A Day in the Life of . . . .
Connie Bridges

Connie started her career at the Medical School in 2000 serving as Director of Administration for Research & Graduate Studies before moving to her current position as the Medical School Chief of Staff in July 2007.

In this new position for the Medical School, Connie is responsible for facilitating the Dean’s initiatives and activities in coordination with the School’s senior leadership. Among her many responsibilities, she oversees operations for the Dean’s Office, managing projects, advising on policy, procedural and operational issues of the School, and representing the Dean both internally and externally as needed. Her job is busy and reactive to the day-to-day emerging needs of the leadership. In addition to managing the staff in the Dean’s Office, Connie serves as an advocate for all staff in the medical school and accompanies Dean Wooliscroft to his twice-monthly office hours, following up as needed with those who stop by to chat with him.

Connie’s job is varied and diverse which is why she enjoys it so much. She likes to assist faculty, staff and students who need solutions to problems, and help them find what they need.

MATCH DAY
Thursday, March 20, 2008
Four Points Sheraton Hotel Ballroom

The Office of Student Programs (OSP) is organizing a Match Day celebration for fourth year medical students who are participating in the National Resident Matching Program. This is when students will learn where they have been "matched" for their residency training.

Following a buffet brunch, a class video and slide show covering and highlighting student life for the last four years is shown. The clips are from the video taken on their first day of Orientation four years earlier and are incorporated into this presentation.

It’s an exciting time for seniors, as one-by-one each will receive the random call to the front of the room, receive a sealed envelope, and open it to learn which residency program has selected them for training upon graduation. Nationally, over 24,000 individuals participate in the National Resident Matching Program.
Distinguished Paper Award

Thanks to research by a U-M-led interdisciplinary team, first-responders such as firemen and emergency medical personnel may soon have improved tools to more efficiently and accurately identify toxic chemicals during emergencies. The research reported in the paper, “Network Analysis of Toxic Chemicals and Symptoms: Implications for Designing First-Responder Systems,” won the Distinguished Paper Award at the American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) annual symposium held in Chicago in November. The paper was led by Suresh K. Bhavnani, PhD, (faculty member at the Center for Computational Medicine and Biology and formerly at the School of Information) and included other investigators from SI, School of Public Health, and the Psychology Department at Stanford University.

The researchers used an innovative application of “graphical network analysis” to visualize and analyze the complex relationship between toxic chemical agents and the symptoms they are known to cause in people. The analysis was conducted on the database underlying WISER, a well-known hand-held system designed for first-responders, which currently requires an average of more than 40 symptoms to identify a toxic chemical. The results suggested algorithms and interfaces that should help first-responders more quickly and accurately narrow down the list of potential chemicals in emergency situations.

The AMIA symposium is the leading conference for biomedical and health informatics, and this year featured more than 100 rigorously-reviewed technical papers and attracted more than 2000 attendees from academic, community, government, and medical institutions worldwide. Co-authors on the paper were Annie Abraham, Christopher Demenik, Messeret Gebrekristos, and Satyendra Nainwal (all students from SI); Abe Gong (from the U-M School of Public Policy); Gautam Vallabha (from the Department of Psychology at Stanford University); and Rudy J. Richardson Sc.D., D.A.B.T. (from U-M's School of Public Health).

The award-winning paper can be found at:


Questions From Our Readers

Q. Can you tell me about vacation accrual, and is there a maximum amount you can accrue?

A. As a full-time campus employee vacation time for staff members accrues as follows: Non-exempt staff members accrue 8 hours per month for the first five years of service, 12 hours per month from 5-8 years and 16 hours per month for 8 or more years of service. Exempt employees accrue 16 hours per month effective at the start of their appointment. As a campus employee you maximum accrual rate is twice your annual accrual rate. For example, if you are eligible to accrue 8 hours a month/12 days per year, you can accrue up to 192 hours or 24 days. Once you reach the maximum accrual rate you will stop accruing vacation time but will not lose anything you have. Once you use vacation time and drop below the accrual max, you'll start accruing time again. Please note that all vacation time is based on your appointment fraction so if you are a part-time employee your vacation time is pro-rated.

