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# *IN SIGHT* for Oregon Lawyers and Judges

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

## LEG-UP ON HAPPINESS

We focus on how to “work smart” or work effectively, but our success also depends on how happy we are at work. The following are eight concepts to consider in improving your happiness at work:

- **Accept the fact that you alone are responsible for your happiness.** Happiness is all about your own perspective.

- **Understand the trade-offs.** Every choice has a consequence; be honest about what you want and the costs.

- **Learn how to let go.** The happiest people do not dwell on things. Pay attention to your thoughts; learn from each situation, but let go of things that are not conducive to your work or happiness.

- **Reframe.** When faced with unexpected or less-than-ideal situations, try to reframe the issue or circumstance. Although changing your frame of reference does not alter the facts, it can change the situation into something more positive.

- **Remember that you always have options.** Optimists view problems as specific, temporary, and impersonal. Pessimists see problems as pervasive, permanent, and personal. Reflecting on your frame of reference might help modify your perception of any given situation. And getting out of the “all or nothing” frame of mind will help generate new problem-solving options.

- **Do something nice for someone each day.** Kindness begets kindness.

- **Be more still.** Give yourself the opportunity to reflect. First, think about what is important, then act.

- **Commit.** Take action. No one ever learned to ride a bike by attending a lecture or reading a book. Make a commitment to being happier, and take little steps each day to accomplish that goal.

People who are happy at work tend to be more successful than those who are not. We should seek not only efficiency and results but also joy in our work.

HELEN YU  
YU & YU LLP

*This article was based on a presentation by human resources professional Ellen Raim, JD, at a 2010 Oregon Women Lawyers’ “Leg-Up” event.*

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