



Employee Assistance Program Workshop Topics 2014

Topics may vary based on facilitator availability.

Aboriginal Retention for Managers (4 hours)

Building a representative workforce involves strategies to retain new and existing employees. This workshop will deepen understanding on various aspects of service delivery, policy and practice; we will look at moving from awareness to action. The workshop explores the themes and issues emerging from participant experiences and knowledge to identify concrete and productive ways which lead to

- Improved retention for Aboriginal employees
- Creating an environment that values diversity

Adult Bullying (2 or 3 hours)

Many people do not recognize bullying for what it is. Bullying is a form of psychological harassment and the cost to individuals, organizations and families is high. Bullies can be found everywhere: in the boardroom, the cubicle next to yours, at the community club or perhaps they live next door. This workshop will examine bullying by discussing the following:

- Bullies and the distinction between normal behavior and bullying
- The impact on the target of the bully and the surrounding community
- “I can see the bullying, what do I do now?”
- How to regain psychological well-being

If there is someone in your life who always makes you feel worse for having been in their company, you can become informed. It will change your awareness and provide you with positive coping strategies.

Appreciating Differing Work Styles (3 hours)

The challenges we face in the workplace have become increasingly complex, requiring that we engage and interact frequently and effectively at an intellectual level. Given this reality, our individual work styles become evident and we often risk coming into conflict with each other. In order to manage this potential problem, we are well served to understand:

- What we mean by different work styles
- Why different styles are critical
- The advantages of variation in styles
- The importance of a respectful workplace

Participants will learn about the many ways in which we work, and will gain a better understanding of how to effectively interact with others in the workplace.

Diversity (3 hours)

Employment equity and affirmative action approaches focus on bringing underrepresented groups into the workforce. Diversity awareness training seeks to create an environment where all differences are valued, and where each employee can develop to his or her potential. Focusing on diversity reminds us that it is not enough to hire employees from underrepresented groups. We must also provide an environment where all employees are supported and valued. In this workshop, we will explore:

- How we define diversity in the workplace
- The benefits of supporting diversity
- The harmful effects of stereotyping
- Challenges in maintaining a diverse and respectful environment

Participants in this workshop will gain an increased sense of the importance of diversity within the workplace, and how to support an inclusive environment for all employees and coworkers.

Balancing Work and Life Roles (2 hours)

All too often, we find ourselves struggling to balance our commitments to family and the workplace. Busy schedules, eldercare, that important meeting – how do we create a balance, and still keep everyone happy? What about time for ourselves? In this workshop, we will explore:

- How we define balance
- How to assess your own level of balance
- What can support, or hinder, balance

Participants will learn a variety of ideas and techniques for supporting balance in our lives.

Boomers, Xs, Ys and More – Generational Diversity (1 or 2 hours)

In this day and age there can be many different Generations working in the same organization and each generation has its own unique characteristics and challenges. This workshop will examine those challenges and their solutions as well as provide a better understanding of how all generations are integral to the workforce.

Caught in the Middle – The Sandwich Generation (2 or 3 hours)

Because middle aged people could have children and even grandchildren who require attention, as well as parents who require personal assistance, caught in the middle as they are, they have been called the Sandwich Generation. The workshop explores who they are, where we are going and where are you?

Communication Techniques and Conflict Resolution (3 hours)

The workplace has become a place in which many of us spend a majority of our time. We are often required to interact with others in complex and challenging ways, to solve equally challenging problems. Effective communication skills are essential to prevent misunderstandings and resolve inevitable conflicts. Topics to be explored include:

- Barriers to communication
- Healthy and helpful communication skills
- The conflict resolution model

Participants will gain new ways to enhance the potential for being understood and decrease the potential for conflict, as well as ways to resolve conflicts that arise.

Creating Your Assertive Self (1.5 to 2 hours)

Many people feel unable to express their needs directly to colleagues, family or partners. They may worry their behaviour could be perceived as aggressive or selfish, but there can be implications for not speaking directly: your actions may be misinterpreted, or your wishes might not be communicated. By communicating assertively, you can allow others to be aware of your feelings without taking over the room. Topics include:

- Identification of assertive, aggressive and passive behaviour
- Exploration of how non-assertive communication affects you and others
- Exploration of the benefits of communicating assertively

Participants will also review and practice assertive communication techniques in the workshop, and will gain an understanding of how to utilize these techniques with others

Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace (3 hours)

Emotional intelligence has been a buzzword in recent years, but how do we define it? And why does it matter? If you've ever been in a situation where you wish you had trusted your gut, this workshop is for you. In this workshop, the concept of emotional intelligence is explored, and the impact of emotions on self and others is presented. You will learn more about:

- Recognize how emotions affect work behaviour and performance
- Assessing your emotional strengths and limitations
- Assessing work experiences and identifying areas in which you wish you had behaved differently
- Responding to challenging work situations with appropriate empathy and listening skills
- Negotiating and resolving disagreements, both at work or at home.

