

S t r e s s - A F r i e n d o r F o e ?

*Stress management: Learning to use, not abuse, your stress
or*

*How I kept my sanity as a telephone
answering service operator.*

Diane L. Leipper, 17 May 2001

**"Diagnosing and preventing
stress are not one-time
activities: they are on-going
processes."**

<http://www.wrc-research.ie/hspro/strs/strmgm.html>

Stress can be a positive motivator and valuable tool for accomplishing goals. Stress can also be destructive and self defeating.

Learn how to differentiate between positive and negative stress and how to turn a stressful situation into a productive and potentially revitalizing experience.

Learn what elements in a group situation can lead to stress and learn how stress can manifest itself within the group participants.

Learn how to deal with stress, and how those methods can be utilized in almost any group situation to turn stress into an asset rather than a barrier.

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Leipper Management Group
telephone & fax 775 972 5011
headquarters@leipper.org
<http://leipper.org>
PO Box 21481
Reno NV 89515

Diane L. Leipper has over 20 years experience in volunteer management including youth services, health care organizations, and crisis and disaster programs. Diane has been a program director, a trainer, a board member, and a volunteer for a variety of non-profit organizations. Her educational background has focused on the profession of volunteer management at the University of Nevada and through attendance at numerous continuing education programs, conferences and workshops.

Her experience in team development include Girl Scout neighborhood management teams, Girl Scout program teams, Red Cross disaster groups, health care programs led by volunteers, and crisis call volunteers. Diane's group involvement experiences include participation on the planning committee for various conferences including the AVA international conference and the National Association of Social Workers Nevada Chapter conference. She has also been involved in numerous committees, work groups, and other team effort activities.

Diane has published two articles in the *Journal of Volunteer Administration*. She is a recipient of the Comstock Sertoma Service to Mankind Award, the Girl Scout Thanks Badge, and is listed in *Who's Who for the Millennium*.

Table of Contents

I - An example for stress: the answering service operator	1
II - Defining stress	2
Indicators of Stress.....	2
Acute stress.....	2
Episodic acute stress.....	2
Chronic stress.....	3
III - Job Related Stress	4
IV - Changing the Paradigm	5
What Nevada Ranch is this?.....	5
Lesson - Focus, take time to look at the whole picture	5
Blind man's bluff at the switchboard	5
Lesson - Prioritize tasks, develop a plan and stick to it	6
Establish criteria for ranking individual tasks.....	6
Determine your immediate and longer range goals.....	6
Define the procedures needed to accomplish the goals.....	7
Attitude With a Vengeance.....	7
Lesson - Knowledge and information helps	7
Little problem, big crisis.....	7
Lesson - Learn to recognize and accept that stress is different for everyone	8
Five Alarm Chaos.....	8
Lesson- Completing a task provides a sense of accomplishment and control	8
Sharing the load.....	9
Lesson - Good teamwork reduces stress	9
Superbowl short circuit	9
Dial-a-prayer	10
V - Stop Before You Start	11
VI - Stress Event Review	12
VII - Stress and Volunteer Management	13
Considerations for Volunteering.....	13
Lessons learned: respect the individual	14
A volunteer insecure about language.....	14
Lessons learned: set priorities.....	14
Girl Scout team development.....	15
Lesson: be aware.....	15
Radar Ears.....	15
A Worthwhile Education.....	16
VIII - Additional information about stress	17
Management and the Way of Work from the Leipper Management Group.....	19
Find us on the Web < http://leipper.org/ >.....	19

Answering Service



I - An example for stress: the answering service operator

Communication skills, people skills, negotiation skills, teamwork, multitasking - these are just some of the concepts I learned while working for an answering service. Acquiring these skills would have been much more difficult if I had not learned to cope with stress. It was necessary not just to cope with stress but to learn ways that minimized negative impacts and facilitated effective and often creative solutions. The job provided the hands-on laboratory type experience that, in many ways, was more educational than the university classes I took while working towards a degree in social work.

