

Spring  
2012

# Frontline Employee



## This issue:

- Teaching Children Stress Management Skills
- Maintaining a Positive Work Culture
- Helping Your Coworker Complain Less
- Leaving a Motivation Trail for Employers to Follow
- Using Your Employee Assistance Program

## MIIA Employee Assistance Program

### Confidential Counseling

- Addiction
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family Issues
- Grief/Loss

### Resources & Referrals

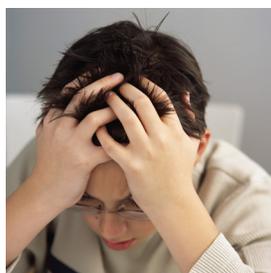
- Legal
- Financial
- Child Care
- Elder Care
- Work/Life

### Stress Management

- Personal Concerns
- Professional Issues

**800.451.1834**

## Teaching Children Stress Management Skills



Are children more stressed today than in years past? The pressure of tougher academics, more competition, social challenges, health risks, and r a p i d - f i r e

audiovisual hype from the media certainly appears to have increased. Additionally, the uncertainty of a secure financial future is felt by 30% of children, says one research study. Coping isn't about eliminating stress. It's about learning resistance and adaptation skills. Exercises abound for teaching kids stress management, but make sure to cover the following bases: sleep skills, relaxation skills, detachment-from-worry skills, how to understand positive thinking, the benefits of proper diet and regular exercise, and how to pursue balance. Improved self-esteem and creativity will result, as well as increased self-confidence and healthier relationships with peers and family.

Source: <http://usat.ly/kidstress>

## Maintaining a Positive Work Culture



A positive work culture is like a well-tuned automobile — it requires regular preventive maintenance. Everyone has a role to play. Do you participate in the “preventive maintenance” of a positive work culture? Here are ways positive work cultures thrive: 1) A positive work culture is characterized by employees who consciously place a high priority on mutual positive regard for one another. 2) Employees rigorously guard a positive work culture, because they are aware of its powerful effect on job satisfaction and productivity. Google is a good example of a company where a positive work culture is considered paramount. 3) Dignifying differences among staff members is valued, and employees pay attention to how their personal and interpersonal communication reinforces or diminishes a positive work culture. 4) Employees seek ways to resolve conflicts quickly. Stopping toxic work behaviors or practices before they affect productivity and morale is essential. 5) Employees reinforce a positive message of unity. They develop traditions of praising and rewarding successes of peers. 6) Employees are proactive about removing barriers to communication. 7) Employees are encouraged to practice self-awareness and understand how attitudes affect others. They “check” their attitudes before coming to work and while they are on the job.

### April is National Alcohol Awareness Month

If you are concerned about your own or a loved one's drinking, your EAP can help! Call 800.451.1834 anytime to speak confidentially to a counselor.

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## Helping Your Coworker Complain Less

Some people who complain without taking action do so primarily to feel heard, which delivers relief. This requires listeners. Unfortunately, you're a captive audience at work, so *not* listening may be a tough assignment. Offering a solution is the instinctive response, but it seldom works because it misses the mark—the other person needs to feel heard. The solution: offer a genuine, heart-felt, empathetic response. Employ this method each time a complaint comes forth. Are you thinking this will make the complaining worse? It won't. Empathy almost instantly gives complainers what they want. Try it! For example, if your coworker complains (again) about the terrible location of your company's office because it's devoid of convenient lunch spots, don't head to Mapquest®. Instead, say "It must be awful for you to experience this stress every day." Notice the result.



## Leaving a Motivation Trail for Employers to Follow

You have the skills and experience, but you didn't get promoted or picked for the position. What happened? A quick look at discussions among recruiting experts in online forums such as LinkedIn shows that the ability to demonstrate a pattern of motivation is often the winning factor in the hiring process. Showing excitement in a hiring interview is a plus, but are you also leaving a motivation trail for employers to follow? This trail may include directly relevant extracurricular activities and things you do that shout your passion. Those who hire and promote know, if only instinctively, that motivation is a combination of desirable traits, such as passion, energy, availability, ability to invest time, going the extra mile, and willingness to take a risk. Have you let your motivation trail grow cold? Work-life balance issues, depression, burnout, or medical concerns can all affect your motivation. Seek support or an evaluation with a counselor if these factors sound like roadblocks to getting your groove back.



## Using Your Employee Assistance Program

Your employee assistance program offers confidential help for personal problems and concerns. The different types of problems an EAP tackles are so varied that no brochure could ever catalog them. Concerned about a troubled family member who won't get help? Need coaching to deal with a difficult workplace relationship? Feel tired and exhausted, but don't know if it's burnout, loss of motivation, depression, or all three? Living in financial fear? Can't sleep? Late for work too often? Concerned about a teenager's unusual behavior? Has use of alcohol or drugs created a crisis you are facing right now? The bottom line: Never wonder if your concern is suitable for the EAP. Assume the answer is yes. Extremely strict confidentiality laws govern the protection of EAP records (in rare cases, such as elder/child abuse or when someone's safety is at risk, confidentiality must be breached). So if you've been putting off taking action to solve an issue that is weighing on you, give the EAP a try.