Participants will take a better awareness of the concept of emotional intelligence with them, allowing them to understand how emotions impact themselves and their interactions with others.

Essentials of Healthy & Professional Communication (3 hours)

When deadlines are tight and we are juggling multiple demands, it can be difficult to convey our thoughts and feelings in just the right way. Communication that is unclear or confusing can mean that others won't understand our intentions, or may even be offended. How do we ensure that our messages will get through? In this workshop, we will explore:

- Barriers to effective communication
- Healthy vs. unhealthy styles of communication
- Creating understanding through good communication
- Challenges within the workplace
- Communicating effectively through email and the web

Participants will leave with a renewed understanding of the importance of effective communication. Tools and tips for effective ways of communicating with others in the workplace will be provided.

Financial Management (2 hours)

For many of us, our finances are always on our minds. We might wonder if we have enough money, if we're making the best decisions for our financial futures, if we are saving enough, or if we're spending too much. In this session, we will discuss a budget as a financial road map, allowing us to see where we might be headed and plan for the future. Participants will also receive information about:

- Techniques for managing your money
- Understanding credit, including when and how to use it
- Mastering your cash flow and becoming empowered

Participants will leave with tools to create a working budget, and tips for managing personal and family finances. Participants will also receive tax tips, and will have a chance to ask questions following the session.

Financial Planning and Your Retirement (3 hours)

Retirement planning often leads to many questions: Can I afford to retire? What will my pension provide? Will government sources help me? Have I saved and invested sufficiently? This retirement planning seminar will address these and many other questions we ask ourselves and others as we prepare for the next stage of our lives. Topics will include:

- Financial planning is more than money
- Demystifying the financial planning process
- Financial wellness check up
- Sources of retirement income
- Cash flow, net worth, income and expenses statements
- How much do I need?

Participants will leave with the information and tools to effectively plan their own retirement and future. In addition, attendees will receive tax tips and have the opportunity to ask questions.

Grief in the Workplace (3 hours)

When a co-worker is affected by loss in their personal life, it can be difficult knowing how to approach them at work and offer support during this challenging period. It can be confusing for co-workers and managers to balance workplace expectations with the very real need for mourning. This workshop will explore:

- Typical grief reactions
- Misconceptions of grief
- Strategies for supporting those who are grieving
- Strategies for the bereaved

Participants will learn the difference between grief and mourning, factors influencing the grief process, and how to create a workplace culture of compassion.

Healthy Communication in the Workplace

Our workplaces have become increasingly complex, and to be productive in these systems, we must be able to communicate clearly and effectively. However, when we **have competing demands and increased workloads, it can be easy become focused on** completing our tasks, and lose sight of how our words and actions can affect others. By communicating in healthy ways, we can help ensure that our messages will get through as intended – which might make your busy day a little bit easier. Topics covered in this workshop include:

- Healthy vs. unhealthy styles of communication
- Tools for healthy communication
- Ways to create an environment in which healthy communication exists

Participants in this workshop will leave with a better understanding of ways in which they can utilize tools for healthy communication in the workplace. Group discussion and activities will allow participants to practice using these techniques within the workshop environment.

Introduction to Mindfulness (2.5 or 3 hours)

When we rush through our days, multitasking, and trying to get it all done on time, we miss the present moments of our lives. Mindfulness is simply paying attention to the moments, without judging.

Through conversation, presentation, and experiential practice, you will begin the journey of awareness. Participants in this session will also participate in a stress reduction/mindfulness meditation.

Mindfulness practices can help us take control of our lives, bringing peaceful balance, lowering stress, decreasing pain and allowing us to enjoy the present.

Managing Change and Transition in the Workplace (2 hours)

We are often not in control of the changes that occur in our workplaces. New managers, new facilities, new organizational structures – all of these changes mean that we must adapt to new ways of being in the workplace. All types of organizational change create a situation in which an employee must go through a period of transition. A transition is an internal psychological process through which the individual comes to terms with the new situation. This workshop focuses on understanding the change and transition process. Participants will:

- Increase self awareness of their personal reactions to change
- Understand and increase their own coping skills
- Participate in exercises and group discussions

Participants will leave with insight into how the change process may impact them, and ideas for working through the process in a positive and productive way.

