

EAPost



Brought to you by FEI Behavioral Health

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College Prep 101

Your child is preparing to go to college. You've gotten through the application and acceptance process and now the time is growing near when you will need to let go. You may experience a roller coaster ride of emotions: excitement, anxiety, pride, panic, loss, sadness. Just as going to college is a time of great growth and challenge for your child, this major transition in your family dynamic can also tax the whole family. Studies show that parents remain a key influence on college students. Your opinions and guidance can make a difference.

Most colleges offer orientation for new students and their parents prior to the start of classes to help them acclimate to campus life and address their questions and concerns. In the meantime, use these summer months to prepare yourself and your soon-to-be college student. Addressing the items below will help ease the stress and make the transition easier:

- Acknowledge that this is a very emotional time
- Talk about money and finances
- Tackle time management
- Prepare for living with roommate/s
- Teach basic health and nutrition facts
- Discuss drug and alcohol use and safety issues
- Stay connected via packages from home, calls, or emails.

While there are many things to think about as you send your child off to college, the most important thing may be knowing that what your child needs most from you is your love and ongoing support. ☺

Tips for the New Grad on the Job

If you are a young person or newly hired graduate on your first job, take time to observe the corporate culture so you can adapt to it and avoid common mistakes that can interfere with your acceptance, reputation, and productivity. Note what your fellow employees wear to work, what time they come to work, how late employees stay. How do young employees speak to older workers? What values do your coworkers share, and what slang common to young people is avoided? These observations can also be powerful clues for how to form a satisfying relationship with your employer. Deciding that you will adopt them may be a key to your success. ☺

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Guarding Your Teen Online

The Internet is a great learning tool for teenagers. However, it can also expose them to predators eager to exploit their vulnerability. As a parent, it is important to monitor your teen's online activities. While some teens may feel this is an invasion of their privacy, parents need to be vigilant, just as they do when they allow their teens to stay out late at night with friends. You should know who your teen talks to and when. Monitor all of your teen's online activity, such as use of chat rooms, blogs, bulletin boards, instant messaging, and e-mail. Web pages such as MySpace.com are increasingly popular with teens and adults alike. Ask your teen to see their MySpace site, or MySpace sites that they visit frequently. Predators often contact unsuspecting teens in chat rooms or through MySpace prior to communicating with them via other means. If you find that your teen is receiving inappropriate communications from a potential predator, contact your local law enforcement agency for assistance. ☺



Should You Have a Five-Year Plan?

Imagine a large business organization making decisions daily with no idea what will be decided tomorrow. No plan. No direction. To avoid this certain route to business failure, an organization develops a strategic plan covering three years or more. It's not easy, and there is no certainty of the end result, but the ship can't be steered without it.

You are making decisions every day, but do you have a plan in mind so you end up where you want to go? A plan will help you feel less restless, more productive, and more in control of your life. Here are some tips:

- Start by putting your imagination to work.
- Decide upon several long-term personal and professional goals.
- Divide your five-year plan into one-year blocks with achievable subgoals for each year—your deliverables.
- Create incremental steps within each year.
- Put the plan where you can see it often, and keep acting and checking.
- Make adjustments, stay flexible, and be adaptable as you go—even big businesses do that. (Some companies plan for more than one national disaster per year in their strategic plans.)

The key is to stay proactive, not reactive, in your decision making. The goal is to avoid arriving someday at the imaginary crossroads of your life wondering, "Where do I go from here?" Don't fear that the plan for your life will interfere with your enjoyment of it. On the contrary, having a plan will allow you to keep your mind off the end result and enjoy the whole ride. [↪](#)

Work-Life Balance - The "Carve Out" Strategy

If you find yourself postponing taking that new bicycle for a spin or waiting until everything else is "off your plate" before going fishing, you probably don't view improving your personal well-being as a priority. *Carve out some time to make it happen.* It's that simple. If you doze off at your desk, become easily distracted, or procrastinate on work tasks, your body may be seeking its own balance. Take back control of your life (and your health!) with purposeful recreation and leisure breaks from work-related stress. You'll feel more energized. You'll get more done. And you will discover the benefits of a correct work-life balance. [↪](#)

