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7	3	4	9	1	6	5	8	2
6	1	5	2	8	4	3	7	9
5	9	8	4	7	1	2	3	6
2	7	6	3	5	9	1	4	8
1	4	3	8	6	7	2	5	9
4	5	2	1	9	8	7	3	6
3	8	7	4	2	5	9	6	1
9	6	1	7	8	3	5	2	4

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Growing in the Walls

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Take a Deep Breath

A Better Way to Get Agreements Signed

3

Catching the True Air Quality Culprit

4

International Business Card Etiquette

Put Your Best Card Forward

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS CARD ETIQUETTE IN 3 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

The business card is a nearly ubiquitous way to give your name, position, company, and contact information to potential clients and business partners all over the world. And while the exchange of business cards in the United States does not come with a lot of pomp and circumstance, that is not the case in many other countries. If you find yourself in one of the following places, remember these tips about exchanging business cards.

Japan

Known in Japan as *meishi*, the exchange of business cards comes with a lot of ceremony. Present your card with both hands, as this gesture is seen as respectful. Japanese culture places a lot of value on hierarchy and status, so make sure your title is listed prominently. When receiving a card, take a minute to look it over and comment on it. Immediately putting it away is disrespectful, and once you're done looking at it, put it in a cardholder, folder, or binder.

China

In China, as in many other countries, having your credentials and contact info in English on one side and in the local language on the other is good practice. Gold lettering is considered auspicious, and if your business is relatively old, make sure the year it was founded is on your card. The practice of giving and receiving cards is very similar to that of Japan. Finish the exchange with a bow as a way to thank your acquaintance for meeting with you.

India

Business cards are exchanged even in nonbusiness interactions in India. Much like hierarchy and status are valued in Japan, academic achievements are valued in India, so list your university, degrees, and honors along with your other information. When exchanging cards, always give and receive them with your right hand. This is also common practice in many Middle Eastern countries.



Exchanging business cards the wrong way probably won't be detrimental to your business deal, but learning the proper etiquette in the country you're visiting can go a long way in starting a professional relationship on the right foot.



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October 2019

Stairway to Nowhere

WHEN THERMAL BRIDGING GUIDES MOLD INTO YOUR BUILDING

Over the last 10 years, whenever I get a call in late August or early September, I can guess what the problem is before I even answer the phone. The ends of my summers are almost always spent in hot, humid stairwells, looking at mold.

By now, when someone calls me about mold in the stairwell, I have a pretty good idea what the cause is. When I arrive at the building, I find myself walking up a stairwell that's 80–85 degrees, with 75% humidity, until I reach a wall covered in mold. It's never the whole stairwell, mind you. The mold is only on a single wall. Sometimes, when I climb another five or six flights of stairs, mold will appear on that same wall. Inevitably, there will be more mold on that wall when I climb another five flights.

Tenants or property managers see mold on the wall and instantly think it's water damage, but when mold appears in a stairwell like this, the key to the problem is what's on the other side of the wall. In many cases, the stairwell shares a wall with a server room, which has to be kept exceptionally cold. The insulation inside the wall between the stairwell and the server room isn't enough to prevent the transfer of thermal energy — a phenomenon called thermal bridging.

Thermal bridging occurs when heat is able to flow through an object that's more conductive than the rest of the material around it. In the case of a moldy stairwell, the cold temperature is able to move through the wall-board studs of the server room into the wall-board studs of the stairwell. The stairwell with its high heat



and humidity creates the perfect environment for the surface of the wall board to reach dew point, which is when condensation occurs. That condensation supports the growth of mold. Since the server room is kept so cold and the stairwell is so hot and humid, standard insulation is insufficient to prevent thermal bridging.

A building I examined recently was suffering from mold in the stairwell. Their plan was to cut out the Sheetrock and replace it, but that wasn't going to fix the problem. Mold would still grow because the server room would still be cold, the stairwell would still be hot and humid, and thermal bridging would still occur. My solution was for them to clean the wall, treat it

“ In many cases, the stairwell shares a wall with a server room, which has to be kept exceptionally cold. ”

with biocide to make sure the mold was gone, repaint the wall, and put insulation board up in the server room on the wall it shared with the stairwell. They didn't have to tear up the wall and the added insulation would keep the wall from getting too cold.

When it comes to mold, the best way to deal with it is to prevent its growth in the first place. There are two ways to prevent thermal bridging from happening in your building stairwell. First, you could air condition the stairwell so it's the same temperature as the rest of the building. However, since this is often unreasonable and expensive, I recommend the second option: Improve the insulation in the server room.

Travis West



An Ancient Solution to Modern Problems

Close your eyes and take a deep breath.

This is the first step in every meditation session. Though often associated with the New Age metaphysical movement, meditation isn't all about incense and healing crystals. Meditation is an ancient practice that strengthens your mental focus, and recent research suggests that it offers real solutions to modern problems.

What is meditation?

Meditation has strong roots in various religious and cultural traditions, but anyone can find value in practicing it. The purpose of meditation is to strengthen your mind by promoting mindfulness, focus, and awareness.

Does meditation work?

It depends on what you mean by "work." Will meditation allow you to defy gravity and hover above the earth? Probably not. But there are so many benefits that will leave you feeling lighter in another way. A study published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that mindful meditation lowers stress levels, and patients who habitually meditate report less chronic pain. Another study published in the same journal found that regular meditation also fights depression.