Q. I'm searching eMploy for a new position. How do I find the most recent postings?

A. As you into eMploy through the Career Portal, you have the option to select what data sort you are interested in using. The default is always by Requisition number. If you look at the column headers in eMploy you'll see triangles (arrows) that, once you point and click on one, it will sort by whatever column you are in. Therefore, to locate the most recent posting you'll sort by date.

Who’s Retired

Tina Dean
Medical Assistant Specialist
Department of Otolaryngology
Retired on 1/2/2008
After 29 years of service

Jill Halman
Administrative Manager
Intermediate
Medical Management Center
Retired 2/16/2008
After 13 years of service

Marc Halman
Administrative Director
Radiation Oncology
Retired 3/10/2008
After 32 years of service

Rita Mitchell
Clinical Info Analyst Senior
Medical Management Center
Retired on 2/28/2008
After 22 years of service

Patricia Turner
Administrative Assistant
Intermediate
Office of Student Programs
Retired on 1/5/2008
After 16 years of service

Lindsay Parker
HR Generalist
Internal Medicine
Received her PHR Certification
January 24, 2008

Linda Gacioch
Administrative Specialist
Department of Psychiatry
is serving as
President of the National Board of Certification, Training Administrators of Graduate Medical Education (TAGME)
A Leader's Mood: The Dimmer Switch of Performance
Adapted from an Article by Bruna Martinuzzi

In response to a discussion on the effect of a leader's mood on the performance of a team, a participant in a recent leadership workshop made this heartfelt and realistic remark: "I cannot see how I am expected to be in a good mood for four quarters in a row."

The point is well taken. But can you afford, as a leader, to even entertain this thought? All of the research on employee performance points to the contrary. There is a concept in French which is called "Noblesse oblige". It means, roughly, that wealth, power and prestige go hand-in-hand with certain social responsibilities. In other words, with privilege comes duty. It is a privilege when we have the opportunity to lead a team of people, but with it comes many responsibilities, chief of which, some leadership pundits would contend, is managing moods.

So what is the major factor that drives the climate of an organization? It's the leader in Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence, Goleman states that roughly 50-70% of how employees perceive their organization's climate is attributable to the actions and behaviors of their leader. A leader creates the environment that determines people's moods at the office and their mood, in turn, affects their productivity and level of engagement.

**Afterglow or Aftermath?**

Witness the number of times you may have driven home with an internal glow, reliving a positive encounter with an upbeat and supportive boss, perhaps savoring a "bon mot" about your performance that he or she left with you on a Friday afternoon. How great it made you feel, and how eager you were to get out of bed on the following Monday morning, and get back to the office to give that man or woman the very best that you had to offer. That's the "afterglow" that lingers and gives you renewed energy to be more productive, to bring your finest talents to work.

And think about the reverse of the afterglow * the aftermath, or bitter aftertaste. This is what Susan Scott, in Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work and in Life, One Conversation at a Time, brilliantly calls "The Emotional Wake." That's what lingers with you after being the recipient of some acrid remarks from a leader in a negative mood. How did that affect your determination to overcome difficulties in a project, to keep your heart fully engaged in the process, to want to continue to give that person your very best game?

**Contagion and Consequences**

Perhaps nowhere is a leader's mood more crucial than in the service industry where employees in a bad mood can, without fail, adversely affect business. In one of a multitude of such studies involving 53 sales managers in retail outlets who led groups ranging in size from four to nine members, it was found that when managers themselves were in an upbeat, positive mood, their moods spilled over to their staff, positively affecting the staff's performance and increasing sales. We can all take an inspiration from organizations such as Starbucks who place great value on the importance of creating a positive climate for employees which, in turn, ensures a pleasant customer experience and repeat visits. "We are always focused on our people" is an explicit statement to new recruits on the company's career site.

When we move the curtain a bit, we can see clearly that a leader's bad mood is a source of infection * an emotional contagion that eventually spreads across people to entire units. We can learn a thing or two from leadership in the military. Imagine the effect on troop morale and energy that an "overwhelmed", "anxious", "worried" or "irate" leader would have? And how about a leader who is plagued by uncertainty? "Indecision," as HA Hopf puts it, "is contagious. It transmits itself to others." It can become debilitating and habit-forming in an organization, as people take their cues from the leader's state of mind.

