



## There's no Excuse...

Organizations have realized the importance of a psychologically healthy workplace and have taken steps to address many of the factors that make a difference between health and toxicity. It makes good business sense to reduce and/or eliminate toxins in the workplace. A healthy workplace creates benefits for workers (and their families) as well as for the recipients of the business' products or services and for the *bottom line*. It increases co-operation and productivity, reduces absenteeism and excessive staff turnover.

## For Being Rude

Jan Worsley, EAP Counsellor

Behaviours which would have been ignored, tolerated, or laughed off by some in the past are now clearly identified as inappropriate, unacceptable and, in some cases, illegal. As a society, we now have an increased understanding of the negative impact of prejudicial and abusive behaviours and sexual harassment.

This understanding is reflected in legislation changes as well as in individual companies' evolving policies and procedures.

Rudeness in the workplace is one of the more recent issues to be examined by researchers such as Christine Pearson at the University of Western Ontario and Lilia Cortina

at the University of Michigan. Rudeness may include behaviours such as teasing, gossiping, negative body language or tone of voice, ignoring, angry outbursts and put-downs, all which can be considered forms of verbal or psychological abuse. These behaviours can increase stress levels in the workplace and undermine morale as people feel demeaned rather than respected and supported.

Not everyone is aware of the negative impacts of rudeness. Therefore, it can take some people time to understand why they are feeling more stressed, and also for others to be supportive rather than dismissive. The blame the victim stance of *You should develop a thicker skin* or *Just don't let it bother you* are examples of dismissive attitudes. It is important to note that these are the same types of remarks that used to be made regarding prejudicial and abusive behaviours and sexual harassment.

Rudeness can tend to have a *snowball* effect in workplaces. If one person is treated rudely, he/she may be less considerate of someone else and so on. There can be a *fairness* factor in workplace culture – if some people are doing X, it becomes more likely that others will do the same, even if that would not normally be their behaviour. Working in a culture of rudeness increases stress levels, and we are more likely to be reactive and less aware of the possible impact of what we say or do on others.

What can we do? First of all it's important to recognize and identify those behaviours that constitute rudeness, and to educate ourselves about their impact.



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We need to examine our own behaviour. Are we treating others with courtesy? Remember, practicing acts of kindness can also have a positive *snowball* effect in the workplace.

Sometimes it can be helpful to speak one-on-one with the person involved, let them know what behaviours of theirs are having a negative impact on you, and request a change in behaviour.

### **Remember...**

It's easy to contact EAP!  
Just call locally 549-5561 or toll free 1-888-409-4499. Also the 24/7 After Hours Emergency toll free number 1-800-668-9920 gives you direct access to a professional counsellor.

It can be useful to speak with co-workers and managers about which behaviours are welcome in the workplace, and which are destructive, agree on some guidelines, and periodically review this code of conduct.

If these approaches are not successful, some people may decide for their own health's sake that they have to leave the organization and find a healthier workplace. For those who feel there are too many reasons not to leave, they can try developing strategies that diminish the impact of others' behaviour on them. This is easier for some to do than others. EAP

counselling may be helpful with this.

In summary, the impact of rudeness in the workplace has been shown to be negative for all concerned. Opening up awareness and dialogue about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in the workplace can be helpful as either a preventative or a remedial tool.



## How do I Deal with a Tax Bill from Revenue Canada?

Tim Utting, Credit Counsellor

As we approach the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for our year 2004 personal income tax returns, many people are concerned about the prospect of having a tax bill to pay.

The first piece of advice I can give you is; **Don't panic!** Revenue Canada expects that you will pay all of your tax owing on April 30<sup>th</sup>, however, sometimes this is impossible to do. What may be more realistic for you to do is to send them a series of post dated cheques to try and repay the debt by the end of this calendar year. If the debt is larger than what you would be able to pay by the end of December, you can send them post dated cheques until the debt is repaid.

If you are entitled to GST rebates or if you get a refund next year, these will be applied to the outstanding balance. As long as you are proactive about dealing with Revenue Canada, you can avoid the embarrassment and inconvenience of having your wages garnisheed or having a third party demand placed on your bank account. Revenue Canada is just like any creditor and they need to know what your plan of action is and that you are willing to follow through on that plan.

For more information regarding your budgeting options for a repayment plan with Revenue Canada, please contact FSEAP to book an appointment with a Credit Counsellor.

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