



# July 2021: Fostering a Respectful Workplace

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*A National Business Psychology Firm*



***“Everyone should be respected as an individual, but none idolized.” – Albert Einstein***

Welcome to the **July 2021 edition of TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the **8 dimensions of wellbeing**. This month we will be discussing how to nurture a respectful working environment and ways to make sure co-workers feel heard and acknowledged.

A respectful workplace, much like respect in general, is a two-way street. You must respect others while also feeling respected in return. In order for a respectful working environment to exist an organization, as well as the employees of that organization, must have a culture that encourages this mutual respect. That means leaders must lead and not just talk down to employees, and that all communications from emails, to telephone/video calls, to face-to-face meetings must be conducted in such a way that all participants feel heard and valued. Now you can only control a small part of this, but there are two very important things you can focus on; learning to accept and use criticism which will help reduce impact and breed productivity from potentially negative interactions, and refining your listening skills which helps everyone you interact with feel heard and respected.

Please remember that your EAP is here for you if you need to talk about disrespect you have encountered, or need ideas on how to encourage a more respectful environment either at work or at home. You have access to free and confidential counseling, self-help tools, trainings, and more.

## ***This Month's Focus***

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To your total wellbeing,

The MINES Team

### ***Positive Ways to Accept Criticism***

Do you hate being criticized even when you know you've made a mistake? If so, it's no wonder—criticism can make people feel incompetent, angry, and just plain awful.

How do you, personally, respond to criticism? Do you make excuses or lash back with criticism?

"This fight-or-flight response is natural and common, but it isn't very productive. It cuts off communication, often just when it's needed most," says Jean Lebedun, Ph.D., author of the video program *The Art of Criticism: Giving and Taking*.

Many supervisors don't give criticism in a tactful manner. Nevertheless, you should accept criticism so you can learn from your mistakes. But don't fret; it'll be easier when you use Dr. Lebedun's "4-A Formula: Anticipate, Ask questions, Agree with something, and Analyze."

[Read about the 4 A's](#)

Remember, if you or a household member are dealing with stress, burnout, or work/life balance issues, your employee assistance program is here for you. Resources include free and confidential counseling, self-help tools, trainings, work/life balance tools, and more. **If you need additional information or to access services, please call MINES and Associates at 1-800-873-7138 today.** Also, [PersonalAdvantage](#) has a ton of great resources and FREE [webinars](#).

### ***Improve Your Listening Skills***

Successful communication is a two-way street. When someone speaks to you, you should listen and create a dialogue. As you listen and converse, your goal should be understanding, not winning or being right.

If you're like most people, however, you have undeveloped listening skills.

"Listening is the art of truly hearing what a person is trying to say, not just what's said. The best listeners hear the words and see the body language

so they capture the whole message," says Anne Warfield, president of Impression Management Professionals in Minneapolis, and author of "Communicating More Effectively."

Ms. Warfield offers these suggestions on how to improve your listening skills.

### **Listen actively**

If you learn to use active listening skills to hear and comprehend the thoughts, feelings and concerns behind the words, you'll make a speaker feel respected and also create an understanding that leads to progress and mutual benefit. Active listening takes concentration, effort and the ability to put your own agenda aside, for the moment, so you can understand the other person's viewpoint.

### **Steps to active listening**

Stop whatever you're doing and give your full attention to the speaker. This shows respect and allows you to view body language. To demonstrate your interest, lean forward, look directly at the other person, nod and make appropriate comments about what he or she says.

### **What to listen for**

- Words. Is the message clear and concise? What are the words alone trying to say?
- Tone of voice. The tone of someone's voice reflects the person's emotional state. Does the tone sound hostile or nervous, or does it sound friendly, relaxed and sincere?
- Pitch. A high-pitched voice usually indicates nervousness, fear or anxiety. A lower pitch signifies confidence.
- Pace. People usually vary in the speed of their speech.

### **Body language to look for**

- Eyes. Good eye contact signifies honesty and confidence. To create good eye contact, position yourself so you're at about the same eye level as the other person.
- Facial expression. A genuine smile expresses friendship, approval and relaxation. Sullen looks represent disinterest, disapproval or concern. Frowning conveys disapproval or disbelief.
- Posture. Standing tall and straight with arms relaxed at the side indicates confidence, while sloped shoulders suggest low self-esteem. Crossed arms signal a person's anger or defensiveness.

### **Rating your listening skills**

"To find out how well you listen, repeat what you think the other person said before you respond to it," says Ms. Warfield. "If people correct you more than 20 percent of the time, you hear what you want to hear, not what's said."

Listening actively pays off because mutual understanding in communication is essential for success, not only in your career, but also in your personal life.	
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***If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.***

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