

Workplace Civility

More than one-third of respondents felt they had been a victim of uncivil workplace behavior either “occasionally” or “frequently,” according to a Baltimore Workplace Civility Study.

Your daily actions signal to others the level of personal respect that you hold for them. Understanding that what you do matters can increase your personal awareness and give you more control over the direct, indirect or unspoken signals you send to others. It can lead you to make improvements in your relationships and increase your happiness at work. This awareness is the key to minimizing strife and hostility, and to increasing the courtesy and mutual respect all of us want from each other. The following are some common behaviors often considered disrespectful. Do you practice any of them? Have you been on the receiving end of some? Use the list to help you consider your role in helping maintain a respectful workplace.

Communication: Interrupting others while they are speaking; cutting someone off before he or she has finished expressing a thought; neglecting to say please and thank you; purposely avoiding an obvious moment to offer a compliment, to say good morning, etc.; criticizing someone in front of peers; using profanity to “be yourself” and making this other people’s problem if they don’t like it.

Privacy: Asking personal questions of someone you do not know well; reading another person’s mail; peering at someone’s computer screen.

Boundaries: Taking things from another person’s desk; not returning loaned books, supplies or other property; standing too close or staring at another person; not stopping offensive behaviors after a reasonable request.

Environmental: Not cleaning up after yourself in the staff

kitchen; having a loud conversation or playing loud music; keeping your work area unsightly, overly dirty or dusty; displaying visual objects in your workspace that offend others or contrast heavily with what most people consider good taste or appropriate; using the last of something and not replacing it—food, supplies, toilet paper.

Differences: Participating in intolerant behavior or using language associated with racial, sexual, age-related or other human differences that offends or contributes to a hostile, offensive or intimidating work environment.

Interpersonal: Behaving in a way that invalidates someone else’s successes; spreading rumors, or not correcting rumors; talking about someone behind his or her back or taking credit for someone else’s work; criticizing a coworker’s character to another worker who has not formulated a firsthand opinion; labeling coworkers with personality or character traits you don’t like; habitually using cynical language or sarcasm; not sharing in the work.

Macro Issues: Macro issues can be rhetorical and may not be directed specifically at one person. Espousing religious and political views that others may not want to hear; repeating catastrophic and “doomsday” predictions about the company, the country, the world or geopolitical issues that maintain an atmosphere of anxiety for others. Being respectful of others isn’t about ‘censorship’ or ‘walking on egg shells.’ It’s about being aware of the powerful impact we all have on each other and knowing that each person has a vital role in creating the type of workplace that we all want to share.

To access the King County Making Life Easier Program, please call: **888-874-7290** or visit www.apshelplink.com (company code: KCMLE)

The contents of this article and referenced websites, such as text, graphics, images and other material contained on the site are for informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Reliance on any information provided by these websites is solely at your own risk. APS is not responsible for the contents of any “off-site” web page referenced from this server.

© 2008 EAPtools.com
All rights reserved.

