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Dear Reader,

Stoicism is a philosophy of life that maximizes positive emotions, reduces negative emotions and helps individuals to hone their virtues of character; exactly what the doctor ordered to cope with and overcome our present trials and tribulations. Our lead article this edition is by **Jari Roomer**, and he talks about the 4 stoic habits that help save more and build true wealth.

The Stoic take is that we are moved to action by positive emotions, such as a sense of indignation at having witnessed an injustice, or a desire to make the world a better place for everyone. Anger just isn't necessary, and in fact it usually gets in the way. Now that's definitely worth pondering.

Darius Foroux follows up with a critique of the "hustle culture." Waste a Few Hours, he advocates, so You Don't Waste Years. Being productive doesn't mean utilizing every waking minute to do productive things. Having that time and space to think allows us to step back and look at the bigger picture.

Then there is the issue of impactful feedback dwelt upon by **Spotify Design** who frowns upon imsy praise like 'good job' because it provides nothing to explore further. Praising your peers is important because the silence is deafening when you don't.

Back-of-the-book we have an in-depth look at the recently concluded twenty-seventh annual Conference of Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Sharm eLSheikh, and the herculean job the Pakistan delegation did in making the 'Loss & Damage Fund' a reality. There's many a slip between the cup and the lip, however, and the consensus is on the need for relentless, intelligent follow-up in bridging the gap between the Global North that has grown rich on fossil fuels and the Global South reeling from the blows of climate change.

JJ's selection of lifelong learning tips is spot-on as usual and the ones that resonated were about circumventing procrastination. Read on! And remember what the billionaire Charlie Munger said that the one quality he especially admired about his business partner, Warren Buffett, was Buffett's ability to be a lifelong learner 😊

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Lifelong Learning Tips

JJ's Selection

4 Stoic Habits That Will Help You Save More And Build True Wealth

Use today's income to make life easier for your future self.

Jari Roomer | 6 min read

Stoicism is one of the most practical philosophies for daily life.

There's a wealth of knowledge to be gained from the minds of some of the greatest Stoics like Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, and Epictetus.

But Stoic wisdom isn't just useful to live a better life, it can also help you save more money and build your wealth.

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Prepare During The Good Times

When times are good — your business is thriving, you're making good money, you've received a financial windfall — you need to prepare for more challenging times.

As Seneca once said, "It is when times are good that you should gird yourself for tougher times ahead, for when Fortune is kind the soul can build defenses against her ravages."

Life is cyclical. Some of its seasons are great, while other seasons are much more difficult.

When you're in a great season of life, however, it feels like it will never end. That's why most people spend as if the good times won't ever end.

But reality is, you never know what the future holds in store for you:

- You might get laid off
- You might need to pay for a medical emergency
- A global disaster (like the pandemic) could hit us again
- The economy could spiral down ([like it's doing now](#))

When you're in a financially great season, don't waste your money on stupid stuff. Don't spend as if there's no tomorrow.

Instead, think like a Stoic. Use the harvest of a great season to prepare for a bad season.

Put some of that cash towards an [emergency fund](#). Put it towards your retirement fund. Use it to pay off your debt.

Use today's income to make life easier for your future self.

Life can be unpredictable, so you need to **build a financial fortress during the most profitable seasons that protects against life's most challenging seasons.**

. . .

Focus On What's Truly Essential

Most people major in minor things. They let the most trivial things distract them from what's truly essential.

As Marcus Aurelius once said, "You're better off not giving the small things more time than they deserve."

To paraphrase the advice of personal finance expert Ramit Sethi, **you need to focus more on \$30,000 questions, not \$3 questions.**

Examples of \$3 questions are:

- Should I make my coffee at home or get it at Starbucks?
- Should I buy organic tomatoes or non-organic?
- Should I cancel Netflix now that it's a few dollars more expensive?
- Should I get this appetizer or not?
- I have \$10,000 in savings, should I switch banks with a 0.10% higher interest rate? (only makes a \$10 difference per year)

These tiny expenses have almost no impact on your personal finances — yet it's what people focus on the most.

