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Chicago's Astute Lezbo Educational Journal for Today's Professional 2nd Iss Vol % April 91 This month's prizewinning essay "Problemsolving in the Workplace"

Editor's note: I received this query by mail and was moved to respond to it in this Negativa, the professional journal issue.

Q: Is there a way to prevent my aftershave from spilling in my suitcase when I travel?

A: Like many work-related problems, the solution lies in sharing the burden! First, examine the problem from more than one angle. Get input from both the managerial perspective and from the experience of your co-workers. Maybe they are having the same problem! To start the brainstorming session off on a good note, do a slow strip tease. When you reach a comfortable place, wiggle your muff in a co-worker's face. Since this meeting is taking place at your instigation, some leadership is expected of you!

Discussion, by now, is flowing effortlessly. But is it going in the right direction? Is the original problem being addressed, or, has it been sidetracked by the diverse minutae of your co-workers' concerns or by the management's long-winded blinders-on positivism? Exercise your authority as the meeting's facillitator and gently divert the discussion back to your original topic using this creative roleplaying strategem: Ask everyone to bring their chair into a circle. Assign each person an archetypal role from the pantheon of Greek myth. Pull out a bottle-brush and starting with grieving Demeter (earth) and sullen Hestia (hearth-keeper) plunge the brush deep into each anus, stirring vigorously to dislodge "debris", or, if you think it will aid in the exercise, you may wish to use the more technically precise term of "phlatus", the sputum of the gods.

Watch the quality of discussion skyrocket!

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