

# Individual Stress Profile

Rate each of the following statements in terms of the degree to which it reflects your living and working habits, within the last year:

	<i>Seldom/Never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Very Often</i>
1. I have problems sleeping.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. I am restless and can't seem to relax.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. I am irritable and angry if things don't go my way.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. I have difficulty concentrating.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. I have lost interest in my usual recreational activities.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. I have periods of prolonged or excessive fatigue.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. I worry about things that worrying won't help.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. My health has been adversely affected by my work.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. I set myself impossible deadlines and meet them at any cost.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. I work excessively (ie, take work home, work on weekends).	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. I lose sight of what's important in the areas of job and family.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. I habitually smoke cigarettes.	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. I drink quite a bit.	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. I take sedatives when I can't sleep.	_____	_____	_____	_____

## Scoring:

If you answered

**Seldom/Never**  
**Sometimes**  
**Often**  
**Very Often**

1 point  
 2 points  
 3 points  
 4 points

If your score is over 30  
 it is quite likely you're  
 experiencing a considerable  
 amount of stress in your life.

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# Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle. This exercise can provide an immediate feeling of relaxation, but it's best to practice frequently. With experience, you will become more aware of when you are experiencing tension and you will have the skills to help you relax. During this exercise, each muscle should be tensed, but not to the point of strain. If you have any injuries or pain, you can skip the affected areas. Pay special attention to the feeling of releasing tension in each muscle and the resulting feeling of relaxation. Let's begin.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Shut your eyes if you're comfortable doing so.

Begin by taking a deep breath and noticing the feeling of air filling your lungs. Hold your breath for a few seconds.

*(brief pause)*

Release the breath slowly and let the tension leave your body.

Take in another deep breath and hold it.

*(brief pause)*

Again, slowly release the air.

Even slower now, take another breath. Fill your lungs and hold the air.

*(brief pause)*

Slowly release the breath and imagine the feeling of tension leaving your body.

Now, move your attention to your feet. Begin to tense your feet by curling your toes and the arch of your foot. Hold onto the tension and notice what it feels like.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension in your foot. Notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Next, begin to focus on your lower leg. Tense the muscles in your calves. Hold them tightly and pay attention to the feeling of tension.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension from your lower legs. Again, notice the feeling of relaxation. Remember to continue taking deep breaths.

Next, tense the muscles of your upper leg and pelvis. You can do this by tightly squeezing your thighs together. Make sure you feel tenseness without going to the point of strain.

*(5 second pause)*

# Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

And release. Feel the tension leave your muscles.

Begin to tense your stomach and chest. You can do this by sucking your stomach in. Squeeze harder and hold the tension. A little bit longer.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension. Allow your body to go limp. Let yourself notice the feeling of relaxation.

Continue taking deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, noticing the air fill your lungs, and hold it.

*(brief pause)*

Release the air slowly. Feel it leaving your lungs.

Next, tense the muscles in your back by bringing your shoulders together behind you. Hold them tightly. Tense them as hard as you can without straining and keep holding.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension from your back. Feel the tension slowly leaving your body, and the new feeling of relaxation. Notice how different your body feels when you allow it to relax.

Tense your arms all the way from your hands to your shoulders. Make a fist and squeeze all the way up your arm. Hold it.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension from your arms and shoulders. Notice the feeling of relaxation in your fingers, hands, arms, and shoulders. Notice how your arms feel limp and at ease.

Move up to your neck and your head. Tense your face and your neck by distorting the muscles around your eyes and mouth.

*(5 second pause)*

Release the tension. Again, notice the new feeling of relaxation.

Finally, tense your entire body. Tense your feet, legs, stomach, chest, arms, head, and neck. Tense harder, without straining. Hold the tension.

*(5 second pause)*

Now release. Allow your whole body to go limp. Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation, and how different it is from the feeling of tension.

Begin to wake your body up by slowly moving your muscles. Adjust your arms and legs.

Stretch your muscles and open your eyes when you're ready.

# HOW TO SAY NO

Being responsible for yourself means you need to be able to say “no”. If you rarely say no, it means others are charting your course in life. Below are strategies for saying no.

