



City of Boston
Employee Assistance Program
FrontLine Employee
www.cityofboston.gov/EAP



Your Resource for Solutions

Reducing Aggression In Email Communication

Avoid email blunders that can accidentally send the wrong message, communicate aggression, or demonstrate emotions you do not intend to send by steering clear of these “digital do not’s”: 1) Unless explained clearly, do not use “ASAP.” It reads like a barked order. 2) Do not use “reply all” unless the topic concerns all recipients. 3) Do not use all uppercase letters—this is perceived as SHOUTING. 4) Do not use chat and texting acronyms. “LOL” is an example that most people understand, but there are hundreds of other mind-teasing examples. See a list at www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php. 5) Do not send an email when you are upset; send it to yourself first. After you calm down and then read it, you will likely change it.

Should You Volunteer for Medical Research?

Billions of dollars fund clinical trials on every known medical issue from alcoholism treatment to z-joints hip adjustments. Over 188,000 such studies are registered at the federal government’s clearinghouse Web site. There are 800 studies for depression alone and 20 for toenail fungus! Medical research may include free medication, free physical exams and diagnoses, lab tests, dietary counseling, monetary compensation for being a participant, and access to new treatments that may not be available to the general public for years. Could you benefit from participating?

Source: www.clinicaltrials.gov.

E-cigarettes Less Than Helpful

E-cigarettes (electronic vapor nicotine devices) probably won’t help you quit smoking tobacco, according to a recent study that found e-cigarette users 49 percent less likely to decrease cigarette use and 59 percent less likely to quit smoking compared with tobacco smokers who try to quit. One prediction did come true: Adolescents using e-cigarettes get hooked, and one third of them have never smoked real tobacco. Teen use of e-cigarettes rose 300% between 2013 and 2014. (4-16-15; New York Times)

Source: health.ucsd.edu (Search: “e-cigarettes”)

Green Vegetables for a Sharper Mind

Cognitive decline in older adults may be slowed through their consumption of green leafy vegetables, according to new research. Nine hundred and fifty-four participants averaging 81 years old took part in a Rush Hospital Memory and Aging Project. Over approximately 4.5 years, their cognitive faculties were closely measured. The goal was to discover whether nutrients found in green leafy vegetables reduced cognitive decline. Solid evidence, after other factors were accounted for, showed that cognitive decline in older adults was indeed slowed in those who consumed green leafy vegetables. These vegetables are rich in folate, phyloquinone, lutein, and beta carotene, which are found in arugula, romaine lettuce, “spring mix”, spinach, kale, collard, turnip, and mustard greens; watercress, chard, broccoli rabe, and Chinese broccoli.

Source: www.fasebj.org (Search: “green leafy”)

Powdered Alcohol Is Coming

Powdered alcohol may be sold in your area late this summer. The federal government approved it, but 37 states are hoping to block and prohibit its sale.

Powdered alcohol is sold in pouches and flavored as cocktails. A drink pouch requires five ounces of water or other liquid to reconstitute the powder into a cocktail with the right amount of alcohol equivalent to the real thing. Experts fear that the portability, novelty, and storage advantages of powdered alcohol will attract underage youth to experiment with it and thereby abuse alcohol even more than they do now. Cocktails to be sold by the manufacturer include pink cosmopolitans, lemon drops, and margaritas, which of course may appeal to a younger crowd. Early promotional messages on the manufacturer's Web site initially suggested that one advantage of having powdered alcohol is that you can take it into a public event where alcohol is not available. These messages have since been removed following a severe public backlash. Whether powdered alcohol will lead to greater problems is unknown, but being aware of this substance can help you as a parent consider the role you will play in helping keep your child stay safe.

Facebook Making You Depressed?

Sometimes we compare our lives with others around us to gauge how we're doing. This is no big deal, but when you combine this with a lot of time on Facebook, you may feel depressed. That's what researchers at the University of Houston discovered. After using Facebook, those users who spent more time online felt more symptoms of depression. Facebook doesn't cause depression, but comparison behavior can leave you feeling in the dumps. One survey found that nearly 70 percent of Facebook users felt somewhat depressed or depressed all the time after spending time online. Limit your exposure to all the excitement, vacationing, parties, and endless fun photos. Fill that time with more things you want to do, and recognize that online you're seeing only one side of people's lives.

Source: www.uh.edu (Search "Facebook depression")

Coping with Change Avoid the "Big Picture"

"It's important to see the big picture!" This common saying applies to understanding many types of problems, but not necessarily to coping with change. When you are suddenly faced with stressful change, focusing on the "big picture" can feed your anxiety and fear. To cope better, whether with workplace or personal change, break change into realistic action steps, and possible decisions and potential solutions to specific difficulties you imagine will arise. Committing these things to paper allows you to see a personal plan to manage change come into view. Get a friend to help you brainstorm ideas and solutions, and the support will help you feel in control even faster. Panic and dread of change come not only from the stress of forced alterations to our lives, but also from trying to grasp the magnitude of the event. To reduce this distress, break change into manageable, actionable steps.

Seek Couples Counseling Early

Long delays in your decision to seek couples counseling can make counseling less likely to be effective. The reason is simple: As time passes you adapt to and cope with unhealthy relationship patterns. Eventually, your reflexes will go on autopilot. You can change reflexes, and the methods for doing so are time-tested, but delay will require more effort, time, and cost. To make needed changes, you will experience more setbacks. This frustration means more thoughts about giving up, increasing risk for dropping out. Marital conflict doesn't mean failure. Two brilliant, mentally healthy people in a relationship can have tough conflict. Couples counseling is about satisfying, enriching, and building back up a cooperative relationship. There's psychology involved, sure, but there's no mystery. Start honestly and avoid using couples counseling as a last-resort or as a half-hearted way to validate a decision you've already made to leave. You'll then do the hard work for the big reward of making the changes needed and acquiring the relationship you desire.