

The Five O'Clock News[®]

from America's Premier Career-Counseling and Outplacement Service

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"One organization with a strong record of success in helping people find jobs is The Five O'Clock Club."

FORTUNE

Are We *Safe at Work?*

Rethinking Office Security in the Wake of 9/11

by Gayle George of The Employment Roundtable
with David Madison, PhD



Gayle George is Director of Human Resources at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, a major law firm (over 1000 employees) located at One

New York Plaza in lower Manhattan, less than a mile from ground zero. She played a key role on the firm's crisis management team in the weeks following the attack on America. Also a member of the Employment Roundtable, at its November 15th meeting she presented an initial overview of the lessons learned about workplace security. The following article is based on that presentation.

Short of a nuclear attack or mass bioterrorism, the events of September 11th really were the worst-case scenario. It was the ultimate kind of crisis we had to work through. None of our disaster planners—the people who are paid to worry about earthquake, wind and fire—could have foreseen the horrific chaos that engulfed lower Manhattan that day: not even Osama bin Laden expected the towers to *fall down*.

Although we may have known on some level that we face dangers, we have become starkly aware that we are now in a deadly game of outwitting evil people fanatically devoted to our ruin. We are accustomed to planning for earthquake, wind and fire—and perhaps a disgruntled worker with a bomb or gun. Now we realize that protection is far more complex: one of the front lines in the

war on terrorism is the workplace.

In fact, two studies conducted soon after September 11th suggest that most companies realize that disaster planning must be taken to new levels. The Profile Group, which offers consulting and search services to law firms, reports that the majority of companies—in a survey of 60—are enhancing their emergency plans. 60% of 5,673 companies responding to a nationwide survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) admitted that they were "ill-prepared" for disasters and presumably will do something about it.



HOW THIS RECESSION IS DIFFERENT

WHERE THE JOB MARKET IS GOING

WORKING WITH A CAREER COACH

ADVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

From Safety to Statistics

CATCH UP HERE ON EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER ISSUES

Another jam-packed issue. Gayle George, director of Human Resources for a large law firm near Ground Zero, enthralled the members of the Employment Roundtable with her presentation of how her employer has responded to safety concerns in the wake of the 9/11 tragedy. We thought her company's response was something that we should share with all of you. Pass it on to your human resources department. It may help them considerably in this changing environment.

John Wieting, Regional Commissioner for the Bureau of Labor Statistics also delivered an intriguing presentation to the Roundtable. You may be interested in finding out why this recession is different from previous ones, and why it seems to be over. I know the press is also saying that the

recession is over, but it was good for us to hear it directly from the source of some of the most dependable data in this country.

John also made a presentation on where the job market is going these days. Details inside.

If you think it's time to re-examine your career, or give yourself a 50,000-mile check-up, take a look at *Working With a Career Coach*. You can call The Five O'Clock Club coach you've established a relationship with in the past. Members who do not presently have a coach can get one by filling out the Coach Request Form in the Coaches and Speakers section of our website. In fact, we will match you with two coaches who are appropriate for you.

We turn our attention to young people in two brief articles. One of our career coaches, Sharon Kassakian, presents a case

study of a young person's search—with ideas for all of us. And I've included a brief essay for young people on handling their references.

Finally, Richard Bayer, our chief operating officer, had a little fun in putting together a cross-word puzzle for those of you who think they really know The Five O'Clock Club methodology. This is a chance to test yourself.

Cheers, Kate

President and Editor-in-Chief



QUOTES TO INSPIRE YOU

If I try to use human influence strategies and tactics of how to get other people to do what I want, to work better, to be more motivated, to like me and each other—while my character is fundamentally flawed, marked by duplicity and insincerity—then, in the long run, I cannot be successful. My duplicity will breed distrust, and everything I do—even using so-called good human relations techniques—will be perceived as manipulative. . . Only basic goodness gives life to technique.

Stephan R. Covey

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

The price one pays for pursuing any profession or calling is an intimate knowledge of its ugly side.

James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name*

There's a lot of talk about self-esteem these days. It seems pretty basic to me.

If you want to feel proud of yourself, you've got to do things you can be proud of.

Feelings follow actions.

Oseola McCarty, a washerwoman who gave her life savings of \$150,000 to help complete strangers get a college education.