**Inconsistent Means Unpredictable**

We could argue that the occasional bad mood, the occasional rant, on a bad "corporate hair day", is excusable. Often, we refer to this type of behavior with statements such as: "She can't control her temper sometimes, but she is so brilliant". Or, "He has an amazing mind but he has a tendency to shout at people when it's stressful." It is as though brilliance is an excuse for bad behavior. And it may very well have to be in some environments but the message it sends to constituents is one of inconsistency, which is an undesirable trait in any leader. We want our leaders to be predictable because there is comfort and safety in predictability. Predictability engenders trust and an unpredictable leader elicits anxiety and, in some cases, even fear, both of which negatively affect performance and productivity.

**The Right Mood?**

There are, of course, no easy solutions to managing emotions on an hourly basis in the often difficult circumstances in which leaders must operate and make decisions. First of all, it's important to note that a leader's mood has the greatest impact on performance when it is upbeat. But it must also be in tune with those around him.

Goleman et al call this dynamic resonance. "Good moods galvanize good performance, but it doesn't make sense for a leader to be as chipper as a blue jay at dawn if sales are tanking or the business is going under. The most effective executives display moods and behaviors that match the situation at hand, with a healthy dose of optimism mixed in. They respect how other people are feeling even if it is glum or defeated but they also model what it looks like to move forward with hope and humor." The operative threesome here is "optimism", "hope" and "humor".

As someone once put it, leaders are dealers in hope.
Steps Towards Better Performance

So what are the specific recommendations? Your mood and behavior affect your performance. How do you work on attaining the consistent, emotionally intelligent leadership behaviors that breed success in yourself and others? Here are a few other suggestions to consider that can improve your and your team’s performance.

Model Meeting Behavior

Take a hard look at your behavior in meetings, which are often “cauldrons of emotion.” Do you model the way by setting a positive tone right from the start? Or do you impose your own “pace” based on how you feel at the moment? Aim for a calm, relaxed mood, and a consistent, positive approach.

Look For Good In Others

Long before leadership books were in vogue, Andre Malraux, French novelist and statesman, reminded us that one of the central objectives of a leader is to make others aware of the greatness that lies in them. Be known in your organization as someone who is always on the lookout for what is right with people. It engenders good will and is good for business.

Read The Climate

Do you have a good reading of the climate of your unit or organization? Can you accurately sense what the emotional atmosphere is? Is it upbeat? Is it energized? Is it down or dejected? Do people seem slightly apprehensive and somewhat cautious in your presence? Can you ask a trusted acolyte if the atmosphere changes when you are away?

Be Pleasant and Cooperative

If you are an emergent leader, and working on having a pleasant personality is not a priority for you, consider putting some effort into cultivating this prized quality. It is almost impossible to have executive presence without it. Be cooperative, for example sharing ideas and shortcuts. This is another example of how mood affects productivity.

Be Emotionally Attractive

Along that vein, focus on being emotionally attractive. This links to the concept of resonant leadership. Resonant leaders are individuals who have the ability to manage their own emotions and those of others in a manner that drives the success of their teams and organizations.

Manage the Emotions of Change

Be particularly mindful of how you manage emotions if your organization is undergoing change: how you handle emotions during these crucial times can help or hinder the change process. It’s a known fact that if the resistance to change is emotional, it is the hardest form of resistance to overcome. As the leader handling a change initiative, don't avoid the emotions that accompany the change process. Set the mood and manage the emotions or they will manage you.

Hone your intuitive ability, and listen to those hunches that hint to you that something in your behavior and actions on bad days is causing a ripple effect on others. These are the whispers we try to dismiss when we elect to focus only on "rationality." Intuition is a precious tool worth including in our kit. Einstein put it best: "The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

As the leader, you have in your hand the switch that can control the intensity of engagement of the people who do the work in your organization. It's like being a director in a movie: "The first work of the director is to set a mood so that the actor's work can take place."

(William Friedkin, American movie and television director/producer.)

