



The Trial of Motivation

Many managers just as well as employees currently feel themselves subjected to great pressure, as it is necessary to make the right strategic decisions, convey unpleasant news, and keep the employees loyal and the organisation healthy. One thing is certain: An increase of effort and motivation is needed. Read more about it in this edition of the HILL Management Mailer.



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Editorial

Many employees and just as many managers currently feel themselves subjected to great pressure. Pressure to keep business running, pressure not to lose the job, pressure to conduct unpleasant (dismissal) talks and to keep the rest of the staff loyal and productive.

Important issues at the same time are strategically thinking in advance, setting the right measures for the future, motivating oneself and the team, and keeping the organisation healthy. The changed surroundings may be threatening in many places, but at the same time offer the chance to examine

the company critically, adjust the positioning, clean up structures, and care for the most important resources. Not survival is important for healthy companies, but setting measures that bring advantage over the competition. One thing is certain: An increase of effort and motivation is needed. And – next to strategy – the human issue and more quiet tones have more importance again now. If we maintain these values also after the current situation has passed we are able to call ourselves »winners of the crisis«.

For this edition of the Management Mailer we have contacted experts again to hear their opinion about currently decisive issues, gathered tips for conveying unpleasant news, analysed the meaning of stress – also for »survivors« in the company – and introduced workplace health promotion as a long-term tool for a vigorous future.

Enjoy your reading.



Using Headwind

Readers Talk about Motivation and Seizing the Opportunity

A recipe for acting future-oriented, motivating oneself and employees in spite of the crisis, and mastering the challenges in a powerful way – this is what we wanted to educe from our experts from the circle of our readers this time. We are grateful for the extensive feedback concerning different approaches, cleaning measures, and motivation.

Klaus-Peter Heimerl, HR manager at **Volvo Baumaschinen Österreich** (Volvo construction machines Austria), has a full range of strategies available for using the crisis in a positive way, and motivating his employees. He »optimises internal processes, conducts structure changes, and wants to direct the branch-thinking of his employees towards team spirit/company success«. Further he identifies and promotes motivated and dedicated employees, whereas he only sees a limited chance respectively the option of release for low performers. All in all, »being honest« is an important motto for him.

»Using the time to save up new energy« is the recipe of **Benjamin Göbel**, HR IT project leader for **Robert Bosch**, with which he is able to seize the opportunity to the fullest. He also uses the crisis to »creatively advance ideas that have been dormant until now«.

For **Johann Gneist**, managing partner of the **GCT-Consulting Centre**, acting future-oriented means that »a company must possess a clear strategic direction, which also needs to be communicated to the employees so that they are able to contribute to the development of the strategic goals«. »Only if the employees are familiar with the strategic goals of the company they will have the necessary motivation to find adequate measures to reach these goals step by step together and realize them.« In his opinion, many companies hope to project previous successes from the past also in the future, without including the changes in the economic situation. Suddenly, they would find themselves in a position of »only being ab-

le to react instead of actively acting and contributing.« Only this way one is able to use the currently dominating headwind to move forward, just as in sailing.

Actively using the crisis and its challenges is an essential tool for the consultant **Gabriele Nohejl**. For her, it is especially important to »have courage to make decisions and take anticipatory action«. Also it is essential for her to »analyse complex systems and recognize their interactions«.



Current Question to the Reader

We invite you once again to share your opinion with the readers of the next HILL Management Mailer.

Please send your answer to the question »**What is your experience with psychological aptitude diagnostics? What benefit does the usage of these methods bring in (your) company, and where do you see deficits in the application of business psychological procedures?**« to marketing@hill.co.at.

We are interested in what you have to say.



Healthy Organisations Live Longer

Workplace Health Promotion as Investment in the Future

Health, the condition of total well being of the body, mind, and social position according to WHO-definition, originates from where people live, love, play, and work. Thus, we are able to create the opportunity to design and promote health for us in our private and professional life. In private, personal health promotion is part of lifestyle and self-management; it is our own responsibility.

Health promotion is most effective at work, where people spend most of their time. In these surroundings interests of society, organisation, team, and the individual meet, which inevitably leads to conflicts in which arguments that are versatile but still rational for each individual oppose each other. Unsolved and long lasting conflicts may be hazardous to health or even cause illness.