For those of you not familiar with the inside view of an answering service, especially one in the mid 1970's, let me set the stage. This was before current technology had replaced old style switchboards. These boards are like the ones you see in old movies or the prop used by Lilly Tomlin in her spoof of a switchboard operator. My answering service had five switchboards. Each board handled about 100 clients therefore there were 100 holes for connections, each with it's own indicator light. There are about 10 pairs of cords on the bottom which are used to answer and connect calls. When a call comes in you plug a cord into the appropriate hole to answer the call.

As with most answering services there are a wide variety of clients, each with their own preferences on how their calls should be answered and handled. Customers included security firms, plumbing and other service companies, doctors and other professionals, and social service programs such as the crisis line and alcoholics anonymous. All messages had to be handwritten so extreme care had to be taken to make sure the content was accurate and the message readable.

In addition to answering calls, we also handled over five hundred alarms of several different types and provided dispatch service to companies on over 15 different radios. Maximum staff coverage was one operator per board. During slow times or on nights and weekends there might have been only be one or two operators on duty.

II - Defining stress

Stress is a part of life. It is hard to define because it means different things to different people. Everyone is affected by stress in different ways and to different degrees. The methods of dealing with stress and the effectiveness of the method vary for each individual.

Indicators of Stress

Stress is indicated in a variety of ways. Physical indicators include changes in muscle tension, blood pressure, pulse rate, appetite, and headaches. Mental process indicators include inability to concentrate, mistakes, forgetfulness, loss of perspective, and poor judgment. Emotional



indicators of stress include non-specific anxiety, depression, outbursts, and hostile behaviors. Behavioral indicators include sudden or radical changes in work or personal habits, lethargy, increased illness and absenteeism. There are three commonly defined levels of stress. They are acute stress, episodic acute stress, and chronic stress.

Acute stress

Acute stress is the most common form and in small doses can be exciting and energizing. It is often a product of current or anticipated activity. Most people are familiar with the signs of acute stress including irritability, anxiety, tension, heartburn, or sweaty palms. This recognition facilitates easier resolution of the issue causing the stress. A fender bender, being late for a meeting, going to the dentist, or planning your first trip to Disneyland can produce this type of stress. Because acute stress is short term the symptoms usually dissipate without causing harm.

Episodic acute stress

Episodic acute stress is apparent in people who continually seem disorganized, always late and in a hurry, or have too many irons on the fire. It is also evident in the "worry wart" □ someone who is pessimistic and sees problems everywhere.

These people see other people or external events as the cause of their woes. Often these characteristics are ingrained and habitual. This makes recognition of stress harder. People with this sort of stress can be resistant to change and don't see anything wrong with the way they are living.

Chronic stress

Chronic stress is an ongoing process which affects the person day after day, year after year. The person may feel hopeless, trapped, or see no way out. Sometimes chronic stress may stem from early childhood experiences or some traumatic event that profoundly affects personality.

Chronic stress can be the most difficult to deal with as people get used to it, they forget it is there. They ignore it because it seems to be just the way things are and sometimes even seems comfortable. This is the kind of stress that underlies many life threatening health problems including heart attacks, physical and mental breakdowns, and even suicide.

"Stress is a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as exceeding his/her resources."

-- <http://www.wrc-research.ie/hspro/strs/strmgm.html>

III - Job Related Stress

Whether you are a paid employee or a volunteer, job related stress is so commonplace it often is accepted as part of the work environment. Since work is a major part of our lives, the result of stress can have far reaching consequences in our personal as well as our work environments. Stress does not have to be inevitable but avoiding stress does take effort on the part of both the individual and the organization. To achieve a beneficial and productive relationship, organizations need psychologically and physically healthy individuals and individuals need a healthy work environment.

There are both direct and indirect costs related to stress in the work environment. Direct costs include absenteeism, staff turnover, increased accidents, and lowered morale. Indirect costs include low motivation, communication breakdowns, impaired decision making, and disrespect and distrust.

