



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

Sudoku solution from Page 3

29 Pinewood Forest Ct, Ste. 200
The Woodlands, Texas 77381

www.BAQ1.com

TOLL FREE 866-367-1177

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BOISE, ID
PERMIT 411

Return Service Requested

- 1 Meet Travis' 4 Friendly Giants
- 2 5 Great Ways to Start a Business Call
- 3 How to Protect Yourself From COVID-19 Scammers
- 4 Are Smartwatches Really Worth the Hype?

ARE SMARTWATCHES REALLY WORTH THE HYPE? SOME BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS

First, there was the iPod. Then, there was the smartphone. And now, we have the latest phase in consumer technology that seeks to consolidate countless functions into a small package: the smartwatch. Smartwatches have many features that already exist on your smartphone but they are more easily accessible. But just how much easier or better is a smartwatch? Well, that depends.

STYLISH OPTIONS

Smartwatch manufacturers have worked hard to create something sleek and functional — a wrist accessory that looks like it belongs on a camping trip as much as it does at a black-tie gala. You can even change the wallpaper of some models to a digital clock, an elegant watch face, or anything in between. However, that versatile style comes at a pretty steep price — usually somewhere between \$200 and \$400. So, while looks aren't the only thing smartwatches have

to offer, you have to decide if their utility justifies the cost.

CONNECTIVITY ON THE GO

When you're out mountain biking, running in the hills, or maybe going for a dip in the pool, having a smartphone with you can be more of a burden than a blessing. Smartwatches, on the other hand, are designed to go wherever you go. Some are even waterproof! That means wherever you are, if you get lost or hurt, you can use your watch to call for help. However, that connectivity comes at the price of foregoing a welcome reprieve from all the notifications you escape when leaving your phone behind.

FITNESS TRACKING

The fitness tracking capabilities of the smartwatch are comparable to those of a simple wrist fitness tracker. While the smartwatch is not entirely accurate in its



measurements of things like heart rate and calories burned, it's accurate enough for the average person who's just trying to get an idea on areas to improve their fitness. Plus, measuring fitness is a great motivator for continuing to exercise.

Smartwatches aren't nearly as ubiquitous as smartphones, and it doesn't seem like they will be anytime soon. However, for the right person with the right lifestyle, a smartwatch might just be the next must-have tech.



281-448-1100 or TOLL FREE 866-367-1177

www.BAQ1.com

February 2021

The 4 Friendly Giants of IAQ

Meet the People Who Changed My Work for the Better

Indoor air quality (IAQ) is a niche industry, but just like basketball, cooking, and app development, we have our own celebrities! These giants of the field aren't household names like LeBron James or Gordon Ramsey, but maybe they should be.

In that spirit, I'm going to introduce you to four of the most impressive people I've met over my years in the business. These four are all experts in indoor air quality, and each of them has had an outsized influence on my work in the last two decades. When I go to conferences or other training events like the ones I detailed in last month's newsletter, these are often the people I learn from.

DR. RICHARD SHAUGHNESSY: THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE OF IT ALL

Richard heads the Indoor Air Quality Research Program at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma and has single-handedly made the city an air quality hub. He's been in that same position since 1987 and puts his chemical engineering degree to work doing research for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

I met Richard in 1990, when I was fairly new to the IAQ business. He was speaking at an air duct cleaners' meeting I attended, and the more he talked about his work, the more fascinated I became. He was working in the same niche I was!

After the event was over, I caught up with him and introduced myself. I still remember saying, "I'm interested in learning as much from you as possible!" That's how excited I was.

Richard and I struck up a friendship, and he invited me to his annual IAQ conference in Tulsa. The two-day conference was an IAQ workers' playground. For several years in the 1990s, Richard brought in 10-12 speakers who were doing significant research in the industry to share their work with 150 people like me. That's where I met the other three giants of the IAQ industry!

