



# MSAOP News Notes

January/February 2012

Editor: Kelli Adkins

## THOUGHTS TO IMPROVE THE WORKPLACE IN 2012

Submitted by: Linda Fulton



There are 365 opportunities to improve our personal workplace in 2012!!!

Do your best to promote respect for yourself and others. At times, we use technology exclusively (E-mail, texting, etc.) to communicate with co-workers. It may be more advantageous to have some face-to-face time so that we can learn

about each other and appreciate individual ways of accomplishing tasks as well as the volume of work needed to complete a task (what I perceive as a simple task, may not be as simple as I think).

Avoid negativity. Negativity is toxic and is not helpful to anyone. It is effortless to stay in a negative mode, and challenging to break away from a negative attitude. Take the challenge. Even when you are listening to negative thoughts from others, you might challenge them by asking "how can we change this", and encourage them to share specific ideas and suggestions. Negativity is based on the past, look to the future.

Be aware of generational differences. As a "Baby Boomer", my thought processes and method of accomplishing a task is certainly different than a "Generation Y". Four generations as described by the American Management Association are: "Silent Generation (born before 1946) values hard work, Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) value loyalty, Gen Xers (born between 1965 and 1980) value work-life balances, Generation Y (the generation just entering the workforce, also known as Millennials) values innovation and change".

Make a determined effort to motivate and encourage co-workers to feel good about themselves and their part in the overall Agency mission. Everyone has an essential role in accomplishing the research goals. Sometimes just listening provides encouragement. Praise and thanks are also motivating and encouraging.

Think about your daily tasks and generate a "not-to-do list". We habitually perform tasks that may no longer need to be done. Review your task list.

Most of all we need the optimism that it is worth the time and hassle to create a better working environment.



## Multi-tasking

Submitted by: Drusilla Fratesi

Much has been written recently on multitasking and whether it is efficient or not. Even the term multitasking has been challenged,

with writers on the subject insisting that most of us do not do numerous tasks at one time, but instead switch our attention from one task to another. Hence, the term switchtasking is now being used with or in place of multitasking.

The consensus currently seems to be that both multitasking and switchtasking are inefficient and stressful. According to the Ameri-

can Psychological Association, switching from one task to another, particularly tasks that are unfamiliar, causes us to spend more time on the tasks. Another problem cited regularly is the increase in mistakes when we try to handle too many things at one time. We think we are getting more done, but our productivity actually decreases by as much as 40% according to Peter Bregman in the *Harvard Business Review*.

Besides being inefficient and causing mistakes, multitasking and switchtasking are cited as being stressful. Our ability to focus is important in our work. Be aware that focus is

critical to avoid mistakes and work more efficiently. Check and re-check your work. Read emails; don't just scan them. Scanning can give you the subject matter, but details will be lost if you don't focus on the information being presented. By the way, Peter Bregman goes on to point out that most of us believe we are exceptions and can multitask/switchtask productively. And he pointedly tells us that we are wrong in that assumption.

So eliminating distractions and focusing on the work at hand will help you get more done correctly in less time with less stress.

## Beat the afternoon energy slump!

Submitted by: Tammy Dorman

Research has shown that the most common time for energy slumps is 2:16 in the afternoon, when workers feel drained and unable to concentrate.

### Desk stretches

- Link your hands, push your arms out in front of you and then raise them above your head.
- Lift your shoulders up towards your ears and gently roll them backwards.
- Extend your legs in front of you and point and flex your toes.
- Hug your knees, one at a time, towards your chest.

Before you reach for the chocolate bar or packet of crisps, try these energy boosters instead.

### Mid-afternoon snacks

- The energy boost of a sugary snack wears off quickly. Instead, have [fresh fruit](#), dried fruit or nuts, which are a

healthy and long-lasting source of energy. If you must have chocolate, choose a few squares of good-quality plain chocolate. It contains less sugar and the richness means that you need less to feel satisfied.

### Stretches

- Hunching over a computer all day can leave you tired and aching. Make sure you're [sitting correctly at your desk](#). Take regular breaks, at least once an hour: get up, move around and stretch your legs. A few deep breaths and stretches will boost your circulation and help to wake you up.

