

# THE FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE

*Wellness, Productivity & You!*

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## What's Up with Shoplifting?

Recent media attention on a Hollywood movie star convicted of shoplifting has caused many people to ask about the mental disorder associated with stealing called kleptomania. More than a million people per year are detained for shoplifting, but only a small percentage are affected by kleptomania. According to the most widely used manual on mental disorders, the DSM-IV, kleptomania affects less than 5% of shoplifters. One key symptom is the inability to resist the urge to steal things that are not needed for personal use or for their monetary value. Kleptomania is frequently associated with other personal problems like depression or the need to escape from personal pain associated with other feeling states. Learn more about symptoms and sources of help from the EAP.

## Flu Watch

Finding out whether the flu is coming to your area before it strikes can help you plan a prevention strategy and consider whether to get a flu shot. Flu season runs from October 1 to March 31. The 2002 -2003 vaccine this year is for the Moscow H3N2, New Caledonia H1N1, and Hong Kong strains. Learn more about the flu, treatment, and how hard your area is getting hit at — [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluvirus.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluvirus.htm).

## Kid Sports & Parent Retorts

Parent rage in youth sports is still a serious, growing problem. A recent *Survey USA* poll says 55% of parents have witnessed other parents engaging in verbal abuse at youth sporting events. But solutions are emerging. One is the Parents Association of Youth Sports. Its 11-point Parents' Code of Ethics (see it at [www.nays.org](http://www.nays.org).) helps parents remember kids' sports are for kids and focus on the benefits of sports, physical exercise, social interaction, teamwork and the opportunity to learn discipline and good sportsmanship.

## Eat Less — Live Longer!

Recent research appears to show that reducing the number of calories you consume in a nutritionally sound diet, say by 20%, may increase your life span. Reducing caloric intake causes the body to use slower-burning, but high-energy fat cells instead of faster-burning carbohydrates that produce less energy output. As you get older and go about daily activities, the less strain that is put on an aging heart, the more energy is available to it. Hence, the risk of heart disease is reduced. Much research on aging, diet and the effects of foods on health has emerged in recent years. Always talk to your doctor before starting a diet or exercise program or acting on the latest research findings.

Source: University of Wisconsin, Research News

## High-Yield Safe Risks

Ask people who have advanced their careers and you will hear that taking risks was part of the secret to their success. You will also hear that some paid off, while others did not. Do you pass up high-yield, safe risks that can get you where you want to go in your job? Classic opportunities missed include raising your hand to lead that committee, writing a trade journal article, presenting at a conference, and taking the initiative to solve or propose solutions to problems that have stumped everyone else. If you are a team leader, supervisor or manager wanting your employees to be "all they can be": 1) model risk-taking yourself; 2) give permission to employees to take risks; and 3) praise or commend those who take risks, even when they don't work out.

## EAPs and "Other" Problems

**Q.** I don't have a personal problem, I just want to talk with the EA professional about some career decisions I am facing. Is the EAP still appropriate for me?

**A.** Yes. EAPs are for any personal concern you would like to discuss in confidence. In a discussion with the EA professional, you may discover the answer to a question that has eluded you. The EA professional can also assist you in taking the next step to find the answer you seek. You don't have to be in crisis with a substance abuse problem, marital difficulties, financial issues or have a mental health problem to use the EAP. If the issue is important to you, and you want confidential help, the EAP is available.

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## Office Gift-Giving Stress Solutions

Co-worker relationships get the spotlight during holidays with parties, Santa in the hallway, seasonal cards swinging on doors, and – ouch! – exchanging gifts. Is your office looking for the right balance to this source of holiday stress? Here are a few tried and true alternatives to last-minute, late-night shopping discovered by some work groups making merry: 1) The "Secret Santa" (everyone secretly draws one co-worker's name. The spending limit is \$10-15. Gifts are placed in one location to be opened on a selected day.) 2) Pool funds for a special group lunch. 3) Pool funds for a donation to a charity in your group's name. Tips for gift-giving: Be cautious about giving an expensive gift to one co-worker and an inexpensive gift to another; you generally can't go wrong with a \$10 limit; and you probably should forget the gag gift.

## Date-Rape Drug: GHB

The Drug Enforcement Administration wants parents to be aware of a "date-rape drug" called GHB\* or GBL that has been sold over the Internet. GHB is a colorless, odorless liquid with a salty taste. It produces euphoria, intoxication, and a hallucinogenic state. It has no approved use in medicine. It is also a central nervous system depressant like alcohol. The drug causes drowsiness, dizziness, loss of consciousness, and loss of inhibition as well as memory impairment. This can make the prosecution of rape cases difficult when victims are given the drug. Higher doses of the substance will cause seizures, severe respiratory depression, coma and even death. A person who has taken GHB should obtain emergency assistance immediately.

Oddly, the main problem with GHB is that it is not illegal to possess it in the United States. It is only illegal to manufacture or sell it. To learn more, go to [www.health.org](http://www.health.org), the web site of National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), 1-800-729-6686.

\*GHB: *gammahydroxybutyrate*