

# WORKING

## Reality Check

It's that time again.

By Haidee E. Allerton

### The HR Reality Show

Run for your life, says a recent Cubicle Corner by Jared Sandberg [careerjournal.com](#) if HR wheels in one of those big red popcorn making carts to your next all-staff meeting. It probably means that the company is going to take something away, such as a perk or benefit.

If coffee makers are lined up on the credenza, the unveiled plan will cost a lot of money.

Those and other insights are observations of Dave Brookstein, who

worked for many years in the textile industry. Another work-thropologist (our term) is quoted in the column as saying, "HR tries to humanize and make real all of the stuff you have to deal with but don't want to take the time to deal with it."

That kind of fits, as the column points out, the theory of George Elton Mayo in the 1920s, whose studies suggested that no matter how you train employees, just offering them the training boosts productivity.

National Cash Register is credited

with developing the first HR department, to improve employee relations after the company defeated a union strike. But even HR can get tired of its own activities, such as outdoor team-building, says a former HR exec. "You don't have to go into the woods and play games to open up communications and build confidence."

### It's Not Just the Money

Contrary to popular opinion, 70 percent of women say they work outside of the home because it's financially *and* emotionally satisfying.

Source: *Self*

# UPDATE

Remember reader Steve Kanten's complaint (March) about service people always saying, "No problem" — as if doing their jobs might have been a problem but they're letting you know it wasn't in this case?

Good news, Steve! A firm policy of the Ritz Carleton hotel chain is for employees to never say, "No problem." They say, "My pleasure."

# FearFactor

Compared with 2001 to 2002, people are calling in sick less in 2003 (despite stress, child care, and similar reasons) because they're afraid of losing their jobs.

Source: *The Art of Work, Dan Pink, Great Ideas!* GWSAE

## Salary Range

Here are some 2002 salaries of various people in various jobs:

- George Lucas, filmmaker US\$200 million
- Willa Robinson, book dealer \$5000
- Ivan Seidenberg CEO, Verizon \$13.5 million
- Dolores Casillas, HR consultant \$80,000
- Bill Clinton, author/speaker \$25 million
- Gwen Farmer, office manager \$26,500
- Tara June Roberts, manager, donut shop \$31,000
- Reese Witherspoon, actress \$18 million

Source: *Parade*

# Spinnin' the 45s

They're here, they're not going anywhere. A big whopping 70 percent of people over age 45 say they plan to continue working after they turn 65.

Here are the top five things they want most:

1. friendly work environment
2. chance to use skills and talents
3. chance to do something worthwhile
4. respect from co-workers
5. chance to learn something new.

Here's what they least want:

1. ability to work from home
2. opportunity to work part-time
3. ethnic and racial diversity
4. chance to earn lots of money
5. 401(k) retirement plan.