If you want to improve your finances, your time is much better spent on \$30,000 questions:

- Can I earn more by negotiating a raise or switching jobs?

- Should I start a side-hustle so I can make an extra \$1000 per month?
- Do I invest consistently and automatically?
- How much am I paying in investment fees?
- What's the interest rate on this 30-year mortgage?
- Do I have a plan to pay off my debt?

These financial decisions truly move the needle, so they are worth spending your time on.

Yet, most people ignore or avoid these questions because they are more difficult questions to ask.

"Most of us are obsessed with \$3 questions, but we really should be asking \$30,000 questions. Get those right and you will never have to worry about how much it costs to buy coffee or an appetizer." — Ramit Sethi

We only have so much time, energy, and decision-making power to spend on our finances, so don't let \$3 questions distract you.

As Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least."

Focus on the big financial decisions such as increasing your income, investing early and consistently, minimizing investment fees, and paying off your debt.

Avoid Ego Traps

As Epictetus said, "Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants."

Consumer culture wants you to believe you need more stuff, better stuff, and more expensive stuff to feel happy and confident.

They have a financial incentive to make you believe that:

You won't be accepted by the tech crowd if you don't have the latest iPhone

You don't belong with the cool kids if you don't wear designer clothes

You're lower in social status if you drive a cheaper car than your neighbor

Most people fall for these 'ego' traps.

They end up spending so much money trying to look rich that they don't have enough left to actually become rich.

You become rich by investing in assets that make you more money in the future. This is how you achieve financial freedom.

But you'll never achieve financial freedom when you play status games, fall into the consumer trap, and let your ego dictate your spending.

As Morgan Housel said in *The Psychology of Money*, "Savings can be created by spending less. You can spend less if you desire less. And you will desire less if you care less about what others think of you."

Less ego, more wealth.

. . .

Focus On What You Can Control

Marcus Aurelius said, "You have power over your mind — not external events. Realize this and you will have strength."

When you focus on what's within your control, you gain power. You take ownership. You improve.

When you focus on events outside your control, you lose power. You start blaming others. You won't move forward.

For example, if you're in a difficult financial place, don't blame the economy, your boss, or politicians. Instead, focus your resources on what's within your direct control:

- Learn high-income skills
- Look for a better job
- Start a side-hustle
- Minimize your spending
- Make a budget
- Learn about investing
- [Read books about money](#)

Don't get me wrong, the economy might suck. Your boss might not pay you enough. Politicians might make decisions you don't agree with.

And yes, they have an effect on your life.

But when you start obsessing over these external things, you're giving your power away. You'll stay stuck in a place of financial difficulty.

If you want to make a change, follow what the Stoics did; take ownership of your life and focus on everything you can control.

Build better habits. Learn new skills. Improve your mindset.

This is the only way to move forward in your (financial) life ■

Source:

<https://medium.com/wealthwise/4-stoic-habits-that-will-help-you-save-more-and-build-true-wealth-db6ced2752cc>

Waste a Few Hours, so You Don't Waste Years

What are you doing this evening?

Darius Foroux | 4 min read

Being productive doesn't mean utilizing every waking minute to do productive things. That's why I don't like "hustle culture." I don't need to be busy every minute.

Sometimes, spending a day doing various things around the house, maybe taking walk or doing some reading, can actually be more useful. These moments help us examine our lives.

But high achievers and ambitious people often have a problem with doing nothing. They feel like they need to be productive every single minute. So they get busy with minor things.

For example, when highly productive entrepreneurs have spare time, it's not unusual to see them making minor improvements to their business. They optimize their websites, clean up their brick-and-mortar shops, do more research on their industry, and so forth.

It's great to have the desire to improve yourself and your career. But you also don't want to be too extreme with busywork.

In his commencement speech at the University of Southern California, the billionaire Charlie Munger said that the one quality he especially admired about his business partner, Warren Buffett, was Buffett's ability to be a lifelong learner.