FORMULATE YOUR POSITION BEFORE YOU SPEAK	DO NOT FEEL COMPELLED TO EXPLAIN OR RATIONALIZE YOUR “NO”	BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE	REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT
Know what you are or are not willing to do before you respond. If you are unsure, state that you need some time to think about the request.	Often we contrive reasons why we cannot comply with a request. Rather, we should feel comfortable with our own decisions and verbalize them as choices, not reasons or excuses.	Every so often people make decisions and then need others to comply in order to make the decision a reality. Remember that just because someone else has personally committed to a project or idea, you are not compelled to do so, regardless of how worthy the project may seem.	Be prepared to state your “no” several times before it is heard and accepted. You do not need to rephrase your “no” each time; simply restating that you are not able to help out is sufficient.

<b>NO</b>	“I am not able to do that...” “I am not taking on any more commitments...”
<b>NO &amp; VALIDATION</b> (AND REASON IF YOU CHOOSE)	“I can see you are in a difficult position...” “Sounds like this is important to you..”
<b>NO</b>	“I am not able to do that...” “I am not taking on any more commitments...”

# Constructive Ways To Handle Anger

## Before you get Angry...

1. Recognize and allow yourself to believe that anger is a natural, healthy and valuable **feeling**.
2. Recognize the difference between **feeling** angry and **expressing** anger.
3. Be prepared to own your feelings by using "I" language: "I feel angry!"
4. Learn to recognize what things, people, events, situations, etc. **trigger** your feelings of anger.

*Know your buttons as well as those who push them do!*

5. Explore ways you can avoid unnecessary anger-producing situations. Develop alternatives.

*Don't set yourself up!*

6. Develop your ability to relax. Relaxation skills can help you regain control of a situation, especially when they help to desensitize your triggers and buttons.
7. Develop many ways of coping with situations that block your healthy expression of anger by expanding your choice list of expressing anger.
8. Learn to listen and observe undefensively.
9. Develop your skills of self-awareness.
10. Develop a vocabulary of feeling words.

## When you are Angry...

1. Recognize and acknowledge your feeling of anger through self-awareness and internal statements to yourself.
2. Apply what you have developed in the 10 areas listed above.
3. Evaluate the situation and decide whether or not you want to resolve the situation within yourself, with others or, maybe, not at all. You choose how you want to spend your energy but remember **anger is energy and can be destructive to you unless it is vented or expressed in some healthy way!**
4. Begin with a simple statement that owns your feelings: "I feel hurt and angry."
5. Avoid blaming statements and "you" language such as, "You make me mad!"



# Self Talk when Experiencing Anger Build Up

## Effective Self Talk

I feel my muscles getting tight. Time to slow down and relax.

Anger reminds me to stop and do what I need to do to meet my needs.

Let's discuss this one point at a time.

Let's cooperate and find out where we have common ground.

It's not who is right, but what is right.

Let's try to work constructively And understand each other.

I know he/she is pushing my buttons to get me angry but I am choosing not to let that happen.

## Less Effective

My muscles are tense, I am uptight.

This is really making me mad.

He/she is wrong.

He/she is out to get me. Always against what I want and need.

There is only one person right and that is me.

I'll give him/her a good argument.

I'll show you.



# A CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL

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The following process is a framework for how a conflict might be resolved. No two conflicts are alike; therefore, how a conflict is resolved will always vary. Note that this resolution process is from the perspective that you are the one approaching another person to discuss a conflict.

## STEP 01

### **ANALYZE THE CONFLICT**

- When possible, analyze the conflict
- Prepare yourself to:
  - Acknowledge your contributions to the conflict
  - Listen
  - Seek common ground

## STEP 02

### **BUILDING UNDERSTANDING**

- Clearly state your purpose and hope for a positive outcome
- Establish a good time to talk
- Invite them to share first
- Ask questions and demonstrate you are listening
- Share your perspective

## STEP 03

### **CREATE SOLUTIONS**

- If there are multiple issues, work through them one at a time
- Focus on understanding their interests and sharing yours
- Utilize brainstorming
- Summarize progress

## STEP 04

### **DEFINE DETAILS**

- Work out the details of any agreement or acknowledge disagreement
- Discuss how you will handle any future problems
- Thank the other person

# Staying Calm

## 1. Recognize Stress – Be aware of stress “signals.”

### **Body signals**

- Breathing/heart rate increased
- Tense muscles
- Increased sweating
- Face turns red
- Body feels hot

### **Thought signals**

- “That brat!”
- “I’m not going to take any more!”
- “I’m a worthless parent.”
- “I can’t handle this!”
- “I hate him/her.”
- “I give up.”