An answering service, by it's nature, involves some of the psycho-social factors that cause stress in the work place. These factors include minimal participation in decisions, work overload and underload, consequences of mistakes, and lack of career development opportunities.

After working at an answering service for a while, the biggest source of stress becomes apparent. You realize that how you handle a client's calls can play a role in making or breaking a business. How you respond to an alarm has the potential of burning down a house or building. Handling calls for doctors or social service agencies can impact the health and well-being of other human beings. Stress is compounded by the common assumption that an answering service operator is a menial job with minimal requirements or skills.

To overcome these and other job related stresses and be an effective answering service operator, it is crucial to learn ways to diffuse and re-direct stress.

ONE CALLER to our answering service gave me his name, number and message and then said, "You know my name. What's yours?" "4136," I replied, since we were allowed only to give our operator numbers. Sounding disappointed, he said, "May I call you by your first digit, or would that be too personal?" *Contributed to "All In a Day's Work" Reader's Digest by Donna Annetta*

IV - Changing the Paradigm

There are many situations where stress is hard to avoid. At the answering service for example, you can't pull the plug or ignore the call even if you want to. You can't just get up and go for a walk after a difficult call. Sometimes it is even hard to find time to take a deep breath or two. So, to keep stress at manageable levels you learn some creative methods for getting the job done without raising your blood pressure to crisis levels.

What Nevada Ranch is this?

As a new answering service operator, still in training, I was trying very hard to do everything right. I got a call on a doctor's line and answered it promptly. According to what I had been taught, I asked who was calling and what was the problem. The only thing the woman on the phone would say was that "This is the ranch and I want to speak to the doctor." I tried to no avail to get further details - nothing doing. I finally asked my supervisor for help. She took the call, talked for a minute and then put it through to the doctor. Then she told me that it was THE ranch (the Mustang Ranch, a bordello) and the normal rules for doctors call didn't apply, we just put them through to the doctor, no questions asked.

Tip: Reduce stress by shedding the superman/superwoman urge. No one is perfect. Review what needs to be done and ask for help when needed.

Lesson - Focus, take time to look at the whole picture

Unexpected circumstances, conflicts, problems, or disagreements are prime sources of stress. Sometimes focusing so intently on one issue or one part of the problem inhibits the discovery of solutions. One of the standard methods to reduce stress is to adjust your response. Instead of responding to an unexpected circumstance by trying to fit it into a known framework, try adjusting your response by:

- > taking time out to clear your head and look at the problem from a different angle
- > taking time to review the situation and getting all the facts
- > reviewing all the solution options

Blind man's bluff at the switchboard

One early morning at the end of a twelve hour shift, disaster struck. At four o'clock in the morning I was the only operator on duty although I did have a trainee with me. The weather had been stormy all night and just as my relief came in the electricity went out. When that happens the switchboard indicator lights don't come on, all you hear is a little click indicating a call is coming in. You have no idea which line might be ringing.

IT WAS particularly busy at the Disney World hotel where I worked as a telephone operator, and I was taking calls as quickly as possible. "Good

afternoon," I said to one caller. "Contemporary Resort." No answer. I immediately repeated myself. Still no answer. And then, just as I was about to take another call, a slow Southern voice drawled, "If you'll just hush a minute, little lady, I'll talk to ya." *Contributed to "All In a Day's Work" Reader's Digest by Brenda Graves*

Lesson - Prioritize tasks, develop a plan and stick to it

In this situation what you have to do is plug into a line that you suspect might hold a real incoming call. If there is no call on that line, then check another line and so on until you determine which line has the incoming call. How do you figure out which lines to check?

Knowing your customers is crucial to determining what lines you will check in what order and in developing a plan of action. For instance, a doctor's call could be life and death so they are a high priority. But then there are certain doctors whose calls must take precedence over others. Then there are the emergency lines - the crisis line, alarm companies, and security services. Then there are the lines the customers use to call in to check for messages.