In everyday work, tasks are assigned to employees and performed by him/her for remuneration – with versatile effort. If it is a challenge for one to take on a new project, it may be too much for another person. Thus, the promotion of social and mental well being at the workplace is the centre of attention in workplace health promotion. However, can the individual act by himself contrary to a health promoting lifestyle in private? The answer is no.

Creating added value

Workplace health promotion must be lived management responsibility and integrated in personnel development. Companies have defined targets, strategies, and turnover that they must realize within a certain period of time. From time to time however it is forgotten who is the driving force in achieving the company goal.

The level of productivity achieved by the staff resp. individual employees is a critical factor for the permanent success of organisations. Especially because the technical possibilities are comparable, different results are based on the competencies and

possibilities of management personnel and employees, as well as in the motivation with which they contribute their competencies to their daily work. The increase of motivation, the increase of innovation, the increase in vitality and increase of health differentiates successful companies from the less successful companies.

It is not only an ethical and humanistic obligation that the company assumes the responsibility for integrated health promotion, but especially also a measure for safeguarding the future of the companies.

The ROI (Return on Investment) for measures of workplace health promotion is marked with the ratio 1:3 in relevant international studies, which proves that these measures provide a verifiable added value for the company, and the money can be invested in the human capital of the company in a long-term, efficient, and safe manner.

Evaluate individually

Together with business success, workplace health promotion sounds very promising. Thus, if customers ask me to send them a generally informative offer I have to answer: »There is no such offer«. Companies and their strains are different. It is an essential challenge to recognize this individuality.

In the starting phase it usually requires external consulting to see the situation from a different point of view and to reflect company goals and strategy in interaction with strategic personnel planning and workplace health promotion as management responsibility.

About the person

Verena Ochs is consultant at HILL International and leads the institute for Humanistic Management together with Dr. Othmar Hill. She is project leader of the health political forum, a network for the actors in the Austrian healthcare system.

»
*Safeguarding the future
for companies*

Verena Ochs «



Workplace health promotion is a dynamic, complex, and flexible process. It takes place through the basic understanding of a social system in which every individual acts on his own according to his/her basic patterns.

Apply for the long run

In order to increase the well-being of the individual, to achieve the business health of the organization and the entrepreneurial success it needs strategic planning of the management and responsible leaders, the recognition and the promotion of the potentials and competencies of the employees (e.g. via the HILL Competence Analysis®) and the clear and regular transfer of information.

Long-term company success will only be possible if the employees want and are able to use their resources ideally, conflicts and discrepancies are used productively in form of coaching, supervision, and moderated work groups and the entire organisation sees itself as a team. Because: »No wind will be beneficial for those who don't know the harbour they want to sail into, and the crew on the ship does not want or know how to operate the sails.«



Status Symbol and Cause for Illness

Eustress – Distress – Extreme stress... What's Next?



*2,6 million workdays
are lost*

Franz Schaudy

In times of special challenges stress mobilises our mental and physical resources. The body reaches top shape in the blink of an eye to secure its survival. All systems are started up at the same time: The blood pressure drops short term, circulation is concentrated. The hypothalamus is activated, the adrenal glands produce adrenaline and noradrenaline. The heart beats faster, the breathing frequency is increased, the muscle tone intensifies, fat and sugar reserves are tapped, blood coagulation increases. At the same time the digestion and immune system are blocked to save energy.

From eustress to distress

Already the father of stress research, Hans Selye (1907-1982), differentiated two types of stress: the positive, vital eustress that is performance promoting, activating, and stimulating. It stands for the challenge in a positive sense. Distress on the contrary strains our body, impedes our thinking, depresses our mood, and makes us ill. Distress is too much negative stress over a too long period of time.

A phase of relaxation inevitably follows stress (lat.: stringere = to tense). If this relaxation is hindered and the stress situation remains unchangedly intense the body enters a »resistance phase« first followed ultimately by the »exhaustion phase«. Flame-out. Burn-out!

The paragon of negative strain in earlier times, stress is increasingly becoming a highly valued status symbol today. If you are not in a hurry, not running from one appointment to the next, meaning if you do not have stress to show you do not seem to

be of much value in today's society. Stress gives its »victim« the feeling of social importance. The generalization and inflationary usage of the term »stress« however suppresses the serious health consequences and the insights of stress research.

