Do You Need a Mid-Career Tune-Up?

In today’s highly competitive workplace, you have more responsibility for your own continuous improvement and professional development.

"Although your boss may want to be helpful, he or she may be facing similar challenges and concerns that you’re confronting," says Rosemary Salmon, coauthor of The Mid-Career Tune-Up. "To survive and succeed in this dynamic atmosphere, employees must develop new work habits and discover new ways to apply traditional skills."

Ms. Salmon offers the following suggestions for a mid-career tune-up.

- **Do what your company pays you to do.** More than ever before, the challenge is to determine exactly what your company pays you to do, understand your work goals, then achieve them. Make sure you don’t waste your time on activities that may no longer contribute to or support what your company is trying to accomplish.

- **Sharpen your communication skills to enhance your reputation.** To do so, keep track of the best way to communicate with your manager, coworkers, customers, suppliers and other key people you interact with regularly. Evaluate what has worked in the past and try to replicate these successful practices.

- **Develop productive relationships with the right people.** One way to ensure success is to build relationships with the right people — key individuals who can help you the most and who depend on you for their success.

- **Take charge of your job; fix your own problems.** Many employers view problem-solving and decision-making as key skills that separate the more talented employees from those who would rather wait for someone else to tell them what to do. "By solving your problems, you send the message you’re accountable, involved and committed to making things right," says Ms. Salmon.

*Story continued on next page...*
Ten Tips for Drinking More Water

1. On a sedentary day, try to drink around two liters of water.

2. Start by drinking a glass of fresh water when you get up in the morning.

3. If you are not used to drinking water regularly, try initially replacing just one of your other drinks a day with fresh water, increasing your consumption as the weeks go by.

4. Ask for a glass of water to go with your coffee and tea in restaurants.

5. Drink a glass of water before and during each meal.

6. Hot water with fresh mint or a piece of fruit – like lime, lemon, orange, etc.– often helps those who want a hot drink.

7. Carry a bottle filled with chilled water with you whenever you leave the house.

8. During exercise, drink at 10 to 15 minute intervals or think of it as a full glass every 30 minutes – drink slowly and drink early, it’s physically easier to do this when you are still feeling fresh.

9. Keep a check on your urine. As a general guide to hydration, it should be plentiful, pale in color and odorless.

10. Ask for a glass of ice water with your meal when in restaurants and with your alcohol when in bars – good establishments will be happy to provide this.

Headaches Linked to Inactivity

Norwegian surveys of more than 68,000 people show that being sedentary may increase the risk of developing frequent headaches.

Over an 11-year period, researchers found that subjects who never exercised were 14 percent more likely to develop non-migraine headaches than exercisers. Participants who reported pre-existing headaches were more likely to be physically inactive.

Study authors say protection against headaches is a good reason for people to lead a more active lifestyle.

- Learn to accept uncertainty and adapt to change. Understanding, accepting and being receptive to change and uncertainty in the workplace will help you become more comfortable finding out what’s going on and why. In times of rapid change, you’ll need to be able to move quickly, to anticipate where the next change may come from and be flexible enough to change directions and try new approaches.

- Stay current and manage your own career. You can accomplish this by staying up-to-date on technology, industry trends, customer needs and any other factors important to your personal and professional self-development. Upgrade your knowledge and skills in ways that are consistent with your own future interests and career development.

- Take responsibility for your job performance and morale. “The more you take responsibility for your own actions and your own morale, the more you’ll be able to apply your talents to tasks that will help you succeed,” says Ms. Salmon.