Mental Health at Work – For Managers

What You Can Do For Your Employees (1.5 hours)

Anxiety and depression are on the rise and one third of workers report high levels of depressed mood and burnout, according to Linda Duxbury, a Canadian researcher. As a manager you may have an employee with a mental health issue.

This workshop addresses common mental health concerns in the workplace.

- Myths and reality of mental health/mental illness
- Mental health concerns in the workplace
- What you can do to help

Multiple Intelligences (1.5 hours)

Multiple Intelligences is based on the work of Howard Gardner. He postulated that there was not one Intelligence Quotient to be measured but that there were seven kinds of intelligence. This workshop provides a wealth of information to individuals and teams. It is a positive, fun workshop that can lead to greater understanding by team members of each other's strengths; teams can then utilize this knowledge in their workplace.

In this workshop you will:

- Complete a Multiple Intelligences Questionnaire
- Discuss the manner in which these strengths are utilized at home and in the workplace

Navigating Change (2 hours)

We adapt to change in our lives everyday all of the time. On top of all the small changes such as a child going to a new school or learning new technology, there are life changing events such as the loss of a parent, a move or a marriage. Some changes we seek out, others land on us and still others are just part of life. We go through a transition, a psychological process of adaptation, when we go through change. In this workshop you will:

- Develop a better understanding of the nature of change
- Learn about several theoretical models of change
- Increase awareness of our own and others reactions
- Consider the ways in which we may get mired down in the process of transition
- Increase resilience in dealing with ongoing change

Resilience (2 or 3 hours)

Living with constant change is a challenge and our 21st century selves have had to adapt to the underlying uncertainty that this brings. Resilience is adaptation; it is flexibility and the ability to bounce back. One way to improve on our abilities to adapt and live with change (and the stress that comes with it) is to become aware of and further develop our competencies of resilience.

This workshop will:

- Examine the skills and competencies of resilient people
- Provide an opportunity to consider our current skills
- Look at how we can further develop resilience in five key ways: physical, emotional, intellectual, and social resilience as well as strengthening our inner selves.

Respectful Workplace (2 or 3 hours)

It has been recognized that work plays a critical role in the life of all people. Not only do we spend a significant amount of time in the workplace, but it is the means by which we define ourselves and create a place for ourselves in our communities. The workplace, or more accurately, the people in the workplace have a significant impact on our lives. This session explores the nature of a respectful workplace including:

- What it is
- Why it is so important
- How we can enhance it
- How we risk losing it
- What we can do to protect it

Participants will explore these factors and return to their workplace with an understanding how they can contribute in creating a respectful workplace.

Social Media and Our Youth (3 hours)

Facebook, Twitter, texting, BBM'ing.....What is social media? How do these social mediums affect our kids??

In a time where youth are more likely to send a friend request followed up with a text message, those of us less tech savvy are left baffled by all of these new ways of communicating and interacting.

This workshop is designed to offer basic information and increase awareness about social media and its influence on our kids. We will discuss strategies for guiding and protecting the *iGeneration* as they navigate these new worlds of technology and interactive dialogue.

Stress Management (3 hours)

Stress is a popular topic of conversation for many of us. We talk about how we are 'feeling stressed out', about what factors are 'causing stress' and of being 'under stress.' However, our experience of stress is not in itself an external factor - it is our internal reaction based on our resources and situation. Although stress can be difficult to manage effectively, it can also be a motivator for us to achieve within our deadlines. This workshop explores:

- Stress management techniques
- Positive work environment characteristics
- Ways of managing change

By exploring these points in an interactive discussion, participants will gain a better understanding of their own stress reactions, and new ways of coping.

Stress Management – A Creative and Thoughtful Approach (2 or 3 hours)

There are many factors determining our response to stress. We all know the basics of getting enough sleep, exercise and healthy food but one of the most significant factors is found in the way we process information. Psychologists have known for a long time that what we think about an event determines how we feel about it.

In this workshop we will:

- Discuss three main contributors to stress in our lives
- Explore how our belief systems determine our stress response
- Define resilience and why it is important to us
- Look at the role of creativity in our response to stress

This session will provide practical tools for altering our response to stressful circumstances.

