives as well. A classic example is reaching for an object on a high shelf, stretching too far, and then falling - rather than climbing down and repositioning the step stool first. Turn would-be accidents into nonevents and mere close calls by understanding how to *think safety*.

Suicide Risk and Baby Boomers

There’s new concern about middle-aged baby boomers and this group’s increased rate of suicide that was first identified in 1999. Middle-aged men are at highest risk, but suicide among middle-aged women is up too. The rate has jumped about 50% in the past 10 years. Although it made national news recently, experts can’t yet

explain the trend. Speculation centers on financial stressors, having more



chronic illnesses than their parents’ generation, and their unique life experiences and perspectives. A higher spike in suicide among the baby boomer group was also witnessed in their late teens, causing some researchers to anticipate what’s being witnessed now. The subgroup with the highest risk among baby boomers is divorced/single men without college degrees experiencing isolation, chronic health problems, and depression - particularly Vietnam-era men and vets. Do you know someone who falls in this group? Learn about intervention and about helping prevent suicide no matter what a person’s age or background. You can learn more at [American Federation for Suicide Prevention](http://www.afsp.org).

Leftover Pain Medication: Get Rid of It

What should you do with leftover prescription pain pills? Securely dispose of them, says the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and you'll reduce risk of misuse, burglary, theft, and illegal redistribution. These are serious problems, especially among youth. Using stored pain pills for a new injury or illness can place you at risk, especially if doing so causes you to avoid seeing your doctor. Check for disposal instructions on medication or ask any pharmacy or medical center for guidance. Discover whether there's an unused prescription "take-back" program in your area. Learn more at [FDA: How to Dispose of Unused Medicines](#)



Fast Service "Wows" Customers



Customers love things done quickly, but most only just hope for speedy service. Fast in customer service without carelessness, makes a powerful and positive impression. Speediness often costs nothing to deliver, and it can give your organization or work unit an edge that many competitors can't match. Rushing too quickly can produce negative results, of course, but a

delighted customer will deliver the word-of-mouth advertising that every business covets. Consider how you can anticipate and eliminate the natural delay in fulfilling customers' needs in your position. Witnessing your customer's delighted response may be all the enthusiasm you need to brighten your day and even find renewed meaning in your job.

Networking for New Graduates

Networking is the most common method for finding a job, but it's much more than heading to the hors d'oeuvres table to collect business cards. It's about developing a personal strategy of long-term and synergistic engagement with others with whom you can mutually share resources and opportunities. If you're a new graduate, begin now to build this list of contacts. Nurture it by sending a short, heartfelt note of well wishes once per year—in writing via a real postage stamp. This powerful networking strategy used by executives and even U.S. presidents will build good will, and the payoff will be a bank of opportunity that will follow you throughout your career.



Your Health

Tips for Avoiding Ravenous Hunger

Eating several smaller meals during the day could help you lose weight and rescue you from low blood sugar, the trigger for those cravings that sends you rushing to a fast-food restaurant at lunch or on the way home from work. Get yourself a lunch box and put in it a frozen "cold-pak" along with foods like carrots, celery sticks, grapes, cherries, dried fruits, almonds or lower-fat nuts, and a piece of cheese. Chances are you've heard of this strategy; now you know how to pull it off. Try it for a week and notice the result.

Do You Have Prediabetes?

If you are predisposed to diabetes or have any of its risk factors, be sure to ask your doctor to order a hemoglobin A1C test in addition to ascertaining your glucose level. Your glucose level could fall in the upper end of the normal range, whereas a hemoglobin A1C test given at the same time could show you are well within the prediabetes range. With these two tests, your medical provider can offer you guidance in preventing type II diabetes. Source: [American Diabetes Association](#).

