



# advantage

## April Fools Addition

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## NO, MANAGERS SHOULD NOT DO THIS!!!!

I worked in content management for a now-defunct internet company and one day decided to take a liberally long lunch. When I returned, my direct manager, a sweet but nervous type of fellow who often wore neckties with puppies and ducks on them, asked me to step out into the hallway where I assumed I was going to be reprimanded. Instead he basically asked me if I would go on a date with his adult son, whom I had never met or heard of. I lied and said I was dating someone, but diplomatically asked about his son's interests in case I thought of any single friends.

He replied: "Games and gaming. Computer, board, video... all varieties. [Huge sigh] And he's a theme park mascot. We really just want to get him to move out of our basement."

Great pitch, and also made me wonder about how my manager perceived me. Basically, this was a Failure to Launch situation. Had I had my druthers, I would have figured out a way to charge for my services.

## WHERE DID THEY FIND THIS PERSON?

When I started my recent temp gig at a non-profit health care provider, I was told I'd be sharing the position with another temp. I had not been told, however, that the other temp would essentially be a tiny, squeaky lady house-elf. Our job was to call insurance companies and verify the mental health benefits for potential patients for this program. They'd use a lot of insurance lingo, so it was normal for us to have questions, and usually it was fine, but my co-temp was unable to form coherent questions that featured more words than sounds. For example, and I immediately texted this question verbatim to a friend so I'd have a preserved copy for later study, she asked the healthcare expert who was training us, "Gzzz-if you... because, like, er... when you mmm phone — ugh — the right words, right?"

We were about two weeks into the six-week project when She-Dobby gave up and switched her focus from making calls to making sure that enough Saved by the Bell was being watched, in our shared cube space, without headphones. When the second day of this began, an employee passed by and asked, "Are you able to make phone calls with the volume up on your show like that?"

"Not really," my co-temp responded.

"Oh. Are you going to make any more phone calls?"

"Eh... I don't think so. Mmmm I've had a problem with motivation since I was a kid."

This was far too much unexpected honesty for Tyler, the unwitting employee, and he walked away.

On what would turn out to be her last day, she left me with a comment that has perplexed me more than anything I had yet encountered in any workplace. I was standing in the break room staring at my rotating food thawing in the microwave, because it's the most fascinating thing that happens in an office, when she walked in and said to me, "HgZ- Man! You microwave your food. That's soooo smart," and then walked out. That was all. This has been really hard to wrap my head around. I knew I'd seen her with food that is purchased frozen, and I could find no evidence of a campfire anywhere in the building. What did she use, a lighter? Or did she just prefer her Lean Cuisine cold and crunchy? What does "HgZ" mean? What did any of it mean? Unsurprisingly, she was asked after week three to not come back.

## WHEN IS IT OKAY TO SEND SOMEONE HOME?

My first job out of college was at a live TV show: a great learning experience — for the work, yes, but mostly for learning about how to handle absolutely crazy people.

Before I came in one morning, a woman everyone called “pot roast lady” came in really hungover/still drunk from the earlier show that morning. I guess she was really drunk because she THREW UP ON HERSELF, but instead of getting up and cleaning herself off, she just took off her shirt and proceeded to work on the rest of the show without a shirt. She really took “the show must go on” to heart, I guess. Anyways, I came in at the end of the show and all my co-workers just looked a mixture of horrified and stunned. She still works there, I think.

## REALLY, WE HAVE TO TELL PEOPLE THIS STUFF?

I worked at a place where my boss was asked to make an announcement to all employees to make sure we knew that no one should ever flush magazines down the toilet. Because someone had tried to flush a magazine down the toilet.

## CARS V. COMPUTERS

At a recent computer expo (COMDEX), Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated, ‘If FORD had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon.’

In response to Bill’s comments, FORD issued a press release stating:

If FORD had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash.....Twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull to the side of the road, close all of the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a maneuver such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single ‘This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation’ warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask ‘Are you sure?’ before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You’d have to press the ‘Start’ button to turn the engine off.

