

A4TD's Nugget of Knowledge

July 24, 2020

Greetings Everyone ~

My Little View on the World - Savor the Summer (a coronavirus-free edition)



To ruffle someone's feathers means to annoy, irritate or upset them. But after watching the sparrows at my birdbath, that expression doesn't make sense to me. I've been watching the sparrows have a grand old time swimming and dunking in the water, and their feathers get quite ruffled in the process. Of course, one reason they bathe is to

remove dust, dirt and parasites from their feathers in order to keep them in good condition and waterproof. I presume that by ruffling their feathers they are maximizing the cleaning activity. So unless they hate the bathing ritual, why would this make them upset? The evidence seems to be otherwise.

This is just another point to ponder among the many I have been pondering as I look out my window. Regardless of the history or meaning of the phrase, let me just say that I get an enormous kick out of watching those sparrows swim and ruffle their feathers. It's like a message to me to get out there and enjoy the summer in the most simple of ways. It doesn't have to be anything fancy, just do it and have fun. We in the northeast know that our summers are too short and winter will come soon enough. So even though our lives may be in a bit of limbo right now, that doesn't mean we should forgo the fun. What's your favorite summer activity? I encourage you to go out and enjoy that to the fullest – and ruffle your feathers in the most positive of ways!

I'll be right back – I see a maple creemee with my name on it!

Read on and enjoy.

A Cool Resource . . .

If staying inside too long has your mind wandering to earth shattering questions such as “*how long is it safe to hang upside down?*” there’s a place to find the answers. Check out www.howstuffworks.com!

The answer to that particular burning question can be found here:

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/innovation/science-questions/hang-upside-down-how-long-safe-deadly.htm>

Just For Fun! . . .

Brain Games

Here are some new games that will keep you on your toes!

<https://www.braingle.com/games/animal/>

<https://www.braingle.com/games/hangglider/>

Brain Teasers

Here are the answers to our previous challenge:

- 1) *Forrest left home running. He ran a ways and then turned left, ran the same distance and turned left again, ran the same distance and turned left again. When he got home, there were two masked men. Who were they? **The answer is: the umpire and the catcher.*** (Kudos to Charles N-B, Sharon C. and Pat W.)
- 2) *What makes this number unique: 8,549,176,320? **The answer is: it has each number, zero through nine, listed in alphabetical order “beauty”.*** (Kudos to Charles N-B, Sharon C. and Rick S.)

Now for this issue’s challenge:

1. **I am taken from a mine, and shut up in a wooden case, from which I am never released, and yet I am used by almost everybody. What am I?**

2. What are the next three letters in the sequence WATNTL?

A Training Tidbit . . .

We have talked in a previous Nugget about the importance of putting together your employment portfolio. This should include your cover letters. There are many things to keep in mind while writing a cover letter. And while every cover letter should be tailored to the position, there are certain tips that you – as an older worker – should apply to all of your letters.

Cover Letter Tips for Older Workers

1. Don't summarize your entire resume but instead focus on your experience relevant to the job at hand. Illustrate how your qualifications fit the position. Also, don't ever lead with "decades of experience" or say you have 25 or 30 years of experience. It might signal to employers that you're overqualified even if you're exactly who they are looking to hire!
2. Emphasize your results and accomplishments. Quantify them using data and numbers wherever possible. Make sure you list achievements that set you apart from other candidates. The more you can demonstrate how you've added value and how specifically you've made an impact, the better. This is one of the key cover letter tips for older workers – your years of experience have given you more achievements to promote.
3. Express some understanding of company's current challenges and demonstrate that you have solutions.
4. Include language about your flexibility and willingness to learn. Emphasize that you're a proven commodity, and highlight any knowledge of current technology that you have.
5. Relate yourself to the company and show that you'll fit if you get hired. Spend some time getting to know the company's culture; explore their blog and social media platforms to learn more about them. Ideally, you'll also want to demonstrate your connection to the company's goals. Have you been following news on them for a while? Do you use their products? Anything to show a genuine interest in the company will increase your chances of being interviewed.

