



# The Training Post

www.nj.gov/csc

Spring Edition

May 2021



Here Comes  
the Sun

## Prepare for the “next” Normal

Here comes the sun! And, with its rays rising over the horizon, we need to prepare ourselves for the “next” normal as the world begins to reopen. Over the past year, many of us have fully or somewhat adapted to remote or hybrid work schedules, virtual events, and even limited in-person interactions with family, friends, and coworkers. On the other hand, it’s important to remember

that there are members of our workforce whose schedules and routines have remained the same due to the nature of their work. For them, the sun may have been dim but it was present. The rest of us need to mentally prepare for what’s to come. We may have different office setups, safety protocols, varied work timetables to avoid overcrowding, and adjustments to our homelife activities. It won’t help to put these thoughts aside; you must plan ahead.

In this edition of **The Training Post** we want to “shine rays” of possibilities and ideas to prepare you for the brighter days ahead with our featured training and development opportunities, professional growth advice, and beneficial updates and tips for the Learning Management System (LMS) and ePAR.

Bright skies and warm rays bring positivity. Let’s prepare ourselves to embrace the sunny days ahead. Like the Beatles said, “...Here comes the sun and I say it’s all right.”

## New Releases >

In each edition of **The Training Post**, be sure to check here for a list of highly recommended Quarterly Courses, Specials, and Training Promotions.

### New to the LMS Catalog - Learning Paths - Now available with a CLIP All Access Pass

1. Building Blocks for Better Teams
2. Civility and Professionalism in the Workplace
3. Conflict Resolution - Strategies for Positive Outcomes
4. Dynamic Communication Skills for Workplace Success



## Student Spotlight

### Angelica Richardson

Meet Angelica Richardson, Human Resource Generalist in the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) with 9 years of public service experience.

After recently attending a CLIP virtual Workplace Diversity and Inclusion training, Ms. Richardson expressed her sentiments about the value of the topic for HR and managerial professionals. She reflected that overseeing discrimination prevention training in a previous role prompted her to take the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion training. Ms. Richardson conveyed that the class enhanced her ability to “have difficult conversations among diverse groups on the impact differences have on perceptions and experiences.”

She further noted that the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion training emphasized the importance of not just tolerating other employees and their differences but

respecting those differences as a necessary part of creating a safe and harmonious work environment.

The use of various training methods amplified her learning experience. Ms. Richardson stated that, “the discussion was rich; the anecdotes and examples were helpful in expanding my knowledge.” Ms. Richardson credits the use of breakout groups as an added benefit that was “exceptionally helpful” and supported her awareness of handling employee relations.

Ms. Richardson indicated that the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion course is “insightful” and would recommend it to management staff who can “greatly benefit from this training” and are responsible for “ensuring a productive and safe space for employees.”

*“The discussion was rich; the anecdotes and examples were helpful in expanding my knowledge”*

Because successful training programs are not just about content, each edition of **The Training Post** will spotlight an individual who has been involved in one or more of the many professional development programs offered by CLIP.



### What Will Workplace Technologies Look Like Post Pandemic?

While a definitive answer to that question remains to be seen, experts in workplace technologies have made several predictions. Here are a few changes we can expect in some workplaces.

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Workplace

As workplaces promote healthy work practices, adhere to social distancing guidelines, and ensure compliance, one or more of the following measures will become the norm:

- AI equipped cameras and cones to manage traffic flow as well as occupancy.
- Thermal cameras to detect elevated body temperatures.
- Smart hand-sanitizer stations to allow contactless sanitization and prevent cross-contamination.

#### Workplace Health and Safety Apps

Workplace safety is a priority for employees and employers alike. Health and Safety apps may provide some degree of comfort. Technologies such as contact tracing apps offer individuals a means to know whether they have encountered an infected person and steps to take.

#### Additional Conversation Features on Conference and Video Calls

Currently, during conference calls, participants are unable to have side con-

versations with colleagues. Video conferencing software will mimic in-person interactions and allow selected individuals to see your facial expressions and the ability to have conversations with one or more colleagues - just as you would in person.

Whether one or more of these technologies are implemented at your organization, expect to experience at least some of these changes when you interact with other organizations.

# The BUZZ

## The Art of Resurfacing

At CLIP, we strive to provide our participants with innovative and cutting-edge learning experiences. “**The Buzz**” features the latest training trends and noteworthy “buzz” about various professional developmental themes. In the present climate, there has been an overall shift in the platforms, applications, and everyday tools we use to get our work done. In this edition, we will explore ways to stay current and expediently acquire skills in an evolving workforce.

**T**hirty five thousand eight hundred and fifty three feet. That’s the greatest depth that any human being has ever explored - the bottom of the Mariana Trench, where Mount Everest could be planted like a towering oak and not come within a thousand feet of kissing the ocean’s surface. The trench is a cold and unforgiving place, eternally shrouded in darkness and host to alien creatures adapted to survive under the crushing pressure of 15,750 pounds per square inch (psi).

