



**"The Strait Facts"**  
**Prince Edward Island Chapter Newsletter**  
**April 2006**  
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### Never Fall for Fashion, Always Be in Style

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Women frequently want to have a mad passionate fling with fashion, but given a choice, most of us would marry style. That’s because style, like a good man, doesn’t let you down. When fashion seduces you, the affair usually burns itself out before the next season.

Fashion is a show-off, concerned with the cutting edge. Style has seen it all before and knows that the classic tenets of simplicity, beauty, and elegance have staying power. Fashion is a cult; style is a philosophy.

Fashion mocks individuality; style celebrates it. Never forget that fashion, while frequently a charmer, is also a self-centered, frivolous bore. Style is high-spirited and generous, given to touting your best features for all the world to see. Fashion is a provocateur; style prefers to soothe. Fashion is self-congratulatory; style waits for the inevitable compliments. “Fashion can be bought,” Edna Woolman Chase observed in 1954. “Style must be possessed.”

“Fashion guesses, so it can only bluff. Style knows. Fashion is impatient and eventually passes away. Style is steadfast and waits for every woman’s awakening, because authentic style is born of Spirit.

Fashion fades. Only style remains.



### Certification Study Group Update

The CPS Exam date is fast approaching and our group is busily preparing for it. We now meet on a weekly basis (sometimes twice a week). Early on, our format was a general question and answer session on a particular topic with much round table discussion. As we get closer to exam time we have modified our format and now all study group participants bring to each session 15 multiple choice questions on an assigned topic. We compile the questions and write a mock exam within a set time frame. Our group session generates lots of discussion and laughter, but most importantly we are learning from each other.

We have applied for and secured a testing site here in Charlottetown. One of our members, June Harper, has very generously agreed to proctor the exam. For the next month we will be very busy study - study - studying. Wish us luck!!!

PS: We’ll tell you what it was like after we write on May 6.

The **deadline** for the May issue of “The Strait Facts” is April 28<sup>th</sup>. Please submit your articles, photos, tidbits etc. to the Newsletter Committee.



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### Why Certification? What are the CPS and CAP Ratings?

The Certified Professional Secretary® (CPS) and the Certified Administrative Professional™ (CAP) ratings are the industry marks of excellence. Perhaps more than any other distinction, they indicate to employers and colleagues the desire to succeed in your career. In addition to enhancing your marketability for potential career opportunities and advancement, attaining Certification will also give you experience and:

- \* pride in accomplishment
- \* increased self-esteem
- \* greater respect from employees and colleagues
- \* confidence to assume greater responsibilities

To achieve CPS / CAP Certification, individuals must successfully complete extensive examinations covering all aspects of the profession. The CPS Examination is a one day three-part exam which includes

- \* Office Systems and Technologies
- \* Office Administration
- \* Management

The CAP Examination has an additional one-part exam covering

- \* Advanced Organizational Management.

Candidates may choose to obtain either the CPS Certification or the CAP Certification. CPS holders may choose to complete the section on Advanced Organizational Management at a later date, thus

obtaining both a CPS and CAP distinction. A Certification Review Guide, application forms, examination dates, and information about what to expect and how to prepare can be found on the IAAP website.

#### Future Exam and Deadline Dates

Following are the dates and application deadlines for future exam administrations:

Exam Date	Application Deadline
Friday, Nov. 3 & Saturday, Nov 4, 2006	August 15, 2006
Friday, May 4 & Saturday, May 5, 2007	February 25, 2007
Friday, Nov. 2 & Saturday, Nov. 3, 2007	August 15, 2007

New candidates can find additional information on the website at <http://www.iaap-hq.org/index.htm> or contact Edith Cardy, Certification Chair for more information. Our Chapter has Study Guides and materials available to assist in you in preparing for the exams. If there are enough people interested, a study group can be easily organized.

Edith Cardy  
Certification Chair



## Be smarter at work, slack off

In a world of too much work and too much multitasking, the best way to beat the competition may be to do less.

By [Anne Fisher](#), FORTUNE senior writer  
March 17, 2006

Remember the story of Archimedes lolling in his bathtub? To an observer, he'd have seemed to be wasting time. While ostensibly doing nothing, however, he discovered the principle of displacement, a cornerstone of physics. Would he have reached the same insight in a quick shower?

Unlikely. And while you might say that's ancient history, don't be too sure.



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Consider that for most industries, the U.S. can't hope to be the low-cost producer in a global economy. With innovation now our main competitive strength, creativity is crucial for anyone who wants to move up.

But it's really, really hard, if not impossible, for the human brain to come up with fresh new ideas when its owner is overworked, overtired, and stressed out. And in today's wonderful world of non-stop work, 40% of American adults get less than seven hours of sleep on weeknights.

"The physiological effects of tiredness are well-known. You can turn a smart person into an idiot just by overworking him," notes Peter Capelli, a professor of management at Wharton.

Still, putting in more than 50 hours a week at the office has become routine -- and that doesn't count time spent doing paperwork at home, answering e-mail at the airport, or talking on the phone in the car.