Examples of Cover Letter Phrasing for Older Workers: Four Scenarios

Here are some of the situations you might need to explain when applying for work, coupled with helpful phrasing to use.

#1: You took time off to nurse a family member. Here is one way to address it:

“In the last two years, I stopped working to care for my mother who was diagnosed with a terminal illness. It was a difficult period, but I’ve made sure to keep my skills up to date by participating in various networking events and online forums, as well as studying_____.

Right now, I am available to return to work, and I believe my extensive experience in_____ would be an asset to your team.”

#2: You took time off to raise a family. Here is one way to address it:

“After stepping away from my professional life to start a family, I am eager to return to workforce now that my children are older and more independent. I have kept my skills and connections current through attending industry events and through _____ (for example – “participation in a couple of charitable organizations.”) “

#3: You are looking to change careers. Here is one way to address it:

“Even though my last role was as a _____, at this point in my career I want to apply my skills in a new field. My skills will transfer nicely, as I am focused, dedicated and have a track record of completing projects on time.”

Then name the specific skills that are relevant to the job, how you have applied them, the outcomes, and how they will benefit the prospective employer.

#4: You are applying for a position for which you may be overqualified. Here is one way to explain your willingness to take a step down professionally:

“At this stage of my life, I’m more interested in flexibility and work-life balance.”

A Bit about A4TD & SCSEP . . .

We are still enrolling new participants!

Even though most of you aren’t able to train at your host agency at the moment, that doesn’t mean that the SCSEP program has shut down. We are still enrolling new participants, and we would love for you to tell your friends, family and acquaintances about SCSEP and A4TD. They may go to our website at www.a4td.org to apply online. If you know of someone specifically who wishes to apply, you should have them contact your Regional Coordinator or Director.

Please refer any host agency supervisor to your Regional Coordinator or Director.

Should you receive a phone call from your host agency supervisor about returning to training – or about any other matter – please ask them to contact your local A4TD professional staff person instead.

Just for Fun . . .

Did you know the history of duct tape? . . .

My father grew up during the Depression and as a result, he was an incredibly frugal man. He rarely bought a replacement for something that he could fix – or attempt to fix - instead. And he creatively fixed many things with his favorite tool – duct tape! In fact, we called him Dr. Duct Tape. I am proud that I have inherited that skill, and I was thrilled to stumble on this little history of duct tape.

Vesta Stoudt was the mother of two Navy sailors serving in the Armed Forces during World War II. In 1943 she wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, suggesting that an adhesive fabric tape be used to seal the boxes of ammunitions, in order to save precious time during battle. From that advice, Johnson & Johnson developed the first duct tape in history. It was made of a thin strip of duck fabric (a type of canvas), with a plastic coating and a layer of rubber-based adhesive. During the war, the use of duct tape was limited to the emergency repair of military tools and vehicles. Its introduction to the market for home applications came much later.

It is a common belief that duct tape, in the years of its early history, used to be called “duck tape”, probably referring to the name of its fabric or to its resistance to water, just like an actual duck. However, according to research, there is no reference to the name “duck tape” in any document of that time. During the war, the tape simply had no specific name.

During the Fifties, duct tape was use in the construction sector to wrap air ducts, with the production of grey colored tapes that would blend into the tin. The name “duct tape” was given to the product during those years, referring to this application. During this time, the tape assumed many of the features it still has today.

During the Sixties and the Seventies, duct tape became part of the equipment NASA used in space missions. In fact, in 1970, it saved the lives of the astronauts on Apollo 13 during their lunar mission. After an oxygen tank exploded, they had to move from the Command Module to the Service Module in order to return home. Unfortunately, the carbon dioxide expelled by three astronauts in that small space would deplete the air reserves needed for a safe return home. The only solution was to install the Command Module’s lithium hydroxide canisters – used to clean the air and absorb carbon dioxide – into the Service Module. But there was a problem – these canisters weren’t compatible in size with the openings in the Service Module

where they were to be installed. NASA engineers had to come up with a plan to modify the canisters to fit – only using supplies onboard the ship. And what did they use to attach the canisters to the opening? You guessed it – duct tape!

