

LIFE ASSISTANCE NEWS

WELLNESS & PROACTIVE LIFE TIPS

October 2009

"The first recipe of happiness - avoid too lengthy meditations on the past."

- Andre Maurois

Work Life Tips

⇒ Performance Review...

No matter what rating you receive on your next performance review, don't forget to ask your boss exactly what you can do to earn a better rating in areas marked for improvement. Then have follow-up discussions periodically during the year and you'll be more likely to hit the mark. Did you know that the key purpose of a performance review is not to rate your performance? Rather, the key purpose is to help maximize your performance outcomes. Every organization wants its employees to achieve superior ratings. That means productivity is high. Without a review, goals, follow-up, and partnering with your boss, you can't remove the "we versus them" mentality.

⇒ Even More From Your EAP...

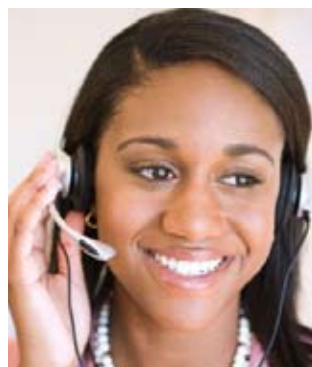
EAP's help employees with personal problems that may affect job performance. But what if you don't have a personal problem and just want to talk confidentially about what's going on in the office—worries about work place trends, internal politics, and related frustrations—or perhaps a work idea that you want to bounce off of a good listener? Is it appropriate to the call the EAP? Can these discussions also be confidential? Answer: **Yes.**

The Unhealthy Hazard of Inactivity...

As many as 50 million Americans are living sedentary lives, putting them at increased risk of health problems and early death, says the American Psychological Association. In a long-term study of more than 40,000 adults, 16 percent of deaths were directly related to sedentary living. This percent age did not include deaths complicated by other factors, such as obesity, smoking, high cholesterol, or diabetes. Plain and simple, a lack of exercise was the culprit. Men with moderate levels of exercise lived an average of six years longer than sedentary men. Close examination of more than 14,000 women showed that active women were 55 percent less likely to die of breast cancer than women who were not in good shape. This was after researchers had controlled for Body Mass Index, smoking, family history of breast cancer, and other possible risks. Source: www.apa.org/releases/sedentary-lives.html.



Fight Recession with Customer Care...



It's easy to feel helpless and unable to help your employer fight the recession. You may have over looked one thing, however—providing good customer service. It could have a positive effect on your job security. During a recession, businesses that can stick it out usually gain market share. Even with zero growth, these businesses can be well positioned when things turn around, having fewer competitors. Layoffs, furloughs, resource limitations, fear, and stress can test your optimism, but don't neglect

the customer. Customer service heavily influences buying decisions. And word-of-mouth advertising is the most effective tool in your arsenal. *You do have the power.*

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Toxic Relationship Troubles...

A toxic relationship is a relationship that doesn't work. It produces negative physical and mental health consequences for its partners. The relationship is not simply a pattern of repeating disagreements, bickering, or periodic feelings of incompatibility. Instead, toxic relationships fuel worsening self-esteem and negative views of one self. Fear of the other person because of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse is not uncommon. Toxic relationships are not characterized by reciprocal "give and take" or "I/you" conversations. Interactions in which each party feels respected and supported, heard, and valued are rare or nonexistent. Feelings hackled by patterns of dysfunctional behavior that leave you feeling drained is more common. It can be difficult to come to terms with the fact that you are in a toxic relationship. And it can be even harder to determine what to do about it. You need support. A professional counselor at Blomquist Hale Consulting or other mental health professional can offer perspective and help. You can discover how to feel safe and explore whether there is some way to intervene and make the changes necessary to salvage the relationship. If you are feeling the stresses of a toxic relationship contact Blomquist Hale today or find an office near you by visiting us online at www.blomquisthale.com.



Obligated to Get Along?

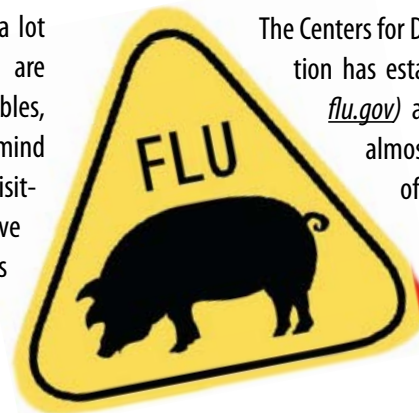


Getting along with coworkers is a lot like dealing with family. There are bound to be occasional squabbles, flare-ups, and coworkers who remind you of relatives you try to avoid visiting. Certainly, you don't always have to love each other, but the truth is that you are obligated to get along at work. One powerful strategy for

doing so is improving your "other-awareness" skills. Unlike the more familiar self-awareness, other-awareness is the degree to which you are tuned into the environment and what others are feeling or needing. Simply asking is the fastest route to finding out, but the real world doesn't always work that way. You can't be a mind reader, of course, but you can practice reading the signals. Is your coworker tired, frustrated, rushed, or experiencing anxiety? Is he or she avoidant and untalkative, in need of space and privacy? This social skill takes practice, but the degree to which we possess it enables us to build better relationships. Ask yourself, "How are my other-awareness skills?" If you could use some skill building, take a day to notice the signals others send without spoken words.

Information in the Employee Assistance News is not intended to replace counsel or advice of qualified health professionals. For help with personal concerns or for a referral to community resources, consult with a physician, a qualified health care provider or with Blomquist Hale as your Employee Assistance Professional 800-926-9619. For a complete list of Blomquist Hale office locations or phone numbers to these locations visit www.blomquisthale.com.

Swine Flu Facts...



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has established a Website (www.flu.gov) as the one-stop source for almost anything you can think of regarding the H1N1 influenza virus (swine flu). The Website has news updates daily, and sometimes hourly, that can help you and your community better protect against and respond to

a flu pandemic. Included are answers to dozens of common and not-so-common questions: facts and figures: reported cases and deaths: state-by-state information; action steps to prevent the spread of the virus in schools, workplaces, and households; and much more.

Flu fact: *Those most vulnerable to H1N1 are younger people, pregnant women, health care personnel, and people who have underlying health conditions.* Source: www.flu.gov.