

Bulletin Board: An entertaining side to business

by Amy_Winter

A high school teacher referred to her as "wildly sophisticated." Nicole Williams identifies with this term and has now turned it into a way of life. "Wildly Sophisticated Media," now known as WORKS, attaches career with fashion, networking and entertainment.

"We are known for taking a traditional business plan and making it more conversational," says Williams.

WORKS redefines career as fun and glamorous. Williams explores career as a life outside of the 9-to-5 office job. She discusses romance, power in relationships and money management methods. Her Web site gives professional women the chance to share their stories and gain more career life tips through a weekly e-mail and several online articles.

Williams wanted to write an edgy entertainment career book when she was seeking information on career building, a book that discussed other issues besides resume writing. Serving as the foundation for her business, her first book "Wildly Sophisticated," is a "bold new attitude for career success" aimed at businesswomen ages 25 to 40.

Now with two books, a TV show and a Web site, Williams has had the opportunity to apply her own life of personal career principles and strategies to her company. She says she pushed the limits in order to learn something new; she took risks in order to find out which ones were successful. Her book is based on these experiences.

"It means so much to me because it comes from real life," says Williams. "It isn't just a theory, which makes it consumable and readable."

Williams emphasizes that women start doing something even if they feel unprepared. Perfection isn't attainable and as long as women give it their all, they won't fail. Many times workers undervalue themselves, especially when it comes to young women starting out in the workplace.

"Women can gain more in their careers by taking little risks that feed a sense of confidence," says Williams. "The world is so forgiving; you can learn how to do better the next time."

Not only do women need to take risks, but they also should be willing to ask questions. It is a balance between having a lot to offer and having a lot to learn. Seeking help and admitting you don't have all the

answers helps build success through relationships and partnerships in the office.

Williams admitted that this company was designed to target women ages 18 to 34; however, she feels it has just as much value to men as well as to older women returning to work in order to reinvent themselves. WORKS is for those who want to move to the next level of success and desire more in their careers.

"You can reinvent yourself at any stage," she said. "You can change course at any point."

In addition to the WORKS Web site and the weekly e-mail, Williams offers entrepreneur workshops for women to share stories and connect. She creates a fun and entertaining atmosphere, including information on office style commandments.

For more information about the organization, visit www.nicolewilliams.com.

REWARDS WANTED

Employees won't likely receive a gold star or a candy bar for a job well done; however, a little recognition would be nice. Many feel their good work is unnoticed by employers. More than 35 percent of workers said that businesses are unsuccessful at rewarding their employees' beneficial performance, according to OfficeTeam, a staffing service, who surveyed 150 senior executives and 534 full- or part-time employees. Thirty percent of managers answered the same.

A low percentage of both employees and employers agreed that the process is not very effective. A majority of employees (44 percent) and employers (63 percent) thought the rewarding is somewhat effective.

"Businesses need to make retention an ongoing priority," said Diane Domeyer, executive director of OfficeTeam. "Rewarding employees for their accomplishments enhances productivity, reinforces positive behavior, and builds staff morale and loyalty.

"Firms that fail to reward great work risk losing employees to businesses that do invest in recognition programs."

OfficeTeam suggests these meaningful yet simple ways to distinguish staff members:

- Say thank you.
- Celebrate achievements with staff events.
- Reward staff by giving them extra time off or longer lunch breaks.
- Give dedicated and beneficial workers the opportunity to work on desirable projects.

For more information, visit www.officeteam.com.

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