

# the Personnel Touch

Prepared monthly by FIU Personnel Department.  
An internal communication on FIU Personnel  
matters, policies, procedure and benefit  
information. Suggestions on content may be  
sent to the Personnel Department, PC 220,  
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## FIU'S HURRICANE PROCEDURE (June 1 - November 30 Hurricane Season):

In the event of hurricane danger in the South Florida area, the University takes its cue from official U.S. Weather Bureau Advisories. The Weather Bureau issues a Hurricane Watch when it appears that the storm will hit the coast. Subsequently, as the direction of the storm becomes more certain, the Weather Bureau issues a Hurricane Warning, narrowing down the area in which the storm is likely to strike. It is the Hurricane Warning that is the basis for the President to make the decision to close the University or its branch campuses if they are in the Hurricane Warning area.

The President or his designee will inform the University Police Department and the news media of the decision to close the University until the danger is over. If the decision to close the University is made during "work" hours, all departments will be informed by the President's designee and/or the University Police Department to leave the campus or go to a central area of safety on campus. Upon receiving such information, employees are expected to secure papers and equipment that may be damaged by water or misplaced by winds. Certain employees have been designated to secure windows and external features of buildings.

If the decision to close the University is made during "non-work" hours, employees will be informed via public bulletins to stay home. These bulletins are widely circulated and heard almost continuously on TV and radio. It is the University's intention to contact all radio stations in Dade County; however, WINZ (9.40 AM) and WQBA (11.40 AM) are among the first two contacted during such emergencies. During emergencies, these two stations normally make progress reports every hour, on the hour. If employees or students are off campus and wish to clarify whether the University is closed they may call the University Police Department at 554-2626. In the event certain employees are required to work during hurricane emergencies, they will be personally informed by their supervisors. **STAY ALERT: STAY SAFE THIS SEASON!!!**

## AMENDMENT TO LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM:

All state employees should be aware of the amendments to state legislation that were passed during the 1988 Legislative Session:

- Retirement: The required retirement contribution rate for members of the Regular Class of the Florida Retirement System has been increased from 13.14% to 13.90%, effective 1/1/89. Subsequent increases for 1990 - 1993 are as follows: 14.66%, 15.43%, 16.19%, and 16.95% respectively. A second amendment to retirement increased the rate of employer contributions from 2% to 3% for members of the special risk class (law enforcement officers) of the Florida Retirement System, and also increased the monthly retirement benefit for Special Risk Service, effective 10/1/88.
- State Holiday: The amendment to the state holidays provision provide that Martin Luther King's birthday shall be celebrated on the third Monday in January as a paid holiday for state employees. This amendment deletes the provision of past law authorizing the secretary of the Department of Administration to designate one additional working day per year as a paid holiday for state employees. However, the special holiday offered to USPS employees will not be affected by this amendment.

TIME OFF, FOR USPS EMPLOYEES, FOR ELECTIONS: An employee who lives at such a distance from the assigned work location as to preclude voting outside of working hours may be authorized a maximum of two hours of administrative leave with pay for this purpose. Any other employee may be granted one hour of administrative leave with pay for the purpose of voting during normal working hours. An employee shall not be granted administrative leave to work at the polls during elections.

FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM: As of July, 1988, the Department of Environmental Health and Safety offered eleven departments at University Park training in the ABC's of fire prevention. Before the end of the year, all departments at both campuses will be sufficiently aware of their obligations toward fire prevention. The training consists of general fire safety rules and the operation of the three types of fire extinguishers, including the necessary precautions taken for their use. Evacuation maps are being updated and included in the training as well. The Dade County Fire Department also is assisting Environmental Health and Safety in this training effort. In August, they conducted a demonstration on the west side of University Park that instructed participants on issues of fire prevention. If you missed this demonstration and wish to have one scheduled for your group, phone the Department of Environmental Health and Safety at University Park (554-2621). These demonstrations can accommodate approximately 35 people.

WORDS: A SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO COMMUNICATIONS:

If you are a typical supervisor, you spend some 70 to 80 percent of your work day communicating in some fashion: making job assignments, listening to progress reports, conducting staff meetings, and the like. Obviously, many factors influence the effectiveness of a supervisor's interpersonal communications, but perhaps none so directly as the words he or she uses to convey thoughts, feelings, attitudes, opinions, or facts. Words can be "turn-ons" that enhance employee motivation, or they can be "turn-offs" that bruise a person's ego. To illustrate the impact of words, let's take a brief look at words that are ineffective and words that are effective in communicating with others.

Here are the least effective words a supervisor can use in conversations with employees:

- 10 least effective words: "Don't give me any excuses, just get the job done."
- 9 least effective words: "I'm the boss and don't you ever forget it."
- 8 least effective words: "Either get with it or hit the road."
- 7 least effective words: "I do not care what you think."
- 6 least effective words: "We've always done it that way."
- 5 least effective words: "You're not paid to think."
- 4 least effective words: "Because I said so."
- 3 least effective words: "It's company policy."
- 2 least effective words: "That's stupid."
- 1 least effective word: "Never."

Now let's look at the most effective words a supervisor can use in communicating with employees:

- 1 most effective word: "We."
- 2 most effective words: "Thank you."
- 3 most effective words: "I don't know."
- 4 most effective words: "I made a mistake."
- 5 most effective words: "Your idea is much better."
- 6 most effective words: "Let's work together to accomplish it."
- 7 most effective words: "What do you think should be done?"
- 8 most effective words: "I trust and respect you as a person."
- 9 most effective words: "You know more about the job than I do."
- 10 most effective words: "What can I do to help you fulfill your needs?"

Words - they can stimulate, inspire, and encourage but they also can deflate, discourage, and damage. So choose your words carefully to make certain that you make the positive impact you desire.

Excerpts taken from Don Caruth, Supervisory Management, June 1986