### Drink Water

- If you don't drink enough water you'll feel sleepy, be less able to concentrate, and you may get headaches. When you feel hungry

you're often actually thirsty. Don't wait to feel thirsty to have a drink. Keep a filled bottle of water on your desk, so that you're more likely to drink regularly, and can see if you're drinking enough. For more information see [Health A-Z: diet - fluids](#).

### Changing work focus

- When your work pile seems endless, it can be easy to lose enthusiasm and slip into an energy slump. Breaking your 'to do' list into small, manageable tasks and taking a short break after each one will help you stay focused. Leave the simple jobs for early afternoon so that you don't have to concentrate too hard.



*"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."* **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

## What are your options?

Submitted by: Michele Brown

*"If you ignore the situations, change will slam into you and knock you off balance.*

*Getting angry won't make it go away – in fact, temper typically makes things worse.*

*Wishful thinking is a waste of time, too, so don't sit around thinking and talking about "the good old days" with the hope they'll return.*

*You can't even run away from it, because there's no place you can run that's*



*beyond the range of change.*

*Might as well face the problems and find the opportunities.*

*How you think and how you act, become very important during times like these.*

*Obviously, you won't be able to control everything that happens to you. But you're in complete control of how you respond to what happens.*

*This is the Age of Instability, where managing change is everybody's job. Think of it as your personal assignment."*

Price Pritchell and Ron Pound. [The Employee Handbook for Organizational Change](#)

### Question(s)

#### Corner

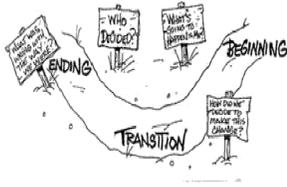


**There were no questions for this issue.**

If you find yourself pondering a question and need help finding the answer then this is the place for you.

Submit your question(s) to [kelli.adkins@ars.usda.gov](mailto:kelli.adkins@ars.usda.gov) and your question and answer will be printed in the next News Notes.

## Change Management Process—The Four Levels of Change



### Level 1 – *Cope with change: Victim Mentality*

A culture is operating at the first level of change when people primarily think in terms of just coping with the situation. They respond to change with a "victim mentality." You see a lot of helplessness and dependency behavior. The general outlook is pessimistic. Too much valuable energy gets invested in resistance, anger, blamefulness, or fear. People focus on problems instead of solutions. They talk about how hard things are, and why they can't make it work. Usually the mindset at level one is that maybe change will pass. People wait and hope for a so-called "return to normal."

When a culture is stuck in the coping mode, people tend to slow down. They're overly cautious, too conservative, and it causes an organization to lose momentum. Naturally, productivity drops. Operating results take a hit. Employee energy and attention get diverted away from basic company business, and toward "me issues"—that is, concern over how one might be affected personally by the change.

When a culture lives at the first level of change, people try to protect the status quo. This means they make little effort to innovate, experiment, or take reasonable and appropriate risks. They hang on to the past instead of actively seeking to shape a better future. In the competitive game of business, they rely on defense and are lousy at playing offense.

Overall, level one cultures are reactive, not proactive. It's the sort of culture that undermines both our individual and organizational effectiveness.

### Level 2 – *Comply with change: Adjustment mentality*

Cultures operating at the second level of change display more of an "adjustment mentality." Here at level two there's a clear, but not impressive, effort made to comply with the situation. Folks may not like what's going on one bit, yet they spend some energy accommodating the change. It may only be grudging compliance, or sort of a "cut your losses" attitude. Could be they're merely accepting the inevitable. But people here basically go with the flow.

Nevertheless, these cultures are dangerously sluggish. The main problem, of course, is that people in level two fail to put forth the personal effort they should to help drive the change. They may have resigned themselves to what's going on, but they don't do all they should to bring about success. People go along but may grumble, and they fail to function as effective change agents.

Cultures operating at level two fall way short of realizing their full potential. They're followers, not leaders, and have difficulty trying to compete.

### Level 3 – *Capitalize on change: Opportunity mentality*

Cultures operating at the third level of change display an "opportunity mentality." Here the mindset is to capitalize on change. People try to turn it to their advantage. Instead of spending energy on resistance, they invest themselves in a search for positive benefits. Change is not only accepted, but also actively embraced as a potential opportunity that should be seized.