There are several factors that must be considered when organizing tasks and developing a plan of action. These include:

Establish criteria for ranking individual tasks

The criteria we used in this situation included risk factor, service provided by the customer, and likelihood of call on clients line. In other words -

- > Clients whose call had a high probability of relating to life and death issues were the first to be answered.
- > Clients who provided key services such as alarm and security systems were usually second
- > Responding to customer call in was usually third

Within this framework, knowing which of the lines in each of these categories were most likely to receive calls help narrow down which line to check first. Knowing which line would most likely ring was based on experience under ordinary circumstances.

Determine your immediate and longer range goals

Our immediate goal was to get all incoming calls answered as quickly as possible. This helped to clarify which calls needed immediate action and which could wait. Once the calls were answered we could then go back and handle the call as needed. The first task was to get a name and number so if contact was lost it could be re-established. When time allowed we would complete the message record noting the customer, date, time of the call and message if any.

Define the procedures needed to accomplish the goals

Defining our short and long range goals provided a clear and unambiguous method of dealing with a chaotic situation. It provided a solid framework which met the needs

of the customers and minimized the probability of a critical piece falling through the cracks.

Attitude With a Vengeance

The answering service served a wide variety of doctors and medical groups. One doctor always required special handling. One day a trainee answered his line and following proper procedures, called the doctor. When he got on the line he chewed her up one side and down the other. She was in tears and couldn't figure out what she had done. We had to explain to her that the best way to deal with him was to be assertive and not to back down and to sometimes tell him he was the one who put himself on call and it was his patient and he was going to take the call. He did not like working with operators he felt weren't competent and weren't capable of handling his calls. Once he got to know you and realized you knew your job he was fine.

Later the doctor called back and apologized. Apparently his wife had heard him and told him he was a little out of line. This doctor by the way, was an excellent and highly recommended specialist. One- on-one with his patients he was very considerate and empathetic.

Lesson - Knowledge and information helps

Having clear policies and procedures, knowing where to get help, from whom, and when, knowing a little bit about each customer's business and their personal habits all reduced stress and enhanced effectiveness.

In this situation our response was guided not only by written policy and directions from the doctor himself, it was guided by our knowledge of his past responses and familiarity with his habits and personality. Many times the unwritten procedures are as important if not more so than the written policies. It is this combination that enables us to make effective decisions when the response requires a judgment call.

Little problem, big crisis

Several of the doctors on our service were pediatricians. The doctors provided instructions about which calls were to be put through immediately and which ones could be handled with a message. After working with them and their patients for a while you learned to identify which calls were more likely to be serious. One day a new mother called in a panic because her baby was sick. As any parent knows, a sick baby is cause for concern (and a source of stress!). She wanted to talk to the doctor and would not take no for an answer. After asking the mother questions and getting the necessary information it was clear that this was a 'take a message' situation. It was also clear that this mother considered the problem very serious. While her concerns needed to be acknowledged we still had to follow procedures established by the doctor.

Lesson - Learn to recognize and accept that stress is different for everyone

Stress is an individual issue and it is important never to negate feelings of stress no matter how trivial they may seem to you. Taking a little time in the beginning to assess a situation and discuss the issues can pay off in the long run by minimizing the factors that create stress. If we had just told this mother we would take a message and let it go

at that the situation could have become more stressful for everyone concerned. Instead, taking a little time to listen to this mother, acknowledge her concerns, and reassure her that her message would be handled promptly kept the situation from escalating into a potentially angry and unproductive confrontation.

Five Alarm Chaos

When the power goes off not only do the switchboards cause problems, the majority of the alarms also go off. Since most of these are on alternative power, when they go off they still buzz, ring, jangle, and, in general, create a cacophony of noise. Since you have no idea whether or not one might be for real, you have to log and report all of them.