### **Action signals**

- Punch/hit
- Yell/threaten
- Cry
- Tremble
- Withdraw

## 2. Relax Your Body – Do deep breathing, tense and release muscles, count to 10 and so forth.

## 3. Use “Coping Self-Talk” – Examples of coping self-talk include the following:

- “Take it easy.”
- “Don’t let it bug you.”
- “I can handle this.”
- “I’m going to be OK.”
- “Stay cool.”
- “Relax.”
- “I’ll try my best.”

## 4. Taking Effective Action – Walk away, ignore it, take a walk, try to discuss it, express feelings, use problem solving, and so forth.

From Skills Training for Children with Behaviour Disorders:  
A Parent and Therapist Guidebook  
by Michael L. Bloomquist. © 1996 The Guilford Press.



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# Deep Breathing



**Deep Breathing:** a relaxation technique performed by purposefully taking slow, deep breaths. When practiced regularly, deep breathing provides both immediate and long-term relief from stress and anxiety.

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## How Deep Breathing Works

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During periods of anxiety, the body triggers a set of symptoms called the **stress response**. Breathing becomes shallow and rapid, heart rate increases, and muscles become tense. In opposition to the stress response is the **relaxation response**. Breathing becomes deeper and slower, and the symptoms of anxiety fade away. Deep breathing triggers this response.

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## Instructions

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Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes, if you would like to do so. When you're learning, try placing a hand on your stomach. If you breathe deeply enough, you should notice it rising and falling with each inhalation and exhalation.



- 1 Inhale.** Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 seconds.
- 2 Pause.** Hold the air in your lungs for 4 seconds.
- 3 Exhale.** Breathe out slowly through your mouth for 6 seconds.  
**Tip:** Pucker your lips, as if you are blowing through a straw, to slow your exhalation.
- 4 Repeat.** Practice for at least 2 minutes, but preferably 5 to 10 minutes.

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## Tips

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- If it isn't working, *slow down!* The most common mistake is breathing too fast. Time each step in your head, counting slowly as you do so.
- Counting out your breaths serves a second purpose. It takes your mind off the source of your anxiety. Whenever you catch your mind wandering, simply return your focus to counting.
- The times we use for each step are suggestions, and can be lengthened or decreased. Lengthen the time if it feels natural to do so, or decrease the time if you feel discomfort.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT BASICS

## BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

- a. awareness of
  - your stress level
  - the presence of stress
  - the causes of stress
  - ways to cope
- b. acceptance
  - self-acceptance
- c. responsibility
  - acknowledge that responsibility for change begins with you -- ACT!
- d. coping skills
  - a commitment to develop skills
  - look at changing/avoiding the sources of stress
  - set a time, place and date to begin practicing your new skills

## BASIC STRATEGIES TO MANAGE STRESS:

- a. build up your general health through proper nutrition, rest exercise, and other positive health practices
- b. change the situation; that is, the source(s) of stress
- c. change your perception; that is, the source(s) of stress
- d. change your body; that is, learn to substitute relaxation responses for stress responses

FIRST PRIORITY IS TO REMOVE ANY UNNECESSARY STRESS FROM YOUR LIFE.

## COPING STRATEGIES:

1. **Practice effective communication:** make the message clear, use I-messages, and focus on the positive aspects of life.
2. **Prepare for stressful encounters:** focus on desired results rather than your emotional feelings.  
Ask yourself
  - a) What information do you need?
  - b) What is your role in the problem, the other person's role?
  - c) What specific things trigger your emotional reactions in this situation?
  - d) Ideally, what results do you want?
  - e) What compromises are you willing to make?



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Thinking in advance about what you want from a given interaction, often helps you "think on your feet" once the interaction has started, so you are more likely to get the results you want.

3. **Practice active listening:** look at the content (the words and what they mean) and the feelings (how the person really feels - anger, joy, fear, sadness, etc.). We need to remember that we listen to people, their words and meaning through a screen made up of our own attitudes, values, beliefs, and preconceived ideas and judgements. Thus, in listening to others, we tend to add something to what they say in terms of what we think, feel and believe. We need to try to minimize this. Active listening begins with practicing the skill of silence.
4. **Deal with any unfinished business:** use the following exercise to find out what "unfinished business" you carry with you in your life -- what problems and conflicts have gone unsolved. Break your life into periods, starting at as early an age as possible and then do the following:
  - a. Group the years that seem to go together.
  - b. Give these years a title.
  - c. What are the most significant things that occurred?
  - d. What were the most important episodes you recall in this period?
  - e. What was important about them? What issues were you working on?
  - f. What made that period end?
  - g. How did you feel during that period? in general? about yourself? about others around you?
  - h. What did you want most during that period?
  - i. How much do you feel you achieved of what you wanted?
5. **Establish a support network:** surrounding yourself with people who care about you and are sympathetic to your situation is key. Common experience and medical evidence show that the impact of stress in our lives is influenced by the strength and number of our social relationships. Those that have a positive and protective effect on our health are (in decreasing order of impact): spouse, other family, friends, religious group affiliations, and community organizations. There is some evidence that even pets provide a buffer against disease.
6. **Confront procrastination:** defined as "when you have come up with a good activity, validated your choice yet some time has passed and you are not working on the activity". Procrastination wears many disguises - laziness, indifference, forgetfulness. Behind all of these is FEAR. Fear of pain, embarrassment, rejection or failure.

