

# Supervisor/HR Supplement Newsletter

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Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program



## Workplace Goals for the New Year

*The new year brings hopes and dreams for the future. You've made your resolutions -- to lose weight, exercise, plan a dream vacation, for example. Don't forget, however, that you also spend one-third of your day at work. You can improve your on-the-job enjoyment and your productivity by making the following work resolutions.*

### Learn new skills

To keep your career moving forward and prevent burnout, learn some new skills. Investigate which ones you'll need for a promotion or for your dream job, then make sure you acquire them. Make a resolution to always be learning something new.

### Keep organized

Most people don't function well in the midst of chaos. The clutter on your desk likely distracts you and muddles your thinking. If your office is disorganized, the time you spend getting organized will be paid back in less stress and increased productivity. Make a resolution to spend the last 15 minutes of every day clearing your desk and getting organized for the next day.

### Take daily breaks

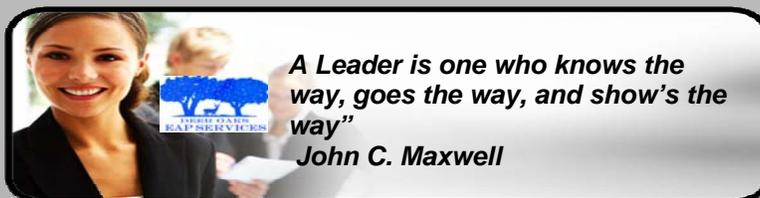
Human beings aren't built to sit at a desk for hours at a stretch -- that's why the coffee break was invented. But, there are better ways to use your breaks -- quick, simple techniques that rejuvenate the body, mind and spirit so you can return to work refreshed and ready to accomplish great things. The following energizing breaks take less than two minutes: Count down from 10 to one, taking a deep breath with each number. Read affirmations, inspiring quotes or poetry. Read a couple of pages of a book. Put your hands over your eyes and visualize a favorite vacation spot. Gaze out a window. Listen to your favorite music. Stand up and stretch your muscles. Doodle. Drink a full glass of water. Eat a healthy snack. Take a short walk.

### Structure your time

Are you wasting time taking care of things that just aren't important? If so, you'll be frustrated when you fritter away your work-days doing things your boss would consider insignificant. The solution is to block off one or two hours of quiet time each day that you spend focusing on your important tasks. Since most people concentrate best in the morning, choose your quiet time early in the day. Then transfer your calls to your voice mail and put a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door. Make a resolution to set aside quiet time every day to work on your important projects.

### Keep an accomplishment journal

Buy a separate notebook for an Accomplishment Journal. At the end of the day, write the date on a new page and write something that you accomplished. It doesn't have to be something major. Even little steps of progress need to be acknowledged. For example: "I dealt with Mr. Jones, a difficult customer, in a very kind and professional way." "I wrote two pages of a special report." Writing such a journal increases your enthusiasm as you look for things to accomplish and write in your journal. Your focus will be on what you did instead of what you didn't do. Keeping the journal will also give you more confidence during employee reviews or when asking for a promotion. One last thought: When you follow through on your work resolutions and make them daily habits, you'll experience increased productivity, more energy and enthusiasm and the joy of accomplishment. *Krames Staywell*



**A Leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way"**

**John C. Maxwell**

Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with home or work related issues contact your EAP, Deer Oaks, at:

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## Goal Setting for Everyday Success

In a garden, you plant seeds, nurture them with water and fertilizer, work at keeping the weeds out and trust the plants will accomplish your goal of growing strong and productive. The same processes can be used to plan for progress in your life and work.

"Setting goals gives direction to life," says Jack Ensign Addington, author of "All About Goals and How to Achieve Them." "If you don't have goals, you have no direction. You're going to drift and get nowhere. Setting a goal creates a mold into which the energy of life flows. It's a law of the mind -- that which you can conceive of, believe in and confidently expect for yourself, must necessarily become your experience." Follow these steps and you'll soon be reaping a bountiful harvest.