Problem is, the culture is still in a reactive mode. At least people are looking for the bright side of things, though, with the idea that the cloud of change may have a silver lining. When change hits, they kick into gear and try to make the best of it.

In level three cultures, people align quickly with organization change. They readily contribute their energy and attention to the company's cause. These cultures are worthy competitors, but they leave a lot on the table.

### Level 4 – *Create change: Possibilities mentality*

Cultures at level four are characterized by a "possibilities mentality." Overall, the organization is proactive, not reactive. Instead of waiting for change to happen, people set about to make it happen.

Level four cultures aren't content to cope with, comply with, or even exploit change—they create it. They do it to help the organization gain competitive advantage. To be the architect of their own future. And because it's both energizing and fun. People operating as part of a level four culture are fired up by their work. They move with initiative, imagination, and a true sense of urgency. Here people have a sharp eye for new possibilities, for how things could be improved, for problems they can help fix. Level four outfits anticipate. They constantly scan for openings where change will give them an edge. The focus throughout is on operating results, on value creation, not merely on being busy or a hard worker.

The prevailing mindset in cultures at the fourth level of change is one of purpose, adventure, optimism, and faith. Here people invest themselves resourcefully in exploring. In experimenting and learning. They operate with a spirit of curiosity...a sense of mobility and pursuit...a hope for breakthroughs. They deliberately set forth to do things differently—to innovate—because they recognize change is their most promising solution. Level four cultures are fast, resilient, high-energy groups. Their flexibility and quick reflexes make them hard to outmaneuver.

These cultures are known for being trendsetters. For making the preemptive strike. For changing the game instead of merely trying to compete. Level four cultures don't fight the future. They partner with the world of tomorrow and co-create change.

## OFFICE PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHT PROGRAM

This is the MSACOPs way of getting to know each other and recognizing each other! Each month a different OP will be “TAGGED” by the previous month’s Highlighted OP!

Also, visit our new website - <http://www.ars.usda.gov/msa/msacop> - to get current information and to access our SOP with tons of information that will make your job easier.



**Telecia Burton** began her ARS career in September, 1980, serving for 19 years with the Southern Insect Management Unit in Stoneville, Mississippi. She transferred to the National Sedimentation Laboratory in 1999. She is now the Program Support Assistant at the Water Quality & Ecology Research Unit in Oxford, Mississippi. She received her Associates Degree from East Central Community College.

Telecia has been married to Don for 32 years and they have a 17 year old son, Andrew. Telecia lists her hobbies as: reading, walking, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.



**Melanie Carter** began her ARS career 11 years ago with the Poultry Research Unit in Mississippi State, Mississippi. She is the Office Automation Assistant. She is currently serving as the Acting Program Support Assistant. Melanie received her education from Woods Jr. College and Mississippi State University.

Melanie has been married to John for 10 years and they have a 5 year old daughter. Melanie lists her hobbies as: Mississippi State Football and tailgating, reading and shopping. But the major portion of Melanie’s time and energy is focused on her daughter! She spends a lot of time and enjoys anything and everything having to do with Rylee Reece and family time!



**Martha Ann Hardy** began her career with ARS 8 years ago in the Aquatic Animal Health Research Unit. This research unit has 2 locations, Auburn, Alabama and Chestertown, Maryland. She is the Office Automation Assistant in Chestertown. Prior to working in this ARS unit, she was a secretary for 23 years with GSA.

Martha Ann is married to Tom and they have a 16 year old son. She grew up and is a native of the “Eastern Shore” area where she works. Martha Ann lists her hobby as: reading. But, it turns out that she loves to vacation anywhere that is warm and sunny with a beach.



**Olga Carias** began her 20 year career with ARS at SRRC in New Orleans, LA, after working with a contractor. She started out as a program assistant in the Administrative Contracting office. Olga is in the Contracting Office where she does acquisition, T&As and property.