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Address all comments, questions & suggestions:

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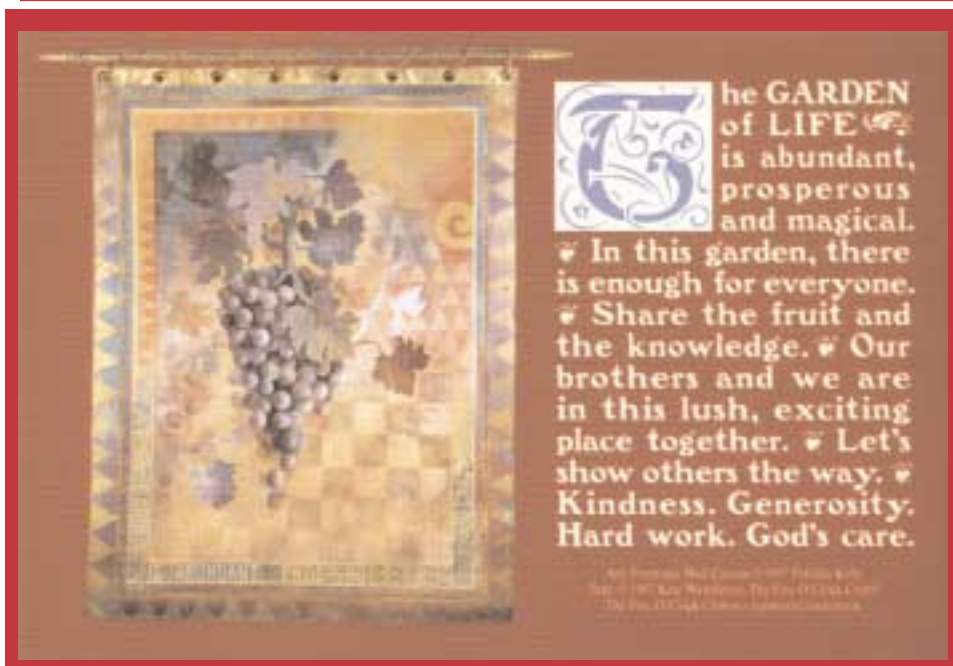
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EXIT ▶

Getting the People Out

Mayor Giuliani warned us within hours of the attack that the losses will “be more than we can bear.” Almost 3,000 people killed in Manhattan is staggering—exceeding the number who perished at Pearl Harbor—but the fact remains that 25,000 people worked at the World Trade Center. The losses were not higher because *so many people got out*. Indeed, many companies learned from the 1993 bombing at the World Trade Center. Morgan Stanley especially got favorable press in the wake of 9/11 because it had good evacuation plans; it took swift action to get its people out of the building.

After the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, many companies developed evacuation plans.

Hence, evacuation tops the list in emergency and disaster planning. Despite the heightened interest in backpack parachutes and rappelling ropes in the days following 9/11, these can't be taken seriously in responsible evacuation planning. Stories abound of people at the World Trade Center who simply said, “I'm outta here” when the first plane hit—thus saving their lives—but one of the most common questions I faced when we got back to work was, “Who makes the decision to get out?” In other words, people are looking for management to take the initiative in saving lives. They know that “run for your lives” isn't adequate. In the post-9/11 SHRM survey mentioned above, half of the concerns listed by employees related to safety.

Evacuation planning must include *training designated people* in crisis management and procedures, i.e., appointing those who will make the decision to get out, and developing scripts designed to reduce tensions, anxiety and a panic

response. It's especially important to choose the right people to make announcements: it's no good to have someone in hysterics on the PA system.

Who makes the decision to get out? People look to management to take the initiative.

We're also finding that employees want more than a brief talk by a fire marshal about not using the elevators—while he/she points to the stairwells. People now want to *see* the stairwells, they want to *walk down* all 25 or 50 floors. Sometimes stairwells lead to unfamiliar territory, i.e., to other offices on other floors with different configurations. Or stairwells exit to the street around the corner or around the block from the main entrance. On September 11th the atmosphere was so thick with pulverized concrete and debris that people leaving buildings through unfamiliar fire exits became disoriented and ended up walking *toward* ground zero.

Being prepared for emergencies also means knowing who your disabled employees are—and how you will help them escape. One hero at the World Trade Center found a woman in a wheelchair and *carried* her down the stairwell. You must know what to do to save disabled employees when you can't use the elevators (EEO mandates that disaster plans include provisions for the handicapped). Also, it's good to have people on staff who are CPR trained and who know how to use Automatic External Defibrillators. Forethought on these matters can help people get out—or just survive.



