



Wisdom Out

*Sustaining Transformational Change in
People, Teams and Organizations*

On the Job Stress Busters

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1. Lunch and Listen Part 1. Eat lunch with someone who will just listen (not give advice or tell you what to do) as you describe something you love about your work. Limit lunch to one hour. Stay focused; no gossip.

2. Lunch and Listen Part 2. Take an aspiring leader to lunch with the specific intent to listen just listen to *them* (not give advice or tell them what to do) as they describe what they think is possible in their work. Limit lunch to one hour. Stay focused; no gossip.

3. Find the Stories. Interview stakeholders, colleagues and

students about something your organization did for them. Take digital photos of each person and put them in a scrapbook along with a couple of quotes from the conversation. Later, when you need renewal and inspiration, thumb through the scrapbook and be reminded about how your work makes a difference. After you make the scrapbook, upload the photos into a digital photo frame where they constantly scroll and infuse the workplace with positive energy.

4. Walk and Learn. Walk down the hall and ask one or two people to tell you what they've learned today. Be sure to tell them that the reason you are asking this question is so *you* can feel renewed. This will make people more forthcoming because they want to be of support to you.

5. My Favorite Mistake. Make a 10-minute renewal date with someone you work with. When you meet up, tell your co-worker about your "favorite mistake"—something related to your meaningful work that might have gone wrong, but that taught you the most valuable lesson.

6. See Systemic Connections. Make a list of the decisions facing you over the next 12 months. Then make another list of the data you'll look at (including surveys, focus groups, trend data, quarterly data) needed for each decision. Notice the overlap and do a happy dance about that. You see, complex decisions usually have systemic connections, so you can leverage information that helps with one decision, to another decision.

7. Get Some Coaching. Schedule a coaching session with someone you work with who has great coaching skills and will ask you the kind of thought leadership questions that create breakthroughs in your thinking. Send them a thank you card afterward with an invitation to reciprocate. Senior leaders who coach their colleagues and direct reports learn more about the work of others and gain insight into the whole system.

8. Thanks for the Opportunity. Write a thank you note to someone for something they allowed you to do to make the organization better. Deliver it to them in person if you can. They may be perplexed at first, "Say what? You're thanking me for something you did?" Tell them you are thanking them because they gave you the chance to lead and grow.

9. Thanks in Advance. Write a thank you in advance note to someone expressing your gratitude in advance for something you need from them. You'll learn how to ask for what you need and you'll experience gratitude, which is a source of renewal and energy. The other person gains the experience of giving and supporting a colleague.

10. Have a Research Date. Pick up one of your "go to" professional journals that you never get to read and skim the table of contents, looking for something that sparks your curiosity. Make one copy of the article, bring it to a colleague, ask him or her to meet you for lunch or a break where you can read it together and talk about it. Your colleague gets to pick the article the next time.

11. Make an Artistic Display of Data. Review key indicators for a project you are leading. Get a poster sheet and markers and represent the data in a format you've never considered before. Or, go to a website such as www.easel.ly that allows you to make infographics for free. Explain your data display with your team.