"If you take Warren Buffett and watched him with a time clock, I would say half of all the time he spends is sitting on his ass and reading."

BUSY TIME ~~≠~~ PRODUCTIVE TIME

DARIUS FOROUX

Having that time and space to think allows us to step back and look at the bigger picture. As the platitude goes; **work on your business, not (only) in your business.**

Good vs bad waste

Doing something that helps us, in the long run, is actually not a waste of time when you think about it. So how do you "waste" your time wisely?

Avoid spending too much time on social media. We both know that's not good for you. It's also a good opportunity to switch from [being a consumer](#) to a creator. As a creator, you want to spend time making something. At the same time, you can also discover new insights and inspiration.

Some time ago, I was talking to a friend who asked me for some book recommendations. He said he wanted something to read, but had no specific topic in mind. Which is also why he didn't know what to search for.

I suggested he check out a local bookstore instead. And he can pick whatever got his interest. He ended up spending half a day in the bookstore, browsing various books.

And that's how he discovered his passion for trail running: When he read the book, The

White Spider by Heinrich Harrer. (Harrer was an Austrian mountaineer. The film, 7 Years in Tibet, was based on Harrer's autobiographical book of the same name). The book inspired him to join mountain hiking groups on the weekends. And from there, he upgraded into doing trail marathons.

The next time you're low on energy, or you feel like you're on autopilot, or you're stuck on something, you can try to focus on bigger fundamentals in your life or career.

- Instead of worrying about the next email or social media post, take the time to read [a few good books](#). Your next business idea or design inspiration just might come from that.
- If you're working on a new diet, this could mean not worrying so much about that Saturday night you went out drinking with friends. Instead, focus on the 20 other meals you'll be taking throughout the week. The impact of those other meals is much more significant.
- For creative writers (or those who use the written word to persuade people to act), you can spend a day strolling or talking to other people, or even watching a documentary. Personally, I've seen that stepping away from writing for a short while can improve my ideas.

Killing time with intention

While writing my latest book on investing and stoicism, I did some research on the investor Mohnish Pabrai, founder of Pabrai Funds and author of The Dhando Investor. He is well known for having spent more than \$650,000 to have lunch with Warren Buffett. And for trying to run an empty calendar.

I've observed that Pabrai has stoic tendencies with his investments. He manages his emotions when it comes to investment decisions. And he sticks to his plans, whether the market is up or down. He adopted what Buffett said about investing being a no-called-strike game.

"The stock market is a no-called-strike game. You don't have to swing at everything—you can wait for your pitch. The problem when you are a money manager is that your fans keep yelling, 'Swing, you bum!'"

When it comes to achieving things, people often think about action. But as Buffett said, it's also about waiting for the right pitch.

While other people busy themselves scampering through thousands of companies to invest in, Pabrai simply sits back when he can't find a company that he knows for sure will increase his profits tenfold. He doesn't concern himself with opportunities that might only bring moderate margins.

The mathematical statistician Nassim Taleb, author of Fooled by Randomness, a book about the randomness of success and failure, once observed:

"The only measure of success is how much time you have to kill."

Successful individuals understand that [personal energy is limited](#). So it's important that we only spend our energy and time on things that matter most.

So what does this mean in daily life? It's all about being aware that it's okay to kill time. **I call this: Killing time with intention.**

That's because if you waste time deliberately, then it's not a waste. You did it with intent. And the intent is to enjoy your life.

To be productive in the long term. And not to kill yourself by overworking for a few years and then burning out for an even longer time.

So, what are you doing this evening? Nothing?

Source:

<https://dariusforoux.medium.com/waste-a-few-hours-so-you-dont-waste-years-9cf6d334e586>

Beyond “Good Job”: How to Give Impactful Feedback



Spotify Design | 4 min read

Everything I know about giving feedback I learned while teaching kids. I used to work part-time for a preschool program where the ethos was “don’t say ‘good job.’” It’s flimsy praise and gives kids exactly nothing to explore further. I’ve found the same to be true for adults.