TERRY BRENNAN: THE BRILLIANT MOUNTAIN MAN OF IAQ

While Richard is fairly conventional, Terry was a character when I met him. He had long flowing hair and looked like he would survive just fine if you dropped him off in the backcountry of Maine. I met him at one of Richard's programs in the early 1990s. While he was active in the IAQ industry, he was a fantastic researcher and a profound thinker.

Anyone who spoke with Terry could see he had a brilliant mind. When he presented his work, he always spoke slowly and deliberately, and if a listener asked a question, he pondered his answer, then selected his words carefully. When he replied, he looked directly at the

“After the event was over, I caught up with him and introduced myself. I still remember saying, 'I'm interested in learning as much from you as possible!' That's how excited I was.”

person he was speaking to, smiling and nodding his head encouragingly. It was an entirely unique approach to conversation.

These mannerisms made Terry a pleasure to talk to and work with, and I think they were partly responsible for his early involvement with the EPA. He conducted research for the organization and quickly became influential in the IAQ industry, specifically when it came to residential populations and large building investigations. Though he's retired now, there's no doubt Terry made an indelible mark on our industry.

FRANCIS J. "BUD" OFFERMAN: THE BEST RESEARCHER IN THE BUSINESS

Bud is a researcher like Terry, but in manner, they're polar opposites. His brilliance is sharp rather than warm. Still, he has done amazing work over the years, and I was awed when I was introduced to him at one of Richard's programs. His research into large buildings and schools in the early '90s set the tone for the work I do today.

Continued on Page 2 ...

... continued from Cover

Bud is still actively researching, and he has held his place on the cutting edge of the industry. His work is always very thorough and readable, whether he's reporting on the effects of tobacco smoke in cars or the impact of bus exhaust on city air quality. Just a few months ago, he published a paper called "Beware: The COVID-19 Snake Oil Salesmen Are Here," which was absolutely fascinating. You can read more about that on Pg. 2.

BARBARA SPARK: THE JOURNALIST WHO RESHAPED MY SALES FORCE

I first heard Barbara's voice in 1989. I was listening to NPR, and serendipitously, a segment on indoor air quality began to play. The piece was 25 minutes long, and the program reported that it was researched and written entirely by Barbara Spark. I'd never heard of Barbara, but in just 25 minutes, she turned me into a fan. Her story was one of the most consummate pieces of knowledge about IAQ available at the time (remember, this is before I met Richard), and I knew I had to have it.

When the program wrapped up, I did something very '90s: I called NPR and asked if I could buy copies of the story. They sent me 10 tapes, and I distributed them to my sales force. For years, I used Barbara's story to introduce my sales staff to the world of IAQ.

A year later at an IAQ barbecue in Tulsa, I sat across the picnic table from a short, opinionated woman. I rather liked her, so I asked what she did and she said, "Oh, I recorded a program on IAQ for NPR!" That's how I came to know Barbara Spark. Funnily enough, she had heard of me, too. When I introduced myself and she sort of found out that I lived in Texas, she asked if I knew the IAQ guy in Houston who had bought so many of her tapes. I had to confess that I did know him very well, and we both had a good laugh! Barbara went on to work as a regional coordinator for the EPA's IAQ Division before retiring. We still reminisce and swap articles today.

So, there you have it! You've met the four giants of IAQ who shaped my early knowledge and understanding of this industry. I certainly learned a lot from these IAQ "celebrities." I wouldn't trade their wisdom or friendships for the world.

STRUGGLE WITH SMALL TALK?

5 Great Ways to Start a Business Call

No matter what field or industry you're in, you'll probably find yourself in an awkward business call at some point. Starting a conversation with someone you don't know well can be a struggle, and that's where small talk comes in. This necessary skill helps us get to know people when deeper conversation isn't possible or appropriate.

Starting the conversation may feel like a lot of pressure, but with these five phrases, you'll get the conversation flowing in no time.

NO. 1: "HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR POSITION?"

Show interest in what your fellow professional does by asking about their job and how long they've been doing it. People's careers and life journeys may surprise you! If they aren't open to talking about how they landed their current position, don't worry — there are plenty of other ways to direct the conversation.

NO. 2: "ANY PLANS THIS WEEKEND/HOLIDAY?"

