



LifeWorks *Managers* is a publication of LifeWorks Employee Resource, a *free*, 24/7 confidential service provided for managers, their employees and their families.

LifeWorks provides solutions for today's workplace by offering **EXPERTISE** in:

- Employee Assistance Programs
- Organization Training and Development
- Wellness Education
- Critical Incident Stress Management

We can assist EMPLOYEES with:

- Relationship conflicts
- Parenting challenges
- Work-related problems
- Chemical dependency concerns
- Career concerns
- Financial and legal issues

We can assist MANAGERS with:

- Performance-related employee issues

1.800.577.4727

Whether it is a work, family, or personal issue, we're here for you.

LifeWorks Employee Resource

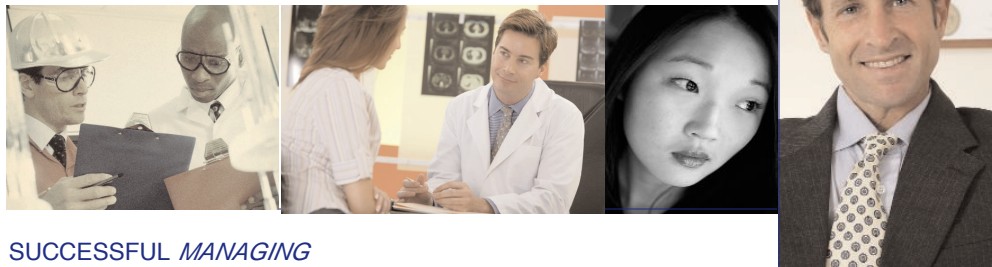
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STRESS - HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT IN THE WORKPLACE:

Feeling overwhelmed? Irritable? Getting head or backaches, muscle tension or not sleeping well? You or your staff members may be showing signs of stress. Sometimes we can't change the situation, "It is what it is," but we can stop and adjust our thinking and reaction to the situation. Often, just acknowledging it can help you feel back in control. For helpful techniques on how to manage stress, see tips below or call LifeWorks today. We're here for you and your staff 24/7.

Managers



SUCCESSFUL *MANAGING*

Lifting Employee Spirits ...

Gas prices are up. Food prices are up. Our economy is down. And morale is sinking fast. How can you inspire workers to feel good about themselves, their company and the future? Try these strategies:

- **Choose happiness.** You're struggling with the same issues that plague your employees. In fact, you probably have even more balls in the air than they do. And how you handle your hardships will have a significant impact on how employees view theirs. If you fret, grumble, and focus on negatives, you can expect employees to match your sour mood. But when you smile in the face of adversity, they're more likely to adopt your positive attitude.
- **Disregard failure.** Given current economic conditions, you can anticipate that sales may lag or new products may fail. Does that mean you should stop trying? No! If Thomas Edison had stopped trying after his 999th failed attempt to invent the light bulb, we'd all be stumbling in the dark. Encourage employees to put failures behind them and keep pressing forward. Simply striving for success can make them feel more in control of their destiny.
- **Seek input.** Napoleon lost the Battle of Waterloo because he failed to heed his soldiers' counsel about permanently disabling British cannons. But in the heat of battle, many leaders tend to rely solely on their own judgment. Learn from history's mistakes. Seek staff input in formulating plans for coping with economic setbacks. Bringing them into the loop will boost their confidence and may result in suggestions that help your business prosper while others decline.

From The Motivational Manager,

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Holiday Gift Giving in the Work Place...

These are difficult economic times. If you have a standard of gift giving in your office or department, consider an alternative way of holiday celebration. Perhaps a pot luck luncheon, a group donation to a children's organization or local school instead of an exchange of gifts. Ask your employees about it and get their opinion. Be sensitive to the fact that not all employees celebrate Christmas or New Years Eve. Check with other departments and see how they are addressing the issue this year.

