



FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

1-800-822-0244

www.oer.ny.gov/eap

Making Good Stuff Happen



Helping to ensure plenty of happy, memorable moments with your family is something no one would consciously shy away from; however, most people do just that, by default. Busyness gets in the way. Time passes, and it is finite, so don't let happiness be something that happens only by accident.

- 1) Decide what you and your partner or spouse want to do for the family. Try making weekly, monthly, and yearly goals.
- 2) Get everyone involved in the discussions and decisions.
- 3) Conduct these discussions at regular intervals as part of a larger family meeting.
- 4) Get things scheduled.
- 5) Consider scrapbooking everything so memories stick around.

Stress Tips from the Field: Intervene Early in the Stress Spiral

Most people do not get help with stress or burnout right away. It's human nature to assume it is part of life, or that the stress you're experiencing will pass soon. But it's important to have awareness of the ability of your body and for the mind to adapt. Adapting to stress can be a slippery slope because the process is to normalize irritability, fatigue, poor concentration, sleep problems, or emotional exhaustion (which amounts to denying their severity). This is called the "stress spiral." Intervene with this syndrome early. You want to reverse the pattern before it affects your health, relationships, and job performance. Get early help from your EAP coordinator. Effective early help is easier to apply and works faster!

Learn more: <https://www.apa.org/topics/healthy-workplaces/workplace-burnout>



Recognizing Alcohol Creep

Do you unwind in the evening with a drink after work? Has it become a nightly pattern you increasingly look forward to? If you notice needing more alcohol than before to achieve the same relaxing effect, it may be an early sign of growing alcohol use disorder (AUD)/alcoholism/addictive disease. This "alcohol creep" can begin years before a diagnosis and may reflect nervous system adaptation to alcohol. AUD is widely understood to involve biological processes or genetics as primary influences in the progression of the illness, and stress or personal problems are often blamed for increased drinking. Be especially mindful if alcohol-related problems run in your family and seek clarity about your drinking through your EAP coordinator. Doing so will help you better understand AUD, interrupt growing dependency, and reduce denial that later makes treatment more difficult.

Learn more: <https://www.asam.org/quality-care/definition-of-addiction>



Ghosting and the Workplace

Ghosting means ending contact without explanation, especially when future communication was expected. Although often linked to dating, ghosting happens at work. Employees may ghost customers, co-workers, emails, or difficult conversations. Have you been a ghoster or the ghostee? Research suggests that 75% of people have ghosted or been ghosted. The person ghosted often experiences confusion, self-doubt, and anguish. Many view ghosting as psychological mistreatment. People remember who follows through and who disappears. Consequently, ghosting can damage reputations and opportunities. If you ghost others, they may see you as unreliable. Fear, immaturity, low empathy, poor communication skills, conflict avoidance, and a culture with less social accountability may contribute. If disappearing feels easier than facing an unpleasant interaction, consider how your EAP can help.



Perfect Friend Syndrome: The AI Relationship Trap

Don't be tempted to form artificial relationships with artificial intelligence (AI) that substitute for a real human connection. Although engaging with AI online may feel satisfying because it can appear to offer empathy and patience, AI does not know you as a real person. Research shows what experts long theorized: these digital relationships cause psychological harm. The risk of relying on AI as a substitute for a real person is losing social skills or failing to develop a deeper sense of interpersonal need and vulnerability that we all need. And loneliness can worsen. This is called "parasocial attachment to AI." This behavior can be defined as a one-sided emotional bond in which a person develops feelings of closeness, trust, and connection with AI that cannot genuinely reciprocate or even recognize the relationship. AI's responsiveness can create the illusion of a mutual relationship, making the attachment feel real. This "perfect friend syndrome" doesn't push back. It doesn't experience bad days. It never demands something from you. This "no friction" experience is the problem, as real experiences are what make us human. AI can simulate conversation, but it will never offer warmth, share life history, or invest in you as a person. This is what makes human connection so special and irreplaceable. Is finding a meaningful relationship a goal in your life? Talk to your EAP coordinator to discover how to build real human connections that matter most.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ghost-chatbot-perils-parasocial-attachment>



Communication Habits that Backfire

Communication habits cause many problems at work. The following are infamous for creating conflict and regret and contributing to a less-than-positive workplace. Do you recognize them? 1) Responding to an email when you're angry. Typing that pithy reply feels like a release when you are doing it, but experience shows it's better to draft it, save it, and then sleep on it. 2) Copying your boss's boss on an email to expose your supervisor or make a point. Trying to gain leverage through a next-level manager often backfires. Most leaders see it as manipulation or an attempt to undermine authority, and your reputation can suffer regardless of the concern. 3) Going silent when you can't make a promised deadline. When a deadline slips, don't make people wonder—give a heads-up early rather than making them wonder what's going on. 4) Being more selective with the phrase "That's not my job." Remember: Even if it isn't your job, people may remember your response long after the task is forgotten.



Have a Better Mood All Day

Have a more positive day at work by experimenting with these positivity strategies, and see if they don't become a habit for having a more productive day.

1) Be intentional about making your day positive by reminding yourself of the things you appreciate about your job. 2) Have achievable goals each day. Don't just "let things happen." 3) Prioritize tasks associated with these goals. 4) Practice time management during the day. 5) Initiate positive interactions with others and nurture these relationships to maintain a positive and enjoyable workplace. 6) Consciously practice gratitude for a minute or two during the day to reflect on what you like about your job. Doing so cultivates a positive mindset and builds resilience for when the going gets tough. Incorporating these strategies into your daily routine will empower you to navigate challenges that may arise, ensuring a fulfilling and resilient journey in your professional life.



Building a Positive Reputation at Work

Being unflappable, competent, and nearly unerring can take you far in your career, but the real leverage is a strong reputation built through how you interact with and treat others. The most powerful ways to build a good reputation are to be reliable, communicative, and consistent. These qualities have everything to do with how others experience you on the job. They cost nothing to achieve, but they shape whether you are perceived as trustworthy and valuable. Being reliable means following through consistently. Being communicative means that you share information clearly and being consistent means you show high-quality performance over time. Here's the leverage: when people can count on you to follow through, communicate clearly, and show up consistently, you're trusted and recommended—so when opportunities arise, your name is more likely to be considered first. These habits help your team, but their power lies in how they shape conversations about you.

