

How to Increase Kindness in the Workplace: Six characteristics of a positive (kind) workplace

1. Treat one another with respect, gratitude, trust, and integrity. Examples to discuss:

- Tell your colleagues what you appreciate about them and tell their boss also. *Make the effort to compliment one colleague every day.*
- If you see something your colleague will absolutely love—for example, a book about a topic in which they are interested—give it as a gift.
- Praise your officemate to their boss who may not realize how hard and successfully they are working. *At a staff meeting share an appreciation for another employee.*
- Pair any criticism with a helpful advice.
- What other examples of Treat one another with respect, gratitude, trust, and integrity have you seen at work?
- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

2. **Compassionate Engagement:** Caring for, displaying interest in, and maintaining responsibility for colleagues. Examples to discuss:

- Engage with colleagues by asking and caring about their interests and learning what is important to them separate from work interests. *For example, ask about what their child is doing at school or their partner is doing in their area of interest.*
- When you ask a work mate about their work, really listen to the answer. *If there is a way to offer support, do it immediately.*
- Ask a new coworker to join your lunch group. *Remember what it was like for you to be awkward and to have to eat alone.*
- Stop by a coworker's desk to say good morning or goodbye to make them feel connected. *Share an appreciation or encouragement.*
- (Discussion) What other examples of compassionate engagement have you

seen at work?

- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:

a. _____

b. _____

2. Helping Others: Provide support for one another, including offering kindness and compassion when others are struggling. Examples to discuss:

- Learn about what is important for colleagues to succeed. *Help them with compassion with their problems at home or at work. Share your expertise with a colleague who would benefit from your help.*
- Offer assistance to help a colleague with a difficult project or situation. *Don't wait to be asked, some people are reluctant to say they need assistance. Provide advice on how to communicate effectively.*
- Offer to relieve your colleague of his or her difficult or undesirable tasks when the person appears overwhelmed.
- What other examples of helping others have you seen at work?
- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:

a. _____

b. _____

3. Avoid blame, forgive mistakes. Examples to discuss:

- Help the team learn from mistakes. *Focus on moving forward not on blaming the person who made the mistake.*
- When a colleague frustrates you, do not assume that the unkind act was intentional. *Give the person the benefit of the doubt (the first time it happens) and gently share your experience to promote different actions in the future.*
- When a person consistently acts in ways you do not approve, talk directly to the person. *Don't complain to others about the person or act unkindly in*

response.

- What other examples of avoiding blame and forgiving mistakes have you seen at work?
- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

4. Inspire one another at work. Examples to discuss:

- Admit openly a significant error in judgment you made.
- Be a cheerleader for someone else's idea or project.
- Praise your colleague for a job well done. *People rarely complain about getting too many compliments.*
- Invite a less experienced colleague to a meeting or to work on a project that can help him or her grow.
- What other examples of inspiring others have you seen at work?
- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

5. Emphasize the importance and meaningfulness of the work. Examples to discuss:

- Frequently communicate the mission and vision of the organization and how they relate to the specific work of each employee. *Develop employee passion for organizational purpose.*
- Share examples of how clients benefit from the work at each staff meeting.
- Encourage discussions about how the work is consistent with employee values and purpose.

- What other examples of emphasizing the importance and meaningfulness work have you seen?
- (Discussion) What other examples of this type of kind behavior does the organization or workers want to focus on in the training:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

Group discussion

The stories we tell, the words we use and the actions and behaviors we choose.

Some organizational cultures develop unhelpful and unkind long-term beliefs about the organizational system and staff. These are limiting and not true. But when staff believe these stories they act in ways that maintain that unhelpful and, at times, unkind structure and culture. Change occurs when there is a belief that there are other possibilities and truths that are potential for the organization.

1. “What would a transformed organization that was more connected, compassionate and kind look like?” (Discuss)
2. “What shifts in the way staff think might contribute to a kinder work environment?” (Discuss)
3. “Focus on strengths not problems: What gifts and talents do different staff have that can contribute to a vibrant, caring team?” (Discuss)

My commitment to workplace kindness

Choose your personal commitments to kindness in the workplace. If you want to commit to any of the kindnesses listed below, fill in the blank to describe how you will be kind in that way. To describe other kindnesses you want to commit to, fill in the blanks at the bottom. Then sign and date your commitment.

1. I will **Compassionately Engage** with my colleagues.

My example:

2. I will **Help Others** and provide support including offering kindness and compassion.

My example:

3. I will **Avoid blame, forgive mistakes.**

My example:

4. I will **appreciate and Inspire** others at work.

My example:

5. I will **Treat** others with respect, gratitude, trust, and integrity.

My example:

6. _____

7. _____

Signature

Date