DURING A HURRICANE, my wife and several co-workers at the telephone company were pressed into service as operators to help handle a massive number of calls into South Carolina. One call came for a family in Eutawville. My wife's colleague typed in "Utahville." The computer responded, "No location found," which she repeated into her headset. "Oh, my goodness, I was afraid of that," said the caller. *Contributed to "All In a Day's Work" Reader's Digest by Reggie Murphy*

Lesson- Completing a task provides a sense of accomplishment and control

Accomplishing something, getting one job done often releases the tension and gives you the direction needed to finish the job. When the power goes off and all the alarms start ringing, your first reaction is to wonder where in the world to start. Most of the alarms can be reset but still indicate active mode. So the first task was to reset all the alarms to stop the noise. When one alarm wouldn't reset we asked a first day trainee to put her finger on the button and hold it down. That solved one immediate problem and enabled the other operator and me to focus on the next problem of logging all the alarms and reporting them to the alarm company. When that was done, the alarms could be reset, we could complete the paper work, and relative calm was restored to the answering service office.

One outcome of this situation was that after that night the trainee never came back. Apparently she had decided there was more to being an answering service operator than she had anticipated and that it wasn't for her.

Sharing the load

During my tenure at the answering service we moved to a new office. Moving a business that never closes requires some special planning. Calls must be answered and handled, radio communication must go on uninterrupted, and alarms must be monitored. Interactions must proceed as seamlessly as possible. Telephone technicians, alarm company representatives, and others are involved in the move as well as the operators. Everyone has to work together to ensure a smooth transition. When the time comes to start transferring calls from the old office to the new, two identical systems are in place, one in each location. When everything is ready the old system is

methodically taken "off line" and the new system is activated.

Lesson - Good teamwork reduces stress

What made the transition of the answering service from one office to another run smoothly was teamwork. Knowing you can depend on others creates a support system that makes dealing with stressful situations much easier. On the night of the move there were operators in each office. There are phone lines in place between the offices so both groups can keep in touch. Although we have some notice that one switchboard is about to go off line you aren't too sure exactly when and you might be in the middle of a call. The first thing you have to do when any

call comes in is to get a number so you can call back. That way if you are unable to finish the call you can return it or call the new office and have the operator there complete the call. When clients call in for messages you have to be sure and check with the operators at both offices to make sure nothing is missed. Often, in the process of transferring the alarms, some will go off. Again checking with the technicians in both offices is necessary to determine what response if any is needed. Once everything has been transferred, the staff in the old office go over to the new office then we begin the process of double checking everything, coordinating messages, and ensuring that nothing has fallen between the cracks.



Illustration 1 Telephone Company in small Mexican Town

Superbowl short circuit

Two situations provide examples of creative solutions to specific problems. The first involves the phone lines for the cable TV station. At this time it was apparent to all of us working at the answering service that different parts of town received response to trouble calls from the cable TV company differently. Most of the time this wasn't too big of a problem but on Superbowl Sunday that difference became more apparent. One particular year, for whatever reason, the cable went out right in the middle of the Superbowl game. The phones started ringing off the wall. Most people were understandably very irate. We had to get some basic information in order to pass it along to the technicians on call but trying to get the callers calm enough to give us the information was quite a chore.

What I finally did was to plug a hand set (like a regular telephone receiver) into the board as well as my headset. When I answered a call on the cable TV line and the caller was upset and ranting on the phone I would switch to the hand receiver then leave that line open, but go ahead and answer other calls with the headset. Every once in a while I would go back and check the cable call and maybe say "uh-huh." When the person calmed down I picked up the line to get the information I needed. Very often the person would apologize realizing it wasn't my fault. But they had to vent their frustrations somewhere. Putting these calls on hold made them even madder and often they would hang up and call again and again. Letting them yell got their frustrations

out of their system and in the end made for a much better resolution. Using the hand set meant I could take other calls and not have to listen to their yelling in order to get the information I needed. It also seemed to be much better for the caller because, instead of keeping all that frustration pent up, they could get it out and then move on.