Asking about someone's interests, travel plans, or weekend activities not only helps you connect in the current conversation, but it also gives you a great way to start the conversation the next time you chat by following up! Ultimately, the goal of small talk is to enjoy a short conversation and get to know someone in a limited amount of time. This question lets the other person decide how much to share.

NO. 3: "HAVE YOU HEARD OF WHAT [FAMOUS PERSON] IS DOING LATELY?"

Talking about a celebrity's recent movie, philanthropic efforts, or project can be a great way to open up the conversation and learn about interests you may have in common outside of work.

NO. 4: "RECENTLY, I HEARD [LOCAL NEWS FACT.]"

We'll be straight: The news has become fairly political over the past few years. However, there's always interesting local news that isn't related to politics. Local news can be a fun way to stay in tune with the community and keep your small talk entertaining.

NO. 5: "I REALLY ENJOYED HEARING ABOUT ..."

When you're trying to wind down the conversation or segue into another topic, this can be a great phrase to use to reference an interesting point in the conversation and say farewell!

Practicing these five phrases is a small way to make a big difference in your small-talk skills.

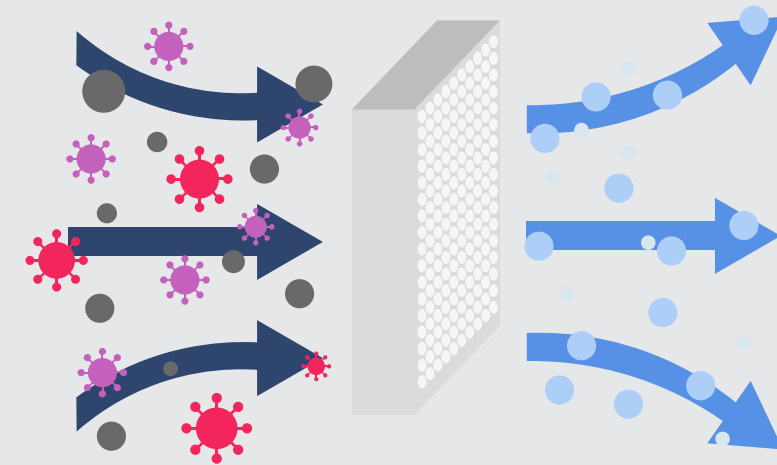
DON'T FALL FOR THE SNAKE OIL SALESMEN!

How to Protect Yourself From COVID-19 Scammers and Their Faulty Filters

Every industry includes scammers and con artists willing to do anything to make a buck — even with indoor air quality. When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, these snake oil salesmen jumped on the opportunity to make money off of honest people's fears. I've seen this with some of my own clients, a few of whom have fallen for or *almost* fallen for these scams.

Just to give one example, not long ago I heard rumors about a new product that "flooded a room with negative ions to kill germs and bacteria." The sellers said it was 98% effective and their claims were backed up by research. The whole thing looked good on the surface, but when I dug into that research, it all fell apart! The product had barely been tested, and its effectiveness had been exaggerated based on the studies I found.

There was no way of knowing whether it would work at all, let alone be worth my clients' money. I was able to steer clear of that scam product, but a building or facility manager less well-versed in the industry and its science might have fallen for



it. This has been on my mind a lot lately, and I'm not the only one who has been thinking about it.

Last November, Francis J. "Bud" Offerman, one of the top researchers in the indoor air quality business, published a paper about the epidemic of scammers called "Beware: The COVID-19 Snake Oil Salesmen Are Here." It's a fantastic piece of research that dives into some of the claims out there and debunks them. If

you're considering purchasing additional air cleaners because of COVID-19, I highly recommend reading Bud's article before spending your money.

You can read more about Bud on Pg. 1 of this newsletter and find his article at IEE-sf.com/pdf/TheCOVID19SnakeOilSalesmenAreHere.pdf.new. If you have additional questions about a product, feel free to reach out to me as well.

SUDOKU

HAVE A LAUGH WITH TRAVIS



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

Solution on Page 4