



Just in case it matters to you:

- **EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR UPDATE:** A survey of some 5,700 office workers by CareerBuilders.com developed the following (not-really-so-surprising) responses: 45% admit they fall asleep on the job; 22% acknowledge stealing from the company; 21% drink alcohol on the job; and 18% “snoop after hours.” In terms of social behavior, 39% are involved in some form of office romance (at minimum kissing) and 22% acknowledged “spreading a rumor about co-workers.” [JRNL OF ACCOUNTANCY – Oct 09]
- **WHEN TERMINATED WORKERS FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE,** the last employer may be subject to increased U.I. rates if termination was a layoff or for lack of work, versus firing for cause. In general, to be eligible for benefits, a worker can’t quit voluntarily or be fired for ‘misconduct.’ Examples of what constitutes misconduct include acts of dishonesty, intoxication, fighting, using offensive language, or “intentionally, knowingly, or deliberately failing to perform, or performing in a grossly negligent manner” – the area where disputes mostly occur. While a worker “owes material duty to the employer – e.g. showing up for work, performing to best of ability, obeying a reasonable order, not sleeping on the job, etc” – the employer must still be able to demonstrate that fired employees have received prior communication “about areas of improvement and needs for immediate change.” DCG can help you with Human Resource procedures to avoid U.I. problems, as well as ‘unfair termination’ claims. [METAFORCEAGENTS.COM NWSLTR – Sep 09]
- **AS IRRATIONAL AS IT MAY BE, PEOPLE SIMPLY CLING TO THEIR OPINIONS.** So, often, even after being presented with contradictory evidence, people “actually intensify their existing beliefs, making them more rigid and entrenched.” According to social science research, people “fend off evidence that strongly held beliefs are wrong” through a process of ‘motivated reasoning’ that such beliefs “are their opinions,” justifying selective interpretation “even when presented with compelling, factual data from a trusted source – and still finding a way to dismiss it... When presented with new, troubling information, ideologues...use ‘contorted logic’ to make the conflicting evidence just go away.” In the context of today’s ‘hot button’ political debates, this human nature factor is hardly encouraging. [THE ATLANTIC.COM – Oct 09]
- **ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS DU JOUR:** With every cow producing as much manure as eighteen humans, the EPA now warns that *E.coli*-laded cow manure is the “primary polluter of the nation’s streams and rivers,” creating unsafe drinking water in many wells and aquifers. In one locale, some 40,000 cows expelling over a million gallons of daily waste contaminated over 100 wells with water which “smelled like a barn coming out of the faucet” and sickened “dozens of people with stomach ailments and infections.” ~/~ Another somewhat-related crisis appears to be the “grave and gathering threat to life on earth from extra-soft toilet paper.” Produced from “extra-long wood fibers found only in old-growth trees,” too many are evidently being cut down for this extravagance (around 5% of forest products) which impacts the atmosphere’s carbon-dioxide level. This has prompted eco-activists like Greenpeace, now pushing to “abandon our mad pursuit of velvety soft toilet paper and embrace the significantly rougher recycled tissue used by Europeans... in a battle for America’s behinds.” [THE WEEK – Oct 9, 09]
- **AMERICAN HOMES ARE NOW FORECLOSING AT THE RATE OF ONE EVERY 13 SECONDS,** over 6,600 filings per day. “With nearly two million already this year, the flood shows no sign of abating anytime soon... That’s the rhythm of a crisis that threatens to choke off hopes for a recovery in the U.S. housing market, as it annually destroys hundreds of billions in property values.” Residence foreclosures are projected to peak by end of next year but may impact nationwide home prices “until 2020...and in states hardest hit by the housing bust, like Florida and California, the rebound will take until 2030,” according to Moody’s Economy.com – since “people are no longer defaulting simply because of a change in the payment structure of their loan, but because of lost jobs or reduced hours or pay.” Unemployment is currently at a 26-year high, “in the latest evidence that a turnaround in the jobs market is the missing link in the economic recovery.” [REUTERS – Oct 8, 09]
- **THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK:** *“I get up every morning determined both to change the world and to have one helluva good time. Sometimes this makes planning the day difficult...”*

FOR A GENUINE LOOK AT THE 1960s (for those old enough to care), check this out: <http://objificks.com/TakeMeBackToTheSixties.htm>