

July - September 2004

Did you know?

- Claremont EAP can make referrals for after-school care, day camps, and summer camps
- It's a good idea to look at your credit report once a year. Claremont EAP offers a free credit report.
- Claremont EAP can make referrals for pet care services such as groomers and pet boarding

Claremont EAP
800.834.3773

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Productivity: Improving Your Odds of Success

The term "productivity" can mean different things to different companies. One firm may define productivity as getting work done fast. Another may measure productivity by the amount of goods or services delivered in a specific time period. A third company may define productivity as the proportion of total output (such as work, training, financial investments and time) to the total output. And some companies productivity simply equals profits- the amount of money a business has left over after expenses. No matter how your company defines productivity, it remains an important component of its success as well as your own.

Characteristics of Productive Workers

Productive workers are always on the lookout for ways to get the most out the people, machines and materials at hand, including improving their own skills. Productive workers pay attention to the outcome of the work. For example, an employee who works quickly but has to spend time correcting mistakes is not being productive. So the productive worker strives for



quality, as well as safety and cooperation with coworkers. Productive workers make mistakes like everyone else. But they try to learn from their mistakes. Productive workers tend to set goals and develop priorities, tackling the most important tasks first. They value time by beginning work on time, and they work as efficiently as possible, whether they're working alone, on a team or under constant supervision.

The Benefits of Productivity

Some workers believe that improvements in productivity benefit only the company, but productivity has advantages for the workers too.

Companies that prosper because of productive workers can offer greater job security and opportunities for promotion. These companies are more likely to provide bonuses or a wider range of fringe benefits. A productive

workforce enables a company to expand, thus providing more jobs and deterring layoffs. In a wider context, a stronger company contributes to a stronger economy.

On personal level, the productive worker knows how to avoid painful and costly accidents, adapts more easily to change, is better able to cope with stress, has a more positive attitude, is a skilled problem-solver and feels satisfied after putting in an honest day's work.

You Can't Lose

Improving your productivity may mean making changes in how you think and live rather than by working longer hours. Start by developing a commitment to quality, efficiency, teamwork and good health and safety habits. And remember, improving your productivity improves the likelihood of advancement, recognition, personal profit, valuable new skills and job satisfaction. When you look at productivity in that light, you can't lose.

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Legal Troubles

Common Situations

Modern life is complicated. Sometimes it's complications are greater than you can handle by yourself. Here are some common situations in which it might be prudent to seek the help of an attorney.

Family Matters

Do you have a will? Dying without one (called "dying intestate") can bring problems and unnecessary costs to your heirs, possibly delaying the disposition of your estate. If you have small children and you and your spouse both die at the same time, a will spells out who is to be the guardian of the children.

Divorce on the horizon? If it's available in your state, "no fault" divorces make sense for some people (especially those without children or extensive community property), but hiring an attorney to represent your interests before the judge can make good sense.

Money Matters

Are you buying property? If



it's a complicated arrangement, asking a real estate attorney to review the transaction papers on your behalf can save you money and complications in the long run.

For example, if you've been injured in a car accident, it can be helpful at least to discuss the matter with an attorney, especially if lost wages or high medical bills are involved. A reputable bankruptcy attorney can review your financial situation and make recommendations for action if creditors are lined up at your door. It's especially important to get reliable advice if a mortgage is involved.

Criminal Matters

If you're arrested and taken before a judge, an attorney will be appointed for you if you can't afford one, or until you can locate one on your own. Your local district attorney's job is to represent you (as a representative of "the people") if you've been the victim of a crime.

Small Claims Court

If you have a problem, which can be satisfied by the payment of a relatively small amount of money, such as trying to get a refund from a merchant, small claims court might be for you. You must act as your own representative in small claims court. Check with your local municipal court to find out the maximum amount of money for which one can sue.

“Life is complicated. Sometimes its complications are greater than you can handle by yourself.”

Communicating Effectively with Your Children

Do you ever get the feeling that you just don't know how to get through to your children? That they don't do as you ask or lose interest before their tasks are completed? Here are a few suggestions to help you get the most from your kids while respecting their needs and wishes.