Asa UX Writer (and a Gemini), I have a love-hate relationship with sharing my work for critique. I love discovering when the words aren’t doing what they should be — I love improving products! But, I hate that sometimes I sense my peers don’t have any particular feedback — they’ll either remain silent or say something like “looks good!” This feedback is very hard to build on. My hypothesis about what happens is that people are looking for flaws and if they can’t find any, they forget to give praise about what was done well.

I’m here to ask you to praise your peers because the silence is deafening when you don’t. And, it’s much easier to repeat something done well than to find a quick fix for something that doesn’t work.

Giving praise can be as simple as saying “I like your use of the color plum.”

I like your use of the color plum.

This sentence signals praise at the start, and goes beyond the superficial with tangible evidence. In one fell swoop, it acknowledges praise, the effort that goes into decision-making, and a specific decision.

I learned this schema when I worked for a program that paired college students with preschool kids to encourage fundamental learning and social skills. Our goal was to build up the child’s confidence by asking them to explore and seek validation from themselves. Healthy design teams have a similar goal in my opinion — to encourage growth among peers.

I find the five principles from Alexia Dellner's article "[Stop Saying 'Good Job' to Your Kids \(and What to Say Instead\)](#)" really inspiring. They're based on research by the University of Florida and Columbia University, and they taught me that you can give praise that has an impact and builds a healthier culture around critique.

Be specific

Give someone a specific example of how they did well. This makes it easy to repeat that behavior in the future, and get the same positive outcome. Try starting this type of praise with "I like how you..." or "I admire it when..."

Focus on the process, not the outcome

It takes months, sometimes years, to build a product. Yet, the end result is a product of the process. That's why there's a higher value in commenting on the effort and process. Instead of "great job getting your project done," you might try saying, "you must have worked so hard and managed your time well to meet this tight deadline!"

Avoid praising people for things they don't control

Consider, for example, that praise about the visual attractiveness of a design can easily lack value when it's based on a subjective opinion or immovable requirements like your brand's design language. Praise what's within someone's power like the effort, generosity, and attitude that they put into the work.

I often worry that the praise I get from my coworkers will dry up if my strengths and knowledge in a particular subject don't translate to other projects. But, what I try to remember is that I actually control and want to be praised for how I approach problems and create spaces for people to share ideas. I don't always need to be

the subject matter expert.

Say what you see

A simple, evaluation-free statement lets someone know that you noticed. It allows them to take pride in what they did and gives them a moment to expand on what you're seeing. Remember to be specific, so your statement has depth for the receiver.



Ask questions

Allow someone to decide for themselves how they feel about their accomplishments by asking questions. Doing this allows someone to reward themselves, and encourages them to internalize what they observed about their own efforts. You could uncover a fascinating conversation by asking, "what was the hardest part to design?" or "I'd love to learn from your process, how did you approach this problem?"

A bonus: just say "thank you"

"Good job" or "looks good" can be an attempt to show appreciation for someone. Try a simple "thank you for being here" or a more verbose "your many-folded brain makes our products better." This shows someone that their whole self has value ■

Source:

<https://medium.com/spotify-design/beyond-good-job-how-to-give-impactful-feedback-ec9e722d8202>

Elite-Capture Big Problem for Masses-in-Distress

Open the Starting Gates for God's Sake!



**Cop Out at COP27 - Out-of-Control Emissions at Flat-out Gallop
Loss-&Damage Pitiful Panacea; Despair NOT an Option
Sharm eL-Sheikh Fails to Shame the Shameless**

Release the brakes, please

The champions, read villains, of the lethal status quo that grips the world as we speak have exercised arbitrary and wanton control of the starting gates, refusing to throw them open and unleash the unimaginable potential of the masses, the vast majority chomping at the bit as it struggles to maneuver in ultra-tight spaces, desperate for release to race down the beckoning turf on the racetrack to a dignified living, even fame and fortune.