Reducing the Chances for Disaster

We are more aware now of our vulnerability: gathering a few thousand people every day to work

in one building is, in fact, *dangerous*. Reducing the vulnerability and minimizing the danger have become the agenda. We must scrutinize, as never before, who and what *gets into the building*. Hence many companies are thoroughly reassessing security protocols.

In a drill, people want to see the stairwells and walk down all 25 or 50 floors.

The decision was made, at our building, One New York Plaza, to close most public access entrances. There are now two instead of six. All bags and packages must be scanned, employee photo ID's and visitor badges are required, and bomb-sniffing dogs are on stand-by. The loading docks and parking garage are now under video surveillance—and mirrors are used to scan beneath vehicles. The building management will allocate the costs of these enhanced measures.

“Did You Back Up?”



The first concern of any business must be the safety of its employees—assuring that as many people as possible escape injury and get out alive when emergencies exist. The second concern, of course, is *getting back to business*. One image of the disaster scene in lower Manhattan still haunting most of us is that of a landscape of dusty paper: millions of documents blown from the Twin Towers...some drifting as far away as Brooklyn. In many cases, vital information was lost forever. The ability to get back to business is seriously compromised when information is lost.

Most of us have discovered to our dismay, at one time or another, that we have failed to back up. The scope of this disaster has taught us that “backup”

The Employment Roundtable is a group of leaders from business, government and think tanks. We review and comment on the central employment issues as they present themselves today. In addition, employees themselves should keep up-to-date on the subject. Please pass this issue of the *Five O'Clock News* on to your human resources officers, or call us and we'll send them a free copy.

should mean much more than it used to.

What good is the nightly or weekly backup of computer information if the backup disks are kept on-site?

In addition to the thousands of pages of handwritten attorney notes (written on the ubiquitous legal size pads), at least one Twin Towers law firm discovered that beneficiary designations had existed only in hard copy form in its office (no duplicates at insurance companies). And what good is the nightly or weekly backup of computer information if the backup disks are kept on-site? There is growing awareness that off-site storage or use of branch offices for daily downloading is vital.

We asked each internal department to make a checklist of important information that needed to be reviewed for backup purposes. This was especially important for the Human Resources area: we had only to contemplate the loss—the complete loss—of certain documents to see how much trouble we would be in. Who would want to have to re-construct I-9 information on hundreds of employees? When we inventoried our employee records, we realized that a lot of data was not backed up, and much of the information collected had grown stale. In some cases emergency contact numbers were no longer valid, and we didn't have home fax or cell phone numbers, both of which might help us reach people. We will require family-member information on all employees, and plan to ask people to update the information *monthly*. Not only is the information backed up, members of the management team will actually keep such crucial information at home on disks or hard copy.

Other data that was only in paper form may also be required to be data-entered and backed up. For example, information on new hires, who were scheduled to start the Monday after the attack, was at the office on application forms. Since our office closed, some had

no way to contact *us*. Luckily, we were able to reach these people. Also critical may be the backup of termination and separation agreements, and documentation of employees on warning, as well as off-site storage of the HR Policies and Procedure Manual. What a nightmare it would be to rewrite that! Needless to say, safe-guarding and preservation of payroll data should be a top priority.

What about *facilities* backup? Some firms located at or near ground zero were up and running the next day because they had good disaster plans. Other companies were able to fashion make-shift offices in midtown within a few days. Disaster recovery plans should include alternative venues if offices are destroyed or inaccessible.

**Getting Back to Business:
The Human Factor**

In a calamity of this magnitude, how do you ask people to get back to their desks? In our case, we could expect trauma levels to be high: access to Manhattan below 14th Street was restricted (for most of our employees, with the FDR Drive closed, subway was the only option), the presence of troops gave our neighborhood the feel of a war zone, and the odor from ground zero hung in the air. And, of course, we could expect that some of our staff would be in mourning for family and friends.

Some firms located at or near ground zero were up and running the next day because they had good disaster plans.

On Sunday September 16th, the following message was sent from the managing partners to employees:

We are currently at One New York Plaza, so, as you can see, we have been able to get back into the building, with all of the New York Office Administrative Directors.

The office will be open tomorrow,

Monday September 17th, for those of you who feel ready and able to return. We understand, through our own experience, the ambivalence that many may feel in returning to the office.