Set Reasonable Goals and Expectations

A positive first step is to evaluate your child's capacity to understand your needs, and his or her ability to comply with your requests. When you have a good handle on what your child can do, you can set reasonable goals and expectations. As your child gets older, he or she begins to see that a family works together and that he or she cannot always be the center

of attention. At first the child may experience resentment at this reality, but will gradually learn that his or her contributions and independence are rewarded with a new and different feeling of importance. Affirm and reaffirm that cooperation and help are essential to the family; that without the child, things just couldn't work as well.

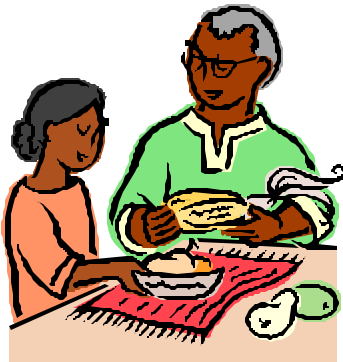
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Communicating Effectively with Your Children

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Impart A Sense Of Responsibility

Try to help your child understand why you need something from him or her, whether it is extra time spent with a sitter or unpleasant chores that need to be finished. Impact a sense of each family member's responsibility to give and take. Be firm and explain exactly what you want from the child. Try to avoid an apologetic tone of voice, though compassion and understanding should always come through. Ask your child how he or she feels about the assigned



tasks and acknowledge those feelings. If the child does not think a request is fair, ask why. Try to help your child express himself or herself and tell him or her you value these concerns. It's sometimes hard to view a situation from a child's point of view, but it's important to try.

Children's realities may sometimes be blown out of proportion from your perspective, but their feelings are very real. They may not be able to tell you exactly what they need, however, remember to observe their behavior to recognize if they have some gap that you can fill for them. Then offer to do so. You can work to negotiate a compromise with your children. That way they will feel taken care of while they do their part to help you. Include them in the decision-making process and work with them to solve problems.

“Self-esteem is how you see yourself as a person, both on the job and at home.”

Feeling Good About Yourself At Work

How do you see yourself as a person and as a worker? Do you feel your skills and talents are valuable and important to your company? Or do you often feel you are not smart enough or talented enough to make a difference?



Self-esteem is how you see yourself as a person, both on the job and at home. Regardless of your accomplishments, you can do things to boost your self-esteem. Here are some examples.

Positive Self-Talk

Most of us carry on an inner dialogue. Stop and listen to what you're saying to yourself. If your dialogue tends to be critical or self-

ridiculing, try replacing those statements with positive ones. Avoid unflattering names or labels. Instead of "I'm hopelessly disorganized and lazy," try "I'm creative and can take time to dream."

Nobody's Perfect

Self-esteem is often a matter of being as tolerant of your own faults as you are of the faults of others. Think of mistakes as opportunities for learning rather than as

personal failures. Nobody who's doing anything important gets through life without falling down occasionally.

Choose Supportive Friends

Your choice of friends often mirrors how you feel about yourself. Thus, supportive friends can boost your self-esteem. If you tend to choose friends who are always putting you down, make a conscious effort to seek out people who value you. Listen to what they say about you, and include their remarks in your positive self-talk.

Recognize Your Accomplishments

Many people with low self-esteem have been taught that

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Feeling Good About Yourself At Work

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it's immodest to be proud of their own accomplishments. But pride in your own worth is good for you and may even boost the morale of those around you. Make a list of your accomplishments—even the little ones. By recognizing them, you remind yourself that you and your work are valuable.

Expect Respect

When others treat you with respect, it naturally boosts your self-esteem. Learn to be

assertive. Communicate your needs to others rather than allowing them to walk all over you. Remember that you have rights too.

It's Gradual Process

Building self-esteem is a lifelong project. Practice the techniques of self-esteem consciously. It's like smiling even when you don't feel like it. The more you do it, the better you feel.

Claremont distributes this newsletter to provide employees with general behavioral health information. If you have concerns about these or other behavioral health issues, you can call Claremont to arrange for assistance. You will be directed to an appropriate, experienced professional who can offer guidance in a variety of work and family matters.

For more information or for confidential help call
Claremont EAP 800.834.3773

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