



Just in case it matters to you:

- "GOSSIP AND RUMOR SPREADING AMONG EMPLOYEES HAS INCREASED 54% SINCE THE RECESSION BEGAN" according to a Society for Human Resource Mgmt study. During rough economic times, "fear, anxiety and resistance can quickly take over an organization, causing employee productivity, morale and engagement to plummet. When change occurs – or is simply rumored to occur – stress can take over and cause serious disruption to operations." Strategies to mitigate this impact include (1) Communicating accurate info on a regular basis, in order to offset the rumor mill and clarify *why* changes are needed; (2) "Letting people know it's normal to feel anxious – even panicked – and that the company still values their contribution"; (3) Reframing issues as 'challenges' to optimally position for the future. "Making change part of a company's internal dialogue is critical to successful management." DCG can help. [LEGAL MANAGEMENT – Aug 09]
- "MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES TO SPEND EVER-MORE HOURS AT WORK IS BAD FOR THE BOTTOM LINE... Endless workdays not only wreak havoc on personal lives, they impair judgment and hurt performance." Better to focus on getting more productivity during regular, reasonable-hour workdays. Surveys suggest that 'time-waste' ranges to several hours daily in some companies, resulting from a spectrum of causes including "excessive Blackberrying," procrastinating important tasks until they become pre-emptively urgent, and the usual suspect: useless meetings. DCG has helped hundreds of clients develop systems and processes which promote efficiency and effectiveness. We can help you. [THE WEEK – Aug 28, 09]
- FISH IS HEALTHIER FOR THE HEART, BUT NOT SO MUCH FOR THE REST OF THE BODY, as Mercury levels continue to rise. A recent U.S. Geological Survey found traces in 100% of fish sampled from nearly 300 streams across the country, at levels which in 25% of the streams exceeded EPA "safe for human consumption" standards; in another two-thirds of the tests, levels exceeded "what scientists believe fish-eating mammals should ingest." Ocean water fish, particularly larger species like tuna, sword and shark, also register consistently higher levels since Mercury "accumulates as it works its way up the food chain." The Nat'l Research Council estimates over 60,000 new babies each year are "at risk of learning disabilities because they have been exposed the womb...and prenatal & infant exposure can cause mental retardation, deafness and blindness." In adults, Mercury can be toxic, leading to "reproductive problems, memory loss and tremors." [THE ECONOMIST – Aug 29, 09]
- "FEAR AND GREED ARE THE EMOTIONS THAT RULE THE MARKETS and changes in stock prices simply reflect the swing of the pendulum between these two extremes... Warren Buffett calls fear and greed 'super contagious diseases – if you catch either one, you risk serious damage to your financial health.'" The thin line between them, in today's tumultuous economy, is also impacted by the intersecting pendulum of 'inflation phobia.' On one end is potential for high *inflation* which would help settle the tremendous budget deficits (\$1.8 trillion this year alone); many feel that "the Fed's decision to pump cash in the financial system has already made high inflation inevitable." At the opposing end of this spectrum is the argument that "the Fed may seem to be printing money, but bankers are scared to lend it out, consumers are just as terrified of borrowing it, and nobody's spending it. So the real risk is actually nasty *deflation*." If you're a gambler or just someone who enjoys the ramifications of volatility, this is your time. Others would be smart to make no hasty investment decisions. [MONEY – Aug 09]
- CORPORATE OFFICERS AREN'T NECESSARILY IMMUNE from employment-related lawsuits in bankruptcy. The Federal Appeals Court recently held that three individual corporate officers (including the non-shareholder CFO) were *liable for unpaid wages to employees*, on the basis that these officers "controlled the employment relationship of the wage earners." Also be aware that, in bankruptcy, "IRS has a history of pursuing individuals who are responsible for mechanical preparation of paychecks and mailing payroll tax deposits, even a bookkeeper who merely signs checks." [SIEFFLAW.COM – Aug 09]
- THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK: **California law allows a person who receives a 'bounced check' to sue for service charges and, in some cases, triple damages up to \$1,500.**

"One of the disadvantages of alcohol is that it makes a person mistake words for thoughts.."

"The first human who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization." –Sigmund Freud