

the Focal Point!



A newsletter for the customers of Focus Telecommunications, Inc.

Healthy...

Summer heat and activity can easily lead to illness, so drink plenty of liquids. When your body loses more water than you take in, dehydration is the result. Hot weather increases our need for fluids. The first signs of dehydration may be dry mucous membranes, tight feeling skin and even fever. Wait too long for that long drink of water and you may experience weakness, abdominal cramps and faintness, as well as nausea and even vomiting. Not the way to spend a summer day!

Wealthy...

If you're trying to decide whether to make a purchase or not, remind yourself how many hours you have to work to earn the thing you want to buy. Maybe that new jacket really is worth six hours of your life... but maybe it isn't!

...and Wise

If you have assets or income that needs to be tended to on a regular basis – then you probably should have a legal document called a “Power of Attorney”. This allows you to select an “agent” to write checks, pay bills and manage financial interests if you are mentally or physically incapacitated, until you are able to do it yourself. If you become incapacitated without a Power of Attorney, your family must take the time consuming and expensive task of filing a Petition of Guardianship with the court; and it becomes your family's choice not your own. Making this decision before anything happens allows you to choose the right person to look after your affairs.

How Do We Reach Thee? Let Me Count the Ways

In the beginning there were two options—to call your home or activate your pager. Today there are cell phones and smart phones, faxes, and e-mail to add to the mix.

If you or your employees are carrying old fashioned pagers, may we suggest retiring them in favor of contacting you on your cell phones? Pagers have begun to be less and less reliable as the years have gone by, and now it isn't surprising to have a pager that worked yesterday become unreliable today. This is old technology and carriers are slowly doing away with it because it has become too expensive to support.

Fax machines are also slowly fading away. Yes, you can still buy them and they have their uses, but often a fax will stop playing nicely with the new equipment we are using today. We can't think of a single reason faxing to you is better than e-mailing. (Unless of course you don't have e-mail.) E-mail delivery is faster, and can be downloaded into files for fast research in the future. Best of all, it's green—no paper to load into the machine, and file and recycle even later.

This is a great time to review your account information, and replace all those pager and fax numbers with cell numbers and e-mail addresses. You'll be glad you did.

Ten Suggestions for “On-Call” Success

Most of us do not like being on-call. After-hours calls interrupt our lives, and are rarely ever welcomed. That's why we work so hard to be sure that we don't make mistakes, and don't call the wrong person or call when we should hold a message. The following suggestions will help all of us when emergencies develop.

1. Determine which numbers (home, pager, cell, etc.) we should call first for each person and be sure that we understand the order.
2. Have a back-up person for us to call after a specific (and limited) amount of time.
3. Supply a supervisor's or owner's number to be used as a last resort.
4. Ask on-call people to limit their answering machine message while they are on call. Long lead-ins and children with cute messages cost money and time for your company.
5. Instruct on-call people to have writing materials ready at all times.
6. Provide a concise on-call calendar to us at least a few days in advance.
7. Make on-call changes prior to 3:00 PM whenever possible.
8. Ask to speak to a Supervisor when you need to make changes.
9. Confirm on-call when you forward your lines if you'd like - but don't make changes at that time.
10. Review your on-call procedures at least every year (six-months is better).



Our Services Include

Answering Service
Appointment Making
Customer Service
Data Entry
Dealer Locate
Direct Mail
Fulfillment Literature
Help Desk
Hotlines
Pre-Announcements
Relief Receptionist
Reservations
R.S.V.P.
Surveys
Voice Mail

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Search people for
"Lannette Gerbrick", our
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Call us NOW for more info at
301-421-1111

The President's Letter

Dear Friends,

In the June 2011 issue of the Harvard Business Review an article by Adam Grant referred to a recent study which demonstrated that radiologists who saw photographs of patients (rather than just their X-ray images) increased the length of their reports by 29% and improved the accuracy of their diagnoses by 46%. The photos helped turn the images of bones and organs into patients. I was intrigued by this revelation and I've realized that seeing a photo will work in many other ways.

If, as the article suggests, employees are unconsciously inspired to do a better job because they can picture a client, then we want to take advantage of that phenomenon to give you better service. This is one more indicator of what we all know – people like to do business with people they know. That's why we always encourage you to make an appointment to come and visit us. It gives us a chance to put a face with a name, and to feel more like we are your employees. But, if you can't visit, or bring your whole staff over for a meet and greet, why not do the next best thing? Send a photo of you and the employees we contact on a regular basis and let's get to know one another better!

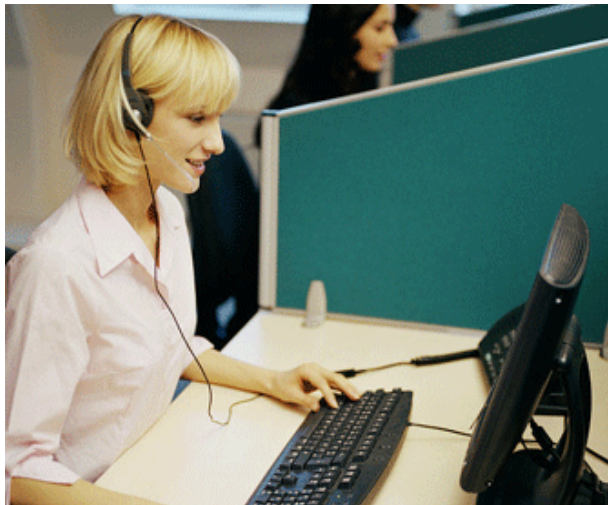
Today, it's easy to snap a photo whether you have a throwaway camera, a top of the line digital or just your phone. You can take one today, and send it via e-mail in just a matter of minutes. Don't procrastinate, get out your camera and share some smiles. Cheese!

Hugs,



Reminder Calls

Are there times we all crave the security of a reminder call? It can be something as simple as asking for a wake up call for an especially early appointment, or asking us to call your elderly relative to remind them to take their medicine.



We can make reminder calls TO you or FOR you. For example, let us call your customers to let them know you will be there to clean their chimney between 1:00 and 4:00 PM. Or ask us to call your patients to remind them of their appointment with you at 10:00 AM (and all times in between). We are here to help you whenever we can. Think of us as another employee; what can we do to make your life easier? Whether you want to make sure YOU are up to catch an early plane, or you want to make sure every client or patient remembers their appointment with YOU, we can help!

Gotta' Giggle

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

Life in 25 Words or Less

“We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us.”

—*Marcel Proust*