

Employee Assistance Program

Promoting a Healthier Work Environment

Your daily actions signal to others the level of personal respect that you hold for them. Being aware of how your behavior impacts the people around you can give you more control over the direct, indirect or unspoken signals you send to others. This can lead to improvements in your relationships and overall happiness at work.

Consider the following tips to ensure you are doing your part toward maintaining a respectful workplace:

What You Can Do

- **Practice the golden rule: treat others the way that you want to be treated.** Think about the last few interactions you've had with co-workers. Would you like to be on the receiving end of your behavior? If not, identify what you would like to change, such as not interrupting others while they are speaking; not using profanity, saying 'please' and 'thank you' more often; or offering more compliments when deserved. Once you have identified what you want to change, give yourself little reminders to reinforce your behavior change, such as posting a sticky note near your computer screen, or counting to five before approaching or responding to someone.
- **Remember privacy.** Just because you work together doesn't mean you are entitled to know everything about a co-worker. Be mindful of asking personal questions of someone you do not know well. If you are unsure if a question is too personal, start with a general question on the same subject and let your co-worker determine what personal experience or information, if any, he/she wants to mention. Also, do not read another person's mail, listen to their phone conversation, or peer at their computer screen.
- **Share space.** Be aware of the noise level and subject matter of your conversations when other co-workers are around. When it comes to your work area, try to keep it clean and do not post things that could offend others or contrast heavily with what most people consider good taste or appropriate.
- **Reach out.** Get to know your co-workers, acknowledge people you pass in the halls, offer help or assistance when needed, and be inclusive of those around you. Remember that a kind word goes a long way. These actions can help build a greater sense of camaraderie and support in the workplace.
- **Cultivate respect.** Celebrate your co-worker's success, rather than invalidating or taking credit for someone else's work. Stay away from criticizing or labeling co-workers with personality or character traits you don't like. Never participate in intolerant behavior or use language associated with racial, sexual, age-related or other human differences that could offend or contribute to a hostile, offensive or intimidating work environment.

For more information on this topic or further assistance, please contact your Employee Assistance Program.



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