Dial-a-prayer

In another situation we had an alcoholic relative of a client that called all the time just to talk to someone. His relative often refused to take his calls, we weren't authorized to put him through to a counseling service, and we were not supposed to just hang up on him.

What we finally came up with when he had called once too often was to cross connect him to Dial-a-Prayer. Although it may seem a little heartless, it worked. Hearing a voice, even though automated, seemed to satisfy him for a few days.

Tip: Exercise and develop a healthy life style. Any regular exercise can be beneficial. Good nutrition, adequate rest, and balance between work and play minimize the negative impacts of stress.

Y - Stop Before You Start

Focusing on the productive aspects of stress first requires that the sources of stress are identified and acknowledged. A known problem is much easier to deal with and can more effectively be controlled. An often overlooked way to reduce stress is prevention. Be aware of situations that are likely to produce stress and consider ideas that might effectively reduce or eliminate stress at the source. As an example - you are doing an orientation for a new group of volunteers. These people don't know each other and aren't sure what being a volunteer in your organization is all about. To minimize the stress of starting something new begin your orientation on a lighter note or address their concerns directly. Use an introductory activity that enables people to get to know each other. Ask the participants to share their biggest concern about being a volunteer. These activities will open up communications and help put any concerns out front where they can be dealt with.

Cognitive-behavioral methods are the most effective ways to reduce stress. In addition to identifying sources of stress, cognitive-behavioral methods include restructuring priorities, changing one's response to stress, and finding methods for managing stress. Often adding or interspersing pleasant activities in your daily routine can provide more benefits than just reducing stressful events. Making time for a relaxing weekend or a daily walk, getting involved in a hobby, adding a little laughter or humor in your routine, and taking time to enjoy your family and friends can all help keep your focus more balanced and minimize the impact of stressful situations.



Illustration 2 Demonstration of stress reducing technique

VI - Stress Event Review

Stresstips.Com <<http://www.gday-mate.com/>> provides excellent suggestions for turning stressful situations into beneficial learning experiences. For instance, consider that, after things have calmed down, it is time to objectively review the stressful situation. It is important to assess the situation after some time has passed so there is less problem with emotions aroused by the situation clouding judgment and inhibiting the ability to gain fresh insights.

The following steps are suggested to review a stressful event.

- > Define the event factually. Write a brief but factual and objective summary of the event.
- > Review the event negatively. Try to imagine various ways the event could have been more stressful.
- > Review the event positively. Use your creative imagination to find less stressful ways you might have dealt with the situation.
- > Review the event from the other person's perspective. Try to imagine the perspective and needs of other people involved in the situation
- > Determine future strategies. Reviewing the event invariably turns up fresh perspectives. Use these to re-evaluate the situation objectively and creatively.



VII - Stress and Volunteer Management

Considerations for Volunteering

Not much thought is given to stress in relationship to volunteering. After all isn't volunteering something you want to do, choose to do? It is true that people choose to volunteer because they are often interested in the goals or the mission of the organization. They are enthusiastic and want to get involved. But that doesn't guarantee a stress free situation. One reason stress goes unnoticed among volunteers is that when things don't turn out well they often just leave. Without any follow-up it is often assumed that the source of the problem was with the volunteer.

There are several common assumptions about volunteering that can create stress. They include:

Open ended recruiting - A very common way of recruiting people to assist with a task is to make an open ended statement such as "We need six people to help wrap Christmas presents and deliver them to the children's home. Who wants to help?" This kind of comment puts everyone on the hot seat and seems to convey the idea that skills or interests aren't important as long as the job gets done.

The "just a volunteer syndrome" - This phrase often indicates an assumed lack of capability and can lead to a lowering of self esteem. It also relates to one of the psycho-social factors that causes stress in the work place: minimal participation in decisions and lack of development opportunities.