Increasing pressure

The world of labour is changing constantly. 60% of the employees in Austria are already active in the service sector. The time pressure on the individual/s is massively increased and the acceleration of the labour world increases the level of suffering of the individual. Even sleep becomes a scarce good. Just 100 years ago people slept an average of nine hours per day. In the Sixties the average was eight hours. Today adults reach 7.5 hours (Lauderdale et al., The Cardia Study, American Journal of Epidemiology, 2006). The number of people stating that they have to live with less is constantly increasing.

A comparison of the days of absence due to illness of the last 15 years (1991 to 2006) shows an increase of 92% of mental illnesses, even though almost all other causes for illnesses have a decreasing tendency. Since the year 1991 additional 3.400 employees were absent from the labour world for a year according to the main association of the social security providers. These facts are not only applicable to Austria, but mirror a global tendency.

The WHO sees negative stress as the largest health hazard of the 21. Century. 18%

About the person

Franz J. Schaudy is psychologist with main focal points economic and in-depth psychology and has been active as management coach, management accompaniment and trainer in the areas personnel development, organisation, and strategy for the HILL network for more that a decade.

of the Austrians (almost 1.5 million) are massively at risk of burn-out. 2.6 million work days are lost in Austria due to stress, state the studies on burn-out by Friedl (2006) and 130 billion Euros loss in the EU are attributed to burn-out according to the German university professor Rüdiger Trimpp in a lecture in 2008.

From distress to burn-out

The American psychoanalyst Herbert J. Freudenberger found several characteristic symptoms in honorary and originally enthusiastic employees of help organisations after some time: among others exhaustion, tiredness, and irritability. 1974 he characterized the term »burn-out« and described its versatile symptoms. Due to excessive demands towards the energy household the strength and resources are exhausted. Stress is the ideal fertile soil for burn-out.

There is also stress that develops in the dark, unobserved by social attention. This includes people that are socially isolated, suffer loneliness, people in debt, unemployed persons. This stress is not visible and hides underneath a thick cover of depression, first shown already in 1933 by Jahoda, Lazarsfeld & Zeisel with their studies »Die Arbeitslosen von Marienthal« (The unemployed of Marienthal).

The survivor syndrome

There is the kind of stress that survivors of the concentration camps, survivors of natural catastrophes, accidents and terror attacks experience. They all suffer massive stress, traumatic fears, and massive feelings of guilt because they have survived. Literature calls this phenomenon the »survivor syndrome«.

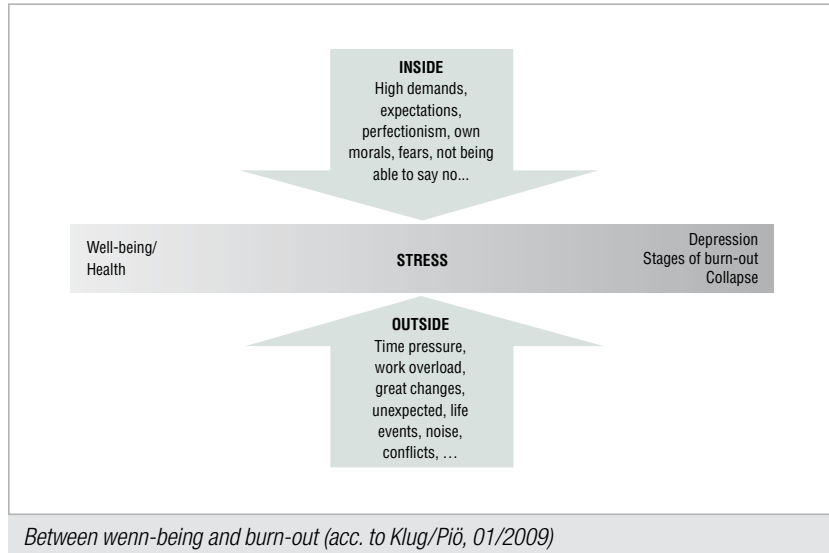
In times of recession dismissals are a tried and tested measure to reduce costs. Currently one third of the companies are planning dismissals of full-time employees. These work colleagues are however often experienced as part of a collegial family and



frequently this includes friendships that pose to be anchors in the social construction. Even if the historical background massively relativizes the »survival of a dismissal«, the inherent mechanism and the individual experience are comparable.