Olga is married to Jesus, Sr. and they have two sons. Olga’s household includes her mother and 3 dogs! She enjoys cooking many different types of food, shopping, music, art and soccer (having played in high school). Her husband played professional soccer in Honduras where they were born. She speaks the Honduras native language, Spanish. She is able to use this bi-lingual talent in her work duties.



**Dana Rubitsky** began working as an Office Automation Assistant with ARS two years ago at a satellite location, Tucson, AZ, for the Food and Feed Safety Research Unit. That research unit is part of SRRC in New Orleans, LA.

Dana is married to Fred and they have 1 son, 2 daughters and 6 grandchildren! Additionally, they are caring for 2 rescue dogs. Dana enjoys traveling, spending time with her children and grandchildren (located in California, Texas and Thailand), gourmet cooking, wine tasting, riding Harleys (and working on them), swimming and playing with the dogs. She is a self-proclaimed Disney fanatic (visiting each of the theme parks except Hong Kong)! She is planning her first Disney Cruise to the Bahamas this fall!

**Tag...you’re it!**



## "January – It's the month to make changes in your life!"

From [Oprah.com](http://Oprah.com)

Submitted by: Ann McGee

### 1. Walk away from bargains

Just because you can buy a cashmere sweater for \$20 or three bottles of ketchup for the price of one doesn't mean you should. "Ask, 'Do I have something similar?' and 'Where am I going to store it?' before making a purchase," advises New York City professional organizer Julie Morgenstern, author of ["Shed Your Stuff, Change Your Life."](#)



### 2. Make peace with imperfection

Efficient people give "A-level effort" to the most important projects (say, work assignments or a kitchen redesign), and for the rest they do just enough to get the job done, says Renae Reinardy, PsyD, a psychologist who specializes in hoarding disorders. Maybe you give yourself permission to bring store-bought cookies to a school bake sale or donate a bag of stuff -- unsorted! -- to Goodwill. "Trying to do every task perfectly is the easiest way to get bogged down," says Reinardy. [Oprah.com: How to stop trying to be perfect all the time](#)

### 3. Never label anything "miscellaneous"

You put a bunch of things into a file or box and write this catchall across the front. "But within a week you've forgotten what's in there," says Morgenstern. Instead, sort items into specific groups -- "electric bills," "lightbulbs," and so on.

### 4. Schedule regular decluttering sessions



Rather than wait until an industrious mood strikes (we all know where that leads), have a decluttering routine in place -- whether it's spending 15 minutes sorting mail after work or tackling a new project every Sunday afternoon. [Oprah.com: Peter Walsh's 3 rules for getting organized this summer](#)

### 5. Stick with what works

"I have clients who will try every line of makeup, every cell phone -- it's exhausting," says Dorothy Breininger, president of the Delphi Center for Organization. Don't waste time (and money) obsessively seeking out the best thing.

### 6. Create a dump zone

Find a space to corral all the stuff that you don't have time to put away the moment you step in the door, says Breininger. Once you're ready to get organized, you won't have to hunt all over the house for the dry cleaning or your child's field trip permission slip.

### 7. Ask for help



"The organized person is willing to expose herself to short-term embarrassment and call for backup," says Breininger. Which is to say, that elaborate four-course dinner you planned? Change it to a potluck. [Oprah.com: When to ask for help -- and how to do it](#)

### 8. Separate emotions from possessions

It's healthy to be attached to certain items -- a vase you picked up in Paris, your grandmother's pearls. But holey concert tees or cheap, scuffed earrings your husband gave you years ago? Just let them go.

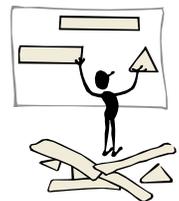


### 9. Foresee (and avoid) problems

You wouldn't leave the house on a gray day without an umbrella, right? People who appear to sail through life unruffled apply this thinking to every scenario, says Breininger. Have a cabinet packed with leaning towers of Tupperware? Organized folks will take a few minutes to short-circuit an avalanche before it happens. (In other words, rearranging that cupboard now is easier than chasing after wayward lids as they scatter underneath the fridge.)

### 10. Know where to donate

It's easier to part with belongings if they're going to a good home. Identify a neighbor's son who fits into your child's outgrown clothes, or choose a favorite charity. "It will save you from searching for the perfect recipient every time you need to unload something," says Morgenstern.



