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**Focus,
Execution,
And Results**

February, 2006

A New Approach to Business

As a result of my sabbatical, I have decided to approach my business differently.

- **Focus, Execution and Results.** I've broadened my scope to include core competencies beyond consulting – from project manager to temporary executive. This expansion of services will ensure successful customer initiatives not just in the design phase, but at launch and implementation, as well.
- **Active Consulting Partners.** I will be partnering with others to bring you the very best resources in:
 - Creating the Future
 - Dealing with Complexity
 - Operational Excellence
 - Public Safety Innovation
 - Public Sector TransformationVisit www.cmperme.com/associations to learn more about how I will be working with and through these new alliances to deliver services.
- **Academic Calendar of Operations.** Or, to put it plainly, summers off. These 10 weeks of annual sabbatical will no doubt make me a better consultant come September. Of course, I will work with your schedule to ensure that services are delivered within deadlines and to your expectations.
- **Updated Web site.** In addition to reflecting these new directions, the site also includes examples of successful projects. Past newsletters and articles are still available to search and download. Check it out at www.cmperme.com

I look forward to reconnecting with you in the future! CMP

What Ever Happened to Cathy Perme?

Some of you may have noticed that I've been out of circulation for a while. Others might have assumed that I was just busy with other things. Both are right! Last year I took a sabbatical for reasons that included health challenges and a realization that my daughter was growing up way too fast. I decided to take a break from work during her third-grade year. The experience was transformative, both personally and professionally.

The Sabbatical

I became a "soccer mom" and I loved it! Five years ago, I could not have pictured myself in this role. Yet here I was, taking care of the house, making dinner, volunteering at school and shuttling kids to and from activities. In addition, I was able to challenge myself in new ways, such as taking a playwriting class and learning to lay laminate floors.

What I Learned

I was lucky to have the opportunity to decompress and reflect (thank you, Scot), and I was courageous enough to take the risk. The experience changed me. As I head back to work, with a renewed sense of who I am and what I enjoy doing, I would like to share a few things that I have learned.

- My greatest gift from this time off was a much deeper sense of who I am, which will make me a better consultant at every level. I have already learned that I am able to take risks and remain objective during tough situations.
- It is easy to become defined by either our latest success or our latest failure, so this time helped me learn that I have value in and of myself, without having to measure up to someone else's standards. I think that this is one of the harder lessons in life, especially at work, since we are all constantly judged by people in our lives such as managers, customers, associates, professors, etc.
- My family can live on less money than we had previously realized. Reducing our income forced us to look at how and why we were spending. Despite the dip in income, stress levels in our family went *down*, because daily life was less hectic and we could spend more relaxed time together.
- My low energy level had nothing to do with diet, stress, work, parenting or disease. I found out that I have severe sleep apnea, so my brain was not getting enough oxygen, and my body was not getting enough sleep. No wonder I was tired! Since I was able to eliminate all the apparent "stressors" during my time off, I became more proactive in determining the cause. The good news is that I now have a new lease on life, and my old energy level has returned.
- Since I spend a great deal of time in thought, I find needed balance from a hobby that provides physical labor and a tangible payoff -- such as a new dining room floor!
- I newly appreciate accomplished playwrights' skills in telling stories, setting moods and revealing action through dialog. During my class, I found it challenging to write meaningful dialog that lasted for *several minutes*, let alone hours, so talented playwrights are now among my heroes! □CMP