How do I meditate?

Meditating is as simple as sitting in a quiet place, closing your eyes, and focusing on your breathing for a few minutes. Whenever your mind starts to wander, gently bring it back to your breath. You don't need to climb a mountain or pay for a week-long retreat to start meditating.

That said, there are plenty of resources that help beginners build a strong foundation for meditation. Popular apps like Calm or Headspace are available on any smartphone and offer guided courses you can start anywhere, anytime. You could also check online or at your local community center for group classes if you would like some in-person guidance.

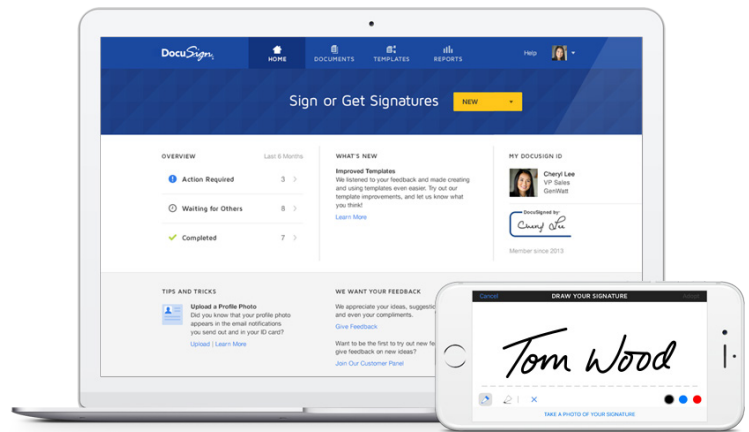
Meditation isn't a magical ritual that will cure all that ails you, but plenty of research suggests meditation does provide tangible benefits to our mental and physical well-being. Maybe one day, meditation will be as commonplace as daily exercise.

Resource of the Month: DocuSign

SECURE DOCUMENT SIGNING FROM ANYWHERE IN

At the foundation of every business deal is the agreement. And the anchor that gives the agreement its weight is the signature. Signing an agreement may signify that the negotiations are done, but it also serves as the starting line for the business that's about to commence.

The beauty of living in a digital age is that almost all business dealings can be done from the comfort of just about anywhere, so long as you have access to a computer and the internet. But the downside of living in a digital age is that because things are carried out behind the invisible walls of the World Wide Web, you lose your sense of security about who may actually be getting their hands on your sensitive business information along the way. Sure, you could avoid all this trouble by snail-mailing your documents — but who has time for that?



HAVE A LAUGH WITH TRAVIS



This is where DocuSign comes in. DocuSign is a business tool designed for the safe and secure collection of signatures on the documents you need in order to continue running your business. The company values security and automation of the signing process by moving away from old practices that are slow, expensive, and error-prone. It's a great tool not only for securely signing and organizing your documents but also for safely communicating with your clients, customers, or contractors about the next steps needed to keep up your progress.

DocuSign's subscription-based services are easy and reliable to use from anywhere in the world. It's as simple as uploading your documents, confirming the identity of the signer, and waiting for the magic to happen. That may sound too good to be true, but you can put your worries away; DocuSign's prowess is in its security features. Every document you upload is encrypted from the moment it leaves your computer, and anti-tampering measures are in place at each step. It's the most reliable way to get your business done quickly and safely, and that's why many of the largest technology, pharmaceutical, financial, and other businesses across the globe use DocuSign every day.

If your business is ready to step into the age of secure and speedy document handling, DocuSign is the tool for you. To learn more or sign up for their services, visit DocuSign.com.



Catching the Real Culprit

A Look at IAQ and Dust

Achoo! A-a-a-choo! AAAchoo!

It's like a domino effect. Suddenly, everyone in the office is sneezing. Is it allergies? A cold? There was that exposé about the dangers of indoor mold hiding between walls ... it must be mold! That's it. Time to clear the building. Suddenly, occupants are up in arms over possible causes of their discomfort.

Likely, the looming culprit is much smaller but even more elusive: dust.

Sneezing, coughing, itchy eyes, upper respiratory problems — yes, many of the health challenges building occupants report can be chalked up to the tiny particles floating around a building, as research from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) demonstrates. Dust may be made up of outside soil, dead skin cells, fibers from carpets and clothing, and tissue from paper. When occupants neglect to keep their space organized, these particles build up and dramatically worsen the air quality.

Do you remember the character Pig-Pen from the classic comic strip "Peanuts"? Somehow, he's followed everywhere by a cloud of dust. As much as this may be an exaggeration, it's not unlike many office environments. Papers pile up on desks and quickly collect dust. When the piles are disturbed or moved, the tiny particles go airborne.

In studies conducted by Building Air Quality, areas observed over a 10-day period showed "explosive increases" of airborne dust particles when the occupant was in the office. When occupants come in to work, daily activity distributes the dust on surfaces back into the air, and we see a dramatic decrease in the IAQ. Simply by being in a space, occupants unknowingly contribute to poor air quality.

To improve air quality and lessen complaints of sneezing and allergies, the first place to start is with each occupant. Air purifiers can help remove airborne dust, but it's important for occupants to keep their workspaces clean so custodians can do their job and remove dust before it gets kicked up into the air.



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