"Do the hard jobs first. The easy jobs will take care of themselves." **Dale Carnegie**

"Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task" **William James**

## Procrastination: Ten Things to Know

Submitted by: Wendy Smith

By Hara Estroff Marano, published on August 23, 2003—last reviewed on July 07, 2010  
<http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200308/procrastination-ten-things-know>



There are many ways to avoid success in life, but the most sure-fire just might be [procrastination](#). Pro-

crastinators sabotage themselves. They put obstacles in their own path. They actually choose paths that hurt their performance.

Why would people do that? I talked to two of the world's leading experts on procrastination: Joseph Ferrari, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at De Paul University in Chicago, and Timothy Pychyl, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Neither one is a procrastinator, and both answered my many questions immediately.

1. Twenty percent of people identify themselves as chronic procrastinators. For them procrastination is a lifestyle, albeit a maladaptive one. And it cuts across all domains of their life. They don't pay bills on time. They miss opportunities for buying tickets to concerts. They don't cash gift certificates or checks. They file income tax returns late. They leave their Christmas shopping until Christmas eve.

2. It's not trivial, although as a culture we don't take it seriously as a problem. It represents a profound problem of [self-regulation](#). And there may be more of it in the U.S. than in other countries because we are so nice; we don't call people on their excuses ("my grandmother died last week") even when we don't believe them.

3. Procrastination is not a problem of [time management](#) or of planning. Procrastinators are not different in their ability to estimate time, although they are more



optimistic than others. "Telling someone who procrastinates to buy a weekly planner is like telling someone with chronic depression to just cheer up," insists Dr. Ferrari.

4. Procrastinators are made not born. Procrastination is learned in the family milieu, but not directly. It is one response to an authoritarian [parenting](#) style. Having a harsh, controlling father keeps children from developing the ability to regulate themselves, from internalizing their own intentions and then learning to act on them. Procrastination can even be a form of rebellion, one of the few forms available under such circumstances. What's more, under those household conditions, procrastinators turn more to friends than to parents for support, and their friends may reinforce procrastination because they tend to be tolerant of their excuses.

5. Procrastination predicts higher levels of consumption of [alcohol](#) among those people who drink. Procrastinators drink more than they intend to—a manifestation of generalized problems in self-regulation. That is over and above the effect of avoidant coping styles that underlie procrastination and lead to disengagement via [substance abuse](#).

6. Procrastinators tell lies to themselves. Such as, "I'll feel more like doing this tomorrow." Or "I work best under pressure." But in fact they do not get the urge the next day or work best under pressure. In addition, they protect their sense of self by saying "this isn't important." Another big lie procrastinators indulge is that time pressure makes them more creative. Unfortunately they do not turn out to be more creative; they only feel that way. They squander their resources.

7. Procrastinators actively look for distractions, particularly ones that don't take a lot of commitment on their part.

Checking e-mail is almost perfect for this purpose.

They distract themselves as a way of regulating their emotions such as [fear](#) of failure.



8. There's more than one flavor of procrastination. People procrastinate for different reasons. Dr. Ferrari identifies three basic types of procrastinators:

- o arousal types, or thrill-seekers, who wait to the last minute for the euphoric rush.
- o avoiders, who may be avoiding fear of failure or even fear of success, but in either case are very concerned with what others think of them; they would rather have others think they lack effort than ability.
- o decisional procrastinators, who cannot make a decision. Not making a decision absolves procrastinators of responsibility for the outcome of events.

9. There are big costs to procrastination. Health is one. Just over the course of a single academic term, procrastinating college students had such evidence of compromised immune systems as more colds and flu, more gastrointestinal problems. And they had [insomnia](#). In addition, procrastination has a high cost to others as well as oneself; it shifts the burden of responsibilities onto others, who become resentful. Procrastination destroys [teamwork](#) in the [workplace](#) and private relationships.



10. Procrastinators can change their behavior—but doing so consumes a lot of psychic energy. And it doesn't necessarily mean one feels transformed internally. It can be done with highly structured [cognitive behavioral therapy](#).

