

ORCA TALES

September 2006 “We can tell you more about them than their mother” Volume 13 Issue 09

HIRE-O-MATIC

Small-business owners can substantially lower the danger of making a bad hire by automating repetitive hiring tasks. Business with a Website and an answering machine can cost-effectively use automation to reduce hiring costs, increase applicant flow and eliminate unsuitable applicants. Automated systems work 24/7, saving time and money.

The first step in hiring better employees is spreading your job message to as many people as possible. The second is making it easy for people to apply when they can, which may well not be during your business hours, since the best employees usually already have a job. The third is eliminating applicants who don't meet your criteria.

Even the smallest company can develop a 24-hour job hot line using an answering machine or voice mail. Start by putting a 24-hour phone number in your ads. Then put a message similar to this on your answering device: “Thank you for calling. We appreciate your interest in working with us. Please leave your name, phone number, the best time for contacting you and a brief message about why you're interested in working for us, and we'll get back to you right away.”

Set up an employment page on your Website with an application that can be filled out and returned online, and include a snail-mail address for resumes. While some applicants may want to e-mail their resume, the formatting is often lost in the process.

Be sure to post your job openings on local online job boards such as www.craigslist.org, many of which are free, and include a link to your Website. (If you don't have a Website, you should seriously consider getting one - a Website sends the message that your company keeps pace with the times.)

“Ruffles”

Just recently we adopted a new member to our Orca pod - Ruffles. Ruffles was born in 1949 and is one of the oldest males in the Southern Resident Community of orcas. At 56 Ruffles still is quite active. He tends to show off quite a bit for the females, and they think that he may even have a girlfriend, Lulu! Ruffles is extremely easy to recognize because of his tall, wavy dorsal fin. It is one of the tallest in the Southern Resident Community (approximately Six feet)! The wavy trailing edge of his dorsal fin is how he got his name.



Rudeness Costs Plenty

If you think it's not your place to speak up when others exhibit rude behavior at work, think again.

A new study shows that rude employees cost companies millions in lost productivity. And the biggest offenders are managers. When employees think the boss isn't civil, here's what happens:

53% said they've lost hours or productivity sweating about “what will happen next time?”, 46% considered changing jobs, 37% say they feel less committed to their company, and 22% deliberately get even by cutting back their efforts.



Keeping your mouth shut and taking it seems the easy way out. But to get more positive results:

1. Repeat what was just said. For example, “Let me see if I understood you correctly. Did you mean to say...?” Sometimes people don't realize they've come across rude until they hear what they actually said.
2. Give people the benefit of the doubt. If they aren't usually rude, assume they're having a bad day. Consider taking time to cool off before discussing the incident, but do discuss it.
3. Steer the discussion toward solutions. Resist the urge to let your emotions interfere with reaching a positive outcome.

How are You Doing?

The form on the back of this month's newsletter titled, “Apartment Community Survey” may help you get feed-back from your tenants (clients).

What People in the Know are Saying About Orca

“Dear ORCA,

Thanks so much for your presentation at the Des Moines Landlord 101 class last Thursday. Your participation really made an impact on our group. I look forward to working with you again!

*Thanks again,
Tonya Seaberry, Community Service Officer”*

Or ca *WISDOM*

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Apartment Community Survey

This is a questionnaire to determine the current concerns of residents. The information will be utilized in developing strategies to improve the livability of the neighborhood.

1. How long have you lived within our apartment community?

0-6 months 1-2 years 3-5 years over 5 years

2. Do you feel safe in the neighborhood?

Yes No

Do you feel safe in the neighborhood after dark?

Yes No

3. Overall, how do you feel about living in the apartments or manufactured home community you currently reside in?

very satisfied satisfied not satisfied no opinion

4. Since you have been living in this apartments do you think it has become a better place to live, worse place to live, or has remained the same?

Better Worse Same

5. What types of crimes/problems have you witnessed in the neighborhood that are of greatest concern to you?

- a. Speeding vehicles
- b. Violent crimes (murder, rape, assault)
- c. Gang activity / graffiti
- d. Drug activity
- e. Juveniles
- f. Noise
- g. Litter / trash
- h. Vandalism
- i. Abandoned vehicles
- j. Other _____

6. What do you like about the apartment community?

- a. Appearance
- b. Interaction with police
- c. Apartment Managers
- d. On-Street Parking
- e. Other _____
- f. Activities for children
- g. Neighborhood Clean Up Projects
- h. Location
- i. Neighborhood Newsletter

7. How do you currently learn of activities in the neighborhood?

- Radio
- Neighbors / Friends
- Apartment Community Newsletter
- Property Managers
- Flyers

8. Please indicate any project or improvements you would like to see in the apartment community:

9. Please provide any other comments you would like?
