



AGO LEADERSHIP BULLETIN

The purpose of the American Guild of Organists is to promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide a forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members.

Take Good Care

The Committee on Career Development and Support has the daunting responsibility to update, interpret, and promote compliance with the AGO's Grievance Procedures, Code of Ethics, Discipline, Salary Guidelines, and Model Contract Provisions among other documents. It has also assumed responsibility for providing practical guidance to help members cope with the daily challenges and stresses that result from busy schedules and an abundance of professional commitments. On behalf of the committee, former director Donna Hackler recently prepared two articles for publication focusing on these concerns. The initial article appears below and emphasizes the importance of caring for yourself and your colleagues in the journey toward professional growth.

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Practical Hints for Successful Professional Relationships A "Top 40" List Donna J. Hackler, AAGO, MM

Take care of yourself

1. Get enough sleep.
2. Eat balanced meals.
3. Take vitamins, especially antioxidants.
4. Get regular exercise.
5. Develop a support system of friends.
6. Make your spiritual life a priority.
7. Develop interests and hobbies aside from music.
8. Add margin to your life-space that isn't scheduled, money that isn't spent, resources that aren't committed, relationships that aren't neglected.
9. Get out of debt. Being debt-free and having 90 days salary saved can let you survive the sudden loss of income or have the flexibility to exit a bad situation.
10. Give a portion of your income away. Generosity affects all aspects of life.
11. Take regular time off.
12. If at all possible, take two weeks of vacation as a unit.
13. Real belly laughter can relax the muscles more than a vigorous massage.

Take care of yourself at work

14. Have a current contract.
15. Plan your tomorrows to make today less stressful.
16. Make regular periodic, written reports on work activity: phone calls and visits made, extra rehearsals, professional activities, some of the minutiae of each day. Astonish your supervisor with the range of responsibilities inherent in music!
17. Set realistic expectations.
18. Focus on strengths.
19. Walk in integrity.
20. Manage conflict as soon as it arises, rather than avoiding it.
21. Avoid triangulation (when a twosome brings in a third party to decrease their tension, create stability, and avoid

painful change [Peter L. Steinke]) at all costs. See Matthew 18:15.

22. Resolve to be a "step-down" transformer; a non-anxious presence.
23. Remember, there is always a choice in every situation.

Care for those whom and with whom you serve

24. Go to coffee hours, potlucks, and other fellowship events.
25. Wear a name tag and call others by name.
26. Spend time with those not involved with the music program.
27. Memorize and use these phrases: "Tell me more" and "Help me to understand."
28. Welcome feedback as your friend.
29. Be "quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry." (James 1:19).
30. Respond to anxiety, rather than react to it.
31. Accept differences in others.
32. Catch someone in the act of doing something right. (One Minute Manager)
33. Send thank-you notes and birthday cards.
34. Express appreciation for effort and hard work.
35. Compliment the clergy whenever possible. Don't you appreciate having your efforts noticed?
36. Balance correction with praise.
37. Avoid using negative comparisons.
38. Be the first to apologize.
39. You don't have to immediately answer questions or respond to attacks.
40. Use a "pass the butter" voice in difficult situations. Those in the know say that tone of voice communicates volumes more than words spoken. And calm helps in discerning creative and flexible solutions.

For additional ideas, try these books:

Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives, Richard A. Swenson. ISBN 0891098887.

Mary Hunt's Debt-Proof Living, Mary Hunt. ISBN 0805420789.

Your Money or Your Life: Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Achieving Financial Independence, Joe R. Dominguez, Joe Dominguez, and Vicki Robin. ISBN 0140286780.

Talking the Winner's Way, Leil Lowndes. ISBN 1567314317.

How to Make People Like You in 90 Seconds or Less: The Magic of Instant Rapport, Nicholas Boothman. ISBN 0968454305.

How Your Church Family Works, Peter L. Steinke. ISBN 1566991102.

Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership, Kenneth H. Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi. ISBN 0688039693.