"If you want to make an easy job seem mighty hard, just keep putting off doing it." **Olin Miller**

## How to Get Rid of Negative Thinking—for Good

by ASAPorg.com Staff



We all suffer from negative thoughts at one time or another. In fact, we often use these thoughts to talk

ourselves out of tackling tasks with which we're uncomfortable. In this way, we trick ourselves into believing that our negative thinking can "protect" us from failure.

Sadly, negative inner dialog also protects us from success. For example, if you always find something to object in a work assignment, you might find yourself being given routine tasks that don't challenge you—because the boss finds that easier than risking your oh-so-many objections.

If you always dwell on past failures ... ignore the good things that happen ... believe that everyone sees you in a bad light ... call yourself names when you've made a mistake ... then your negative thoughts may well be holding you—and

your career—back!

### How to turn around negative thinking

What we all must realize is that we can choose not to repeat these ineffective patterns of thinking and behavior.

First, monitor your negative thoughts. Notice how often they occur and how they influence you.

If you shy away from projects because you're afraid of failing, ask yourself if your feelings are reasonable. Tell yourself, "Just because I'm worried about accepting a new and unfamiliar assignment doesn't mean I'm not capable of handling it." Focus on the strengths you bring to the project, not the weaknesses.

As you pay more attention to your negative thoughts, you'll find yourself recognizing them sooner. Some negative thinking "trigger" words include "always," "must," "never," and "should-have."



Submitted by: **Brenda Aysenne**

### Start a positive mental dialog.



If your inner conversation sounds like this: "I'm hopeless—I left an important section out of the last marketing plan," turn it into this: "I made a mistake this time, but I'll do better next time." When you think, "I can't", think instead, "I can."

Tell yourself that you are a strong, capable person with unique abilities and talents. Remind yourself that you're willing to take risks to grow and change, and if something goes wrong, you'll handle it. Repeat to yourself, "I am a worthwhile individual, no matter what my mistakes."

Make a concerted effort to stop negative thoughts as they occur and to focus on your strengths and the good things in your life. See if you're not able to replace negativity with positive feelings, beliefs, and actions.

Have you been to the website lately??

Below are the SOP's that are available to use as a resource.

**Agreements**   **Correspondence**   **Files, Retention and Disposition**   **ARMPS**  
**US Bank**   **CATS**   **Personnel**   **Property**   **RPES**   **Travel**

We're on the web:

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/msa/msacop>



A group photo of the Council members is not available. Due to the Annual Meeting being conducted by conference call we were unable to take a picture.

The **Mission** of the MSACOP is to provide a resource for the Area Director's Office and all levels of management for matters relating to office professionals.

The **Goal** of the Council is to enhance office professionals through training, networking, mentoring, and recognition of office support employees. It is the desire of the Council to work with all levels of management to assure that office support staff are highly skilled and motivated professionals and to assure that the clerical and administrative needs of the Mid South Area and ARS are met.

### 2011-2012 Members

Virginia Kelley, Senior Chair, Stoneville, MS  
 Tammy Dorman, Junior Chair, Auburn, AL  
 Kelli Adkins, Ex-Officio, Lexington, KY  
 Brenda Aysenne, Recorder, Houma, LA  
 Mr. Archie Tucker, MSACOP Sponsor, Assistant Area Director, Stoneville, MS  
 Drusilla Fratesi, Area Director's Administrative Assistant, Stoneville, MS  
 Linda Fulton, Technical Advisor, Mississippi State, MS  
 Ann McGee, Secretary, Western BSC, Stoneville, MS  
 Wendy Smith, Stoneville, MS

# Reminder Calendar

## October

- Review Delegation of Authority for GovTrip.
- Performance Appraisals (AD-435).
- Submit documentation for employee accomplishments, appraisal, and award forms to Area Director (if at Center, submit through Center Director).
- Update Investigator/SY time on projects in ARIS to agree with Annual Resource Management Plan System (ARMPS).
- Check Status of Funds to make sure funds for all prior FY expenditures have been obligated.
- Prepare files for the coming year and transfer old files.
- Fall cleanup of Incoming Agreements <\$25,000 only.
- Funded Postdocs announced.
- Area requests meeting names and dates for foreign travel anticipated April 1 of coming year through March 31 of following year. (Travelers names are not necessary at this time.)
- Send Procurement a list of who can purchase on what account.
- Prepare general authorization for individual travelers.