We’ve all been on a journey into a trench of our own in the past year, and now we’re eager to leave that

crushing pressure far behind. But as any experienced diver knows, the art of resurfacing is a subtle one. Rise too quickly, and the rapid decompression can prove lethal. This is called decompression sickness or the bends, and the key to avoiding it is gradual, methodical ascent.

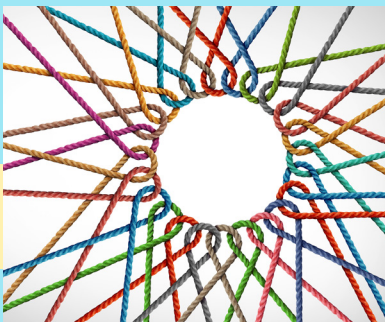
A safe and successful return to work in the coming months will be predicated on the same principles. Slow and steady wins the race. Hybrid plans that blend remote and in-office work are going to be standard practice in the months ahead and will likely even become a permanent fixture in the employment landscape.

Teleconferencing tools like Microsoft Teams and Zoom are also here to stay. These technologies, along with advances in cloud storage and file sharing, will help build a more flexible, better connected public workforce.

Updated workplace health and safety measures will also be in full effect, and many of the sanitation guidelines regarding handwashing and maintaining clean workspaces will remain relevant. For those who return to the office, caution and vigilance will be the order of the day, but less with each passing day.

So don’t stress over returning to work. Like a diver resurfacing, you’ll have plenty of time to reacclimate and adjust.

### ePAR Insider: Planting the Seeds for Growth

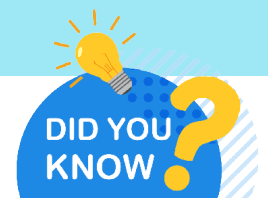


As we prepare to enter the “next normal” of our professional lives, the ePAR will play a critical role in establishing the ways we’ll be moving forward. For example, it may be necessary to reconsider job expectations if we move toward a hybrid work environment. If expectations are altered, changes in Significant Events will need to be altered. Creating development plans that are meaningful

will be particularly important to support our workforce. Whatever the next phase of our work lives holds, ePAR should be embraced as a tool to be used in the ongoing pursuit of government service excellence. It’s an opportune time for positive change. The ePAR is a great starting point to plant the seeds of growth and to monitor their progress.



What was the first day of spring 2021, otherwise known as the spring equinox? (see p. 6)



World Day for Cultural Diversity is May 21<sup>st</sup>.



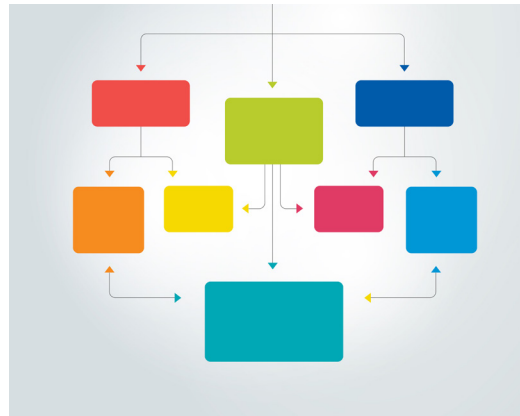
## Readjusting to Your New Workflow

It wasn't too long ago that employees were trying to establish work from home routines. For many, that required significant adjustments. As circumstances change, it seems surreal to be preparing to navigate the switch back to your workplace setting, or a new schedule of remote and workplace hours. With change on the horizon, it's important to start thinking ahead so that you can mentally and logistically prepare.

*The following tips can help you make a smooth transition from home to your workplace:*

**Shift your mindset.** Focus on opportunities that being in the workplace provides, such as access to resources or a stable internet connection.

**Get into a differently structured routine.** Getting ready for a day in the workplace may be different from your remote-work prep. To ease back into it, try setting aside your clothes and/or preparing lunch the night before. Make a list of tasks you will focus on the next day and make sure you have files and documents ready to go.



**Make yourself at home.** Consider the little comforts you enjoyed at home and incorporate them into your workplace environment. Take the sweater you loved wearing or the headset that made taking calls that much easier.

**Leverage your new skills.** Focus on new techniques that emerged while working remotely. Perhaps you blocked off times on your calendar to complete tasks without disruption, used earbuds to limit distractions, or increased the level of detail in your communications. Use the abilities that you developed while working remotely to your advantage when you're back in the workplace.

**Be Kind to yourself.** When it happens, the change in your work routine plus the added interactions with colleagues may be overwhelming. Take advantage of time for designated breaks in your schedule. Be sure to renew as you readjust.

## Signature Blends

(available with a CLIP All Access Pass)

### From Peer to Supervisor

Classroom Complement - [Making the Transition from Co-Worker to Supervisor](#)

### Managing Remote Teams

Classroom Complement - [Managing Employees Remotely](#)



## LMS Café

The "LMS Café" has something for everyone. In each edition of **The Training Post**, the LMS community can find information on new course releases, blended learning recommendations, and for our LMS administrators, system updates.

## LMS Barista



## Evaluations Do Not Affect Training Completion Status

When a user completes a training, an evaluation is added to their plan as a pending action item. However, this does not affect completion of the course or certification. If the training is completed, the training will reflect as completed in their completed learning.



