

Supervisor/HR Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

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Learn to Build Trust in the Workplace



It's important to be able to trust the people you work with day in and day out. It can, however, be hard to communicate this trustworthiness to others.

Here are a few tips to help show your coworkers how trustworthy you are:

- *Be consistent.* Make sure your actions uphold your promises. People won't take you seriously if you continually make promises you can't keep.

- *Beware of excuses.* Take responsibility for any mistake you make instead of trying to rationalize your way out of it. Those who take responsibility for their actions gain more trust from coworkers.
- *Stay away from negative comments.* Just because a co-worker isn't there to hear them doesn't mean the comments won't be passed on. If people hear you bad-mouthing a co-worker they may wonder what you say about them when they are not around.
- *Fact-check your information.* Before sending out information, make sure it's correct. It is tedious to have to go back and make corrections, and it also makes people second-guess you.
- *Make commitments you can stick to.* Don't blindly commit to events you don't know if you can attend. Tell coworkers you need to check your schedule, and, if you RSVP yes, make it a priority to attend.
- *Don't criticize people in public.* While constructive criticism can go a long way in helping an employee, it's not always best to dish it out in front of everyone in the office. Set up a meeting instead to talk to a co-worker about any issues you may have.
- *Realize it takes more effort to build a reputation than destroy it.* While the effort you put in to make sure your coworkers trust you could take years, it can take just one conversation or incident to lose the trust you worked so hard to build. Keep in mind the kind of reputation you want to have at the office and work toward that each day.

Source: <http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/45607/learn-to-build-trust-in-the-workplace>

Five Times to Avoid Email

There is a love/hate relationship with email. But, as with any technology, there's a downside. There are plenty of stories about an accidental "reply all" or inadvertent "forward" that caused embarrassment.

As a savvy supervisor, you already know that emails can be misinterpreted. An emailed message lacks vocal tone, facial expression and body language—all those cues we get through face-to-face communication. Taking the time to make sure your emails are clear and concise is well worth the effort. There are, however, five times when you must forgo email and deliver a message in-person or, at the very least, over the phone. If you can Skype, FaceTime or otherwise video chat, that's even better than a call.

- 1. *Angry or irritated?*** It's never wise to send any message until you've cooled off and can communicate clearly and professionally. Along the same lines, if someone's sent you a scathing email, avoid the temptation to respond in kind and instead, pick up the phone. "I got your email and thought it best if we have a conversation, since so much can be misinterpreted via email and I'd like us to resolve this."
- 2. *If you believe there's any potential for misunderstanding,*** it's just not worth the risk of sending an email. Pick up the phone.
- 3. *Concerned that your message might hurt the other person's feelings?*** Perhaps you're giving feedback or critiquing a proposal. It's tempting to avoid dealing with the potential emotional fallout by sending an email. Do the right thing and speak to him face-to-face.
- 4. *Some people take pleasure in peppering emails with snarky observations,*** belittling comments or other damaging statements they would never say in person. So, if your email contains something you wouldn't say to the recipient directly, delete it. And if you are the recipient of such an email, see No. 1.
- 5. *If you need to apologize, please don't even consider doing it via email.*** Deliver your apology in person or, if that's not possible, call the person. You won't be sorry.



Source: <http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/45616/5-times-to-avoid-email>

Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.



Q. How can the EAP help me maintain high morale among my employees?

A. Maintaining high morale is like tending to a garden. There are many things that go into it, however, having a keen awareness of your behavior and its impact on employees is by far the most important thing. Why? Employees almost always blame poor morale on the one in charge. Some of the most common behavioral complaints voiced by employees include that a supervisor is exercising too much control, being a micro-manager, having a lousy disposition (irritability), rejecting ideas from subordinates or not giving them a fair hearing, creating fear among employees, and playing favorites when giving out cushy assignments. There are many more examples, but almost always, the underlying cause of low morale is explained by the supervisor's behaviors. The EAP can help you examine your supervision style and how to improve it. The promise is reduced stress and more job satisfaction for everyone, including you.

Q. I believe I manage my own stress on the job well and stay positive with the health habits I've established. However, my employees are really stressed. I hesitate to overwhelm the EAP by referring them all. What role can I play to support my employees and reduce their stress?

A. There are several ways stress can exhibit itself in the work setting. Most stress falls within three manifestations: daily strain, burnout, and disengagement. Each type of stress can benefit from different interventions. The EAP can consult with you on what role you might play in responding to any of them. Daily work strain responds best to health habits that mitigate stress, including diet, exercise, proper breaks, and stress management techniques that build resilience. In this regard, there is nothing improper in your sharing tips and successes you have experienced in managing stress. In fact, it is a good idea, because a positive attitude is contagious, and modeling is a powerful way to influence your team. Always encourage employees to use the EAP, individually and in group presentations, staff meetings, and the like. No matter how many employees contact the EAP, they will be accommodated.

Q. I know my role as a manager includes promoting a positive workplace and championing diversity. How can I understand this role better and know where to begin?

A. Get a lay of the land by taking time to observe the work environment for several weeks. Make it a conscious effort. This will produce insight and help you focus more specifically on how you might engage employees as time goes by. Discuss your observations with your own manager and even the EAP. You will discover that your best resource for demonstrating the value of diversity is you—that is, your modeling appropriate and validating behaviors. Observe employee interactions, lack of interaction, how employees group or isolate themselves, types of communication, body language, and social interactions. Consider reading the book "Cultural Competence for Public Managers." The book is a rich source of information, ideas, and direction. The supervisor is a powerful agent for influencing change, and one person can make a difference.

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