MAKING LIFE WORK FOR YOU & YOUR EMPLOYEES

Q & A

Q: *As a supervisor I noticed that after showing a little appreciation to one of my employees his attitude and work ethic seemed to improve. Can showing employees appreciation help me become a better supervisor?*

A: What a great observation. Yes, appreciation is definitely an important aspect of becoming the best supervisor you can be. If you think about your own life, I'm sure you will remember a time when some words of praise and encouragement really improved your own outlook. For some, expressing appreciation does not come naturally, but it can easily become a learned skill. Below are some suggestions from Nick Heap (<http://www.nickheap.co.uk/>) on how to use appreciation in the workplace:

✓ **Appreciate people doing things right.** This can be as ordinary as saying "What a nice tidy desk," when she is the only person with a tidy desk in the office!

✓ **Appreciate people making a special effort.** "Thank you for that, your ideas are always interesting. Do you have any thoughts on the first steps?"

✓ **Appreciate your boss!** He or she is human and will respond positively. You could say, "I appreciate your supporting my position at the project meeting."

✓ **Express your appreciation to your peers.** When you have a particularly good meeting, talk about what made it go so well and why.

For more information about managing styles, contact:
1.800.577.4727



Take the fear out of performance reviews

Why do employees dread annual reviews?

- *They cringe at the formality.* Though a performance review is serious business, the goal is to engage in a two-way dialogue. You can best accomplish that by adopting a conversational tone.
- *They don't like surprises.* It's natural to experience anxiety when facing the unknown. Workers who receive little feedback throughout the year will feel anxious as time rolls around for the annual sit-down. Ease their minds by providing ongoing feedback throughout the year.
- *They're battle-weary.* Workers who've received a lot of criticism may fear the annual review as another opportunity to be belittled. Always balancing criticism with praise makes their review an opportunity to gain something worthwhile.
- *They're braced for a sucker punch.* Some managers ask employees to prepare for an evaluation by writing reviews of their own performance—then they dismiss the employees' comments. A self-review can be a useful tool for assessing how well employees gauge their own efforts. But the exercise should have meaning. Discuss self-reviews, paying particular attention to areas where an employee's viewpoint differs sharply from yours.
- *They just don't get it.* Do your performance reviews lead to substantive changes? Do they lead to pay increases for employees? Do they help workers better understand their contribution to the health of the company? Do they help workers improve their skills, enhance their value, and become more successful in their careers? Employees should be able to walk away from reviews feeling they've gained something worthwhile from the experience. If they don't, they'll continue to see reviews as a waste of time.

From The Motivational Manager

ENHANCING *WORK PLACE SKILLS*

Working from home while your children are there

Do you work at home every day? Or even occasionally? Are there children in the house? If so, then you know that there can be, ahem, challenges.

If you work at home with small children, you know that at times they can be noisy or in need of attention—but you have to work. Why not try setting up a small workspace for your child. Make sure there is paper and crayons to keep your little one occupied so that you can get your work done in peace and your child can be near you and have some fun.

If you have older children at home, have them participate in accomplishing household tasks, like the laundry. You might be surprised at their abilities and willingness if you teach them what to do. And make sure you tell them how much you appreciate their help and maturity.

Take a moment to think about what you're sending

Before you send that e-mail or letter out, you need to check it to make sure you have everything right. That means that you're going to copyedit your own work. The best way to do that is, if possible, to allow a little lag time between writing your communication and editing it. Then find a quiet place and sit down with a red pen.

Here's a few things to check for:

- 1. Make sure you have the client's name or company name spelled correctly.** Remember, whoever receives your communication is going to be judging you from what you send.
- 2. Make sure you have everything spelled correctly.** But make sure you check problem words for "disaster typos." For instance, if you're writing to Bob Jones, public relations director, and you drop the "l" out of the word public...well, you see what I mean.
- 3. Make sure your communication is written in the appropriate tone.** Don't use a casual, jokey tone if your subject is serious. Don't use a formal tone for something that should be fun.