Am I better than my best friend, do I really deserve to be »spared«? Are we not both equally responsible for the poor result? Were we not equally loyal? Next to these (unconscious) feelings of guilt there is the fear of what will happen next in the company, what the future holds and how long it will take until all are dismissed? Distrust rules the working climate. Stress! This does not only mean a high level of psychological stress, but also a massive decrease of motivation, dedication, and identification and the increase of misperformance and concentration deficits. The work performance inevitably decreases. It is the task of a responsible management to recognize these problem fields early enough, to understand them, and oppose them consistently.

The WHO (2004) states several social protection factors for the maintenance of mental health:



- > Positive interpersonal interactions
 - > Social participation
 - > Social responsibility and tolerance
 - > Social support and community networks
 - > Perceive and realize the discomfort
 - > Take over responsibility for the solution of problems
 - > Analyse stress factors
 - > Perceive and respect boundaries
 - > Develop overcoming strategies
 - > Plan and execute concrete steps for realization
- Closing some tips from the expert. Stress management und burn-out-prevention starts with:

Literature Tip:

Learning from the Future

A completely new approach, as comprehensive as hardly anything for a long time – these are thoughts that came to my mind promptly while reading this book. Scharmer fascinates with his new book that shows solutions of the great problems of our time – in an admittedly sometimes very »American« style.

Scharmer’s goal is to bring the individual, the organisation, ultimately the global construction to its »highest future potential«. He defines management as »...the ability to change the inner place from which we act«. In his analysis he goes beyond the level of reflectivity to a level of collective creativity. In this course he is able to make creative processes that took place at the edge of consciousness as well as the necessary requirements for the in-depth renewal of structures tangible. The association to different psychological, systemic, and philosophical aspects as well as different approaches to the management theory contribute to the understanding.

His contemplations – as sophisticated and complex as they are – become tangible by practical examples. Issues that were understandable only with intuition previously now become explicitly clear. And suddenly completely new views of mechanisms develop that seemed beyond influence until now. Towards the end of the book it even seems imaginable to approach essential but previously unsolved problem fields with relatively simple management mechanisms, and enable the positive impulses urgently required for the development of humans.

C. Otto Scharmer, Theory U – Learning from the Future as It Emerges, 2009

A recension by Elisabeth Leyser, managing partner HILL International.



Considerate Acting and Managing

Credible Communication Strengthens Solidarity



Sufficient other saving potentials

Peter Pöcksteiner <<

Mr Pöcksteiner, how do you judge the current situation, which – maybe also positive – value does the current economic situation

have for you, what changed?

Luckily Mölnlycke Health Care is active in a branch that is experiencing little impact from the economic crisis. The tense financial situation in healthcare has been demanding for years, and we are used to handling our costs in a far-seeing manner. However, we do notice changes in the search for personnel. The search for product specialists is extremely difficult, as the majority seems to be reluctant to change from the relatively safe hospital branch into the private economy.

As country manager with the parent company in Sweden you are surely also confronted with enforcing unpopular decisions. How do you convey unpleasant information?

My motto is open communication. My employees must learn of unpleasant decisions in the right way, and in order to receive understanding, I also have to convey the background. If the issue is a decision that concerns the entire company, we use employee meetings. It is important to me that there is always enough time left for the discussion of open questions. Nobody should leave the meeting with the feeling that his/her questions were not answered. This only leads to insecurity, rumours, and therefore also to demotivation. Of course there are also private discussions or discussions in small circles – but I do make sure that everybody has the same status of information.



MÖLNLYCKE
HEALTH CARE

In your opinion, what can one learn for leading difficult discussions?

Credibility is the essential issue in difficult discussions, as communication is no one-way-street. The employee may not have the feeling that the superior only wants to get rid of the unpleasant news. It is important to gather feedback and opinions from the employees about this news. You do not only collect valuable information, but also bring your employees on board.

Many companies are currently having trouble to motivate their key players sufficiently and keep them. Which strategic personnel measures do you apply in this connection?

Of course, the best heads need to be supported. Every vacant position we have is openly advertised internally, and we also nominate our top talents for international support programmes in the enterprise. However: Support may not be confused with promotion – top salespeople do not necessarily have to be good sales managers – whereas one does not exclude the other. Job enrichment is therefore also a topic for us to motivate employees, promote loyalty, and keep them in the company.

