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# Pay-by-Selfie

## AMAZON LOOKS TO ELIMINATE INSECURE PASSWORDS

In 2015, BBC.com estimated over 3.2 billion people around the world use the internet. Nearly half of Earth's total population surfs the web for everything from social media to online banking. Personal information is poured into cyberspace, protected only with a password. Unfortunately, our personal passwords may not be as secure as we think. A survey by Usabilitynews.org found that 74.9 percent of individuals reuse their passwords for multiple sites. Of those, 98.3 percent reported using the same three passwords. When asked how frequently they changed their passwords, 52.7 percent of all respondents said never.

244 million individuals are active users of Amazon.com, enjoying the wonders and convenience the online shopping titan offers. Currently operating on the password system themselves, Amazon hopes to provide a new level of security to their users. The company



recently submitted an application for the patent on "pay-by-selfie."

Though it may at first sound ridiculous, Amazon aims to eliminate the insecurity that passwords

create. Instead of entering the same eight characters and a number used on countless other sites, Amazon shoppers will take two pictures of themselves when logging in or making purchases. The first picture identifies the user. The second will require the user to complete some action prompted by the site, such as a wink or head-tilt. This ensures it's indeed the user rather than a fraudster with a photograph.

Companies like MasterCard and Chinese e-commerce site Alibaba have begun to introduce a "selfie security" method. However, Amazon is the only one with the second photo requirement rather than just the easily fooled facial recognition. There isn't any indication of when this authentication method will be implemented for widespread use, but this new technology looks like it will go a long way to add security without sacrificing convenience.

# Quality Work for Quality Living

## HOW I USE MY SKILLS TO EDUCATE AND IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES

As a kid, my parents and I were forced to relocate pretty frequently. My father was in the Marine Corps and the Air Force, while my mother was with the U.S. State Department. Before I was 15, we lived in seven different places. Eventually, my parents retired, and we moved to Wisconsin where I went to high school and met my wife, Kaye.

Kaye and I got married after high school and had three beautiful daughters. As our family grew, we decided to move from northern Wisconsin to southern Wisconsin, because we thought it would be warmer. Shortly after, we moved to northern Illinois to get away from the snow. That winter, we saw more snow than we'd ever seen. Finally, we decided to go to a place where it rarely snows, and we've been in Texas ever since.

At the time, I was working in engineering, and I was starting to get bored with the industry. I began looking for something new. Indoor air quality (IAQ) offered that opportunity, as it is an offshoot of the engineering work I had been doing. It presented a new challenge and required me to develop new abilities to see the issues that others didn't necessarily see. While there is some low-hanging fruit that many people can spot, there are also some unique challenges in IAQ work that only trained eyes can see. I enjoyed the challenge and found that I was good at it too!

I started my company in 1989, offering indoor air quality consulting to the owners and managers of commercial buildings — places like office buildings, industrial facilities, and retail buildings. Work was slow at first. At the time, IAQ was something that nobody else was doing, and it took a while to get people to recognize that it really was an issue. Most people just didn't understand the concept of indoor air quality in the early days.

***"My goal isn't just to find out what's making people sick; it's also to make good on an opportunity to educate."***

Since the early '90s though, building occupants have learned more and more as they've become interested in indoor air quality. Hundreds of articles and reports have been written, and when problems occur, they become front-page news. As a result, the bad press has really educated the public on the value of good air quality.

Over the years, I have invested countless hours in training to be able to learn about the types of problems that can occur. And now, when I'm in a building, my goal isn't just to find out what's making people sick; it's also to make good on an opportunity to educate.

When I started this business, I knew the technical side of indoor air quality work, but I never anticipated the personal skills that would come with time. Nor would I have imagined how my writing skills would improve as I learned to write detailed reports using simple terms for the non-technical reader. A lot about this business has changed in the past 27 years, creating a never-ending challenge! I've increased my knowledge and widened my skill set, now able to help people through my work. I have even learned to focus my



thoughts. I'm proud of my work and the positive impact Building Air Quality has made for the clients I serve.

*Travis West*



# Teaching Grit TO YOUR STAFF

**Part of managing staff is helping them become the best they can be. Obviously, you'll want them to keep progressing in skills related to their particular job,** such as accountants learning more about tax laws or graphic designers training in Adobe software. But how do you teach hard-to-define skills that are just as important to their success?

Angela Duckworth is a TED speaker known for her theory of "grit." After moving from management consulting to teaching seventh graders in a New York public school, Duckworth took note that IQ wasn't a consistent predictor of student performance. Some of the highest-IQ kids weren't doing well in her class, and some of the students with more modest IQs were doing excellent. If IQ couldn't predict their success, what could?

She determined the answer was grit. This short word encompasses a lot, but it boils down to having passion and perseverance in pursuit of your goals. As a manager (or property manager), you absolutely have to have grit — simply being intelligent isn't enough to carry you to the finish line. If you're not willing to keep jumping over hurdles and nimbly overcoming obstacles, you'll miss out on success.

As important as grit is for one's self, it's a quality you should be looking for in your staff as well. Does an administrative assistant become dejected after dealing with an abrasive client? Teach them grit in the face of difficulty. Does the maintenance department learn what it takes to create an efficient solution, or do they settle for a lesser workaround? Give them encouragement to get the problem solved the right way.



