

The Continuum Edge

RESOURCES FOR EVERYONE

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COMMUNICATION HABITS THAT BACKFIRE

Communication habits cause many problems at work. The following are infamous for creating conflict and regret and contributing to a less-than-positive workplace. Do you recognize them?

- 1) Responding to an email when you're angry.** Typing that pithy reply feels like a release when you are doing it, but experience shows it's better to draft it, save it, and then sleep on it.
- 2) Copying your boss's boss on an email to expose your supervisor or make a point.** Trying to gain leverage through a next-level manager often backfires. Most leaders see it as manipulation or an attempt to undermine authority, and your reputation can suffer regardless of the concern.
- 3) Going silent when you can't make a promised deadline.** When a deadline slips, don't make people wonder. Give a heads-up early rather than making them wonder what's going on.
- 4) Being more selective with the phrase "That's not my job."** Remember: Even if it isn't your job, people may remember your response long after the task is forgotten.

For even more workplace communication tips, visit dalecarnegie.com/blog/eight-tips-for-effective-communication-in-the-workplace.



UNHEALTHY HABITS THAT HURT MEN LATER



Guys, your body won't let you forget unhealthy habits formed in younger years. Later in life, men often regret earlier health choices.

DON'T IGNORE ROUTINE MEDICAL CHECK-UPS. Thinking "no symptoms, no problems" can shorten your life. Many conditions — including high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, coronary artery disease and liver disease — have few early signs. These can damage your body for years even while you're feeling fine.

DON'T IGNORE SLEEP ISSUES OR CHRONICALLY SACRIFICE SLEEP. It can lead to weight gain, memory problems, faster aging and heart issues.

BUILD HEALTHY HABITS FOR MANAGING STRESS. Denying or internalizing stress creates irritability, fatigue, anxiety and relationship strain.

DON'T IGNORE EXERCISE. It helps fight disease, depression and declining energy, but it gets harder to start over time.

WATCH POOR EATING HABITS. Convenience foods and large portions add up and contribute to long-term health problems.



PERFECT FRIEND SYNDROME: THE AI RELATIONSHIP TRAP

Don't be tempted to form artificial relationships with artificial intelligence (AI) that substitute for real human connection. Although engaging with AI online may feel satisfying because it can appear to offer empathy and patience, AI does not know you as a real person. Research shows what experts long theorized: These digital relationships cause psychological harm. The risk of connecting to AI as a substitute for a real person is losing social skills or not developing a deeper sense of interpersonal need and

vulnerability that we all need. And loneliness can worsen. This is called "parasocial attachment to AI." This behavior can be defined as a one-sided emotional bond in which a person develops feelings of closeness, trust and connection with AI that cannot genuinely reciprocate or even recognize the relationship. AI's responsiveness can create the illusion of a mutual relationship, making the attachment feel real. This "perfect friend syndrome" doesn't push back. It doesn't experience bad days. It never demands something from you.

This "no friction" experience is the problem, as real experiences are what make us human. AI can simulate conversation, but it will never offer warmth, share life history, or invest in you as a person. This is what makes human connection so special and irreplaceable. Is finding a meaningful relationship a goal in your life? Talk to Continuum EAP to discover how to build real human connections that matter most.

Source: unesco.org/en/articles/ghost-chatbot-perils-parasocial-attachment

FEELING SINGLED OUT AT WORK?

A common complaint among employees is feeling singled out at work — more scrutiny, negative feedback, more work and higher expectations than asked of peers. This experience is stressful and can leave you uncertain about your future. The good news is there are constructive ways to navigate it.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THESE STEPS WORK BEST:

- Give yourself permission to consider whether any feedback, however uncomfortable, might be useful. This can be difficult because when you feel attacked, the tendency is to defend yourself rather than consider the other person's point.
- Request a calm, private one-on-one with your supervisor to clarify expectations.
- Talk to a trusted co-worker who can offer an honest outside opinion.
- Meet with Continuum EAP. They can help you sort through issues, stay objective and prepare for a productive conversation.

