



141

March 2011

Helping Hands

The Employee Assistance Program Newsletter

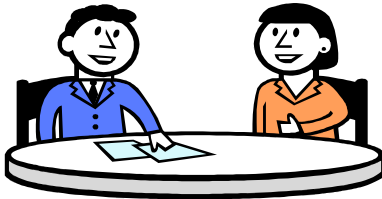
www.iam141.org/eap

Get a Jump On Your Tax Return

There are many sources to help with filing a tax return. The Internal Revenue Service has a web site that has all of the information necessary to successfully file your return. www.tax.gov offers information on a variety of topics. These include: filing/paying taxes, record keeping, IRS audits, post-filing issues, retirement plan tax issues, scams and frauds and much more. The site includes videos on subjects including: choosing a tax preparer, home office deduction, business tax issues, schedule C deductions and more. The IRS supports the site with regular updates and offers help with specific issues that may affect you and your tax status. The site offers information for Spanish speaking tax form preparers also.



Creating a More Positive Workplace



The workplace can be a place of tension and conflict. There are many stressors that can lead to negative behaviors. While it can be difficult to change the culture once it has a number of negative factors in play, it is possible. Creating a positive workplace involves creating better communication among all parties by listening better, increasing tolerance of differing views, being willing to incorporate varying ideas about how work can be done and sharing as much information about the work that needs to be accomplished as possible. This will lead to increased job satisfaction for all because everyone has input into the work being done.

Getting Excited about Spring

Spring is a time of renewal, regeneration and increased energy. It is a time to participate in outdoor interests and increase your physical activity. These activities are healthy distractions from work stress, and give you more balance in your life. Preparing your garden, sorting through stored items and selling them in a weekend garage sale, or arranging short getaway trips will help you feel refreshed and improve your attitude. These spring “tune-up” activities will lift your mood and provide feelings of accomplishment. The winter “blues” can be vanquished through increased activity which can greatly improve your attitude. Also- Increasing vitamin D intake from limited exposure to sunshine has been shown to diminish depression.



Eye Safety at Work

More than 50 percent of computer users experience eyestrain, headaches, blurred vision and other visual symptoms. This type of stress on the visual system can also cause body fatigue and reduced efficiency at work. Like other parts of your body such as your muscles, your eyes need to rest periodically. To combat eye fatigue and all of the accompanying symptoms, take frequent breaks: talk with a co-worker, make a phone call, take a brief walk, run an errand, divert your attention by focusing on different tasks in your workplace. Be aware of when you are squinting and straining your eyes and give them a rest!



Crime Prevention Tips Worth Trying



Local law enforcement websites often have worthwhile crime prevention tips. Visit your local law enforcement agency website for crime prevention tips tailored to your area. Here are a couple of ideas from experienced police officers that you might not have considered: 1) Always deadbolt the door leading from your garage into your home. Many people leave this door unlocked when they go to work, thinking the garage door is enough of a deterrent. This is precisely what many burglars count on. 2) When you are home and gardening in your yard this spring, keep your home locked. Your presence either in the backyard or front yard is not enough to deter someone from entering your home from the opposite side. It may even signal that your home is an easier target. The goal is your wallet or purse. Leaving your wallet or purse on a counter or in the open will make it easier for a thief to quickly “grab and dash” leaving you with a host of problems.

IAM-EAP Peer Coordinators

The heart and soul of the District 141 EAP is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist you and your family when you experiencing personal difficulties. EAP coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations. However, coordinators are trained to make a basic assessment of a situation and refer to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation and course of action. EAP coordinators will follow up with you to ensure you have been able to access services that addressed whatever difficulty you may be experiencing.



Complacency: Relaxing with the Risk



Complacency is “a feeling of quiet pleasure or security, often while unaware of some potential danger, defect, or the like.”¹ Safety experts worry about complacency. It plays a significant role in the cause of on-the-job accidents. Jobs that require routine inspection of vital parts or mechanisms to spot deficiencies, can lead to workers become complacent due to the routine nature of the work. Becoming complacent is a natural experience. This makes complacency stealthy and treacherous. Complacency can permeate all areas of your life. Here’s how to spot complacency and intervene before an accident happens. Always follow recommended maintenance procedures including: 1) “Approved” methods of maintaining standards of safety regarding all activities; 2) Maintain proficiency on any machine or job you are involved with; 3) Be aware of boredom on the job. Boredom leads to distraction and potential accidents; 4) Beware of cutting corners and being satisfied with “good enough”. This is the initial link in a chain of events potentially leading to an accident.

Information Overload



We are all inundated with information from multiple sources every day. Sifting through all of the information can put us into overload! Identifying what information is relevant to us will help reduce the amount of sources we pull information from. Getting information from trusted sources will also help reduce the amount of information that is of little value. Knowing how to utilize search engines effectively can narrow the amount of information returned to you. Let the search engine do the work for you.