



Tom Towater/DN

Inconvenience department alternative to work

"I may live badly, but at least I don't have to work hard to do it." — A Slacker

Get a job? Why? Give up, and slack.

I did. I'm working a part-time job and eating well as a part-time student. It's what I know best. I've been doing it for five years now. I started with work on a farm for several summers when I started college.



Gary Longsine

I realized the first summer that I could never make a life of it. My complexion is so fair that I burn endlessly from direct sun. A tan won't happen for this cat. I wore a straw hat to save the tops of my ears and my face from permanent damage.

I put that hat through hell. It got wet nearly every day as I trudged through the morning dew and artificial mud to check the wells. One day, while pulling a small disc behind a tractor, the wind swept my hat away. I looked back just in time to see it fly directly under the disc. I thought it was dead for sure, but I stopped to investigate.

The hat suffered a big crease through it, but I knocked it against my knee to beat the dust out, and put it back on my head. Sometime later, another gust of wind swiped it from my head and plunged it under the disc. I must have plowed that hat a half-dozen times that day.

Each time I retrieved it from behind the disc, it became more flexible and comfortable. The hat and I became good friends after that. We knew that we wouldn't abandon each other.

Halfway through the summer the hat, in tatters already and soaked in water from the Nemaha River, fell off my head, and my dog Daisy stepped on it. Weakened from a hard summer, the hat gave in. A hole, roughly the size of a collie-paw, wounded my hat irreparably.

I sent my hat to a good retirement home. It hangs, respected

and loved, on the wall of a friend whose dad was a farmer and wore straw hats.

Since then, I've sold my soul to rent-to-own, and done a variety of truly mundane and trivial things for money. Trivial jobs have advantages.

They contribute to low-stress lifestyles by giving you a way to make money without using your brain power. Excess neural capacity can be directed to pondering moral issues raised in philosophy classes or coffee houses.

But I've never had a perfect job. I know they exist. The campus abounds with evidence of a super-secret, extremely well-funded, and widely-denied Department of Student Inconvenience (DSI). That would be the perfect job.

That is one of the few departments on campus that will receive budget increases this year, when overall university spending will be cut. The analysis department of the DSI rivals that of the CIA or RAND Corporation.

The genius of DSI is responsible for determining that the parking problem on campus should be treated as a parking image problem. Then, after spending tons of tuition and tax dollars on a lengthy study by a committee, the study can be shelved and ignored.

I would have loved to have been the guy who writes the proposal on how to change the parking problem into an image problem. He probably got a bonus for that one.

The men and women of DSI, like those of the Washington-based cloak-and-dagger counterpart, often feel badly because people only find out about the things that get screwed up. They don't get credit for success. But I've stumbled upon one of their phenomenal success stories.

DSI brought in special agents several years ago to deal with the problem of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. It seems that a small group of radical students got wind of the existence of DSI and its influence with that office, and started making waves.

Oh, they didn't tell anyone about DSI — who would believe such a conspiracy theory? Instead, they

got people fired up about the lines that went clear out of the building and lasted all semester.

People decided that they had been trampled enough and started writing letters to the office, the paper, Regents, state senators and their parents, complaining about the lines.

In a brilliant maneuver, having already used up the "image problem" strategy with this particular office, DSI's special agents came through. They moved the inefficiency from out in the hall to inside the office, behind closed doors.

I would have loved to have been paid to think up that one. Imagine the team spirit in the Department of Student Inconvenience.

"Hey, Joe, I got it! We ditch the lines! Let's just make sure that the students don't have access to anyone with the authority to answer questions. In fact, students shouldn't be able to do anything but hand in completed forms and make appointments for no sooner than three weeks in the future!"

"Great idea, Sue. I never would have thought of getting rid of the lines! It's such an integral part of

every plan we've ever had. I never would have thought of it. I think we should set the phones to automatic busy-signal, too."

Of course, by going public with my knowledge of DSI, I've put myself at risk. I could be targeted for special arrangements.

My student ID card will break in half about three days before graduation, and I won't be able to do any of the last-minute things that they will make sure I have to do.

The library will send me overdue notices for books I've never heard of. The records office will forget that I exist, but nevertheless, I'll be billed for some extraordinary tuition oversight and a late fee. Housing will bill me for all the times I studied in the snack bars when I didn't live in the dorms.

If only I could get a job with DSI, then life would be good. I'd be an insider. I could park right next to my super-secret office and use the super-secret express elevator.

And I would always have a place to hang my hat.

Longsine is a senior international affairs and economics major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

THE EQUATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION:

Information + resources x (services) -- networking =



SUMM-IT UP! at the 1991 Student Organization Orientation Summits!

| DATE | TIME | LOCATION |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Wednesday, September 4 | 4:30 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Thursday, September 5 | 4:30 p.m. | East Union |
| Monday, September 9 | 4:30 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Wednesday, September 11 | 4:30 p.m. | East Union |
| Thursday, September 12 | 12:30 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Sunday, September 15 | 7:00 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Tuesday, September 17 | 4:30 p.m. | East Union |
| Friday, September 20 | 12:00 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Sunday, September 22 | 7:00 p.m. | East Union |
| Tuesday, September 24 | 3:30 p.m. | East Union |
| Wednesday, September 25 | 4:30 p.m. | Culture Center |
| Thursday, September 26 | 7:00 p.m. | Culture Center |

These sessions will provide valuable information on services, resources, and policies for student organization members and activities. Organizations must send at least one representative to one session.

This is your chance to share information with other student leaders and voice your opinion on needs and issues for your organization. Don't miss it!

Alive in Downtown! Live bands for every taste. From jazz to blues, reggae to rock, new age to new wave. And Downtown's theaters serve up Hollywood's latest greats and acclaimed foreign films on 15 big screens. All day and into the night, Downtown is truly Lincoln's entertainment center.

LOOK WHAT DOWNTOWN IS UP TO. GREAT TIMES...ALL THE TIME.