



Tips for Supervisors

Supporting Your Newly Remote Staff

Keep in mind, we are all experiencing an unprecedented event across all current generations. In these challenging times, remember Maya Angelou's words, "People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel."

Remember, most of us do not have home offices or an adequate space for doing our work at home. The complications are varied and endless. Two-parent and single parent homes are all juggling child-care needs and loss of resources for these services, less income, other wage earners working at home as well, children being home schooled, aging parent care in some instances, and health concerns to name a few. For those who are single and living alone, isolation from colleagues can be tough especially as they balance other responsibilities independently. Ergonomics issues takes a week or two to emerge as we discover that the kitchen table is not as friendly as it once was. Stress, frustration, anxiety and depression may be at an all-time high as a result. Productivity will vary. For some it may increase and for others it will be less due to the other priorities vying for time and attention.

Here are some tips to help with our "new" work-life:

Accountability – Set realistic goals around workload, timelines for projects/deadlines and clarity about who is responsible for what. Assess what is necessary now and what can wait.

Compassion – Be reasonable and understanding of unique circumstances for your employees. One size will not fit everyone at this time. Look for means to work together and accommodate needs of home/work balance (which is currently out of balance). Give genuine encouragement and support and encourage this among your team with each other.

Connection – Set up times for on-line meetings to touch base and keep colleagues working together collaboratively. This will also cut down on feelings of isolation and distance. Have a set time of day for folks to check in either individually or collectively. Make sure contact information is distributed to those who need to know.

Creativity – Share ideas with each other about what is working and what is presenting some challenges. Offer ideas and solutions whether related to work or balancing what is going on at home with one another to help when needed. Sharing ideas for shortcuts, juggling stakeholder's needs, keeping sane and lighthearted can be very beneficial. Consider buddy system to help each other and check in on one another.

Flexibility - Be flexible as much as possible. Adjust schedules especially for those with family demands. Some may need to work early, pause midday and then resume work in the evening. Flexibility goes hand in hand with all the above. Sharing a lunch break online may be helpful to keep people bonded to

each other socially. Inquire about ergonomics. “Are you comfortable in you work setting (Kitchen table)?”

As you discuss these issues with employees you may sense things are significantly more strained and stressed than expected. This is a good time for managers/supervisors remind employees about their EAP benefit. Also, you can call EAP directly to talk about what you are hearing and how to assist someone who may be struggling.

We all need to make self-care a priority.

- Keep some form of a normal schedule
- Stay hydrated
- Get plenty of sleep
- Eat healthy
- Exercise: Get fresh air, walk or keep other exercise routines in place as much as possible
- Stay connected with social supports
- Helping someone else feels good too. Keep in touch with seniors or others at risk
- Smiling helps 😊 😊 😊

Collect and post aphorisms such as, “This too shall pass. We’re all in this together. We will get through this. Take each day as it comes. Focus on today and what is needed now. We are stronger together than apart.”

Keep EAP in mind as a resource. Provide EAP contact information to your employees and encourage use of the program. Support services are free and confidential.

Have a legal or financial question? Legal and financial experts are available for a free 30-minute consultation per issue to discuss your personal issues. Simply call our EAP partner firm, CLC, toll-free at (866) 262-5749. Inform the CLC customer service representative that you are covered through Adirondack EAP.

These are challenging and uncertain times for all of us. We are all experiencing various levels of concern for the safety and welfare of ourselves and our loved ones. Call us at **(518) 793-9768** when you feel the need to talk. We will get through this.

Final Note: We are all in the early stages of this crisis and over time, people may become more challenged by their circumstances and the stresses and strains of being in a contained environment and with limited normal resources. This is not the best time to make additional major decisions about life, relationships, finances, or employment, etc. We tend to make very different decisions when we are under duress than when we are calm and not juggling any crisis let alone an unprecedented event. EAP is here to assist you now and as we continue to navigate the waters ahead.

ADIRONDACK EAP

(518) 793-9768