## ARE COMPUTERS MASCULINE OR FEMININE?

A French Teacher was explaining to her class that in French, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine. E.g. ‘house’ is feminine – ‘la maison’, ‘Pencil’ is masculine – ‘le crayon’. A student asked, ‘what gender is ‘computer’?’ Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into 2 groups –male and female and asked them to decide for themselves whether ‘computer’ should be a masculine or feminine noun. Each group was asked to give four reasons for the recommendations.

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Editor: Judy Clark, CPC, SPHR, IPMA-CP: Advantage is published monthly and is designed to provide information on regulations. HR practices and management ideas and concerns. The intended audience is managers, supervisors, business owners, human resource and employee relations professionals. If you have questions about the content, an opinion about the information, or questions about your subscription, please give us a call at (503) 885-9815 or e-mail [info@hranswers.com](mailto:info@hranswers.com).

The men's group decided that 'computer' should definitely be of the feminine gender (la computer), because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic.
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long-term memory for immediate later retrieval. And...
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be masculine (le computer), because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on.
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves.
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time, they ARE the problem, And...
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

The women won.

## COMPUTER HAIKU

The Website you seek  
cannot be located,  
but countless more do exist.

Stay the patient course.  
Of little worth is your ire.  
The network is down.

Chaos reigns within.  
Reflect, repent, and reboot.  
Order shall return.

A crash reduces  
your expensive computer  
to a simple stone.

Program aborting:  
Close all that you have worked on.  
You ask far too much.

Three things are certain:  
Death, taxes and lost data.  
Guess which has occurred?

Windows NT crashed.  
I am the Blue Screen of Death.  
No one hears you screaming.

Out of memory.  
We wish to hold the whole sky,  
but we never will.

Yesterday it worked.  
Today it is not working.  
Windows is like that.

Having been erased,  
The document you're seeking  
must now be retyped.

Your file was so big.  
It might have been very useful.  
But now it is gone.

Serious error.  
All shortcuts have disappeared.  
Screen, Mind, both are blank

## CLIENT ACCOLADES

An excellent article was in the "Charitable Giving" insert in the *Portland Business Journal* last week. It was written by Mark Rosenbaum of **Rosenbaum Financial**. The article was about planning for entrepreneurs and discussed how much to invest in one's own enterprise. It was filled with solid information and it provoked serious thinking. Well done, Mark, we are sure that readers found it very helpful!!

Kudos to three of our clients who found themselves in the top ten largest metro-area Residential Property management firms list in the March 16th edition of the *Portland Business Journal*. We offer our heart-felt congrats to **C&R Real Estate #2** on the list, to **CTL Management, Inc.** at #5 on the list, and to **REACH Community Development** who weighed in at #10 on the list. We are so very proud of all of you and thanks for the opportunity to have you as clients.

We have a national winner in our midst. **Schommer & Sons**, general contractor won the AGCA Build American Award for their work on the Clubhouse at Domaine Serene, a Dundee Hills winery. The unique design and work of 86 sub-contractors resulted in a one-of-a-kind facility. The Build America Award recognizes the most challenging, creative, and inspiring construction projects throughout the US.

## TRUE TALES: COMPUTER GENIUS

A neighbor works in the operations department in the central office of a large bank. Employees in the field call him when they have problems with their computers. One night he got a call from a woman in one of the branch banks who had this question: "I've got smoke coming from the back of my terminal. Do you guys have a fire downtown?"

## REGRETTABLE QUOTES

"There will never be a bigger plane built."

**A Boeing Engineer**, after the first flight of the 247, a twin-engine plane that carried ten people.

"Ours has been the first, and doubtless to be the last, to visit this profitless locality."

**Lt. Joseph Ives**, after visiting the Grand Canyon in 1861

"We don't like their sound. Groups of guitars are on the way out."

**Decca Executive**, 1962, after turning down the Beatles

"With over 50 foreign cars already on sale here, the Japanese auto industry isn't likely to carve out a big slice of the US market."

**Business Week**, August 2, 1968

"This telephone has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication."

**Western Union**, memo, 1876

"No imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?"

**David Sarnoff's associates** in response to his urging investment in the radio in the 1920's.

"Market research reports say America likes crispy cookies, not soft and chewy cookies like you make."

Response to **Debbi Fields'** idea of Mrs. Fields' Cookies

"We don't need you. You haven't got through college yet."