In agreement with our company philosophy we also rely on a highly developed evaluation program in which employees and managers rate each other. A standardised procedure ensures that the manager and employee discuss the result together, sup-

plement comments, and in case there is no agreement, invite a third person into the circle. This promotes communication and both are able to act accordingly.

Are you using the time to restructure? Are personnel measures like flexibilization of the working hours or outsourcing a topic for you?

From the start, we have been offering our employees largest-possible flexibility concerning the working hours. We are in the lucky situation of not having to employ short time work models, in contrary, we need new salespeople. But of course, outsourcing is an issue, especially related to projects. Currently we have a project with a leased sales team that is handling a new circle of customers. However, if this project is successful, we will contemplate insourcing this team.

Basically it is currently important that companies concentrate on their strengths. It is important to keep the cost structure as slender as possible – too high fix costs kill every company in bad times. This shall not mean however that we save regarding the personnel – there is sufficient other saving potential.

Thank you for the interview.

Company profile

With approximately 6.000 employees, **Mölnlycke Health Care** belongs to the worldwide leading companies in the production of disposable products and service for surgery and professional wound care. The company headquarters is located in Göteborg, in Austria more than 20 employees work the Austrian market and South Eastern Europe.

Peter Pöcksteiner has been country manager and manager by trade law at Mölnlycke Health Care Austria since the end of 2005.

www.molnlycke.com



Sovereign Saying

Using Voice and Language Correctly in Difficult Discussions

Bad news first: In ancient times, those that brought bad news were beheaded. The good news: These times are luckily over. But the fear of this is still tangible. How else could it be explained that we are nervous prior to a difficult discussion or a crisis meeting, even if we do not always admit it – or even worse – maybe do not even notice it anymore? This fear prevents successful and consistent communication.

Why? Fear means tightness. Physically, this tightness is located in the throat, there where our breath is transformed into voice and verbal energy, into sounds. In language this manifests itself in sentences like »My throat is choked up« or »That takes my breath away«.

It's not what you say – but how you say it

Conveying unpleasant news creates stress and a conglomeration of unpleasant and confusing emotions – in the person conveying the message as well as in the person receiving the message. 90 percent of communication takes place over the tone of voice and body language, also facial expressions and gestures. Not WHAT we convey it decisive but HOW we say it.

If I confront somebody with a warm, pleasant voice and quiet breathing the interpersonal door will open wide, because the voice conveys tranquillity, sovereignty, openness. The conversation partner feels taken seriously and develops trust, and will also accept a negative message better.

If I let my personal emotions sound in my voice – negative as well as positive – and if I am honest with what I say, my voice will authentically convey the content. This is indispensable for credibility. In the history of development our voice is older than our language. Therefore it is directly associated with our emotions. The voice is our most personal medium of expression – our organ.

Warmth is transferred – literally

You know: You have to act quickly, stay objective, inform teams, conduct single discussions, make suggestions for solutions, maintain eye contact. You are in control of content and professionalism. But what does your body, especially your voice do in the decisive moment? Is your voice husky? Do you have to clear your throat or swallow more often than usual? Does your mouth feel dry? Do you have the urgent desire for a glass of water – like a man in a desert?

Warm up! Because if you prepare your body for the »fight« in a private atmosphere you will also handle emotional stress in a more sovereign manner.

- > **Stretch and yawn** – In the morning, stretch consciously, and yawn deeply and loud.
- > **Hum in private** – Say »mmmhhh«, if something tastes good to you – literally and in a figurative sense.
- > **Jiggle and shake your body** – to lively music, if you like, leaving your jaw fully relaxed.
- > **Kissing and chewing** – Try throwing a kiss. This wakes up your articulation muscles and your diaphragm.
- > **Reflectory breathing** – Say »psst« as if you want somebody to be quiet or »ffh« several times as if you were trying to blow out a candle. Laugh – this makes your diaphragm move.

About the person

Petra Rudolf is TV-moderator for the ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation), and therefore also has to communicate »bad news« on a daily basis. As trained singer, voice coach, voice, and movement therapist Petra Rudolf has been working with the voice as a factor for success for many years. Petra Rudolf coaches people that want to significantly improve their vocal potential in companies and in the framework of numerous workshops, speeches, and single sessions (petra.rudolf@stimme.at, www.stimme.at).



