

ADVICE FOR CREATIVES NAVIGATING THE WORKPLACE



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I have to fly a lot for work. Any thoughts on how to pass the time besides emails and movies? As much as I like a good rom-com, I've probably seen enough to get me through both 2017 and 2018!

– *Bored Jetsetter*

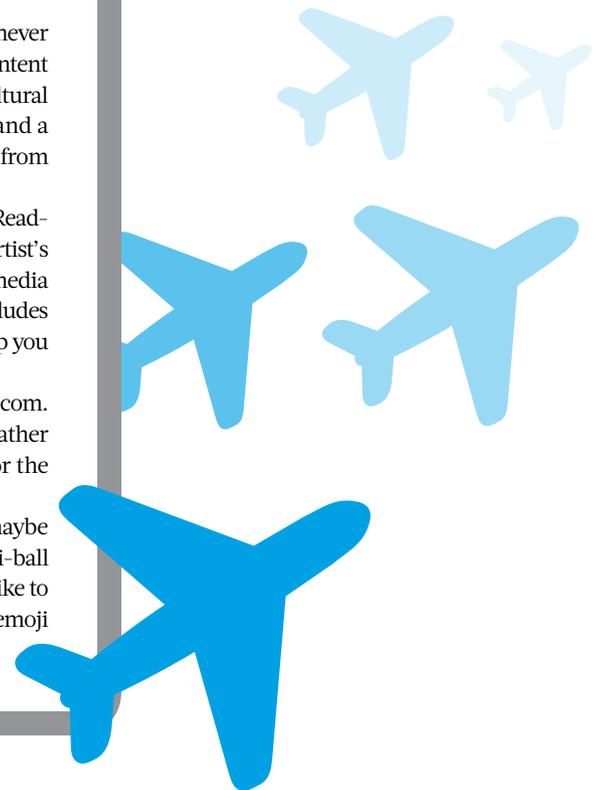
Judy: Hmm. With all of that travel, I'll bet you have less time in general to do something special for "you." Why not transform each journey into a creative retreat and experience something entirely new on every trip? What can you do on a flight that you have never done before? What would motivate you to look forward to travel with renewed enthusiasm? Here are three thought-starters to inspire your new, creative journey.

1) Stop at the newsstand at the airport and choose a couple of magazines that you have never read before. Sure, you may have taken a quick look at these in a waiting room, etc., but your intent here is to dig in and get a well-rounded experience of the publication. Select a newsy, cultural magazine, like *The Atlantic* or *The New Yorker*, a global trend magazine, like *Monocle*, and a fashion magazine, like *Porter*. You may be surprised to find how many new ideas emerge from the magazines to inspire both your home and office life.

2) Visit your favorite bookstore before your trip. I found "Book Lust To Go: Recommended Reading for Travelers, Vagabonds and Dreamers" by Nancy Pearl at Open Book in Minneapolis. "Artist's Café" was on the newsstand at Barnes & Noble. It's packed with 144 pages of artful mixed-media projects. I also picked up the "Flow Mindfulness Workbook." It's printed on tactile paper, includes a bookmark, journal, 3-Minute Breathing Space poster, and is filled with exercises that help you to get outside your comfort zone and break old routines.

I recently discovered a quarterly journal called *Delayed Gratification* at slow-journalism.com. It brings you the top news stories three months after they occurred, with a "final analysis rather than the first, kneejerk reaction." I already ordered it for my next flight and signed up for the free newsletter.

3) Visit Paper Source or any store that sells beautiful blank note cards or stationery, maybe something with a textured finish in your favorite color. Buy a new fast-writing pen (like Uni-ball Vision Elite, it won't leak in flight) and postage stamps. Compile a list of people you would like to thank or let know you're thinking about them. Hand-write notes, add your own personal emoji designs, and mail them when you get to your destination.



I love my boss, but often he makes promises to others that fall into my lap to deliver. When I talk to him about it, he turns it into, "It's no big deal." What do I do?

– *At a Loss with My Boss*



Judy: Obviously, there are many reasons why you value your boss's support. He must also value your work to trust that you will come through for him on any project. Schedule time to meet

with him and express your enthusiasm for the new assignment(s). Then, present a "Timing and Action" grid with a comprehensive list of your projects, including progress updates and

estimated time of completion. Ask for his help in prioritizing your list. Let him know that you want to be successful, but need his guidance to deliver your best work. He will be able to easily assess your workload by reviewing your list and decide whether you can accomplish all that he has requested.

Come prepared to offer solutions of your own, perhaps hiring freelance help. You may also want to ask him if there are lower-priority projects on your list that can be handed off to someone else in

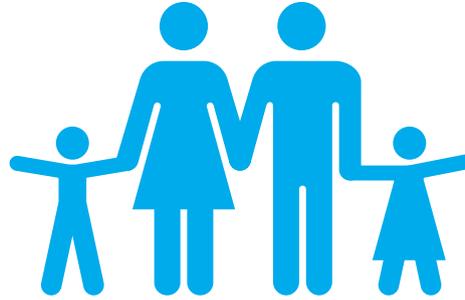
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his department, and offer to guide them to ensure that the projects will be delivered on time. You may find that partnering with him in this way will set a new standard for future assignments.

I have a peer who often thinks she knows my business better. What can I do?

– *Feeling Irritated*

Judy: Frustrated? I'll bet. But can you approach this situation as an opportunity to learn something about human behaviour? Here's an interesting way to look at it through the lens of birth order. First, you'll need to determine your peer's position in the family where she grew up. Was she an only child? If so, she may be used to seeing things from her own limited perspective. Is she an older sister of sister(s)? If so, she may be accustomed to taking care of things and giving direction. If her mother was in a similar position



in her family, your peer would probably demonstrate those traits to an even greater degree.

Next, take a look at your own family position. If you are an oldest sister of sister(s), used to leading the pack (the same as your peer), it's easy to see why you would clash at work. The same holds true if you were both an only child.

You can learn more in the book "Family Constellation: Its Effect on Personality and Social Behavior" by Walter Toman. Chapter 11, "The

Basic Types of Sibling Positions," provides a helpful guide to the characteristic behaviors of a wide variety of individuals. The guidelines are not set in stone, and vary according to parents' positions and other factors, but they are a good place to begin. You can readily gain an understanding of what may be hidden behind certain behaviors, like your peer's lack of respect for your work project boundaries. If you can take a step back and consider that you and your peer's family backgrounds are still in play as adults, you may gain a new perspective and find a better way to work together.

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