Now, you may not have a spaceship needing a retrofitting with duct tape, but you may have one of these needs where duct tape can save the day!

Here are 10 uses for duct tape you may not have considered:

1. Protect blisters. If you develop blisters while walking, running or hiking, don't cover them with bandages. Those often come loose or fall off. Instead, clean any blisters thoroughly, then place a piece of gauze over them and top with duct tape. Trimming the corners will help ensure the tape stays in place when you pull on your socks.
2. Trap bugs. Flies ruining your camping trip? Hang several foot-long strips of duct tape from the trees. The tape will act as flypaper, trapping the insects. This trick also works in your garage or on your patio. One duct tape fan reports catching crickets in his basement by laying strips on the basement floor sticky side up.
3. Patch together glasses. Yes, duct taping your glasses together will make you look nerdy. But if your eyeglasses break and you can't replace them immediately, a little duct tape is all you need. Better to look nerdy than not be able to see.
4. Keep snow out of your shoes. On a hike and need to cross a patch of deep snow? Wrap duct tape around the tops of your boots or shoes and the lower ends of your pants, creating faux gaiters that will keep the snow from falling into your footwear. You can employ a similar system if you have to wade through some muck that might pull off your shoes.
5. Remove splinters. If you have an exposed wood, fiberglass or metal splinter that's in a typical, easy-to-reach spot — e.g., your finger versus near your eye — place a piece of duct tape over it and then pull it out. Some recommend a gentle pulling back of the tape, while others say a quick yank is best.
6. Help squeeze your toothpaste tube. When your toothpaste is nearly gone, it's a pain to keep rolling up the bottom of the tube to squeeze the last bits out. Instead, roll it up and hold it in place with some sturdy duct tape.
7. Employ as a drink holder. Don't want your sparkling water or soda to tip over? Then stick it in the center of a roll of duct tape. It's the perfect width and height to keep many drinks in place.
8. Make roses. Duct tape isn't just for emergency fixes or hacks. It can be used to create artwork and crafts. The Duck Brand, a popular duct tape manufacturer, offers tape in

more than 200 different colors, prints and styles. Its website has instructions on crafting everything from daisy pens and notebook covers to a pot of roses, all with duct tape.

9. Hem clothing. Not handy with a needle and thread, or in a hurry? Hem those pants or skirts with some duct tape until you can get them properly repaired. Bonus: the duct tape should stay in place through a few washings.
10. Remove common warts. An old wives' tale says you can remove a wart by rubbing it on a church pew. A better idea: put a piece of duct tape over the wart and let sit for several days. Remove the tape, clean the area, then put on another piece. Most common warts will disappear within one month. This duct tape regimen proved significantly more effective at wart-removal than cryotherapy, according to a study in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

Do you have anything to add to that list?

* * * * *

Here is a little quiz for you:

“How many times per day does the heart beat?”

And for extra credit:

“How many hearts does an octopus have?”

Stay tuned for the answer next time. (Or, feel free to respond back with the answer and you will get a shout out in the next Nugget!)

* * * * *

Last time I asked you **“What was the first city in the world to reach a population of 1 million people?”**

The Answer? Rome (Kudos to Steven S., Harry S., Donna W., Sharon C.)

In case you need a break . . .

On a hot summer day it might be fun and relaxing to take a cool walk through Redwood National Park in California. Enjoy! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MglBOaOnzqM>

A Final Thought . . .

“If you do not enjoy a moment, you lose it forever. If you enjoy it, it is yours forever.”

— **Debasish Mridha**, American physician, philosopher, poet, and author.

Ask A4TD . . .

Finally, remember that if you have a comment or a question for A4TD, “reply” to this message and share your thoughts or questions.

Until next time, be safe, be well, and savor some happy summer moments. And remember, we’re still at your side.

Sincerely,

All of us here at A4TD