Help for Long-Distance Caregivers

The National Institute on Aging has issued a new resource to help long-distance caregivers. *So Far Away: Twenty Questions for Long-Distance Caregivers* is a booklet providing resources and ideas designed to make long-distance caregiving more convenient and fulfilling. For example, question number three covers "What can I really do from far away?" and provides a list of examples and ideas common to long-distance caregivers. *So Far Away* can be viewed online, or you may order a printed copy at www.nia.nih.gov. [↪](#)

Relationship Skills

To maximize the value of relationships in your life, be sure to include the following:

- Life-skill mentors—people whose life experiences have brought them wisdom that they can share with you to enhance your life
- Role models—people whose achievements match your own dreams and aspirations
- Friends—people you bond with through affection and mutual high regard
- Supporters—caring people who will support you through life's difficult experiences
- Peers—people with standing equal to yours who recognize your achievements and encourage your success. [↪](#)



Give Your Attitude a Twist

Do you take on more assignments, work longer hours, have better ideas, or possess more problem-solving knowledge than your coworkers? If so, do you also know the secret to staying positive, especially if your pay is no higher than that of your peers, and leaving is simply not in the cards? Outstanding employees react in various ways to this classic workload inequity stressor, but those who maintain a positive attitude say they focus on what goes right at work rather than experiencing resentment. Their approach involves focusing on the agreeable aspects of their jobs and using affirmative thinking strategies until they become second nature. “Let gratitude be your attitude” might be the most important stress management tool of all. ☞



Become a Self-Starter

If you are a self-starter, your organization knows it: they rely on you to motivate yourself, and to accomplish objectives and goals in line with their mission. Supervisors put less pressure on you because they know you as a creative person who stays focused. As a trusted employee, you require little supervision. To become a self-starter, decide what you want to accomplish. Make it magnificent, and it will motivate you. Always define what you wish to achieve so that as you complete one goal, another takes its place. Continually assess your progress. Make commitments that force you to stay on task and deliver on your promises. Avoid procrastination and distraction, the greatest obstacles to acquiring a reputation as a self-starter. ☞

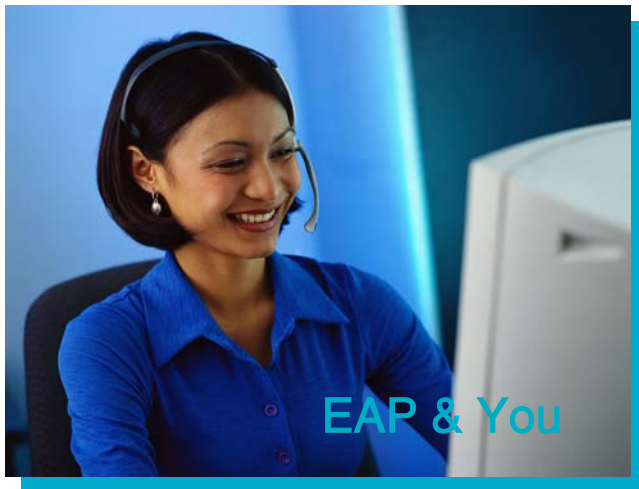
Secrets of Top Performers

You worked hard to acquire the education and skills to compete in the challenging world of work, but do you also possess the winning behaviors valued by employers (often more than some skills)? Here are five winning behaviors that will help position you for that next job or promotion:

- Showcase your motivation, and how you can muster up your own determination to get things done.
- Demonstrate your competence by showing that you routinely achieve your employer’s expectations.
- Do more work than required; it demonstrates your ambition.
- Gain a reputation for owning your mistakes. Stuff happens. When it does, make no excuses.
- Exhibit your ability to anticipate problems before they occur. ☞