For the many their energies have been sapped and they have ceased to buck and kick, yielding to the elite-capture of resources and reconciled to a pathetic ultra-fragile life at a snail's pace as the demons of the deck dictate that the starting gates be rolled forward at their whims and fancies with the horses, read people, packed tightly within, with many a

champion sprinter getting the spirit quashed out much before the flesh falls victim to malnutrition. What an unholy farce of a race.

The twenty-seventh annual Conference of Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) concluded last week in Sharm eL-Sheikh with a historic agreement to create a new loss and damage fund, writes Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri in a comprehensive Special Report put out by The News On Sunday (November 27, 2022).

Copout

While cherishing this achievement, many delegates were disappointed by the inadequate progress on two counts. First, while the world is visibly lagging in achieving Paris Agreement's target to limit the average global temperature, the COP27 outcome had

nothing new to offer to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Second, COP27 failed to convince fossil fuel exporters, including the US, to phase out all fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas) for a sustainable and equitable clean energy transition.

“COP27 outcome had nothing new to offer to reduce greenhouse gas emissions” - Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri

Loss & Damage Conundrum

A lot remains also unanswered around the loss and damage fund, such as; will the rich countries fulfill their climate financing promises? When we say rich countries, does it mean the rich Western democracies alone or does it include China, Singapore, and petroleum-exporting Middle Eastern states?

Will the loss and damage fund work within the remit of the Paris Agreement where the provision of such fund was included only on the explicit basis that it did not provide a basis for any liability or compensation? If yes, how will the Fund determine who should contribute to it and how much?

Relabeling past pledges

Will the contributions be entirely new pledges or re-labeled pledges and loans? In the past “development assistance” has been re-labeled as “funds for adaptation” and “loans for power projects” as “climate financing”? Who will be the potential beneficiaries of the loss and damage fund when the COP27 decision says that the fund will assist developing countries that are “particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change”? Finally, what is the definition of climate change-induced “losses and damage”? The standard answer to most of these questions is: work in progress.

Pakistan’s offensive

The Pakistani delegation, comprising

government officials, businesses and climate activists, manifested effective diplomatic and communication skills in terms of positively influencing the agenda, writes Dr Ejaz Hussain in the same TNS Special Report.

Using its office as the chair of G77 plus China, Pakistan persuasively pleaded the case of the Global South, which has been adversely affected due to climate change and global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions largely by the Global North. Pakistan’s efforts paid off.

“COP27 failed to convince fossil fuel exporters, including the US, to phase out all fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas) for a sustainable and equitable clean energy transition”

- Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri

Victorious ecowarrior

Federal Minister Sherry Rehman skillfully presented Pakistan’s and the least developed countries’ case. She tweeted, “It’s been a long 30-year journey from demand to formation of the loss and damage fund for 134 countries... We welcome today’s announcement and joint text hammered out through many nights. It’s an important first step in reaffirming the core principles of #climatejustice... Now that the Fund has been established, we look forward to it being operationalized, to actually become a robust body that is able to answer with agility to the needs of the vulnerable, the fragile and those on the frontline of climate disasters.”

Intellectuals engage in eco-war-dance

The fourth edition of the two-day Adab Festival kicked off at the Frere Hall in Karachi with the theme of climate change, reports Yousuf Katpar (The News International 27-11-22). To match the theme, the keynote speakers at the inaugural session of the festival were



Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman, fresh from her victorious Sharm eL-Sheikh campaign, and environmentalist Tariq Alexander Qaiser, great champion of the mangroves who represented the private sector activism at COP27.

“It’s been a long 30-year journey from demand to formation of the loss and damage fund for 134 countries” - Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman

Crisis of many proportions

Sherry said climate change was a crisis of many proportions that impacted everything, from people to industries and agriculture, the coffee that we drank and the showers we took. She was of the view that climate action would never be successful, nor would it yield the optimal outcome until the citizens were

directly involved and saw themselves as the key stakeholder. “Urban elites need to act as much or perhaps even more than the state,” she added, explaining that she did not mean to abdicate her responsibility by asking the citizens to act like the main stakeholder.

