Organizational Guru Teaches Survival Skills To Standing-Room-Only Audience
By Paula Levis Suita

Is organizing some mysterious talent? According to Julie Morgenstern, an acknowledged organizational expert, author of multiple best-selling books and nationwide lecturer on the subject, organizing is a skill, not a talent, which everyone can conquer.

“I was formerly a notoriously disorganized person,” she announced to a standing-room-only crowd at her “Chaos Control” lecture, “and now I’m a minor celebrity. People are shocked. I lived in a constant state of chaos from the day I was born to the day of my child’s birth,” Morgenstern told the crowd.

The turning point came when she decided to take her then-baby daughter, Jessie, for a walk. “By the time I assembled the diapers, got a change of clothes, found the pacifier, uncovered my daughter’s favorite toys, two-and-a-half hours had passed, my daughter had fallen asleep and I had missed the moment. I suddenly recognized that if I didn’t get my life together, my daughter would not see the light of day.”

Is It Me or Is It Them?

Morgenstern asked the crowd to think about a time when work was working: when we were doing the work we loved, making a contribution, feeling appreciated and ensuring that everything on the list got done. The new economic reality, however, says that today’s worker works at a hyper speed, maintains an increased workload, and has more pressure.

According to The New York Times, 62 percent of American workers say their workload increased dramatically in 2004. According to a study by Integra Resources, more than half say that have to work more than 12 hours a day to get their work done.

The time management principles of just a decade ago do not apply, and with life and work moving at the speed of light, we need to focus on developing a system. “No matter how much is flying at us, it pays to slow down and take a closer look,” Morgenstern reminded the group.

The Nine Elements of Time Management Survival

What does it take to survive? Morgenstern believes that the following nine steps are key to controlling chaos. They include:

- **Embracing a work/life balance.** Balance your time with physical health (eating, exercising, and sleeping), Escape Mechanisms (follow the hobbies and passions that bring you joy) and Engage with People (put your job in perspective). Work is challenging and our confidence takes a beating at work every day. Spend time with the people who love and know you well. It is the biggest boost of confidence and will help you perform better.

- **Develop an entrepreneurial mindset.** See opportunities and go after them. Connect to your strengths and talents and constantly reinvent yourself.
• **Choose the most important tasks.** Do the most critical task in your work day and in your personal life FIRST. Dance close to the revenue line of either generating revenue or saving the company revenue.

• **Create the time to get things done.** Schedule what needs to be done whether it is telephone calls, strategic thinking, or filing.

• **Control the nibblers.** Control your need for perfection, procrastination urges, interruptions, and meetings. Limit your work day to nine-and-one-half hours and focus on your deadlines.

• **Organize at the speed of change.** Have faith in your own basic system of organizing materials and integrating things into them, so that you spend less time redesigning or learning new technologies.

• **Become a master delegator.** Involve others even if it means you need to release some control. Save your time for what you do best, and delegate the rest.

• **Work well with others.** Look at the six areas that define how well you work with others, including accessibility, reliability, flexibility, respectfulness, clarity, and fairness.

• **Leverage your value.** Understand your value and leverage it so that you have a contract with your customer and company.