



Just in case it matters to you:

- TEXTING WHILE DRIVING INCREASES THE ODDS OF AN ACCIDENT BY **23 TIMES** according to a Virginia Tech study which installed video cameras in the cabs of long-haul trucks, and monitored six million miles of truckers driving over 18 months. *Accidents prevailed when drivers typically spent five seconds or more looking at their texting devices.* When road attention was diverted by merely *reaching* for something (hand-held device, cigarettes, radio/CD tuning, etc.) or cellphone dialing, the accident rate also increased dramatically – by six to seven times. [TIME – Aug 10, 09]
- POORLY DESIGNED PERFORMANCE-APPRAISAL SYSTEMS ARE INEFFECTIVE AND CAN BE DANGEROUS. In weak systems, the biggest issue is usually mis-focus of appraisals on the “presumed deficiencies or strengths” of *individuals* – rather than on team results or “systemic reasons, such as inferior technology” that may underlie poor results. Additionally, inherent biases in the evaluators’ processes (e.g. “managers having greater commitment to people they’ve picked...or underlings sharing their social demographic”) coupled with “evidence that gender and race affect reviews... invariably create competition and discourage collaboration,” as well as achieving optimal results and retention. DCG can help. [BUSINESSWEEK – Aug 3, 09]
- HISTORICALLY, ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS FOLLOWED BY EXTENDED PERIODS OF GROWTH ARE A RECURRING CYCLE. Also, the trends and circumstances endemic to each recessionary period are pretty consistent, involving: overcapacity in products and services; expanding technology with correlated litigation over intellectual property; significant health care issues; consumer pressure for price reduction and/or cost controls; declining business profits; and expanding merger activities for organizations having trouble meeting objectives on their own. In these periods, despite “considerable uncertainty and turmoil, good opportunities existed for companies that were innovative and flexible enough to adapt to the market.” Strategic Planning can be an efficient and cost-effective process. It’s what we do at DCG; let us help. [LAW PRACTICE – Jul/Aug 09]
- THE INFINITE WISDOM OF CALIFORNIA LEGISLATORS is exemplified by new law which bans use of ‘transfats’ (like lard or Crisco) by food service chains after 2009. Arguments against transfats are appropriately based on their contribution to heart disease and obesity so one of the stated purposes of AB 97 was to *protect childrens’ health*. However, as a result of the customary political and partisan wrangling in Sacramento, the law ended up specifically *exempting* school cafeterias, along with deferring applicability to deep-fried donuts, cake batter or non-baked goods for an extra year. FYI: the average American eats around 16 pounds of french fries, 23 pounds of pizza, and 26 pounds of candy every year.
- DIVORCE AFFECTS PHYSICAL AS WELL AS EMOTIONAL HEALTH. A Univ. of Chicago study of 9,000 people age 51-61 found that “pretty consistently, the worst off are the currently widowed, divorced or separated... suffering 20% more chronic health problems, including cancer and heart disease, than married people... In those situations, people are more likely to sleep poorly and ignore their health, and less likely to visit the doctor or exercise. They’re also immersed in emotional turmoil and stress which is itself a health risk.” [THE WEEK –Aug 14, 09]
- IMMIGRATION & CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE) ARRESTED OVER 6,200 EMPLOYERS LAST YEAR for “hiring or continued employment of aliens that employers know are unauthorized to work in the U.S.” with civil and criminal penalties, for repeated violations, as high as \$11,000 per illegal worker and up to six months in prison. Since current Homeland Security policy is to target such employers rather than the workers, proper handling of required I-9 forms is critical – including retention of supporting documents for the later of three years post-hiring or one year post-termination. If you don’t have a simple and protective process, DCG can help. [CITRON & DEUTSCH NWSLTR – Aug 09]
- THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK: ***“Envy is the art of counting the other fellow’s blessings instead of your own.”***

“To us, slavery and tyranny are far-fetched concepts that history has righted – but to history, the far-fetched concept is the idea that men should be free.” –Glenn Beck

“The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it’s too low and we reach it.” -Michelangelo