



Are You Just Punching a Time Clock?

As each minute passes, it is spent, disposed of, never to be used again; no second chance. For every year you are on this earth, you spend 525,600 minutes. How many of those have you squandered passing time, counting down to something else, who knows what? No one knows, if you don't! An average year breaks down like this. There are:

- 525,600 minutes in a year
- Approximately 153,500 minutes are spent sleeping
- 247,500 are spent with loved ones, family, recreation, etc., or perhaps wondering what else there is!
- You punch a time clock for 124,800 minutes every year. 24% of your life, if you work a 40 hour week.

The good news is that you have chosen a job; let's change the word to career, which matters. You have one of the most important careers possible. You make a difference. You are the caretaker of the most precious commodity on earth, "water". Without it there are no minutes to spend in any way. You are the barrier between waterborne diseases and clean water; between illness and possibly death and life itself. You have been entrusted with life's nectar. You make a difference in someone's life everyday. You have a career that has meaning. You live and work in a country where we have advanced beyond cholera and typhoid being a deadly statistic. Our children are not exposed to life threatening waterborne diseases. Because of people like you, they are not one of the 10,000 children who die every day from lack of clean water.

With the SDWA establishing maximum contaminant levels which are safe and guidelines for treatment, disinfection, conservation and reuse, you are able to avoid ugly statistics which plague other countries. In West Bengal, India, millions of people are slowly dying from arsenic poisoning which they contracted by consuming water laced with arsenic from shallow wells. In Amman, Jordan, water taps run only two days per week.

Our industry which used to be a "silent service" is moving to the fore front. It was the feature article in the August 2002 edition of US News and the September 2002 edition of National Geographic. There are places in Africa where less than 20% of the population has access to clean water. In New Delhi less than 50% have access to clean water and many take baths where the large water pipes have massive leaks.

Christi Todd Whitman, the Environmental Protection Agency's Administrator, recently said "Water quality and quantity is the biggest environmental issue that we face in the 21st Century." Do we work in an industry in a nation that is free of concerns? No, but we have chosen a career that has an incredible purpose and we are part of the solutions for these concerns.



Water is a renewable resource. We are using the same water which was used from the beginning of time. It rains, it snows and there is run-off; it percolates, it evaporates, it rains, it snows. That is the way it has been and will always be. It is our responsibility to teach people to honor this gift, to safeguard it from contamination, to conserve. Each time a baby is born in this nation we calculate, on average, 75 gallons per day of clean safe drinking water to fulfill their day-to-day requirements. This is a luxury which could slip away without your guidance and diligence. You are the safe-keepers of life itself. I challenge you to step into your career and take ownership. Someone once said we are all “doing time” if we are not living life passionately, if we are not living life out loud. Remember, work accounts for 24% of your time. If you are just punching a time clock, you are doing time for 124,800 minutes per year, 4 million minutes in a 30 year career. You are incarcerated for 7.5 years.

If you are just punching a time clock, you have not opened your eyes to the gift you are safeguarding.

If you are just punching a time clock, an important piece of your life is passing you by.

If you are just punching a time clock, you have dreams on hold waiting to be born.

If you are just punching a time clock, there is a unsung song within you.

I will leave you with a quote from one of my favorite authors, “Work is love made visible.”

Enjoy the conference, make a new friend, and allow yourself to feel the success of your career.