

Coffee Crisis: 2009

David Mantey, Editor, PD&D



I'm writing from the heart of a brewing crisis in office parks around the nation and, quite possibly, around the world.

In cube farms everywhere, production has been brought to a stand still because amateur office baristas are not heeding the *Rules for Brewing* posted above the Bloomfield Koffee King and making coffee two to three times stronger than the recommended dose.

Such gross scoop misuse has created a nation with tweaked-out pairs of eyes locked on computer screens, working to tribal dance music while attempting to mask the caffeine-inflicted twitch as a New Age rave dance.

Office coffee czars are screaming from the rooftops, "We want you to work harder. We want you to work faster. But we don't want you to drink that much coffee ... Do you know how much that is per pound?"

A side note: Why does all of the screaming always occur on the rooftop? Wouldn't the person be better suited and their message easier to heed, had they simply stood on his/her desk and shouted like the fish-in-hand Jerry Maguire, "Who's coming with me? ... To have a 10-minute demonstration on proper coffee-care and scoop etiquette. We will be filming and shooting the webcast with a complementary PowerPoint presentation to be dispersed to those unable to attend. Call HR, have them reserve a spot for it in the handbook."

Just yesterday, I was at the heart of the internal battle as I, David Mantey, brewed an eight-scoop pot of coffee. (This is the allotted time for gasping and heartbreak,

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as well as a good time to brainstorm mild disciplinary tones, while coming up with a pair of quick pick-me-ups to bookend this compliment sandwich.)

I'm not proud of it. I know the Six-Scoop Standard, I've read the bylaws. I needed to be picked up a bit quicker yesterday and thought those few extra grams could do the trick; until yesterday I never knew it wasn't servers behind the unlabeled black door in the back of the office, but a collection of medieval hand-slapping mechanisms. I have tasted my own medicine and is it bitter.

We each have the handful of things that not only help us get through the day, but also be more productive as the day goes on. For me, it's dark roast strong enough to jump-start a corpse and a set of headphones to drown out office white noise.

For some, it's a never-ending stream of Diet Coke or Mountain Dew; others have yogurt and granola every few hours to stay alert. Some re-enact gangland warfare between Homies and Transformer Happy Meal toys, and some water plants. Some still have trolls with wild hair to rub as if they were anxiously awaiting the life-changing bingo card to cure all of their ills. We all have quirks, rituals and habits we wouldn't dare list on Match.com. If it makes us work harder, who cares?

Reporting live, from Coffee Crisis '09, I'm David Mantey.

**Only fair trade coffee was consumed during the writing of this blog, so all of you hippies with your laptops open in Starbucks can back off.*

What's your office habit, ritual, necessity? Email me at david.mantey@advantagemedia.com [1].

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