

## STEWARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

### Work!

Eugene V. Debs once said, “Workers are the saviors of society.” As stewards of society, Christians productively work not only for themselves, but also for others. 2 Thess. 3:10 insists that if a person will not work, neither should he eat. Non-productive, lazy, loafing sluggards are told to go to the ant, consider its ways and be wise. (Prov. 6:6) The slothful eventually get what they deserve. Non-productivity produces poverty. (Prov. 6:10-11) Idleness is dangerous. Benjamin Franklin stated, “An idle mind is the devil’s workshop.”

### Biblical Work Attitudes

**Be a Servant** - Imitate Jesus who came into the world not to be served but to serve. Being a faithful servant is a mark of greatness. (Mk. 10:43-45)

**Be Respectful** - Submit to superiors with humble respect whether they are considerate or harsh. (1 Peter 2:18; 1 Tim. 6:1-2)

**Be Faithful** - Fulfill responsibilities to the best of your abilities even when the boss is not around. (Eph. 6:5-6; Col. 3:22-23)

**Be Trustworthy** - Don’t steal time or objects in the workplace. Endeavor to please superiors. Don’t mouth off with bad back talk. (Titus 2:9)

**Be Wholehearted** - “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.” (Eph. 6:7)

### Employer Responsibilities

Employers should treat their workers with respect in a non-threatening way and provide them with what is right and fair. (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1) In a fierce marketplace of competition, this is sometimes overlooked. In order to survive economically, some employers reduce costs by having three people do the work of five. Proper wages are not provided, benefits are overlooked and bad working conditions left unattended. Christian employers, however, regard themselves as God’s instruments of provision for their workers. Overcoming the temptation of selfish greed, they endeavor to provide for their workers, in a fair, agreeable and equitable way.

### Stay Focused

Workplace distractions are everywhere, especially in an age of social media and open-plan offices. Checking one’s Facebook, chatting with co-workers, wasting time on less important projects, etc., can gobble up time. Suddenly the deadline for

an important task arrives, the job’s not done and you’re stressed out. Christopher Kim at Chapman University offers some tips on staying focused:

- > Set up a to-do list within four priority areas - urgent; important; not urgent; not important.
- > Tackle tough, critical tasks early in the day.
- > Block out time for uninterrupted work.
- > Check emails after important tasks are done. Limit how often you check.
- > Avoid social media and Google News.
- > Take 15 minute mental breaks twice a day.
- > After work, recharge with physical activity, preferably outdoors in fresh air.
- > Increase focused energy by eating healthy meals, maintaining a good weight level, sleeping at least eight hours and exercising regularly.

### Workplace Fears

For many, work is a scary place. Some are actually afraid to go to work. A poll by Robert Half Global of Menlo Park, CA, revealed the top five work related fears:

1. Having too much work on your plate that will lead to stress or burnout (31%).
2. Making a serious mistake at work (28%).
3. Having conflicts with workers (16%).
4. Being out-performed by peers (13%)
5. Missing an important deadline (8%)

### Handling Workplace Fears

Alan Resinger of Greater Cleveland Accountemps, offers suggestions in addressing workplace fears. If overworked, speak up; let management know you’re biting off more than you can chew. Don’t try to cover up a mistake; address it immediately with your supervisor so it can be quickly and efficiently resolved. Solve worker conflicts with respectful, polite, face-to-face communication; an email, text or letter avoids conversation and hinders resolution. If disturbed by possibly being out-performed by peers, face up to your inadequacies and do something to improve yourself. Avoid unmet deadlines by addressing tasks with adequate time-line priorities.

### RELATED RESOURCES

[www.selc.lcms.org](http://www.selc.lcms.org) (Personal Stewardship)

Life Issues: “Controlling Stress”

Christian Life: “Time Management”

“Work, the Spice of Life”