

## Practitioner's Corner: HRD Poster Board

### Building a Personal Foundation – That Works!

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*Your Personal Coach Today*

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Lately, anytime I speak with someone, he/she asks me one of three questions:

1. How can I get more time in the day for me?
2. How can I get more control over my life?
3. How can I get a life?

Ultimately, we all want to get more energy in our day-to-day lives. Are any of these questions relevant to you? What do you do?

#### **Best Practices Shared**

**G**et yourself a journal or notepad. These are the most important notes you will ever write down. Before you can start any project, you must have a picture of what you want to accomplish or build. The same strategy is needed in creating a personal foundation. I want you to think in terms of numbers. Think about a 10 representing the most ideal life. What would your life look like if it were a 10 today? Think about all parts of your life—your roles and responsibilities—and number them 1–10.

For example, when you consider your roles and responsibilities, they may include: daughter / son; wife / husband; mother / father; sister / brother / friend / community advocate / volunteer: Which of these roles is your number one priority? Yes, they are all important, but you must now re-prioritize them to represent their importance to your current life. You may have young children that moves your “parent role” higher on your priority list than your role as a daughter / son role or friend role. You also may not have time for community advocate / volunteer role – so that becomes a 10.

Now move on to other roles: job / work / other parts of you and use the same logic.

With the new priority system begin to describe in writing what would this role look like if you were to have ideal conditions in your life – what would your best work / effort look like and what would be the outcome / result of this best work (your 10 in effort). You are beginning to craft your personal vision of success.

Review your list and highlight the areas where there are large gaps – think about the things that need to change in order to close these gaps. Next, review the small gaps, and list the changes needed in order to narrow these gaps as well. As you make these lists, also include the people around you who need to be included or excluded from certain roles. What are you digging up? Like in construction, you will have small rocks or large boulders to remove. Some you will toss aside with ease, and others will require some muscle.

So, here you go! Once your numbered list is established, consider these tools to help smooth your foundation:

1. Restore *integrity* – to yourself! Where in your life are you avoiding the truth with yourself? You tell yourself you want something, but are you willing to do what needs to be done to finish this work? What tasks, projects, or commitments are unfinished?
2. Get your *needs* met. First, you need to realize what you need and acknowledge your expectations to those around you. If you feel selfish – don't! We all have needs, and they are basic to everyone. The most difficult part is clarifying what you need, so do not skip this step. Spend some quiet time reflecting and capturing what you need. Keep your thoughts positive.
3. Extend your *boundaries* by identifying your *limits*. What are the things that you want people to do when they are interacting with you? This is the concept of “teach people how to treat you.” Learn to say no, it is not a negative word. Sometimes we take on more than we should because we can do it—it does not mean we should. Only say yes to those things that get you closer to fulfilling your life's desires.
4. Raise your *standards*. Standards are values people can expect when they interact with you. Remember what it felt like to get an A in school? What would happen if you gave everyone you interact with an A before you begin the interaction? How would that change your standards and raise theirs?
5. Eliminate what you *tolerate*. What do you tolerate in your world: at work, at home, in your relationships? What are the small things that zap your energy, and what can you do to get it back? For instance, you might tolerate watching the news each day and comment, “How sad . . .” What if you did not watch the news today? How would that influence your day? Each day, try to eliminate one small thing that you tolerate and keep track of your results.
6. Develop a strong personal *community*. Make a deliberate choice as to who has permission to be in your life. Identify your inner circle and then branch out from there – notice anything? Are you missing anyone? Remember, you can say no to the outer circle and find ways to work with your inner circle more.

7. Create a *reserve*. Where in your life do you need a reserve? Perhaps you need a creative or spiritual outlet. Maybe you need to create a financial or relational reserve. How would your world be changed if you had the reserves you need? What will it take to get them?

Who do you need to be in order to have a solid personal foundation? Do you need to be more of a risk taker? Do you need to have more courage to speak up and inform others of your needs and expectations? Do you need to be more rigorous in your attitude, in your approach and in your actions?

Think about how you can apply these tools to your life. Thoughts without a plan are only dreams. Thoughts with plans behind them can transform your life into a wonderful reality!

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### About the Author

Kathleen B. Cashman is president of Cashman Consulting, LLC and is the Northeast regional director for WOMEN Unlimited, Inc. a leadership development organization lending expertise on women's issues, mentoring, leadership education, and networking. Kathleen has worked across industries and throughout all functions and levels of these organizations – both for profit and not-for-profit. Kathleen is also an effective coach – helping individuals maximize their strengths and leverage them toward creating a more effective lifestyle that works. Today, it is so important to spend your time where you get the most happiness. Understanding how to identify these is also a key success factor. Kathleen often speaks to large and small groups and associations on a wide variety of topics. For more information, call Cashman Consulting, LLC at 609-518-3540.

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