

# Employee Assistance Program

www.dhhs.nh.gov or 1-800-852-3345 x 4336 (Relay NH) 7-1-1



## Developing an Awareness of One's Workplace Behaviors

Becoming more conscious of the verbal and non-verbal messages that our co-workers and others in the workplace receive from us may not be first on our New Year Resolution list, but even a quick review of our workplace behaviors could benefit us with a different perspective, clarity, and an enjoyable year.

A few suggestions for thought are listed below. As you go through your workday, add topics you encounter in your workplace to the list. If you find yourself focusing on the behaviors of others, gently remind yourself that this is a reflection of our self.

### Why Not Discuss Politics at Work

Discussing politics at work usually creates tension and discord among co-workers. You may feel passionate about free expression, but maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict with workplace colleagues are more important. Another downside to discussing politics may be the questioning of your propriety, your judgment, and your ability to fulfill a leadership role. Today's workplace requires that everyone value diversity so workers are free to maximize their potential in an atmosphere that is safe, supportive, and welcoming. Discussing politics in the work setting creates an atmosphere contrary to these goals.



### Business Care for Diversity

Diversity awareness is about tolerance and respect toward others, despite differences found among the work team. Business case for diversity is the synergy and greater productivity that emerges with diversity. To achieve these goals, no employee can be left behind. Beyond making dignity and respect shared values, here's how you can help ensure everyone experiences the opportunity to contribute and achieve their maximum potential.



1) When you hear a different point of view, probe to learn more about it. You will discover how diversity influences wisdom, problem solving, and perception, and can produce new insights. 2) Make attempts to apply knowledge and skills learned from others to your work problems. 3) Think of diversity as a resource - actively seek solutions by borrowing skills and perspectives from others.

### Heading Conflicts Off at the Pass

Follow the "Rule of Immediacy" in resolving relationship conflicts. Quickly, after any incident, seek a private meeting with your co-worker or colleague to discuss comments, issues, or behaviors that concern or offend you. Conflicts are normal and unavoidable in any work organization, but they do not have to be as harmful as many people make them. This "keeping the air clear" approach to resolving early-stage conflicts is sound: Most employees



want to get along with each other, avoid conflicts, and know their relationships are successful and tranquil. "Why didn't you come to me sooner" is one of the most frequent retorts heard in workplace conflict resolution.

## Soft Skills to Know: Accepting Feedback

Ouch – constructive feedback! You will find plenty of tips on giving feedback so a well-meaning critique is received and understood, but less help on how to be a good receiver of feedback or having your reviewer feel welcomed back to offer more. Accepting feedback is a soft skill that will elevate your reputation. Employers appreciate employees who receive feedback well because it helps create a healthier work environment and drives productivity. This makes “the ability to accept feedback” important in many annual reviews. Keys to becoming a feedback dynamo: 1) Remember, no one enjoys constructive feedback that challenges their predetermined notion of a job well done. It’s a shocker. So, accept that life includes this reality. 2) Nearly all reviewers experience anxiety associated with giving constructive feedback. Empathy for this role will give you a shot at eliminating defensiveness, set your reviewer at ease, and seal your reputation as having an outstanding ability to accept constructive feedback. 3) Prepare yourself for constructive feedback by consciously deciding to appear excited to get it, to discover what you don’t know, to be inquisitive, to thank the reviewer, and to not dwell on disappointing news.



## Stay Energized at Work



Working out or going to the gym every day before work can be a big challenge, but it will help you stay consistently energized during the workday. If you typically get groggy in the afternoon, try this five-day experiment. Schedule a 20-minute brisk walk daily during your lunch hour or early afternoon. This routine will cause you to feel more awake, less sluggish, and less likely to doze off in the afternoon, thereby recharging you mentally and physically, and raising your productivity.

## Stress: Improve Your Self-Starter Ability

We all procrastinate, but the stress of a looming deadline and feeling you cannot act until it is crunch time can make you feel out of control. Stop this self-punishing cycle by becoming a better self-starter. 1) Ignore the



desire to plan and organize yourself until you feel “ready” to start a project. This is resistance masquerading as preparation. Instead, dive in. 2) Decide how much to accomplish within a set amount of time, for example, one hour. This shrinks the perceived size of your task. 3) If you procrastinate, you may also be distractible. Both may play a role in helping you avoid work. Instead of allowing distractions, overcome this barrier by working in a “boring” location and taking planned breaks. Silence Enemy #1 – email, with its never ending signal alerting you to another message, check your email only at set times that best fit into your work schedule.

## How to Be a Thought Leader

A “thought leader” is a person with a reputation for being an expert and also a great influencer. Thought leaders are not talkers. They’re doers who teach others “how to do it.” Thought leaders acquire prestige, but the bottom line is their leadership in helping others and making contributions to their field.

# LEADERSHIP

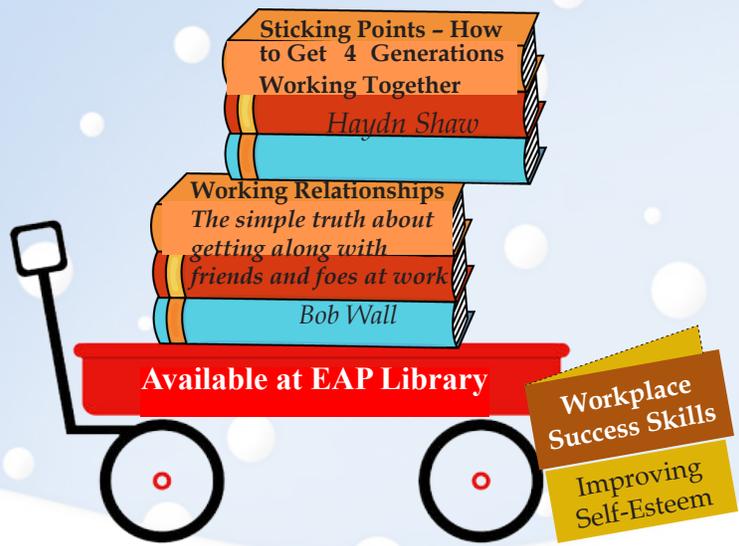
People pay attention to thought leaders because they know the shortcuts to success. If you are passionate about what you do, have what it takes to lead, and are certain others could benefit from your innovations, find a path to thought leadership.

Best ideas: 1) Author a free e-book and distribute it widely. It's easy. Learn how with excellent instructions at [www.wikihow.com](http://www.wikihow.com). 2) Consider free seminars on topics that would attract small groups of peers. Grow from there, using feedback to hone your ideas. 3) Ask yourself what it is that you really know well that other do not, and then pursue this niche to become the expert. 4) Find a funnel to channel your expertise so you can remain visible, such as an association, a community organization, or a business engaged with the larger community.



### New Year's Resolution - Have a Happy Year!

1. Eat healthy.
2. Exercise more.
3. Develop awareness of my workplace behavior - pride, job satisfaction, and happiness are feeling-states that I bring to work.



### Thoughts on Mindfulness

Our culture encourages us to plan every moment and fill our schedules with one activity and obligation after the next, with no time to just be. But the human body and mind require downtime to rejuvenate. I have found my greatest moments of joy and peace just sitting in silence, and then I take that joy and peace with me out into the world.

*Holly Mosier*

Mindfulness is essential in our path toward personal growth. We cannot change what we are not aware of.

*Jose Incer*