### **Put it in writing**

Writing down your goals is like planting seeds. To do so, write a detailed description of each goal -- the more detailed, the better. Most goals fail to materialize because they're too vague. So, instead of writing "I want a new car," describe your new red convertible with the black leather seats. Make sure your goals are realistic and not in conflict with each other. You should believe they're attainable.

Next to each goal, write the feeling you hope to get from reaching it. You might want excitement from the red convertible, for instance. A feeling of success or accomplishment may come from the purchase of your first home. Other goals might give you feelings of security, respect, social acceptance, love, fun, happiness, adventure or power.

### **Act as if**

"Goals should be thought of as already accomplished. Never allow yourself to feel anxious about them. This will impede your progress," warns Mr. Addington. When you feel in your heart you deserve your goal and will do whatever it takes to achieve it, you have won the biggest battle -- the battle with your mind. Close your eyes and visualize yourself as if you already have attained the goal and are experiencing the feelings that go along with it. Feel the joy and satisfaction of owning your new home, the prestige of earning a college degree, the excitement of driving a new car. Then start acting as if you already have achieved your goal. If your goal is a new home, start shopping for furniture. If your goal is to become a lawyer, attend some trials and apply to law school.

### **Make daily lists**

Now that you're clear about your goals, nurture them. Decide which tasks must be done and the tools and training you'll need to achieve them. Each evening, ask yourself, "What can I do today to get closer to my goal?" Then make a list of six things to do and schedule time to do them. Don't beat up on yourself if you don't accomplish them all in one day. Simply carry over the unfinished tasks to tomorrow. At the end of each day, write down what you accomplished in a notebook or calendar so you can track your progress.

### **Be careful about sharing**

Don't discuss your goals with friends or family members who don't share your enthusiasm. They may cause you to doubt your goal, or they may feel threatened and subtly sabotage your success. Most of the time it's best to quietly go about pursuing goals, only giving people information when a goal will affect their lives. That way, you won't have the added stress of accounting to other people about your progress or making explanations if you change direction.

On the other hand, encouragement can be motivating. You can get it from the people who teach you the new skills you need. They have a personal interest in your progress and will be thrilled about your success.

*Krames Staywell*



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## Ask Your EAP

**The following are answers to common questions supervisors have related to their employees and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to EAP for a management consultation at 866-327-2400.**

**Q.** Supervisor referrals to the EAP tend to be based upon unsatisfactory performance or behavior, but I sometimes also help employees see the benefit of getting help for personal problems. Is it okay to soften the supervisor referral in this way?

**A.** Making a supervisor referral is not a punitive act that needs to be “softened.” Couching your referral with a discussion about personal problems could undermine motivation to visit the EAP rather than the other way around. Encourage employees to seek help for personal problems only when they mention them first. Commend employees for recognizing their personal problems, but do not become a “motivational counselor” when making a supervisor referral. Initiating discussions about personal problems puts you in a diagnostic role and connects the supervisor referral to a personal problem. The shift in focus away from performance provides a reason to decline the EAP referral if the employee thinks the problem doesn’t exist or can be solved someplace else, or disagrees with your conclusions entirely. Ironically, even if performance problems are substantial, an employee who spends time discussing the nature of personal problems with the supervisor can lose motivation to visit the EAP.

**Q.** I know that I can inquire about certain information, once my employee signs a release. Still, I feel like I’m intruding if I call the EAP for any information after I’ve made a referral.

**A.** It’s helpful to understand that Deer Oaks exists to interface with employees who have personal problems and with managers who need consultation to manage troubled employees. In this sense, the EAP depends on an appropriate amount of communication with a referring supervisor in order for it to help the employee best. Although Deer Oaks follows strict rules that govern their confidentiality, it is important not to feel as though you are “prying” when you need information necessary to manage your employees. As long as the employee has signed a release, Deer Oaks will know what it can and cannot disclose to you. Good communication means supervisors are identifying performance problems.

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