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NEW BASIC SCIENCE WEB SITE

Ever wonder how new treatments, drugs and technical advances happen? The answer often starts with basic science. Basic science researchers study the most fundamental elements of life - what makes a cell divide and conquer, the makeup of genes, the mysteries of DNA, and so much more - to advance existing scientific knowledge. To learn more, visit the new Basic Science Web site at http://www.med.umich.edu/basicscience/.
It's National Nutrition Month!

How does your daily diet measure up? Here are some tips from the Healthwise Knowledgebase (http://www.mypyramid.gov) for improving your eating habits during this healthy eating month!

Step 1: Look at how you eat
To eat healthier, you first need to know what makes up a balanced diet. Visit www.mypyramid.gov to find out how many servings of each food group you need for a healthy, balanced diet. Whole grains and fruits and vegetables are emphasized. After you know what foods make up a balanced diet, you can figure out what changes you need to make.

Step 2: Start thinking about changes
Start thinking about your current diet and what changes you are willing to make. It can be helpful to start a food diary to track what foods you eat and see where there are opportunities for improvement.

Step 3: Start small
Don’t try to make big changes in your eating habits all at the same time. You will likely feel overwhelmed and deprived of your favorite foods and, therefore, will be more likely to fail. Start slowly, and gradually change your habits. Try any of the following:

- Use whole wheat bread instead of white bread.
- Eat brown rice instead of white rice.
- Try whole wheat pasta instead of pasta made with white flour. Or try a mixture of the two.
- Use skim (nonfat) or 1% (low-fat) milk instead of whole milk or 2% milk.
- Try low-fat cheeses and low-fat yogurt.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to meals, and/or have fruits and vegetables for snacks.
- Add lettuce, tomato, cucumber, and onion to sandwiches.
- Add fruit to cereal.

Step 4: Know your ingredients
To make healthy choices, you need to know how certain foods affect your body.

Fat: Learn the differences between types of fats. Saturated and trans (hydrogenated) fats can raise cholesterol levels and increase your risk for coronary artery disease. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids may reduce your risk of developing coronary artery disease. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish, such as trout, tuna, and salmon, as well as in plant foods, such as walnuts, flaxseeds, and canola oil.

Carbohydrate: Learn the differences between types of carbohydrate. Choose whole-grain sources of carbohydrate found in unprocessed cereal grains, such as brown rice instead of white rice and whole wheat bread instead of white bread.

Sugar: Milk and fruits contain naturally occurring simple sugars along with many other vitamins and minerals. Foods with added sugar, such as granola bars and fruit drinks that are not 100% real fruit juice, often are high in calories but low in vitamins and minerals.

Current and Upcoming Events

Active U 2008
We hope you’re enjoying Active U 2008! Keep tracking those minutes and getting in the physical activity! Also remember to keep checking the MHealthy website at www.mhealthy.umich.edu for continuing updates on Active U and other programs.

MFit
Please visit MFit's nutrition website to learn more about healthy eating programs offered to U of M employees, families and the community (http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/nutrition/index.htm).

Employee Engagement Survey
Let your voice be heard—complete the Health System Employee Engagement Survey between March 10 to March 28. http://www.med.umich.edu/i/empengage08/
WEB CORNER

On February 16, 2008, the Weblogin Authentication Required page replaced the WebNow login screen:

- Log in with your uniqname and UMICH (Kerberos) password. The WebNow home page will display after successful login.
- You do not need an MToken or Tokencode to login to WebNow.
- Functionality within WebNow will not change.
- Be aware that the log out process for WebNow differs slightly from the process for other Cosign-enabled applications.
- For details, refer to the 'WebNow: Signing In and Out' step-by-step procedure on My LINC at: <https://maislinc.umich.edu/mais/pdf/MP_WebNow_CosignLogin_ss.pdf>, or, on the MAIS Web site at: <https://maislinc.umich.edu/mais/pdf MP_WebNow_CosignLogin_ss.pdf>.

SPRING CALENDAR

March 9    Daylight Savings Time Began
March 17   St. Patrick’s Day
March 23   Easter Sunday
May 5      Cinco de Mayo
May 11     Mother's Day
May 26     Memorial Day

If you would like to add a date to the calendar, please e-mail carrkm@umich.edu for future consideration.

Thank you.

The Messenger
Medical School Staff Newsletter

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