“Climate action will never be successful, nor will it yield the optimal outcome until the citizens are directly involved and see themselves as the key stakeholder” - Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman

Citizen Journalism – Getting smart with smartphones

It’s wonderful how the government and the ‘urban elite’ are on the same page in

this matter, with the corporate sector's public affairs departments seriously mulling internships in climate reporting for undergrads. Given the anticipated flood-like-flow of resources from the Global North in lieu of Loss & Damage, the citizenry will need to be kept informed about the effective utilization of these resources through a presently underleveraged communications tool that is Citizen Journalism.

“We all need to be climate literate and make climate impactful decisions like in how much water we consume everyday be it a bath, men shaving or women washing clothes” - Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman

Given the scale and enormity of the crisis, Minister Sherry has emphasized that every single person, in whatever small capacity, needed to take action to bring the outcome to the table and educate children about the possible future they would have to face if the climate issue was not addressed. Pakistan had become the 'ground-zero' of climate change and the world needed to realize that because for three successive years Pakistan had been home to the hottest cities of the planet and 53.7 degrees Celsius was not fit for agriculture, industrial production or any activity inside or outside.

“We all need to be climate literate and make climate impactful decisions like in how much water we consume everyday be it a bath, men shaving or women washing clothes. The amount of water you save can actually save lives and the country from the future of water scarcity,” Sherry stressed.

“For us, 2030 is the decisive decade and not 2050 like the rest of the world. All actions have to be taken within this decade. How

will you feed people or give them relief or even humanitarian assistance when you are drowning both in water and debt?”

In need of new bucket

While in complete agreement with the Minister for Climate Change for the urgent need for a change of consumption mindset at the grassroots level, the question arises that what do we do about the plunder of the public trust and the massive gaping hole at the bottom of the government's bucket through which precious and scarce resources leak out in a wasted flood-like-flow?

The Naushahro Feroze Deputy Commissioner Tashfeen Alam, an officer of the Pakistan Administrative Services (PAS) cadre, is in the news (Dawn 28-11-22), being at the center of an over 3 Billion Rupees fraud in collusion with officials of the Sindh Bank. Fortunately Prakash Lohano, the General Manager National Highway Authority, has blown the whistle and the FIA is on the job and in hot pursuit of Tashfeen Alam who has absconded overseas, travelled to Azerbaijan, reportedly via Dubai, on Nov 19. He was suspended on Nov 23 after having “gone missing” (Dawn 26-11-22).

“How will you feed people or give them relief or even humanitarian assistance when you are drowning both in water and debt?” - Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman

Left high & dry

Left low and wet would be more appropriate. The Larkana circuit bench of the Sindh High Court has expressed its dissatisfaction over the performance of the irrigation department in draining stagnant floodwaters from

affected areas of Larkana division where miseries of flood-hit people have exacerbated after the government has stopped providing food and shelter while they are unable to cultivate their farmland which remains under water” (Dawn 27-11-22).

In a major development, the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Trade and Development Bank President Yalcin Yuksel in Istanbul has announced financial assistance worth Rs35 billion (€150 million) to Pakistan, with the financial package meant for flood relief efforts as well as financial support for the import of fuel. Pakistan has received one billion dollars so far from this source, and where it's gone is the million dollar question which citizen journalists reporting on climate are trying to figure.

“Build Back Better—blah, blah, blah. Of course we need constructive dialogue, but they’ve now had thirty years of blah, blah, blah, and where has that led us?”

– Climate activist Greta Thunberg

Beyond blah blah blah

On September 28, 2021, at the Youth4Climate conference, held in Milan, Greta Thunberg took the stage, narrates Elizabeth Kolbert in her piece CLIMATE CHANGE FROM A TO Z (New Yorker Daily, November 21, 2022).