**Explore this concept of grit and see how it can help your staff be more successful.**

There are a few key components to building grit, and they're worth sharing with your staff. The growth mindset is key — praising people for their hard work, learning, and effort, instead of innate talent and smarts. Another integral concept is an internal locus of control — the idea that you are responsible for your own success, as opposed to outside forces like luck, fate, the government, or upper management.

You can teach the growth mindset and the internal focus of control, but staff won't have grit unless you foster the right environment. That means you don't reward laziness or punish staff for trying and failing, or for making mistakes on the path toward finding solutions to problems within the company.

Explore this concept of grit and see how it can help your staff be more successful. Just be sure to pair this discussion with how to discern what's worthy of dogged pursuit. With grit, your staff become better workers, and your entire staff will benefit from greater innovation and productivity!

## Customer Spotlight

# Wayne Harner

Vice President of Engineering,  
Houston Region for Brookfield



Brookfield Office Properties, Inc. owns and operates Class A high-rise office buildings throughout the United States and all over the world. As the vice president of engineering, I'm responsible for the physical operation of the buildings, which includes energy efficiencies, MEP engineering, elevators, and HVAC systems. I have been in the industry for over 35 years and have been at Brookfield for 23 of those years.

I met Travis West about 20 years ago, the result of a perceived indoor air quality problem in one of our buildings. After a careful inspection, our team found no evidence of a problem but, in wanting to provide due diligence for our tenants, I brought in Travis as a neutral third party. He was able to confirm that no IAQ issue existed and provided reassurance to our clients.

Our experience with Travis was ultimately professional and pleasant. Given my penchant for being proactive, I've since brought Travis in to perform a yearly survey on all the buildings in the region. It's a lot easier to get consulting experience up front — before problems arise. When they do crop up, we're inevitably in a race against the clock on behalf of our tenants' needs.

Working with Travis has always been a positive experience. He's very informed about indoor air quality issues, staying up to date on training and all the current issues. I know he consults with other industry leaders through the United States and Canada to make sure he's staying on top of industry news and trends.

Travis is a personable, service-oriented man who cares about his work. Between his professional expertise and his personable demeanor, he is an expert's expert.

# Deadly Water in the Air

## THE DANGERS OF LEGIONELLA BACTERIA

Legionnaires' disease is one of the most common building-related illnesses. Caused by *Legionella* bacteria, this is a respiratory illness, infecting the lungs and causing pneumonia. A less serious case of Legionella infection is called Pontiac fever, which has similar symptoms to influenza and lasts only about a week. Legionnaires' disease is far more dangerous. A study in the Archives of Internal Medicine estimated between 8,000–18,000 people in the United States are hospitalized due to Legionnaires' disease every year.

Symptoms arise within two weeks after exposure, and include headaches, high fever, coughing, and muscle aches. Because it is similar to other types of pneumonia and looks similar on a chest X-ray, Legionnaires' disease can be hard to identify. It can be treated with antibiotics, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one out of every 10 people infected with Legionnaires' disease dies from it.

Legionella bacteria forms naturally in fresh water. Warm water conditions encourage the growth of the bacteria — think hot tubs and decorative fountains. Among other places, Legionella bacteria is also commonly found in cooling towers — a major component of air conditioning systems in large buildings.

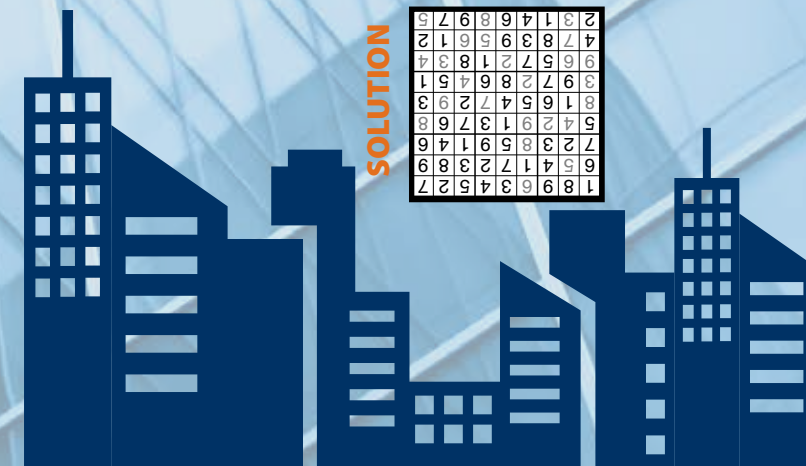
Despite forming in water, Legionella is considered a serious air quality threat



because it is not transmitted by consuming contaminated water or from person to person. It is an airborne threat. You can become infected by Legionella bacteria after breathing in contaminated water vapor or mist. Cooling towers in large buildings use water to remove heat. In this process, water is aerosolized — spread into the air as tiny droplets. If Legionella is present in the system, it can be spread throughout the building and make people sick.

Those who are at the greatest risk of becoming infected with Legionella are individuals with chronic lung diseases, those with weak immune system diseases like cancer or diabetes, and persons taking drugs that suppress the immune system — like medicine taken after an organ transplant or chemotherapy. Current and former smokers and people over the age of 50 are also at a higher risk.

Proper maintenance of water systems is key to preventing Legionella growth and related disease. The Occupational Safety & Health Administration of the United States Department of Labor recommends frequent and proper cleaning, temperature control, approved biocides, and regular inspections to keep building cooling towers free from Legionella growth. If your building is due for an inspection or you fear you are at risk of Legionella, don't hesitate. Call Building Air Quality at **281-448-1100** today.



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