

THE FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE

Wellness, Productivity & You!

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Your Role in Corporate Integrity

Corporate integrity has become a top concern for customers and applicants seeking to work for reputable companies. Do you know the meaning of “integrity” and your role in making it part of the corporate culture in your company? Integrity means wholeness. When you demonstrate integrity, your actions match your words and the image promoted by your organization. Your conduct is dependable—not characterized by saying one thing and doing another, or promising things you can’t deliver. Strive to do what you say you will do, no matter how difficult. Be honest with others even if there is a cost. Put what is best for customers ahead of what is most expedient and easy to do and you will be considered an employee with integrity.

Reward Yourself

If external rewards—buying or treating yourself to something—for accomplishing a fitness routine don’t work to keep you motivated to stick with it, try “internal” rewards. They can be more powerful.

- 1) After exercising, savor your accomplishment.
- 2) Marvel at being “in control” of your behavior, and winning out over “forces” that would interfere with your exercise program.
- 3) Enjoy feelings of relaxation and well-being after exercising.
- 4) Notice improvements in your body’s functioning—better sleep, improved stamina, fewer aches and pains.
- 5) Pat yourself on the back—you deserve it.

Helping to Prevent Suicide

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among college students, but many colleges have limited resources for helping students deal with this pressing issue. Research shows that 90 percent of college students (and others) who take their own lives have a diagnosable mental illness, usually depression. Substance use disorders also contribute greatly to suicide risk. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s recommendation: Be alert to signs of open aggression, anxiety, or agitation in a young person who is also depressed. Let the young person know that treatment is available. Encourage him or her to seek help. The EAP can provide you with information on the signs of risk for suicide and depression so you can better play an intervening role.

Source: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Avoid Instant Messaging Messes

Protect yourself and your company by being careful of what you say in instant messaging. You already know (or should know) that companies and Internet providers back up E-mail systems. E-mail is not necessarily temporary, even if deleted by the reader. But you should also know that the same is true for instant messaging—those shorter, quicker, back and forth messages between you and coworkers that can show your more emotional or impulsive side. Many companies back those up too.

Don't have a "Cold Heart"

New research presented by the European Society of Cardiology found that people with high blood pressure are more vulnerable to heart attacks during months of colder weather, or with sudden and significant temperature drops during other times of the year. One suggested theory to explain the phenomenon is the contraction of blood vessels and increased blood pressure experienced by hypertensive patients exposed to colder weather. The recommendation is to dress warmly when going out in the cold weather.

If you have a heart attack, chances are you won't be sure what's going on if you don't know the symptoms. You may then wait too long before seeking help. Usually, heart attacks are accompanied by mild pain and discomfort, not a sudden feeling of having "an elephant on your chest." Learn the symptoms of a heart attack and you may save your life, or that of someone you know.

1. An uncomfortable feeling in the chest—pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
2. Discomfort in other areas of your body—either or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
3. Fatigue—a feeling of physical and mental weariness. You may feel a sudden sense of being ill.
4. Shortness of breath, which women in particular may have without chest discomfort.
5. Breaking out in a cold sweat, indigestion, nausea, or lightheadedness.

Visit the American Heart Association website www.americanheart.org for further information.

Source: American Heart Association

HANGOVERS: Signal to Get Help?

Hung-over workers cost employers billions of dollars per year in lost productivity and absenteeism. Although heavy drinkers and alcoholics (11 percent of drinkers) experience more hangovers and contribute to more financial loss, hung-over workers are more likely to be light to moderate drinkers because there are more of them. Some people can get a hangover from just a couple of drinks. Coming to work with a hangover can pose substantial risk to yourself and others even if you have a zero blood-alcohol level. For some people, a hangover may be a risk factor for cardiac death. A hangover is a signal to evaluate your use of alcohol. The EAP can help.

Source: American College of Physicians <http://www.acponline.org>

Teen Dating and Substance Abuse

Research from Columbia University's prestigious National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse found a close connection between teen dating/sexual behavior (ages 12-17) and teen risk of smoking, drinking, and using illegal drugs. The more friends who are sexually active and the more hours a teen spends with a boyfriend or girlfriend, the *greater the risk* of smoking, drinking, getting drunk, or using illegal drugs. Compared with teens who have no sexually active friends, teens who report that at least half of their friends are sexually active are:

1. More than six and one-half times likelier to drink.
2. 31 times likelier to get drunk.
3. 22.5 times likelier to have tried marijuana
4. more than five and one-half times likelier to smoke.

Twenty-five percent of teens report at least half their friends are sexually active. Parental engagement and awareness of their teen's friends and dating practices once again correlated with reduced early sexual activity and substance abuse.

*Source: American Attitudes on Substance Abuse IX;
www.casacolumbia.org*

"You're" in the Solution!

Q Can the EAP help me deal with relationship conflicts in the workplace even though I am not the cause of them?

A The EAP can help you examine conflict, its cause, and what is within your ability to change. Help also includes identifying strategies to engage differently or detach without losing your ability to be productive. Contributions to conflict usually come from both sides. An honest search for the contribution you play is a key step in resolving virtually any conflict.