Information deficit - Volunteers often get the short end of the stick when it comes to information. Since they are "just volunteers" they don't need more than the basics about what is going on in the organization.

An effective volunteer program realizes the importance of teamwork and the contributions each individual, whether volunteer or paid staff, makes to the organization. It is important to realize that the elements that create a good work environment for paid staff are very similar to creating a good work environment for volunteers. Provide opportunities for involvement in the decision making process. Provide opportunities for leadership. Acknowledge and utilize each individuals skills, and abilities.

Instead of a blanket plea for help, ask specific people who have expressed an interest or who you feel would do a great job but they just need to be asked. This approach is more of a recognition of each individual and what they might contribute to make the project a success.

'Just a volunteer' is like 'just an answering service operator.' Volunteers are the glue that holds many critical services together. They provide many services that would otherwise not be available or would be too expensive to be effective. Be careful about looking at the tip of the iceberg and assuming there isn't much to it. An iceberg sunk an unsinkable ship. The contributions of volunteers can make a big difference in the quality of life for everyone.

People work better when they are well informed. This isn't to say that every last detail needs to be public record, but it does mean that the better informed people are the better they can support the work of the organization and carry out the tasks assigned to them.

Lessons learned: respect the individual

What I learned at the answering service has benefited me in other areas of my life including my work in volunteer management. Working with volunteers means you are working with people from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences; people who have different expectations and different needs.

The answering service experience has given me a much broader perspective of how to relate to individuals, how to listen, and how to be flexible in meeting the needs of each individual.



Illustration 3 Volunteer morale booster

A volunteer insecure about language

One day a volunteer who couldn't speak much English came in for her first day of training. She had brought a friend with her. Apparently she was so nervous about the training and not being able to communicate very well, she talked her friend into coming to provide some moral support. The friend had not been through orientation and "officially" shouldn't have participated in the training. But instead of asking her to leave, we adjusted the plan and let her continue training and then followed up with the orientation. By recognizing the concerns of the new volunteer and adapting to meet her needs we ended up with not one, but two people who turned into great volunteers.

Lessons learned: set priorities

As any manager of volunteers knows, the job often means wearing several hats simultaneously and being able to switch from one to the other without ever missing a step. It also means having at least some familiarity with a broad range of management and human resource knowledge than may appear necessary on the surface.

The answering service taught me how to prioritize and how to handle multiple tasks simultaneously without losing track or throwing up my hands in despair. In order to best serve our clients it was necessary to learn about all sorts of businesses and business practices from plumbers to doctors to insurance to real estate to hotel security. This has come in handy in my work with volunteers as I find I often have a common link with their own background and experiences. This has helped in developing rapport and has assisted in the effective placement of the volunteer.

Tip: Change your pace, your scenery, your attitude. Take things one step at a time. Don't forget your hobbies. Indulge in occasional treats such as a trip to the beach or go to the county fair. Focus on accomplishments rather than roadblocks.

Girl Scout team development

As the Program Director for the local Girl Scout Council I was responsible for most of the major events, usually a minimum of two or three in various stages of production simultaneously. These events ran the gamut from a simple presentation for older girls to a regional event with 1200 participants to hosting exchange students from Japan. They involved a variety of community resources. The development of a team of volunteer leaders who had responsibility for various program components was crucial to carrying out successful events. Together we could create a plan for each event, rank the tasks needing to be done, brainstorm creative ideas, and accomplish our goals one step at a time. Despite the sometimes hectic pace, we always seemed to incorporate a little fun and humor which not only minimized the stress but also served as a great motivator.

Lesson: be aware

As an answering service operator you not only developed eyes in the back of your head, you developed radar ears. The way our service was set up we sat facing the switchboards and behind us were desks with the radios and some of the alarms. Alarms were also mounted on the walls on both sides of the room. You soon learned just by listening to distinguish which alarm or which radio needed attention without having to turn around and look.

