

Janet's Journal

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Happy New Year

Dear [FirstName],

With the start of another year, I encourage you to strive for the life that you deserve by creating new habits, improving your connections, and making sound decisions—from the small, daily ones to the major, life-changing ones. This month's newsletter offers some useful resources, including how to create a mindset for success.

Thinking of buy or sell your home? Looking for information on how to get started on those long-awaited home improvements? If so, I encourage you to reach out and contact me through phone, email, or text. We can discuss the options that best suit your situation. In the meantime, may you make great strides in creating the life you desire.

Wishing you all the best,

Janet Browning

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What Kind of Person?

According to The List website, YouTube performer Riceman once did a social experiment: He told people his brother was missing to see how they would react.

He saw a homeless man standing on a corner, holding up a sign reading: "U.S. Vet in need, please help." Riceman gave the man some change, told him his brother was missing, and gave him a flyer with his brother's picture.

Instead of holding up his own sign to passing cars, the homeless vet held up the sign with Riceman's missing brother on it.

When Riceman returned, he told the homeless man about the experiment and asked him why he chose to hold up the missing person's sign rather than asking for money.

The man replied, "What kind of person would I be if I didn't help someone else?"

Culture That Supports High Performance

Employees reflect the culture of their workplace. If you expect high performance from your employees, create a culture that inspires them to work to the best of their abilities. Start with these key principles:

Communication. Effectively communicating how activities and behaviors can affect profits and customer satisfaction helps employees know where they can improve.

Capability. Do employees have the knowledge and skills they need to do their jobs? Training in technical skills may be necessary, but don't forget "soft" skills, such as communication and teamwork, which are just as important.

Resources. Tools and equipment are important resources, but don't neglect the less obvious ones, such as workplace environment, culture and atmosphere, and the most vital resource—time.

Motivation. Money can be an important factor, but praise, recognition, and opportunities for development or advancement can be powerful motivators as well.

Words of Wisdom

Here are some random observations about life:

- The older I get, the earlier it gets late.
- It's the start of a brand-new day, and I'm off—like a herd of turtles.
- I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days.
- When you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.

January Question

Q: What globally broadcast parade takes place in Pasadena, California every January?

Dec Question

Q: When is holiday cookie exchange day?

A: December 22

Mindset for Success

Nurturing the right mindset is crucial to long-term success in any occupation or industry. The *Tampa Bay Times* advises adopting attitudes like these:

Learning from mentors. The right mentor can share invaluable experience and advice to guide you in your career. Analyze his or her approach to people, challenges, and opportunities. Ask lots of questions, and listen to your mentor's advice.

Being a good team member. You don't get ahead all by yourself. You'll advance in your career by committing yourself to the goals of your team and organization. You'll be offered opportunities to do more if you show you're willing to support the big picture.

Finding a healthy balance. Don't devote yourself single-mindedly to work, or you'll burn yourself out. Make time for family and friends. Exercise and eat healthy. Give yourself regular down time.

Examining your beliefs. From time to time, look at the values and rules that guide your life. Are they still working for you? Don't be reluctant to make changes that fit your circumstances better as you progress in your life and career.

Giving Back. Wherever you are in your career, be ready to help people. Volunteer, share your expertise, mentor others, and demonstrate that you're willing to help others.



"Only in growth, reform, and change, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found."

- Anne Morrow Lindbergh

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Beware: Hotel Scam

Here's one tip to remember when staying in a hotel: Beware of phone calls pretending to come from the front desk.

The AmoMama website reports on a scam in which someone calls to tell a traveler that the front desk has lost their credit card information, or that the card has been declined.

If that happens, don't automatically read your credit card number to the caller. Instead, hang up and go down to the front desk. If it's legitimate, you'll know right away. Otherwise, you'll protect yourself from a credit card thief.