## What's Brewing

View our [CLIP All Access](#) themed courses for this quarter



### National Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health: [Depression and Low Mood](#)



### National Physical Fitness Month

[Be Active](#)

[Why Sitting is Bad for You](#)



### National Safety Month

Workplace Safety is of the utmost importance. Learn more with: [First Aid : Choking](#)



### World Environment Day (6/5)

In honor of World Environment Day, view [Workplace Sustainability](#), [Recycling in the Workplace](#)

# Writing @ Work



## Preparing to Reenter the Workplace: Begin with a Plan

The possibility of returning to the workplace is on the horizon. However, after a year of working remotely, the prospect of reentering the workplace may incite mixed feelings.

Individuals have likely adapted new routines and become accustomed to accomplishing work tasks outside of workplace settings.

As with other types of professional transitions, developing a strategy is an initial step toward success. So, manage the possibility of returning to the workplace with a plan. As the writer Michael Korda put it, "...don't just think it – ink it!"

Here are a few tips to "ink" your plan:

### 1. Identify/Prioritize Goals:

Write a list of goals that will help you successfully reenter the workplace.

Example: Reorganize my paper files.

### 2. Identify Tasks/Steps to Achieve your Goals:

Think about and write each task/step that needs to be completed to achieve each goal on your list.

Example: Ask your supervisor/manager if you may stop in periodically to work and reorganize your paper files.

### 3. Establish Potential Timelines:

A key question to ask yourself to establish your plan timelines for each task/step is "what are my top three priorities/goals?"

Example: Reorganizing your paper files may be higher or lower on the list than discarding out-of-date office publications.

Depending on your goals and priorities, as well as the possible timeline for your return to the workplace, building flexibility into your plan is key. If needed, revisit it, and make adjustments to stay on track.

Feel the good vibrations with our suggested **Sunshine**

1. Ain't No **Sunshine** When She's Gone by Bill Withers

2. Cover Me in **Sunshine** by P!NK

3. Don't Let the **Sun** Go Down On Me by Elton John

4. Everybody Loves the **Sunshine** by Roy Ayers

5. Good Day **Sunshine** by the Beatles

6. Hello **Sunshine** by Aretha Franklin

7. Pocketful of **Sunshine** by Natasha Bedingfield

8. Soak up the **Sun** by Sheryl Crow

9. **Sunny** by Bobby Hebb

10. Walking on **Sunshine** by Katrina and the Waves

If you have questions or suggestions for topics you would like to see in The Training Post, email us at [Trainingfeedback@csc.nj.gov](mailto:Trainingfeedback@csc.nj.gov).

Click the icon to subscribe to The Training Post



## Credits

LaVida Stalsworth, Chief Editor:  
Introduction, LMS Cafe  
Janet Thompson, Editor:  
Writing @ Work  
Charleen Moore, Writer:  
#TechTips  
Gene Lanzoni, Writer/Designer:  
The Buzz  
David Allen, Writer:  
ePAR Insider  
Tira McCants, Writer: Spotlight  
Melissa Czaplicki, Writer:  
Professional Dev Toolkit

## Question Corner

### Spring Question:

#### What is your Workday Theme Song?

Respond to be entered into our FREE Training Drawing. By submitting to the Question Corner, you are authorizing CLIP to publish your response.

[Respond](#) >



# Here Comes the Sun

State of New Jersey  
Governor Phil Murphy | Lieutenant Governor Sheila Y. Oliver  
Civil Service Commission  
Chair/Chief Executive Officer Deirdre L. Webster Cobb, Esq.

## Trivia Answer

March 20th

## References

### Professional Development Toolkit:

Moran, G. (2017, June 13) The Remote Worker's Guide to Going Back to the Office . Fast Company. The Remote Worker's Guide to Going Back to The Office (fastcompany.com)

Buell, R. Back to the Office: How to Transition from Remote to On-Site Work. The Daily Muse Inc. Back to the Office: How to Transition from Remote to... | The Muse

Moran, Andrea. (2020, June 01) Strategies to Transition Back to the Office after Working from Home During a Pandemic. The Washington Post Jobs Newsletter. <https://jobs.washingtonpost.com/article/strategies-to-transition-back-to-the-office-after-working-from-home-during-a-pandemic/>

### TechTips:

Partida, D. (2021, April 01). 5 Technologies Supporting Social Distancing in Warehouses. Industrial Safety and Hygiene News. <https://www.ishn.com/articles/112920-technologies-to-support-social-distancing-in-warehouses>

Stanton, N. (2012, February 21). Four Technologies Transforming the Workplace. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/02/10/four-technologies-transforming-the-workplace/?sh=71a4bb8c2061>

Weil, D. (2020, November 18). How Covid-19 could change Workplace Technology. The Wall Street Journal. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-covid-19-could-change-workplace-technology-11605708627>

### The Buzz:

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries#>

<https://www.proofhub.com/articles/remote-work-tools-for-team>

<https://www.nj.com/coronavirus/2021/04/nj-will-see-accelerating-opening-up-of-the-state-with-announcements-soon-murphy-says.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/13/man-makes-deepest-ever-dive-in-mariana-trench-and-discovers-trash>