Radar Ears

An environment that utilizes a number of volunteers working in close proximity can create a situation where some monitoring may be needed to answer questions, resolve disagreements, support efforts, and keep things running smoothly. When I was working with volunteers in a health care setting, my office was down the hall from the volunteer room. Although I might be busy in my office I was always aware of what was going on down the hall and, when the situation warranted, I could intervene. This often kept things from escalating and diffused some potential problems before they started. These same skills helped when, as Disaster Director for Red Cross, I had hordes of people wanting to volunteer during the Loma Prieta earthquake. After getting these new volunteers up to speed on the basics, I could carry on with what I needed to do in my office and still be aware of what was happening in other parts of the building.

A Worthwhile Education

All in all I wouldn't trade the experience of working for an answering service. It provided unparalleled opportunities to learn valuable lessons that continue to be beneficial, especially in dealing with stressful situations.



VIII - Additional information about stress

There is a wealth of information available on all aspects of stress on the web. Resources for this presentation came mostly from papers and documents located on various web sites.

WebMD <<http://my.webmd.com/>>

A very good resource for all things health related, provided access to numerous documents on stress related issues. See the following:

<http://my.webmd.com/content/article/1680.51975>

<http://my.webmd.com/printing/article/1700.50604>

<http://my.webmd.com/printing/article/1680.51976>

<http://my.webmd.com/printing/article/1680.50603>

<http://my.webmd.com/printing/article/1680.5197>

American Psychological Association <<http://helping.apa.org/>>

<http://helping.apa.org/work/stress4.html>

<http://helping.apa.org/daily/naps.html>

Other sites

http://psychology.online.jn.sd.cn/psych/eng/new_page_8.htm

<http://www.wrc-research.ie/hspro/strs/strmgm.html>

<http://www.maccavlei.co.za/develop.htm>

<http://users.planetcable.net/doco/sjo/stress.html>

<http://www.hml.org/CHIS/topics/mental.html>

<http://www.hml.org/CHIS/topics/mental.html#sectioninformationstress>

http://www.talkaboutstress.com/fun_with_stress.asp

<http://www.stressdoc.com/>

<http://www.gday-mate.com/>

The Leipper Management Group provides education, management, and information services for associations, membership groups, and small businesses.

Association headquarters services - your own headquarters and staff without all of the headaches

Membership organization support services - manage the information to support membership.

Event Planning - meetings, conferences, and special events from A-Z

Communications - USPS mail preparation; fax and e-mail broadcasting; world wide web.

Personnel Development - consultation and assistance for organization leaders.

Training - orientation, presentations, and tutoring for skills development.

Education - services to create intellectual development for improved leadership and management.

Document Preparation - design and typesetting services for informational materials

Management and the Way of Work from the Leipper Management Group

> ***Board Officer's Handbook, an Overview*** - Why have a handbook? What should be included.

> ***Robert's Rules for Small Associations*** - A synopsis of key procedural elements for small groups

> ***Association Guidebook*** - A guide for developing the administrative foundation for an association.

> ***Volunteer Management Notebook*** - Provides the resources for developing a self supporting volunteer program. Includes sample forms and reports.

> ***The Consulting Option*** - Examines the concepts that are proving to be important in understanding the employee of the future. The Consulting Option is a vision, a definition, a description, and being part and parcel of human society.

Find us on the Web < <http://leipper.org/> >

Who we are, What we do

<http://leipper.org/management/documents.htm>

Volunteer Management

<http://leipper.org/management/documents.htm>

Dear Association Leader - a weekly E-mail bulletin for association leadership

<http://leipper.org/leadership/dal/>

S t r e s s - A F r i e n d o r F o e ?

*Stress management: Learning to use, not abuse, your stress
or
how I kept my sanity as a telephone
answering service operator.*

Diane L. Leipper, 17 May 2001

a presentation of the Leipper Management Group

<http://leipper.org/>