Keeping Your Hot Buttons on Ice

Sometimes the workplace feels like home, especially if the personalities of our coworkers become as familiar as those of family members. We may then be tempted to push colleagues’ “hot buttons” and communicate or behave in ways that create annoyance and aggravation, or provoke back-and-forth, less than civil behavior in the workplace. This common struggle among coworkers makes books about dealing with “difficult people” popular. So how do you keep your cool when a coworker knows how to be as annoying as your kid brother? While avoidance works, it may not always be practical. It is better to develop coping skills to help you understand your own behavior in the workplace. Ask yourself: do you act or react? Choosing to respond to toxic communication, rather than reacting to it with a knee-jerk style, empowers you to make personal changes, de-escalate conflict, and reduce feelings of victimization. Getting a grip on what “sets you off” also helps you take back control of your responses and inoculates you against future incidents. Learn to interrupt the cycle of incivility that could one day lead to violence in the workplace. To avoid pushing buttons, say what you mean and be honest, seek more advice than you offer, and avoid making assumptions about your coworkers and their motives. ☞



Grief - Many Keys, No Shortcuts

Eventually we all experience the loss of someone or something so important to us that life seems forever changed. When this occurs we respond with grief. While nothing prepares us for grief, or equips us with ways of avoiding or shortcutting it, we can learn to cope through understanding. Grief is our natural, normal response to loss. It is not a mental illness or a psychological problem. There is no “correct” way to grieve and different people may experience grief in individual ways. Moreover, as it is a powerful emotion, grief often results in positive and personal growth. Until then, you cannot simply treat your grief as if it were a minor illness, soon to be gone. “Grief work” allows you to take charge of it and, in time, it will become less painful. If you are struggling with your grief, you may find that support groups and counselors who specialize in grief and bereavement can be enormously beneficial. The EAP can help you find them, as well as offer you other resources. ~

Marital/Relationship Counseling - Not Your Last Step

While most couples experience occasional disagreements and rough patches, the majority view counseling as a last resort before divorce or separation, when in fact they should see counseling as an early learning tool to help make things better. Emotional abandonment and emotional neglect are two of the most driving factors for the dissolution of a relationship. Partners often seek counseling when they feel misunderstood, isolated, lonely, frustrated, or deeply hurt. Others may seek counseling when they feel a profound sense of sadness in their relationships. These feelings may not be new; they may have been brewing for years. Couples entering counseling earlier stand a better chance of saving their relationships. Call the EAP for confidential help. ~



When Socializing Brings Suffering

Social phobia is an anxiety disorder where the person feels overwhelming anxiety and excessive self-consciousness in everyday social situations. People experiencing social phobia feel intense fear of being watched and judged by others, of being embarrassed, or of humiliating themselves. Social phobia means more than being shy. People experiencing social phobia cannot relax or enjoy themselves in public. The fear may be so powerful that it interferes with family life, work, school, or other activities that everyone else completes without a second thought. Effective treatment is available. For assistance call the EAP. ~

Help Is Just a Call or Click Away

We all face difficult challenges at different times in our lives. Today more than ever, companies understand that when faced with personal problems, an employee’s work life may be affected as well. Through FEI Behavioral Health, your EAP and/or Work-Life Services provider, help is available if you find yourself struggling with a personal concern or life event. The EAP can assist you with issues such as work-life balance, relationship conflicts, anger management, legal or financial matters, drug or alcohol abuse, stress, family caregiving, parenting concerns, anxiety or depression. Getting help is as easy as calling your EAP or LifeCycle® Service toll-free number to talk to a professional to review your options. Or you can log on to the Internet for information from your company’s EAP website. You and your eligible family members can receive a confidential referral to a professional counselor in your community, or receive valuable information that can lead to solutions for life events.

Remember, we are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and only a phone call or mouse click away! ~

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