



EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the NJ Civil Service Commission's Employee Advisory Newsletter! EAS is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Jersey Civil Service employees by encouraging a good work-life balance. **The EAS Employee 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.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Employees

Successful employees share many common traits such as integrity, a positive attitude, good interpersonal skills, and a strong work ethic. This dynamic presentation will provide an overview of these and other characteristics important to career success and outline several strategies for integrating these traits into our own lives.

When:

Thursday, May 23, 2019
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM ET

Register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3898491496933271554>

Phone: 866-327-9133

Web: www.state.nj.us/csc

Email: EAS_help@csc.nj.gov

What It Takes to Be a Workplace Winner

The phone rings. It's your boss. You're late for the meeting to go over the team's strategy for the next quarter. The clock's running and after yesterday's fumble, you need a win. You grab your notebook and race to the meeting.

It's all part of the game.

You may not think of your work today as a game, but it is. The workplace has become a playing field of moves and positions, all wrapped in sports lingo touting teamwork, coaches and goals. The object, of course, is to win, because there are tangible rewards for winning: recognition, raises and promotions. But how do you win the game when the rules keep changing?

For starters, you need to abandon outdated notions about how the game is supposed to be played. This is not your parents' workplace. You need to modify the rules to fit today's realities. Contemporary careers are fluid and career success is a moving target.

So, to be a star player in today's workplace, you need to take full responsibility. You must strategize, customize, and improvise your maneuvers. Here are a few pointers to improve your game and increase your chances of winning:

Think of yourself as a business. Identify your services—your skills, training, experience, even attitude—and link them to your employer's needs. When you see a need, propose a solution.

Take stock of your skills and accomplishments. View yourself as a portfolio of skills. Calculate the worth of the skills, then replace the nonprofitable ones with newer, more valuable performers. Promote your skills and look for opportunities to apply them—inside and outside the workplace.

Do your job well. Even though you may think you're doing your job well, what really matters is what others think. Don't wait for the annual performance review to find out. Seek ongoing feedback on your strengths, as well as the areas where you need improvement, from your boss and colleagues.

Cultivate new relationships. It's not always the most qualified people who get important jobs or promotions. Rather, it's often the people who know best how to showcase their qualifications. Expand your circle of acquaintances—listen to people around you, look for mentors, volunteer for committees and task forces —because the more people get to know you, the more opportunities for advancement you'll have. Few people can succeed on skills alone.

Practice good sportsmanship. Remember that nobody wins unless everybody wins. Seize opportunities to help others succeed. Don't get entangled in gossip and rumors. Make your boss your ally, because you're unlikely to receive support for a new job if you haven't mastered the old one. Even if you don't like your boss, help him or her succeed. Sooner or later you'll have a new boss, and your status as a team player will be preserved.

Anticipate uncertainty. Nobody can predict with certainty what lies ahead—not you, not your boss, not your boss's boss. There's only possibility and probability and risk. How do you approach risk? If you direct your energy into trying to preserve the status quo, you'll get mired in the mud. But if you view changes as opportunities for growth, you'll be better positioned to go with the flow and benefit from change.

Control your career. If you've allowed your career to just happen by accident, then it might be fair to say that your career is just another accident waiting to happen. Seize control of your destiny. You own your career and the responsibility for maintaining peak performance, building endurance and gaining competence.

Winning at work, as in sports, requires discipline and drive. Look for new skills, challenges, experiences, projects, ideas, assignments and responsibilities that go beyond the boundaries of your current job. Try to keep learning new things to stay fresh and maintain a winning attitude.

Source: King, D. (Reviewed 2017). What it takes to be a workplace winner. Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options.

May is Mental Health Month. To achieve overall wellness, you must know the importance of work-life balance. If you are struggling with a mental health issue, or you are unable to separate your professional matters from interfering with your personal relationships and vice versa, please call EAS for help.

Do You Focus on #4Mind4Body?

Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and mental illnesses are common and treatable. So much of what we do physically impacts us mentally – it's important to pay attention to both your physical health and your mental health, which can help you achieve overall wellness and set you on a path to recovery.

A healthy lifestyle can help to prevent the onset or worsening of mental health conditions, as well as chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. It can also help people recover from these conditions. For those dealing with a chronic health condition and the people who care for them, it can be especially important to focus on mental health. When dealing with dueling diagnoses, focusing on both physical and mental health concerns can be daunting – but critically important in achieving overall wellness.

There are things you can do that may help. Finding a reason to laugh, going for a walk with a friend, meditating, playing with a pet, or working from home once a week can go a long way in making you both physically and mentally healthy. The company of animals – whether as pets or service animals— can have a profound impact on a person's quality of life and ability to recover from illnesses. A pet can be a source of comfort and can help us to live mentally healthier lives. And whether you go to church, meditate daily, or simply find time to enjoy that cup of tea each morning while checking in with yourself – it can be important to connect with your spiritual side in order to find that mind-body connection.