Surviving Adolescence – Parenting Teenagers (1 or 2 hours)

The workshop seeks to help parents understand the teenager within the Family Life Cycle as a normal, but challenging period and the factors that influence a healthy transition from childhood to adulthood.

Team Building the TRUE COLORS Way **available only as consultation or closed session**
(Please note there is an additional cost for materials for this workshop, as well as an allowance for prep time.)

From Hippocrates to Myers-Briggs, throughout time we have sought to understand people and their personalities. In 1978 TRUE COLORS was created based on the work of Dr. David Keirse using the metaphor of four colors. From self-discovery to getting along with others, the workshop goals are to enhance communication, reduce conflicts and increase understanding of others.

Team Building (3 hours) **available only after consultation/review or closed session**
(In order to address the needs of the group most effectively, this workshop can be requested as specific to management and supervisors, or for staff only.)

Many of us are working in situations in which team work is essential. We do not work in isolation, and to achieve our goals and objectives both individually and collectively, we need to be able to work effectively with others. This workshop will explore the essential elements to creating and maintaining a functional and healthy team. It will focus on fostering and enhancing a positive team environment.

- Systems and structures that are necessary in order to create a positive work environment
- Specific strategies on how to build teams in positive ways
- How to foster and enhance positive and healthy working relationships

Participants will strengthen their knowledge of team work and team building through experiential activities and interactive discussions.

Understanding Depression (1 or 2 hours)

(This workshop can be adjusted to meet the specific needs and concerns of management and supervisors.)

Depression is a common illness. At some point in their life, around 1 in every 5 women and 1 in every 10 men will suffer from depression. Naturally, problems which are common in the general population are also common in people at work. In any one year about 3 in every 10 employees will have feelings of distress or of their life being out of control which, if left untreated, could result in depression. When someone is depressed it is not just distressing for the person involved. It may impact others in the workplace, it may make the person affected less productive and can lead to high rates of sick-leave, accidents and staff turnover. Colleagues at work are often in a good position to notice an employee or co-worker is becoming depressed. This workshop will focus on:

- Signs and symptoms of depression
- Myths about depression
- How to recognize someone who may be experiencing depression
- How to help someone who may be experiencing depression

Participants will have a greater awareness of the signs and impact of depression, and will be better equipped to respond to others in their lives that may be at risk.

Understanding Intimate Relationships (1.5 hours)

An intimate relationship is one of the most significant partnerships an individual can experience. It takes hard work, special attention and commitment to make a relationship function. This session identifies:

- Early warning signs of a troubled relationship
- Different ways in which men and women handle relationship stress
- Tips on how to improve communication with your partner

Participants will gain an understanding of how conflict may be affecting their intimate relationships, and how to address conflict.

Who's the Bully? Identifying and Dealing with Bullying in the Workplace (3 hours)

When we think about bullying, often our thoughts will go back to our experiences in the schoolyard. Unfortunately, bullying behaviour often continues into adulthood, and many of these interactions play out in the workplace, albeit in more subtle ways. In this workshop, participants will explore:

- How to recognize workplace harassment and bullying
- Definitions of workplace harassment and violence
- Dynamics of victim/perpetrator interactions
- Characteristics and response pattern of the victimized person
- Characteristics and response pattern of the perpetrator

An exploration of the psychological effects will include:

- physical and emotional symptoms
- maladaptive coping responses
- disruptions in work and relationships

Participants will gain an understanding of the dynamics of victim/perpetrator interactions, and gain strategies to deal with bullying and harassment.

You Don't Understand – Gender Issues in Communication (2 or 3 hours)

The Workshop looks at the different ways women and men think, behave and communicate in their interactions with each other and how our societal expectations influence both genders.

Yours, Mine and Ours – The Blended Family (2 or 3 hours)

The Blended Family, often called the stepfamily, has an adult couple with at least one of the adults having a child from a previous relationship. The workshop examines the many variations of the blended family and the challenges they face.



Employee Assistance Program Wellness Workshops 2014

Topics may vary based on facilitator availability.

Focused on Mind, Body and Spirit

Balance the Odds in Your Favour: Reduce the Risk, Notice the Symptoms and Take Action (1 hour)

It has been said that the majority of illnesses today are preventable in nature. There are many things one can do to lower the risk of developing chronic health care conditions. By focusing on a few key areas, individuals can take steps to decrease the risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and certain cancers. A nurse will review the following program topics with participants:

- Identify major illnesses
- Reduce your risk
- Know the symptoms
- Find out about community resources

Participants will gain an increased understanding of how their actions directly affect their health. Employees will learn how to make healthy choices and lower the chances of developing chronic conditions. This workshop is of an introductory nature and will provide basic information.