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A Likely Story

Rosie bought a build-it-yourself cabinet from her local hardware store. At home, she read the instructions carefully and assembled it in the bedroom. However, Rosie and her husband lived near a railway line, and when the train passed by, the cabinet collapsed.

She reassembled the cabinet. Another train passed and the cabinet collapsed again. Rosie phoned the hardware store, and the manager sent out a handyman. He reassembled the cabinet while Rosie went out to the grocery store. When the next train went by, it fell apart again.

Baffled, the handyman rebuilt the cabinet yet again and decided to sit inside it to see what was making it fall apart. He was sitting there when Rosie's husband came home early, went upstairs to his bedroom, and saw the cabinet. Puzzled, the husband opened it up and found the handyman.

"Hey! What are you doing in here?" he demanded.

The handyman replied, "Would you believe I'm waiting for a train?"



Use Email to Network

The pandemic made clear the importance of a new approach to networking: email. It can be a useful tool when used correctly. The Business 2 Community website offers these tips:

Do your homework. Before reaching out to a potential networking contact, find out as much as you can about them. Where do they work? What's their job title? Where else have they worked? Where did they go to school? Look for anything you have in common that you can use as a connection.

Write a good subject line. This is the first thing your contact will see, and it determines whether he or she will even open your email. Make it concise and engaging. Catch the reader's eye in a few words with something like, "A friend of Jack Smith" or "I enjoyed your article."

Establish a common ground. Highlight something you share early on. It could be your industry, your college or grad school, a mutual acquaintance—anything that makes the other person see you're not just targeting him or her at random.

Build trust. People are suspicious. A good way to build trust is to spotlight your professional credentials—your employer, projects you've worked on, awards you've won, or degrees you've earned. Don't brag. Your goal is to give the person an idea of who you are so he or she can decide whether to listen to you.

Make things simple. If you're looking for a meeting, give them a choice of time and plenty of opportunity to respond. Start out small - ask for a few minutes of time or one piece of advice, not a commitment to mentor or a graduate-level seminar on the person's expertise.

Follow up. If they don't respond, follow up once, but don't be a pest. If they do answer, be sure to thank them and accommodate their needs. Courtesy is the key to establishing a warm, long-lasting relationship.

*"If your dreams don't scare you,
they are too small."*

- Sir Richard Branson

Protect Your Home

You can be on a two-week vacation or just out for the day, but your home is always a potential target for burglars. The C|Net website recommends taking these precautions:

- **Keep doors and windows locked.** This may seem obvious, but it's easy to forget. Lock up every time you go to work or to the store. Double-check locks when leaving on a long-term trip.
- **Secure your doors.** Make sure all doors have a deadbolt. Consider smart locks, which you can activate remotely. Check the frames and hinges on your doors to ensure they are strong enough to resist a break-in attempt.
- **Install a home security system.** Door and window sensors can alert you to suspicious movements on or near your house; some will call the police automatically.
- **Hide your valuable items.** Don't position computers, large TVs, or other electronics where they can be easily seen through your windows. Keep jewelry, cash, and other tempting loot out of sight and locked up securely.
- **Invest in outdoor lighting.** Floodlights can keep intruders away. Motion-detecting sensors that activate when someone comes near your house saves you energy and amps up security. Caught off-guard, most potential intruders will leave once the lights come on.
- **Be careful when hiding keys.** Most burglars know to look for keys hidden under the doormat, in your mailbox, or in a flower pot. Store them in a combination lockbox, far from your doorway instead.

How Gen Z Is Buying Homes

Generation Z is starting to look at home buying, and they have their own way of doing it, according to the AZ Big Media website:

Buying Online: Sixty-seven percent would consider buying a home through an online service or app, compared to 39% of millennials.

Spending Less: The median price of an existing home is \$360K, but Gen Z say they are only willing to spend \$150K-\$250K.

Changing Lifestyles: The number one reason Gen Z would choose to buy a home is a lifestyle change, with 46% citing a new job, a growing family, or relocation.



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people you care about.

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