We expect Monday to be the first day of the serious effort, collectively and individually, to bring our lives back to normal. We all will be there to support you in this effort in every way possible. Later today, we expect to give you further details about tomorrow.

We invited employees for a free lunch in the dining room—to get as many of us together as possible—for rebuilding a sense of community.

For the first few days after business resumed, we closed early—to help ease people back into the routine and to allow for difficult commutes. We asked the administrative directors to meet daily to review what was happening in their areas. How many people are out? Are you busy? How is morale?

We also held a Reunification Meeting during the first week. Employees were invited for free lunch in the dining room—to get as many of us together as possible—for rebuilding a sense of community and answering questions. We found that there were fears to be addressed, not only about the safety of the building and the security of the environment, but also about the firm itself. Was the firm in danger financially? Were layoffs likely? Would the missed work days be charged to vacation time?

But as directors of the firm, we felt



it was our role to try to connect personally with employees. We made a point of talking to as many as possible, one-on-one. How are you coping? Did you lose family or friends? Were you ready to return to work?

How long has it been since you've actually read your insurance policies, which probably went right to the file drawer upon receipt?

We found, however, that expressions of concern were not enough: professional counseling should be a part of disaster recovery plans, whether the disaster is a mass murder (September 11) or something on a much more manageable scale. In the interest of treating people with sensitivity and dignity, *and* getting back to business, trauma cannot be ignored in the workplace, where many people spend most of their waking hours. Counseling should be considered on three levels:

- ♦ Informational counseling for managers, to help them understand how they're handling the crisis themselves. They may know their own jobs very well, but they can benefit from insights on what to expect from staff members who are trying to cope with loss and fear—and how to respond.
- ♦ Group meeting for up to 25 employees, directed by trained counselors, for people to talk about their experiences and share information.
- ♦ Individual counseling as needed.

Getting back to business will depend on the mental health and well-being of your workers. You may also want to be covered for the cost of employee counseling.

Getting Back to Business: Did We Have Insurance?

With the Twin Towers reduced to rubble, the awful reality came home to many people: you really can lose *everything*. Your capacity to get back to business will obviously be severely strained if your property, infrastructure and records don't exist anymore—but you will probably be out of business for good if they were not properly insured.

How long has it been since you've actually read your insurance policies, which probably went right to the file drawer upon receipt? We reviewed our insurance documents for terminology and coverage. Although we've all been talking about the "war on terrorism" since 9/11, it turns out that, as far as insurance underwriters are concerned, damage from "acts of war" may not be covered unless the war is *declared*. Are losses "accidental" when they're the result of willful vandalism? Such issues should be carefully reviewed with insurance carriers.

It is also very important to be aware of claims procedures. Any conscientious homeowner knows that a photo inventory of property (kept in a safe-deposit box) is a part of good insurance practice. Companies also should be aware of insurance company requirements for substantiating claims. And, have you thought of everything? Obviously, furniture and equipment should be covered. But what about the art work? What about the cost of managing and recovering from disaster—and the cost of business interruption? What is the formula for determining how much business was lost? Is loss of time by employees covered? Presumably you want your employees to get paid for the days business was shut down. And, as was discussed above, getting back to business will depend on the mental health and well-being of your workers. You may also want to be covered for the cost of employee counseling. Some companies, by the way, found that their vendors for such counseling—providers of Employee Assistance Programs—were themselves dislocated by the 9/11 disaster. This is

yet another area in which contingency plans would be appropriate.

Paying for what insurance *doesn't* cover may be part of the price of treating people decently and keeping a good reputation in the community. On September 17th, 35,000 reservists and members of the National Guard were called to active duty. The Uniformed Service Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994 provides that companies must take these people back within five years—but not necessarily in the jobs they left. And companies are not required to pay salary and benefits in their absence. Walmart, however, announced that it would cover such people fully for six months. Some forethought—and a defined policy—on fair treatment for people whose lives are so drastically interrupted by a national emergency makes good business sense in the long run.



Have a leadership team in place to respond and to guide the company through the crisis. Appoint and train the crisis response team *now*.

Getting Back to Business: The 'Giuliani' Formula

Disaster and recovery planning begins, of course, before anything bad happens. Part of being prepared is having a leadership team in place to respond...to guide the company through whatever crises or challenges may arise. This means appointing and training the crisis response team *now*—and knowing who will be responsible for technology, the physical facility in general, human resources administration, and so forth.