Beyond Surviving to Thriving – Couple Relationships (3 hours)

An interactive, strength-based workshop for couples who have a healthy relationship and want to make it even better through a better understanding of themselves and their partners.

Healthy Eating for Life (1 hour)

Healthy eating is about feeling great, having more energy, and keeping you as healthy as possible. All can be achieved by learning some nutrition basics and incorporating them into your routine, in a way that works. Choose the types of foods that improve your health and avoid those that raise your risk for illnesses. In this workshop, you will:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of Canada's Food Guide – food groups, serving sizes
- Discover choices within the Food Guide
- Learn how to eat healthy on the job
- And learn the balancing act: putting it all together!

Participants in this workshop will expand their range of healthy choices to include a wide variety of delicious foods and learn to use guidelines and tips for creating and maintaining a satisfying, healthy diet. This workshop is of an introductory nature and will provide basic information about nutrition.

Label Reading 101 (1 hour)

With all the information available on eating well-balanced meals and snacks we need to be able to make the right choice in the grocery aisle. When looking at a food label, it is important to know what the numbers and percentages mean. In this workshop a, Registered Dietician will analyze food label information. You will also:

- Learn about the nutrition information found on food labels including the: *Nutrition Facts*, the *Ingredient List*, *Nutrition Claims* and *Health Claims*
- Learn to identify amounts of nutrients, calories, and serving sizes on Nutrition Facts labels
- Learn to use the 5%-20% DV Guide to get LESS of some nutrients and get ENOUGH of others
- Compare food labels to determine which foods contain higher or lower amounts of nutrients or calories

Participants will gain an understanding of how to make informed choices and become top notch detectives!

Making Changes: Adding Physical Activity to your Life (1.5 hours)

This wellness workshop will introduce employees to both exercise and nutrition guidelines. The workshop is geared toward individuals looking for some guiding principles on how to get started with an exercise program. A physiotherapist will answer the questions “how much” and “what kind.” Your food choices are also an important part of the picture. A review of Canada’s Food Guide provides information on interpreting the guide and how making healthy food choices can benefit you. We will discuss:

- Determinants of health
- Importance of physical activity
- Stages of change
- Myths and misconceptions surrounding exercise
- Canada’s Food Guide review

Participants in this workshop will learn the basics in both exercise and nutrition. Information gained will guide employees as they seek ways to increase activity and make wise food choices.

Supplement Savvy (1 hour)

Many Canadians regularly take vitamins, minerals, herbal products, homeopathic medicines and the like. These products have come to be known as natural health products or NHP’s. There are several important facts one needs to consider before deciding whether or not to take a supplement. In this workshop we will:

- Review of common supplements
- Discuss tips on how to make better dietary supplement choices, looking beyond marketing claims
- Learn to use food as the primary way to achieve your nutrition and fitness goals

Participants in this workshop will gain a better understanding of whether or not they need to take supplements. Information on possible side effects, guidelines for use and myths will also be reviewed.

Take Back Control - Back Pain Clinic (1 hour)

Low back pain is as widespread as catching the common cold/flu. Active participation is required in order to manage, treat, and prevent possible future occurrences. The "magic pill" of pain relief is almost always some form of active role that a person plays and should also be accompanied by education on how the sufferer can take *back* control (no pun intended)! A physiotherapist will provide information including:

- Introduction to back pain, including some interesting statistics on back pain
- Common causes (structural/anatomical causes, work related causes, risk factors)
- Treatments available (varies from passive/active treatments, different health care professionals, wide spectrum of care from rest to surgery, etc.)
- Prevention strategies (exercise, education, work modifications, lifestyle changes)

Participants will also gain an increased sense of why physical activity plays an important role in managing lower back pain. This workshop is of an introductory nature and will provide basic information on reducing and managing back pain.

Women's Health Matters (1 hour)

Women's health issues have been gaining widespread attention and are now at the top of the health/research agenda. Chances are, if you are a woman, you may be faced with one or more of the following or have questions about:

- Menopause
- Osteoporosis
- Breast health
- Reproductive health (cervix/ovaries/uterine)

Although many Canadian women are aware of issues and risks surrounding women's health, many are not working to prevent them. The good news? With help from a nurse, participants in this workshop will explore the many issues surrounding women's health and learn how to make good decisions. The workshop will provide information for living with optimal health! This workshop is an introductory workshop and provides general information on women's health.