



# EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission's Employee Advisory Service (EAS) Newsletter contains useful articles and information for managing various well-being and work-life issues in order to create a healthier, happier, and more productive workplace. EAS is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Jersey Civil Service employees by encouraging a good work-life balance.



## Upcoming Webinar:

### How to Build Positive Workplace Relationships

#### About this webinar:

This important session will discuss the importance of workplace relationships and identify the barriers to building strong bonds between co-workers. In addition, the presentation will cover four core strategies for maintaining great relationships to reduce conflict, improve teamwork and increase job satisfaction.

## What's Inside:

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**Page 6:** 6 Tips to Create a Balanced Life

**Date:** January 20, 2022

**Time:** 2:00-3:00 PM

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**P:** 1-866-327-9133 | **E:** [Eas\\_help@csc.nj.gov](mailto:Eas_help@csc.nj.gov) | **W:** <https://nj.gov/csc/employees/programs/advisory/eas.html>

# Civility and Respect in the Workplace

## Civility, Respect, and Engagement

- Civility is an essential behavior of all employees in all organizations. These are the interpersonal “rules of engagement” for how people relate to each other, their customers, and their stakeholders; the fundamentals of courtesy, politeness, and consideration.
- Respect connects everyone at a personal level. It reflects an attitude developed from deep listening and understanding, cultural and personal sensitivity, and compassion. It honors all the participants in an interaction by creating a safe place to have difficult conversations and leads to an environment of honesty and mutual trust.
- Engagement is the result of respectful relationships within an atmosphere of trust.

“Civility costs nothing, and buys everything”.

Mary Wortley Montagu

### What is Uncivil Behavior?

Uncivil behavior can include:

- Failing to acknowledge another person’s presence
- Using abusive language
- Gossiping
- Discounting employee contributions
- Bullying and intimidating coworkers
- Sabotaging individual and team efforts
- Discriminating against an individual or group
- Practicing insensitivity against coworkers’ needs and values
- Practicing poor etiquette in dealing with correspondence



### Reasons Why You Should Be Civil

- There’s no escaping other people! Cliché as it may sound, no man is an island.
- There are many benefits to practicing civil behavior. Some of the benefits of civility to an organization or an individual employee are even proven by empirical research (less absenteeism, increased productivity, better morale, healthier employees).
- It’s the right thing to do. If anything, civility is recommended because it’s the right thing to do.
- Every person, regardless of age, race, or contribution, deserves to be treated with respect.
- Civility resonates with many of the positive values of society, including tolerance and mutual support—it’s the humane thing to do.
- Civility creates a conducive working environment as well as a stable and productive organization.

## How does civility set the stage for effective communication with a person perceived to have a differing personality or views?

If you act with civility toward a person with a differing personality or views in your workplace, you will be able to constructively discuss what your perceptions are—productively. Reacting in anger and/or being defensive will merely close all channels of communication. Civility helps make a person feel acknowledged and appreciated, which makes them more open to feedback.

### Demonstrating Respect

- Always give a formal acknowledgment of another person's presence, regardless of that person's position within the organization.
- Every person deserves to be given attention when they're communicating.
- Respect your coworker's property.
- Respect the right to individual beliefs.
- Respect diversity within the team or department. Diversity means that you'll have people of different religions, political beliefs, abilities, traditions, and values working in the same organization.
- Use your coworker's time wisely. A little-known way you can practice respect in the workplace is by respecting your coworker's time.

### Costs and Rewards of Civility

While incivility can be perceived as harmless behaviors, they can significantly affect the organization's morale. Incivility has direct impact on worker productivity, quality of products and services, and employee retention, among other things. Civility, on the other hand, can improve all these areas considered as relevant in the running of a successful organization.

### Incivility and the Costs

Costs of incivility include:

- High employee turnover
- Poor productivity
- Stress at the workplace and home
- Health costs
- Lawsuits and settlements
- A steady decline in an organization's values and culture

### Civility and Rewards

On the other hand, rewards of civility include:

- Employee satisfaction and engagement—Workers' strong positive emotions correlate reliably with organizational success, and workers' positive emotions include a sense of being treated with respect.
- Improved company or product branding—Civil behavior among employees can be a plus to an organization's reputation—and in the business world, a good name can be everything.



## Four Causes of Incivility

- Lack of self-restraint—Incivility, in any context, can be easily avoided, or at least controlled, if individuals will actively practice self-restraint.
- Anonymity—Studies have shown that people have less inhibition when they know that they can't be made accountable for their actions.
- Stress—A considerable amount of incivility in the workplace can be traced to both personal and work-related stress.
- Pursuit of individualism in the society of equals—Some people have the attitude that it has to be each man for his own and that expressing oneself in the most authentic way possible, whether civil or not, is a right and an entitlement.

## How to Overcome It

- Create, communicate, and enforce policies regarding civil behavior in the workplace.
- Provide continuous education and training on civility.
- Practice regular self-assessment.
- Increase accountability and transparency in the organization.
- Examine the root cause.



## Forgiveness

- Understand that holding on to negative feelings (grudge) is not healthy for you.
- Humanize the offender.
- Remember your own transgressions. Know that you can choose to forgive even if the other person won't admit their fault.
- If you want to work on your forgiveness of another person, actively find ways to rid yourself of anger and resentment.