Sooner or later, companies' performance has to reflect that, Capelli says. "On the organizational level, what you get is, everyone is so focused on running flat-out to meet current goals that the whole company is unable to step back and think."

Indeed, "the notion that busyness is the essence of business can only do us long-term harm," writes consultant Tom DeMarco in a book called *Slack: Getting Past Burnout, Busywork, and the Myth of Total Efficiency*.

DeMarco knows the word "slack" has some not-so-hot connotations -- slacking off, slacker, slack-jawed... -- but his definition is different: the degree of freedom required to effect change.

"Companies need to respect the time it takes to do strategic thinking," he says. "Task-oriented thinking is important too, of course. But bigger thinking is slow."

The late Peter Drucker agreed. He wrote in *The Effective Executive* (an eerily prescient 40 years ago), "All one can think and do in a short time is to think what one already knows and to do as one has always done." Gulp.

Moreover, in Drucker's view, simply working longer and longer hours won't help. "To be effective, every knowledge worker, and especially every executive...needs to dispose of time in fairly large chunks," he wrote. "To have small dribs and drabs of time at his disposal will not be sufficient even if the total is an impressive number of hours."

Hmm, small dribs and drabs of time...and, just think, the BlackBerry hadn't been invented yet.

#### The multitasking trap

It's not really news that so-called multitasking can actually make people less effective at their jobs. One detailed study five years ago by psychologists at the University of Michigan demonstrated that, because the human brain needs time to shift gears between tasks, the more switching back and forth you have to do -- between, say, talking on the phone, reading e-mail, and thinking about your next meeting, all while scarfing down a sandwich at your desk -- the less proficiently you will tackle any of it (except maybe the sandwich).

The "time cost" of refocusing your attention may be only a few seconds with each switch, but the researchers found that, over time, it reduced people's total efficiency by 20% to 40%.

#### Seeing connections, when you have time

What scientists have only recently begun to realize is that people may do their best thinking when they are not concentrating on work at all. If you've ever had a great idea pop into your head while you were washing your car, walking your dog, or even napping, you already know what a team of Dutch psychologists revealed last month in the journal *Science*: The unconscious mind is a terrific solver of complex problems when the conscious mind is busy elsewhere or, perhaps better yet, not overtaxed at all.

This brings us back to Archimedes, whose "Eureka!" moment in the bath -- or, to cite another example, Isaac Newton's discovery of gravity while loafing around under an apple tree -- was a classic example of a kind of creativity known as remote association, or associative thinking. As the name implies, it's a knack for seeing connections among things that appear on the surface to be unrelated to each other.

For example, consider this sample question from the standard test for this trait, as developed by a University of Southern California psychologist named Sarnoff Mednick: "What word is related to the following other three? Cookies, sixteen, heart."

If you answered "sweet," well done.

Great innovators score off the charts in associative thinking, but most of us are capable of it to some degree -- if given enough slack, in Tom DeMarco's sense of the word.

So it could well be that, in the era of knowledge work, the most prosperous companies will turn out to be those that encourage people to build some slack into their days. (A first step, according to DeMarco, might be to cancel as many meetings as possible.)

#### The Google example

If you doubt it, consider Google. On February 23, the company unveiled a new product called Page Creator, which allows people who can't write HTML code to create their own web pages quickly and easily.

Within hours, this was such a smash hit that the company had to put a temporary limit on the number of [Google \(Research\)](#) users who can sign up for it.

Page Creator is the brainchild of an engineer named Justin Rosenstein whose relatives were constantly bugging him to build web pages for them. He came up with the elegant technology behind the product while noodling around at the office on a project unrelated to his regular job.

Google's headquarters in Mountain View, Calif., is a famously laid-back place, replete with lap pools, massage rooms, pool tables, free *haute cuisine*, and loads of other stress-reducing amenities like onsite dry cleaners and hair stylists.

"We want to take as much hurry and worry out of people's lives as we can, because a relaxed state of mind unleashes creativity," says Stacy Sullivan, the company's HR director. "And everybody's on flextime here, so we don't reward face time or working super-long hours. We just measure results."

In the end, what else matters? Of course, not every workplace can match Google's. But plenty of companies might do a lot worse than to emulate the thinking behind it.



**Get well wishes** are being sent out to Gale Taylor who recently had surgery.



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Nominations (TBA – Feb. '06)

# Mark Your Calendar For Upcoming Events

- ✉ Please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>** for our Professional Day Workshop. June, Judy, Millie MacKenzie and Janet are working behind the scenes to get things organized for this great event. Hope everyone has signed up to come.
- ✉ Canadian Divisions Conference "CAP it all in the Capital" May 18 – 20. For more information contact Co-ordinators from the Ottawa Chapter: Nicole Theriault ([nicole.theriault@nrc.ca](mailto:nicole.theriault@nrc.ca)) or Kim Picard ([kpicard@regionalgroup.com](mailto:kpicard@regionalgroup.com))



Birthday wishes are being sent out to:

- ♦ Vice-President Millie MacKenzie (April 28<sup>th</sup>)



# Happy Easter