**Hewlett Packard** excuse to Steve Jobs, who founded Apple Computers instead.

"I think there's a world market for about five computers."

**Thomas J. Watson**, chairman of the board of IBM

"While theoretically and technically television may be feasible, commercially and financially it is an impossibility."

**Lee DeForest**, inventor

"Radio has no future. Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible. X-rays will prove to be a hoax."

**William Thomson**, Lord Kelvin English scientist, 1899

## RESEMBLING FACEBOOK

Presently, I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles.

Therefore, every day I go down on the street and tell the passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel, what I have done the night before and what I will do tomorrow night.

Then I give them pictures of my family, my dog and me gardening and spending time in my pool. I also listen to their conversations and I tell them I love them.

And it works!

I already have 3 persons following me: 2 police officers and a psychiatrist.

## IT HELP DESK

As we Silver Surfers know, sometimes we have trouble with our computers.

I had a problem yesterday, so I called Eric, the 11-year-old next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control and asked him to come over. Eric clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, "So, what was wrong?"

He replied, "It was an ID ten T error."

I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, "An, ID ten T error? What's that? I want to know, in case I need to fix it again."

Eric grinned ..."Haven't you ever heard of an ID ten T error before?"

"No," I replied.

"Write it down," he said, "and I think you'll figure it out."

So I wrote down: ID10T

I used to like Eric, that little smart Alec...

## THOUGHTS TO THINK ABOUT

Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.

- *Thomas A. Edison*

Discretion is being able to raise your eyebrows, instead of your voice.

- *Unknown*

The first thing a new employee should do on the job is learn to recognize his boss' voice on the phone.

- *Martin Buxbaum*

The company accountant is shy and retiring. He's shy a quarter of a million dollars. That's why he's retiring.

- *Milton Berle*

By working faithfully eight hours a day you may eventually get to be boss and work twelve hours a day.

- *Robert Frost*

I think it's wrong that only one company makes the game Monopoly.

- *Steven Wright*

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Open up your Daytimers, Outlook, and all those Smartphones. The following is a look at upcoming events and workshops, special days, and other diverse and fun activities you will want to be aware of and schedule. **To register for our workshops, go to [HR Answers Events](#), or email your registration form to [info@hranswers.com](mailto:info@hranswers.com).**

### APRIL

National Month of Hope, Distracted Driving Awareness, Child Abuse Awareness, Autism Awareness, Inventors, Fair Housing, Stress Awareness, and Keep America Beautiful.

- Mar. 6 - HRA Workshop Series – HRA Office – Tigard
- May. 1 Supervisory Success For Beginners - Spring 2018 - FULL  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Apr. 1 April Fools' Day
- Apr. 4 HR Lunch Bunch - HRA Office - Tigard  
[HR Department of One](#)  
12pm -1pm
- Apr. 6 National Caramel Popcorn Day
- Apr. 12 National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day
- Apr. 16 National Eggs Benedict Day  
HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
Compliance Triangle  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Apr. 18 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Compliance Triangle](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Apr. 20 National Look Alike Day
- Apr. 25 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Job Search Support Workshop](#)  
2:30am – 4:00pm
- Apr. 25 HR Lunch Bunch - Chemeketa Center - Salem
- Apr. 26 National Take our Sons & Daughters to work Day
- Apr. 28 National Superhero Day

### Planning Ahead:

- May. 22 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Difficult Conversations](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- May. 23 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Corrective Action and Documentation](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Jun. 5 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Performance Management](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Jun 6 - HRA Workshop Series – HRA Office – Tigard
- Aug. 1 [Supervisory Success - Summer 2018](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- Sep 25 - HRA Workshop Series – HRA Office – Tigard
- Nov. 13 [Supervisory Success - Fall 2018](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm

View more details and [register](#) for our workshops and luncheons on our website at [hranswers.com](http://hranswers.com).

### Coming up:

- May. 9 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard  
[Demystifying FMLA / OFLA](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm
- May. 15 HRA Workshop – HRA Office – Tigard, OR  
[Train-The-Trainer: Preventing Discrimination & Harassment in the Workplace](#)  
8:30am – 12:30pm

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