You will be very fortunate if you can choose a crisis management team that inspires confidence. In its November 11th issue, *Fortune* magazine summed up the opinion of the world in an article entitled “What It Takes: Rudy Giuliani Has It,” by Jerry Useem. “Being a good leader,” Mr. Useem wrote, “does not require Churchillian eloquence. It’s nice if, like British Prime Minister Tony Blair, you happen to have that. But more important is to stick to a few principles that apply in politics, business, or any other field. Justice, they say, must not only be done but must be seen to be done. The same goes for leadership. This is not the time to lock yourself away in strategy sessions. It’s time to be visible. What did everyone say about Giuliani? ‘He was everywhere’—with the firefighters, on television, running for his life when the second tower collapsed.”

In managing through a crisis, the tone set by the leadership team is likely to be remembered forever.

It’s a tall order, obviously, but everyone wants to know that people like this are in charge. In managing through a crisis, the tone set by the leadership team is likely to be remembered forever. I’ve heard horror stories of insensitivity displayed by bosses in the hours and days after the attack—ill-treatment that will be recalled bitterly for years. I was stunned by a statistic in the SHRM survey mentioned earlier: only 30% of management said they bothered to *ask people personally* how they were when they returned to work after the attack.

The crisis response team should consist of people from whom you can expect the traits Giuliani showed in this crisis: visibility, courage, compassion, creativity, clear vision and focus. ●

How to Handle **Your References** (For Young People) — by Kate Wendleton

Oops. You went through the entire interview process, and then they asked for references. The dot.com you worked for has gone out of business. They loved you there. Too bad you don’t know where to find your old boss. The Gap manager you worked for didn’t like you all that much, and you didn’t like him either. And you forgot to ask any of your professors to serve as a reference for you, and now it’s summer. Don’t wait until you get a job offer to think about your references. Take care of them now.

1. **Make a list of people** you want to use as references. Former bosses, teachers, even former co-workers could be used as references.

2. **Ask them** if they would serve as a reference for you. Tell them the kinds of jobs you are looking at, and remind them of the good things you did for them – things you would like them to tell others about you.

Say: “I was hoping to use your name as a reference in my job search. Do you think you would feel comfortable providing a strong reference for me?” If a person is not willing to give you a great reference, you don’t want to use that person. If the person promises to be “very fair” and “provide a balanced picture,” get someone else. If a reference starts naming an equal number of good and bad points, you may not stack up well against the other applicants.

3. **Help your references to help you.** Some time ago, I received a call from a prospective employer checking on Bessie, a woman who worked for me and headed up the accounting department. The caller asked, “Is Bessie the type who was happiest heading up the accounting department?” I raved about Bessie’s managerial and organizational skills. The caller said, “That’s just what I was afraid of. We were considering her for an analytical position.” So I had to back-track and praise Bessie’s analytical skills and ability to work alone. Call your references and tell them the kind of job you are applying for

and what you would like them to say about you. Help them to help you.

You could even put some points in writing so the references can refer to your sheet when they get a call about you. This leaves nothing to chance.

4. **Keep in touch** with your references over time. People change jobs a lot. By the time you need that great reference, the person may have moved on. Email your references every six months or so. Send them a holiday card. Don’t lose track of them. Eliminate the problem of not being able to locate someone who could provide the perfect reference when you need it.

“Do you think you would feel comfortable providing a strong reference for me?”

5. **Protect your references** from too many phone calls. If lots of prospective employers call the same person, you will look like a loser. “I wonder why Joe is having such a hard time finding a job.” Therefore, do not give out your references too soon. If the employer asks for references before you’ve even had a meeting, that is too soon – except in academia where it is more standard to give references up front. Instead, tell the prospective employer that your references are very important to you and they should be called only if the employer is relatively serious about hiring you.

6. **Ask your references to follow up with you.** You need to know whether someone was called. Ask your references to let you know when they are contacted. If you have given out three names and none of them has been called within a week or two, you are probably not as close to an offer as you think. Call the hiring company and try to uncover any possible hidden objections.

7. **Thank your references.** After you get a job, let them know what happened and thank them for their help. ●

This is an excerpt from Kate’s forthcoming book, *Kick Off Your Career: Write a Winning Resume, Ace Your Interview, Negotiate a Great Salary* (Career Press, \$13.99, 256 pages, October, 2002)