

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It's Time to Recognize Indispensable "Gatekeepers" Everywhere!

Jenkintown, PA -- They get your coffee; type your letters; screen your calls; remember an important client's birthday, or even your spouse's anniversary.

They are the often unsung (and many would say, underpaid!) heroines – and heroes, too – of the workplace: administrative assistants.

Well, April 22-29th is Administrative Professionals Week® -- time for managers everywhere to recognize these indispensable "gatekeepers" who organize schedules, maintain a sense of calm in the face of a chaotic work week, and generally speaking, make their bosses look good.

According to *Chase's Calendar of Events*, this week was created to acknowledge the "contributions of all administrative professionals and their vital roles in business, industry, education and government." Workplace/career experts Marjorie Brody, CSP, CMC, and Pamela J. Holland, co-authors of *Help! Was That a Career Limiting Move?* wholeheartedly agree.

They say, however, that whatever they are known as -- assistants, office managers, or gatekeepers – these people are often ignored. Brody explains, "Salespeople especially should remember that administrative assistants can be the 'glue' that holds various departments together, or who can influence the decision-makers. If you are rude to them instead, you'll find gaining access to your decision-makers a lot more difficult, if not impossible."

Brody recommends that all of us need to be interested in others – no matter their title or status. "It's amazing how much you can learn and how you can make others feel important when you show an interest in them. Ask questions that evoke conversation, open-ended questions like, 'How was your commute this morning?'"

States Holland, "I know someone who lost an internal promotion to become Human Resources Manager, despite her qualifications, because she treated the vice president of HR's assistant poorly. When the VP heard what had happened, she told the candidate why she wasn't promoted: As an HR manager, this candidate would need to make everyone feel equally respected and appreciated, but given the way she had treated her assistant, the VP felt this employee didn't have the maturity or character traits necessary to be a successful member of her team."

Brody and Holland says all professionals need to show gatekeepers respect, and remember two key points when interacting:

- If they answer the phone, ask their name if it wasn't said. Be courteous, and elicit their help.
- During face-to-face meetings, be pleasant – smile, make chit-chat, and give the administrative assistant your business card, too.

The magazine tycoon Malcolm Forbes once said, "There are no unimportant people." He respected the value and contributions of each individual within an organization. So should you!