We sometimes have difficulty getting started because the task seems overwhelming or unpleasant. These complex tasks can be broken down into smaller activities that are easier to complete. We need to force ourselves to deal with unpleasant situations before doing anything else.

Getting rid of procrastination means reducing the nagging stress we experience when something important but not completed hangs over our heads. Don't spoil your evenings, weekends, and holidays by worrying about uncompleted work. Get on with it.



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## STRESS MANAGEMENT BASICS

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7. **Practice time management:** we can not manage time itself - but only an act with respect to time. This means gaining control over WHAT you do. Plan and set goals which are realistic, measurable, and achievable. We can't do a goal it only gives us a direction. We must then outline the activity needed to get the desired outcome.

Remember the 5 P's!

**PRIOR    PLANNING                      PREVENTS                      POOR                      PERFORMANCE**

Begin by learning how you currently spend your time and then decide where you can make changes.

8. **ATTITUDE:** is a large part of success. We need to look at how our attitude may be stopping us from achieving what we want.
9. **Learn to prevent crises:** a preventable crisis which recurs is a sign of poor planning -- yours or someone else's. Preventable crises can be avoided through the development of and use of routines. Problem solving techniques can help with unpreventable crises too. Think over your last crisis -- ask yourself:

- \* Could this situation have been prevented?
- \* If no, what plans can I make now to deal more effectively with it when a similar situation occurs?

We need to recognize that most problems result from action without thought. Those who know WHAT to do succeed once. Those who know WHY will succeed again and again. Take the time to problem solve and then to ACT.

10. **Benefit from aerobic exercise:** studies and clinical evidence suggest that an aerobic program can build emotional hardiness at least nine ways by:
- energizing
  - relieving tension and anxiety
  - strengthening the body's stress-coping mechanism
  - counteracting hostile, Type A behavior
  - clearing the mind, improving concentration and memory
  - encouraging a more positive self-image and improving self-confidence
  - contributing to feelings of exhilaration and physical well-being
  - improving sleep
  - alleviating depression



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11. **Practice Random Acts of Kindness:** The experts say that caring for others keeps you alive. Lending a helping hand can make the vulnerable feel less vulnerable. It can raise your self-esteem, improve your self-concept and mean that you care for yourself better physically. In order to be beneficial to you, you must give without expectation of anything In return.
12. **Have a good cry:** some researchers believe that distress produces toxic substances in the body and that crying helps remove them from the system. Crying may also help restore balance by relieving the central nervous system of tension.
13. **Seven steps to healthy anger release:**
  - i.) Recognize the anger you're feeling.
  - ii.) Decide what made you angry.
  - iii.) Give the "provoker" the benefit of the doubt.
  - iv.) Count to ten. Calm down first, then discuss the conflict.
  - v.) Make your grievance known without attacking the person.
  - vi.) Listen. And above all, understand.
  - vii.) Forgive. Remember that you care about this person - which may be why the behavior hurt so much in the first place.
14. **Conquer worry:** most worry is anticipatory - we're afraid of what might happen. Use coping desensitization - imagine yourself in the fearful situation. Then imagine yourself coping with it. Do a reality check - are your worries supported by facts. Use the "worst case method" - imagine the worst possible outcome and imagine yourself coping with it. Exercise and talking to friends are two proven ways to reduce mild worries.
15. **Practice transcendental meditation:** has been around for over 25 years and is the granddaddy of relaxation techniques. Use of a secret word, sound or phrase (a mantra) is common. Assume a passive attitude and disregard intruding thoughts. Meditate 20 minutes in the morning and again in the evening.
16. **Create calm through massage:** there are several different styles. Almost any type of massage does at least the following: dilates the blood vessels and promotes circulation, cleanses the body of toxins by promoting the flow of lymph, relieves muscle tension, and makes a person feel good. Some types of massage are: Swedish massage; neo-Reichian massage; trigger point massage; Shiatsu massage; reflexology.



