

# WORKING LIFE

## Bloomsday

However, we never promised you a rose garden.

By Haidee E. Allerton

### Corporate Growth

Plants in the workplace help reduce stress and enhance productivity, according to much research. Not only that, but two-thirds of American workers say gardening is their favorite hobby.

Studies at universities Texas A&M and Washington State show that “visual exposure to plant settings” produces significant recovery from stress within five minutes, while enhancing produc-

tivity by 12 percent. In the presence of plants, test people demonstrated more positive emotions—such as happiness, friendliness, and assertiveness—and fewer negative emotions such as sadness and fear.

[More info/www.plantsatwork.org](http://www.plantsatwork.org)

### Multitasking to the Max

According to *Wired News* [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com) Handspring Visors now offer

a snap-on Personal Massager with three modes to choose from. And you can fine-tune according to these preset programs: frequency, ramp-up modulation, duration, pressure, and burst.

There's more: an illustrated step-by-step Quick Guide and onscreen instruction. Fortunately, the massage mode doesn't interfere with the other functions.

### Fine-Land

In Finland, traffic fines are based on the offender's pay. So imagine Jaakko Rytso-la's dismay when he was stopped for an illegal lane turn in downtown Helsinki and given a ticket with a penalty equal to 12 days of pay. The dot.com millionaire had to fork up 300,000 Finnish marks, or about US\$45,000.

<» Source/Business 2.0

### Do You Have a True Tale From the Workplace?

Tell us actual stories that happen at your work, and we'll mention you as a contributor to Working Life (or grant you anonymity, if you prefer).

Just email Haidee Allerton at [worklife@astd.org](mailto:worklife@astd.org) or write to me at *T+D*, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.

Fame can be yours!—or a place in the Working Life witness protection program.

## Email: The Versatile Tool

Office workers in Britain use email to flirt with colleagues, says a news item at <» [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com)

A survey of 500 workers by U.K. marketing firm <» [edesigns.co.uk](http://edesigns.co.uk) speculates that companies could be losing hours of work time because of misuse of email.

Other discovered email misuses are

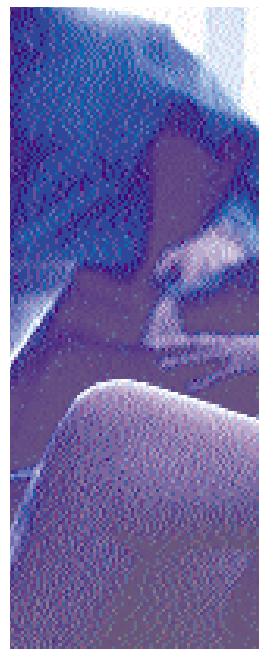
- gossiping (mostly among male employees)
- planning one's social life (mostly among female employees)
- forwarding jokes
- seeking new employment
- visiting inappropriate Internet sites.

## Abetted by Email, No Doubt!

More than half of sales executives have had romantic relationships with their bosses, clients, or peers. So says a survey of 253 sales managers conducted by *Sales & Marketing Management* magazine and reported in the August 2001 issue. The article suggests that the activity is mostly among single people, but not always.

One theory as to why that particular group of professionals might be more amorous than others, says editor-in-chief Melinda Ligos, is that sales execs are naturally social and outgoing. They also travel frequently. Don't ask about the 300-mile rule. (OK, supposedly an encounter at that distance from home isn't considered cheating.)

The article cites the dangers and advises clear policies.



## Choo-Choo, Shhh

Amtrak has added a "quiet car," which doesn't allow cell phones, to most weekday trains.

<» Source/the Washington Post