How we say it is decisive

Petra Rudolf



Avoid clearing your throat. Instead, hum, swallow, or yawn. Even just before a speech you can »grease« your voice by using an agreeing »mmmhhh« in small talk.

Here are some general recommendations for handling difficult conversation partners.

Use the magic of the name. Address the choleric, the know-it-all, the pessimist, or other difficult characters by their name frequently. Do not look your conversation partner between the eyes, but look at his/her chin, and only rarely in the eyes. If possible, do not exclude anybody from a conversation circle. Look at each conversation partner in turn. This creates closeness and respect. Avoid using imprecise terms like »somehow« and »actually«, but also »terrific«, »wonderful«, »great« and »cool«. And: Professionals talk loudly to themselves! Professionals listen to themselves when they are talking!

If you train your breathing and voice regularly,

- > you literally have more to say, especially in times of crises,
- > you convey warmth and consideration,
- > you conduct effective stress management and burnout prevention and
- > you also increase joy in life and creativity.

Let your voice also say that you are a professional.





Interculturally Networked

HILL International Forms Cooperation with ti communication

The network ti communication and HILL International have formed cooperation – in order to mutually use synergies towards customers. »Economic life is international today – whether a company is active in several countries with own branch offices, or simply cooperates with people from different cultural circles. The topics of management, personnel, and organisation always also include an intercultural aspect that can be covered excellently by our new cooperation partner ti communication« Othmar Hill says joyously about the cooperation.

»HILL International has the necessary tools for an objective evaluation of the competencies and potentials of managers in different cultures. Our customers therefore receive double benefit: HILL International identifies the right employees and managers, and increases profitability through ideal employment of personnel, and we provide the tools for mutual intercultural understanding for the optimisation in the work process«, supplements Gerhard Hain from the viewpoint of ti communication.



Gerhard Hain is founder of ti communication

The clear advantage for customers is that that the two companies offer a full-scope offer as of now as a one-stop-shop. International projects can therefore be accompanied and handled in the long run from planning to realization. For customers, the cooperation becomes less complicated, and

they can also draw from an excellently trained team of experts in several countries with experience from personnel planning to project management.

ti communication is specialist in the area of intercultural management and offers customers single training, supportive consultation, workshops, or project accompaniments for their international business plans. The team with nearly 300 trainers and consultants is active for approximately 80 target cultures.

The customers, which include numerous world market leaders and an increasing number of small and medium-sized companies, profit from exact demand analyses and measures that are always custom-tailored to the situation. Together with further cooperation companies ti communication offers a broad training programme. Next to intercultural training and consultation, the network supports customers and projects with further services like translations, interpreting, language training, and soft skill measures.

HILL Locations

Europe | Austria | Graz | Innsbruck | Klagenfurt | Linz | Salzburg | Vienna | hill@hill.co.at | **Bosnia-Herzegovina** | Sarajevo | hill.sa@bih.net.ba | **Bulgaria** | Sofia | hill@hill.bg, office@hill-c.com | **Croatia** | Zagreb | hill.international@hill-croatia.hr | **Czech Republic** | Prague | administration@hill-praha.cz | **France** | Paris | france@hill.co.at | **Hungary** | Budapest | Debrecen | Pécs | Szombathely | hill@hill.hu | **Latvia** | Riga | info@hill-international.lv | **Macedonia** | Skopje | hill.hill@t-home.mk | **Netherlands** | Rotterdam | information@hill-international.info | **Poland** | Warsaw | hill@hill.com.pl | **Romania** | Bucharest | hill@hill.ro | **Russia** | Moscow | hill@hill-moscow.ru | **Serbia** | Belgrade | hill@hill.rs | **Slovakia** | Bratislava | hill@hill.sk | **Slovenia** | Ljubljana | hill.international@siol.net | **Switzerland** | Kloten/Zurich | office@hillinternational.com | **Turkey** | Ankara | Istanbul | Izmir | office@hill-turkiye.com | **Ukraine** | Kiev | office@hill.com.ua

Asia | **India** | New Delhi | india@hill.co.at | **Kazakhstan** | Almaty | office@hill.kz

America | **USA** | New York | usa@hill.co.at

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