## STRESS MANAGEMENT BASICS

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### 17. Practice the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People:

**Habit 1:** Be proactive - the principle of self-awareness, personal vision, and responsibility

**Habit 2:** Begin with the end in mind - the principle of leadership and mission

**Habit 3:** Put first things first - the principle of managing time and priorities around roles and goals

**Habit 4:** Think win/win - the principle of seeking mutual benefit

**Habit 5:** Seek first to understand, then to be understood - the principle of empathic communication

**Habit 6:** Synergize - the principle of creative cooperation

**Habit 7:** Sharpen the saw - the principle of continuous improvement

### RELAXATION TECHNIQUES:

hypnosis

positive self-talk

thought clearing

a warm bath

regular physical exercise

acupressure

biofeedback

pet therapy

therapeutic touch

bibliotherapy

Yoga

faith/spiritual learning

deep breathing hobbies

aromatherapy

thought-stopping

autogenic training

improved nutrition

humor

keeping a journal

bioenergetics

plant therapy

relaxation tapes/CD's/Videos

walking

floatation

music therapy

imagery/visualization



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# What can I do?

Remember, it is not just the character of the incidents, but the number, frequency, and especially the pattern that can reveal the bullying or harassment

If you feel that you are being bullied, discriminated against, victimized or subjected to any form of harassment:

- REPORT the harassment to the person identified in your workplace policy, your supervisor, or a delegated manager. If your concerns are minimized, proceed to the next level of management
- REQUEST a supervisor or union member to be with you when you approach the person
- FIRMLY tell the person that his or her behaviour is not acceptable
- Ask them to STOP
  - Example: “I feel like customers lose confidence in my abilities when you criticize me in front of them, I would like to ask you to not do that anymore and if you feel the need to talk with me about my performance, to do so in a private meeting. Thank you.”
- Keep a FACTUAL journal or diary of daily events
- RECORD the:
  - Date, time, and what happened in as much detail as possible
  - The names of witnesses
  - The outcome of the event
- KEEP COPIES of any letters, memos, e-mails, faxes, etc., received from the person
- DO NOT RETALIATE – You may end up looking like the perpetrator and will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation

# A Checklist

## Why Start from Scratch?

You don't need to start from scratch when you're planning concrete strategies to address psychological health and safety in your workplace. Use this checklist to help you take stock. These are just some of the strategies that can get you started. A simple review and update of existing tactics can take you a long way to ensuring you are on the right track to promoting the psychological health and safety of your employees.

### DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ALREADY?

- A policy on accommodation
- A broad corporate policy stating commitment to mental health
- An anti-bullying policy
- A harassment policy
- A staff code of conduct  
**HINT:** You can modify or enhance these policies
- An occupational health and safety committee  
**HINT:** You can ensure that its mandate includes psychological health and safety
- A joint staff/management advisory committee  
**HINT:** You can expand its mandate to include psychological health and safety
- Previous experience implementing other standards
- A critical incident process or program  
**HINT:** You could expand it, or enhance it
- Data available to assess the progress you will make  
**HINT:** See What You Already Know on The Takeaways Resource Sheet
- Feedback you have received from employees about mental health in your workplace
- Data from any previous employee surveys about workplace mental health
- An employee training program where a mental health module might fit
- A management or leadership program where a mental health module might fit
- An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)  
**HINT:** You could enhance and expand your mental health offerings
- Employee benefits that include mental health services  
**HINT:** You could introduce or enhance them
- An obvious workplace champion  
**HINT:** See You're Closer Than You Think on The Takeaways Resource Sheet
- Members of your team who have relevant knowledge or experience  
**HINT:** You might tap into the personal commitments of people with a special interest in mental health and safety.



## Assertive Communication: A Summary

### “I” message

- keeps the door open - resolution
- speaks for self, e.g., “I feel, I think...”
- shares, discloses feelings and thoughts, “I feel really tired now and would like some time to myself.”
- gives information, e.g., “When you always arrive late for our meetings/date, I feel angry because I think it means that my time is not important to you.”

