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Do Something

by Ken Embley

Forgive me for being personal, but I am feeling a little guilty. Last week, I met with some associates on campus from Continuing Education. They were kind enough to give me a copy of their September—December 2005 Professional Education catalog and to paraphrase, I read:



You can try to fake your way through life using important-sounding—or even made-up—buzzwords. However, if you have minimal skills and yesterday's knowledge, you will not get far. In today's environment, you need real skills and real knowledge to boost your career and increase your organization's contribution to our needy state of affairs. Moreover, the best way to gain these necessary skills and abilities is through a commitment on your part to continue your education.

Well, that got me thinking and for the fun of it, I did a Google search with “results of 1 of about 91,000,000 for continuing education.” Wow, there is a lot of stuff out there on the topic of continuing education. It must be important! So, what am I doing to continue my education? Very little—and that is why I am feeling a little guilty.

The correct answer to “What am I doing...” of course, is *something*—*something* that is *continuous* and *develops knowledge and skill* in my particular profession. I thought about last week, “What did I do during the week to develop my knowledge and skill, *something* that was beyond my required work?” Honestly, I figure that if I can answer my own question, I might be on the right track, but all I could think of was what I could or should have done and I did not come up with anything.

At this point, I must admit, I cannot help but think that if you are reading about my sad state of affairs and have *something* to do, stop reading this dumb stuff and get on with your profession and do those meaningful *something's*. For those of you that are like me and need *something* to do, I suggest we find some way to do *something*. Here is what I plan to do.

First off, I need to find time to do *something*. Well, actually, time is not the question—it is a matter of me making *something* a priority. Dang—maybe *something* is not worth the effort (there goes 30 minutes of Law and Order, the evening news, or in my case, staring out the window on the bus). However, if I do *something*, I might be able to get out of that community development project I do not want to do anyway. I guess I will commit to find some time to do *something*.

Now, if I am going to do *something*, what should I do? My thinking is to find a topic of interest, a topic about *something* that will develop my knowledge and skills. I decide to visit sites such as www.amazon.com or better yet for my profession, www.josseybass.com or www.pfeiffer.com where I can search to find the latest “practical application” books on topics of interest. Thirty minutes a day for five or six days, a week and I can get two to three hours of *something* every week.

Then, if I drop that community development project, I can find time to take a class. I know that local school districts, colleges and the different universities throughout the state offer all kinds of classes. I think I will check the offerings at the University of Utah just to see if they have *something* of interest www.continue.utah.edu.

It seems that the list of the *something's* I can do to continue my education is endless. The *something's* can range from seeking a mentor or volunteering for a project of interest to taking an on-line class or teaching a class (hey, a nice way for me to earn a little money while learning about *something*). At any rate, my plan is simple, what I have to do is make a commitment to do *something* to continue my education.

Hey, what about you—are you doing *something* today?

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