EAS wants everyone to know that mental illnesses are real, and recovery is always the goal. Living a healthy lifestyle may not be easy but can be achieved by gradually making small changes and building on those successes. Finding the balance between work and play, the ups and downs of life, physical health and mental health, can help you on the path towards focusing both #4Mind4Body.

If you find yourself unsure of how to handle daily stressors, depression, anxiety, work and life balance, and other issues, call EAS for assistance. We are here to help!

For more information, visit www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may.



Frequently Asked Questions About Counseling

Q: What exactly is counseling?

A: Very simply put, counseling is talking with a trained mental health professional to collaboratively work through a problem. Counseling is commonly referred to as talk therapy, because it involves an open dialogue between you and the counselor.

Q: Why should I go see a counselor? I'm not mentally ill or crazy.

A: People choose to visit a counselor for many reasons. These include getting assistance with achieving work-life balance, stress management, feeling depressed, conflict at work, parenting support, relationship issues, and grief. Talking to friends and family about a problem can be helpful. However, a counselor is going to be neutral and provide a different perspective on the issue.

Q: I think I have depression and want medication. Can't the counselor write me a prescription?

A: This is a very common misconception! A counselor is a trained mental health professional who is qualified to provide counseling. Counselors cannot prescribe medication. However, the counselor might recommend that you be evaluated for medication by a psychiatrist. A psychiatrist is a medical doctor with specialized training in the medical treatment of people with mental health disorders. A psychiatrist can prescribe medication.

Q: What qualifications does a counselor have?

A: A counselor is a mental health professional who has, at a minimum, a master's degree in social work, psychology, counseling, or another related field. Additionally, the counselor has undergone a rigorous process to obtain licensure or registration in order to independently deliver counseling services. The counselor is also required to take a certain number of continuing education classes to remain updated on the most current counseling modalities and techniques.

Q: I can tell the counselor anything, and he or she cannot tell anyone else, right?

A: The short answer is yes. More specifically, everything you discuss with the counselor is confidential, unless you state that you're having suicidal or homicidal thoughts, or if you disclose that a child or adult is being abused.

Q: Is counseling covered by my insurance?

A: Health insurance benefits vary, so contact your health insurance company directly to discuss your mental health benefits. The Employee Advisory Service (EAS) also offers free counseling and resources for New Jersey Civil Service employees. Simply call for assistance.

Source: Perry, L. (Reviewed 2018). Frequently asked questions about counseling. Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options.

Sharing Family Caregiver Responsibilities With Other Family Members

When your elderly parent needs care at home, lessen the load by dividing responsibilities.

Providing ongoing care for your aging parents is incredibly rewarding. It is an opportunity to spend additional time with your loved ones and give back for all of the time, energy, and love that they gave you as you were growing up. Depending on the cognitive and physical challenges they have, and the amount of care they require, however, it can also be time consuming and difficult. Sharing these responsibilities with other family members is a great way to ensure they get all of the care that they need while taking some of the pressure off of you.

Whether you have been caring for your parents for years, are just getting started, or divide the care with a nonmedical in-home caregiver, if you feel that other family members should get involved in the care of your senior parents, it is important to be honest with everyone involved. Let your parents know how you are feeling, and plan a way to discuss your needs with your family so you all know what to expect.

Sharing caregiving responsibilities with your siblings is a natural choice, and working together to provide this care is a wonderful way to maintain family connections and create lasting memories. When it is time to discuss the need to divide up the care needs, go into the conversation prepared to offer your recommendations and make agreements so everyone is on the same page.

If you do not think that it will be too stressful for your parents, involve them in the conversation so they can let you know how they feel about the different care tasks and who may be able to handle them best. If not, make the decisions privately, and then share them with your parents so they always feel that they are kept in the family loop.

When making decisions, keep these things in mind:

- Who determines which responsibilities should be left to the caregiver if there is one?
- What happens if one person has a conflict and cannot provide scheduled care?
- Do each of you have the right to bring in additional care or add an extra day to the referred caregiver's duties if needed, or do you all need to agree?
- What will you do if you notice that one person is not fulfilling his or her responsibilities properly?

When it comes to sharing family caregiving responsibilities with your siblings or other family members, communication and dependability are essential. Consider setting up monthly meetings with the others in your family caregiving team to discuss your parents, their care, and anything that needs to change so you all feel involved and can express your thoughts. This ensures you work together to give your elderly parents the highest quality of life while enjoying your time together as a family.

Source: Rabinovitz, J. Sharing family caregiver responsibilities with other family members. Newton, MA: Griswold Home Care. Retrieved from <http://www.griswoldhomecare.com/>