## Benefits of Resolution Includes

- Analyzing cause and effect, to identify what needs correcting.
- Identifying feedback. It's important to know what works and what needs to be eliminated or improved upon in order to make the workplace more conducive to productive and happy employees.
- Creating a culture open to change. When you are actively analyzing root causes of uncivil behavior in your organization, you communicate a positive attitude toward implementing changes that are best for everyone.
- Preventing small issues from escalating into big conflicts. Research has consistently proven that small issues, when left unattended, can escalate into a bigger issue.


*Source: Burroughs-Glover, L. (n.d.). Civility and respect in the workplace [PPT Presentation] (B. Schuette, Ed.). Washington, DC: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service. Retrieved October 19, 2018, from <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>*

# Change Your Life with SMART Goals!

No matter how good you are at something, there is always room for improvement. Wanting something is one thing, but as millions of broken New Year's resolutions show every year, setting a goal is much easier than meeting that goal. A good goal is **SMART**: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction-focused, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound.

- A goal should be as specific as possible. If your broad goal is to lose weight and you lose 2 ounces, you've technically met your goal. A good goal, on the other hand, would be to lose 10 pounds in the next 3 months.
- Measurable goals are best, because it's apparent if you're making progress toward meeting your goal.
- Action-focused goals require an action on the part of the goal setter. For fitness goals, a personal readiness device or a health application can be a great aid in reminding you of the actions you need to take.
- Good goals are realistic. A smart goal setter needs to make an honest assessment of how much improvement is possible in a given period and base the goal on that assessment. As the old-adage goes, Rome wasn't built in a day. Trying to do too much too quickly can be just as detrimental as doing nothing.
- Lastly, a SMART goal is time-bound. When setting a goal, you need a deadline to reach it.

Cook, L. (2013, November 22). *Change your life with SMART goals! [Excerpt]*. Retrieved December 4, 2020, from <https://www.army.mil>



**“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.”**

**— Aristotle**

## 6 Tips to Create a Balanced Life

Imagine a tightrope walker in a circus. He is on a rope suspended a few feet above the straw covered floor. His purpose is to walk the rope from one end to other. He holds a long bar in his hands to help him maintain his balance. But he must do more than simply walk. On his shoulders he balances a chair. In that chair sits a young woman who is balancing a rod on her forehead, and on top of that rod is a plate.

If at any time one of the items should start to drift off balance, he must stop until he can get all of them in perfect alignment again—for the tightrope artist doesn't begin until all the elements above him are aligned. Only then does he move forward, carefully, slowly, across the rope.

Life is very much a balancing act, and we are always just a step away from a fall. We are constantly trying to move forward with our purpose, to achieve our goals, all the while trying to keep in balance the various elements of our lives.

If any aspect of our life draws a disproportionate amount of energy, we have to shortchange the other aspects. That throws us off—and we are unable to move forward on life's tightrope until a balance can be reestablished. We have to deal with any areas that are taking too much energy and put them in perspective, align them, so that we have energy available for all areas.

It's important to understand that others cannot do this for us. No one can think, breathe, feel, see, experience, love or die for us. It's up to us to balance all the different aspects of our lives. We just have to decide to do it. How? What's the first step? To stop and assess how we're doing. To look at all the various aspects of our lives that we are constantly juggling, constantly trying to keep in balance—marriage and family, money, health, social circles, spiritual development, mental growth.



Are we able to devote ample energy to all areas? Or are we tipped to one side, unbalanced in one direction?

Here's how to balance it all out:

### 1. Assess your life as it is now.

Looking at ourselves as we really are is the first step in restructuring our lives. Do you feel physically exhausted, mentally stagnant or find yourself without close relationships? Would you call yourself a workaholic? Do you feel a lack of spiritual alignment? If you answer yes to any of these questions, your life is probably out of balance.

### 2. Make a conscious decision to become balanced.

Choosing reality as our basis of decision is the second step to becoming balanced. Achieving balance allows us to reach our goals and our purpose in life while creating less stress to do so. A conscious decision to change is now in order.

### 3. Make that decision on a minute-to-minute schedule.

We are all instant forgetters. Remember all those resolutions you made way back in January? Renewing our decisions on a daily, minute-to-minute basis allows us to ease into change, instead of expecting things to change overnight.

### 4. Set goals in every area of your life.

Set realistic goals in all areas of your life to assist yourself in remembering that your ultimate goal is balance.

Your goals should cover:

- Your relationships
- Your physical being
- Your spiritual alignment
- Your mental development
- Your job
- Your finances



### 5. Be willing to take the risk.

Being willing to assess ourselves and take the risk to change will not only enhance our lives, but you will feel more energy and an expanded awareness of what life is all about. Acknowledging that balance is essential and recreating your life to encompass your decision is worth all the risk.

### 6. Make time to reassess yourself on a daily basis.

None of us can really know how well we are doing with change in our lives unless we are willing to reassess our position. Don't feel that your decisions are made in concrete; if something feels that it isn't working, be willing to look at a new decision. Make time for yourself every day, in a quiet meditative state, to relax and "check yourself out."

*Hansen, Mark V. (2015, October 27). 6 Tips to Create a Balanced Life. Retrieved December 20, 2021 from <https://www.success.com/6-tips-to-create-a-balanced-life>*

**“Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony.”**

**~Thomas Merto**







*Support - Empowerment - Growth*

# Employee Advisory Service

*- EAS is here to help you!*

**“Never underestimate the difference you can make in the lives of others. Step forward, reach out and help. This week reach out to someone that might need a lift.”**

*- Unkown*

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Toll Free Number: 1-866-327-9133 | Email: [EAS\\_Help@csc.nj.gov](mailto:EAS_Help@csc.nj.gov)