### Points to Remember: Do

- be brief, e.g., “Please put away your clothes.”
- active listen (put yourself in the other’s shoes)
- think and check your understanding before you act
- give verbal feedback – “Uhhuh,” ask questions, be interactive.
- attend to nonverbal cues - body language, give your attention
- focus on issue - here and now
- keep things in perspective
- respect self/other
- understand anger (cool down and discuss again), settle, reconcile quickly
- avoid disguised “you” messages. “I feel that you should consider my feelings” . . . that isn’t a feeling

### “You” message

- puts other on the defensive
- speaks for other, e.g., “I know you think you are always right.” “I know you are mad right now”
- attacks - vague, general, e.g., “You never pick up your clothes.” “You’re so lazy.” “You expect me to be the maid around here.”
- places blame e.g., “Who left the milk out? Don’t you care that you’re wasting money?”

### Note:

*The clue words are - always, never, should. If you are using these words, check for “You” message.*

*Points to Remember: Don’t*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • lecture, nag, drag it out                     | • swear, use violence, putdowns, sarcasm, ultimatums, commands, hit ‘below the belt’. |
| • passive listen ‘in one ear and out the other’ | • ignore, refuse to discuss   |
| • assume, mind read or give premature advice    | • stuff your feelings   |
| • get distracted                                | • react without thought   |
| • raise past issues                             |   |



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ASC002

Do	Don't
<p><b>Describe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the other person's behavior objectively</li> <li>Describe a specified time, place and frequency of the action</li> <li>Describe the action and not the "motive"</li> </ul> <p><b>Express</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express your feelings</li> <li>Express them calmly</li> <li>State feelings in a positive manner, as relating to a goal to be achieved</li> <li>Direct yourself to the specific offending behavior, not to the whole person</li> </ul> <p><b>Specify</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask explicitly for change in the other person's behavior</li> <li>Request a small change</li> <li>Request only one or two changes at one time</li> <li>Specify the concrete actions you want to see stopped and those you want to see performed</li> <li>Take account of whether the other person can meet your request without suffering large losses</li> <li>Specify (if appropriate) what behavior you are willing to change to make the agreement</li> </ul> <p><b>Problem-solve</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge change</li> <li>See solutions as possible</li> <li>Use your creativity</li> <li>See problem-solving as a joint effort including both people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use abstract, vague terms</li> <li>Generalize for "all time"</li> <li>Guess at other people's motives or goals</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deny your feelings</li> <li>Unleash emotional outbursts</li> <li>State feelings negatively, making put-down or attack</li> <li>Attack the entire character of the person</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merely imply that you'd like a change</li> <li>Ask for too large of a change</li> <li>Ask for too many changes</li> <li>Ask for changes in nebulous traits or qualities</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ignore the other person's needs or ask only for your satisfaction</li> <li>Make ultimatums</li> <li>Ignore the other person's efforts</li> <li>Drift into black and white thinking/punishing</li> </ul>



# DEALING WITH CONFLICT IN WORK RELATIONSHIPS

1. Be thoughtful in your manner of approaching and speaking to colleagues. Avoid harshness or unnecessary intensity. Aim to be calm.
2. Listen carefully. If you can't deal with a colleague's question or issue at the moment, negotiate a time.
3. If your colleague "A" talks to you about their frustration or anger in relation to colleague "B", encourage them to talk with "B" directly. If they feel unable to do so just now, they could follow the process outlined in point 5.
4. Do not tell others about the problem between "A" and "B".
5. If you are angry with someone, take the following steps:
  - a) Refrain from saying or doing anything that might escalate your anger or make the situation worse.
  - b) Do not try to suppress or ignore your anger, as unacknowledged anger will adversely affect your future relationship with your colleague.
  - c) Practice breathing and relaxation exercises to calm yourself.
  - d) Calmly and thoughtfully, within 24 hours, tell your colleague about your feelings and ask for an appointment to discuss your concerns. If you feel you cannot speak calmly within 24 hours, use a peace note.
  - e) If you use a **PEACE NOTE**, consider having a colleague review your note to ensure that your concern is expressed as clearly and concisely as possible.

Peace Note

Dear ...

I realized today that I have some anger around the issue of ...

Could we arrange a time to discuss this?

*(signature)*



6. If a colleague tells you they are distressed with you:
- a) Respect the other person's feelings; do not ridicule or take his or her feelings lightly, and allow him or her enough time to calm down.
  - b) Do not press for an immediate discussion.
  - c) Confirm the other person's request for a meeting, either verbally or by note, and assure him or her that you will be there.
  - d) If you find you are reacting with anger of your own, follow the suggestions (in 5 a, b, & c,) above.

*David Brown, The Family Centre*