## November

- Complete new Performance Plans (AD-435A) and new Individual Development Plan (ARS-48) for all employees, except limited appointments.
- Complete Appraisal process for all employees.
- Distribute copies as required.

## December

- Prepare new files for the coming year for T&A's and any other "calendar year" files.
- Foreign Travel Meeting Numbers will be provided.

## January [or during slower times perform these tasks]

- Rethink how you work and establish goals for efficient management of tasks.
- Time to catch up on all paperwork and filing.
- Security Awareness Training.

## February [or during slower times perform these tasks]

- Perform ARIS cleanup.
- Check manuscript files and update as needed.
- Ethics Training.
- ADODR Training.

## March [or during slower times perform these tasks]

- Update SY manuscript information in ARIS.
- Mid-year reviews due March/April.

## April

- Update Mission Statement in ARIS.
- Request input from SY's for equipment, travel, and personnel needs for the ARMPS.

## May

- First ARMPS input.
- Draft ARMPS is due in the Area Office.

## June

- Postdoc application process opens for data entry in ARIS.
- Run guideline dollars from ARIS using briefing packet for NEXT FY to complete ARMPS when message is received from Area that it is available.
- ARMPS reviews scheduled June/July.

## July

- Schedule is announced for ARIS entry of Annual Reports (421's).
- Area notification of deadline in ARIS for: Permanent or Temporary FY fund transfers between D-type projects; HQ-funded

Postdoc's; and, deadline for extramural agreements adding current year funds or extending time in ARIS.

- Postdoc fund transfers to be included in next FY ARMPS are due (person has to be on-board before funds can be transferred). (If you plan to use Postdoc funds next fiscal year, this temporary funds transfer must be put in ARIS now in order to show up in August guidelines.)
- Prepare and enter Annual Reports (421's) in ARIS.

## August

- Final ARMPS guideline dollars available for printing from briefing packet.
- Final ARMPS due in mid-August to Area Office.
- In ARIS, check to make sure funds were added on all projects, especially those mandated from HQ.
- Pull Detail by Author reports from ARIS and ask for input in preparation for Performance Appraisals (AD-435).

## September

- Prepare requisition AD-700 for Research Support Agreements (RSA) for coming year. Update related documentation.
- Prepare new files for travel vouchers and other "fiscal year" filing.
- Prepare AD-700's to renew service contracts.
- Update Investigator/SY time on projects in ARIS.
- Review Status of Funds weekly.
- Pull another Detail by Author report from ARIS and check accuracy of updated information for Performance Appraisals (AD-435). This is the last month.
- Request Specific Goals for new Performance Plans (AD-435A) and new Individual Development Plan (ARS-48).
- Prepare Performance Appraisal (AD 435) for all personnel. Distribute to supervisors with instructions for completion.
- Prepare new Performance Plan (AD-435A & B) with Specific Goal(s) and Individual Development Plan (ARS-48).
- Late September: Employees submit documentation of their accomplishments to immediate supervisor for Performance Appraisals (AD-435).
- Go through both computer and hard copy files, disposing of materials that can be destroyed.
- **Recommendation & Approval of Awards (AD-287-2) for the FY must be completed by the first week of the last pay period of the year to be paid from same FY funds.**

## Weekly or Regular Basis

- Check Access Online [AXOL] and CATS II weekly.
- Back up computer on a regular basis.

## Bi-weekly

- T&A's

## Monthly

- Check for any supplies that need to be ordered.
- Reconcile Status of Funds report (except at year end increase frequency as instructed).
- Check ARIS to monitor progress of manuscripts, check for any 416/417's, Agreements which will be terminating and need to be extended or will require reports. Request necessary reports from SY's.

## Quarterly

- Quarterly Civil Rights Assessment Report due to Area Director.
- Quarterly ACRM, Outreach, and 1890 Institutions Reports due to Area Personnel Office.
- Quarterly White House Initiative Report for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Quarterly Visitors report due to Area Director.