Sitting near her was the city’s mayor, Giuseppe Sala, wearing a mask. Thunberg, who is five feet tall, could barely be seen over the lectern. She had removed her mask and was smiling.

“Climate change is not only a threat, it is above all an opportunity to create a healthier, greener, and cleaner planet which will benefit all of us,” she began. “We must seize this opportunity—we can achieve a win-win in both ecological

conservation and high-quality development. . . . We need to walk the talk; if we do this together, we can do this.

“When I say ‘climate change,’ what do you think of?” she went on. “I think of jobs—green jobs.” This received a round of applause.

“We must find a smooth transition towards a low-carbon economy,” Thunberg said.

“There is no Planet B. There is no Planet Blah—blah, blah, blah; blah, blah, blah.” Her listeners, including Sala, started to realize that they’d been had. The applause died down.

“Build Back Better—blah, blah, blah,” Thunberg continued.

“Green economy—blah, blah, blah.

“Net zero by 2050—blah, blah, blah.

“Net zero—blah, blah, blah.

“Climate neutral—blah, blah, blah.

“This is all we hear from our so-called leaders: words—words that sound great, but so far have led to no action,” Thunberg said. “Of course we need constructive dialogue, but they’ve now had thirty years of blah, blah, blah, and where has that led us?”

Greta Going Great Guns!

Well, Greta Thunberg has gone beyond the blah, blah, blah and, along with more than 600 young people in Sweden, has filed a lawsuit against the Swedish state accusing it of climate inaction, a first in the country. Go figure. While the lawsuit is a first in the Swedish courts, six Portuguese youths have taken Sweden and 32 other countries to the European Court of Human Rights, accusing them of failing to adequately address the climate crisis ■

Lifelong Learning Tips

Selection by JJ

- **Save time by using small, personalized return address stickers**

for purposes such as signing in at seminar registration tables or filling out your address when completing comment or suggestion cards. Carry them with you and keep a supply in your desk. The next time you need an inexpensive reward for an employee who's done an outstanding job, try one of these ideas: a voucher for a free car wash, a book by his favorite author, a pass for the afternoon off, three hours' worth of maid service or two movie tickets.

- **When taking over a new position,**

remember to pace yourself. Don't try to be an immediate super-star by tackling 50 projects in the first week. The trick is to be productive over the long haul.

- **Beat procrastination**

by setting a timer for 15 minutes and plunging into your most dreaded task. Even if you don't finish in that time, you will make progress. You can polish your work or build on it later.

- **When you return to your office**

from a trip or vacation, start reading your most recent e-mails first. You won't waste time on issues that no longer require action.

- **Here's a sneaky way to trick yourself out of procrastination:**

Do absolutely nothing for 15 minutes. Force yourself to stare at the papers on your desk until the urge to do something overtakes you. We often allow ourselves to procrastinate by finding busy work to distract us. Don't do it.

- **Increase the odds**

that people will remember what you say by dressing conservatively. Wearing a patterned top, dangling jewelry or a garish necktie can distract those who try to listen.

- **Tip readers off**

to what you want them to do by starting each e-mail or memo subject line with a verb or action word. Examples: "Re-request data," "Seek advice," "Finalize travel plans."

- **Ensure that customers stay calm**

by estimating how long it will take to satisfy their requests. Example: "May I put you on hold for about 90 seconds to research this?" Let the customer choose whether to wait or have you call back.

- **To improve**

your listening skills, challenge yourself to say nothing for the first half hour the next time you have a meal with a group. You're about to end with a heartfelt appeal.

- **Your calendar is packed,**

and your boss comes to you with a time-consuming new project. What do you do? Never say you can't or won't do something. Take a positive approach. Go to your supervisor and say "What do you think? Which project should I take on first?"

- **When attending a conference,**

sit at a lunch table with people you don't know. Don't socialize only with people from your own company. Meeting new people builds your network, allows you to gather information and improves your professionalism and confidence.

Extracted from Communication Briefings

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