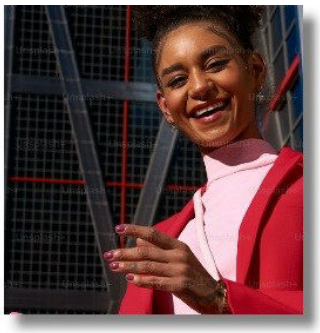
UTHealth | Employee Assistance Programs
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

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Employee Newsletter

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Outstanding Performance Tips: Show You're a 'Self-Directed' Employee



You probably have a reputation as a "self-directed" employee if your work habits include anticipating needs, taking initiative, and solving problems independently. Managers love self-directed employees because they require less oversight and lighten the load. Here are three tips that will build your professional credibility: 1) instead of asking your supervisor, "What do you want me to do?," show that you have ideas and options for them to consider; 2) instead of waiting to be told about a problem or what's needed, be aware, proactive, and attempt to solve problems when first spotted (Your goal is to be seen as a problem-solver, not a passive employee.); and 3) after being given an assignment, don't wait for your manager to ask, "Well, how's it going?," share the results, outcome, or work product when completed. With these practices, you'll be seen as a self-directed employee.

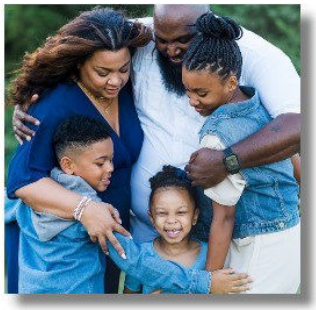
Prostate Cancer Prevention: Weight Management Tops Diet



Dr. Nigel Brockton, vice president of research at the American Institute for Cancer Research, says, "The most modifiable risk factor for prostate cancer is obesity rather than diet or individual components of diet directly." It's true that research has found a higher risk of prostate cancer from foods that contain saturated fat and protective factors from many foods that contain lycopene, like tomatoes. But Brockton is saying food is not the most important. It's weight management and exercise. Is it easier for you to focus on getting more lycopene from tomatoes than getting 150–300 minutes of exercise weekly? Eat a healthy diet, but remember, salad won't replace the sweat when it comes to prevention of prostate cancer.

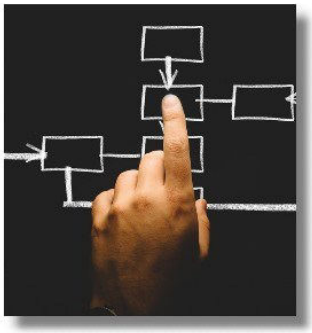
Source: Fortune magazine, May 22, 2025

Kick Off Summer with a Family Meeting



It's summer, and for families that means new routines, activities, and schedules. It's the perfect time for a family meeting. This powerful tool that can also become a tradition helps keep everyone connected and organized, while it models and strengthens family bonds. Other bonuses include teaching life skills like assertiveness, compromise, cooperation, and problem-solving. How to do it: Gather everyone in a comfortable space, review previous meeting issues, share successes, and set the meeting's goals. Encourage open, respectful discussion. Brainstorm solutions, agree on action steps, and talk about plans, ideas, trips, chores, transportation issues, and responsibilities. Conclude the meeting on a positive note.

Extreme Time Management that Works



Time is a perishable resource, so consider these two simple time management conventions to maximize your productivity: time blocking and time boxing. Time blocking schedules specific blocks of time for different work needing to be completed. The benefit, which is underappreciated, is relief from constantly thinking about the work that needs to be done and when it will happen. Time boxing assigns a specific amount of time to a given task; however, focus on the work begins and ends on time—precisely on time! The value of this convention is extreme focus, made possible by the sense of urgency imposed by the strict start-stop boundaries.

Learn more: hubstaff.com/blog/time-blocking-vs-time-boxing/

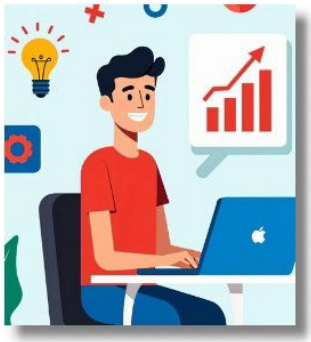
Information in *FrontLine Employee* is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health or legal professional. For further help, questions, or referral to community resources for specific problems or personal concerns, contact a qualified professional. Add "http://" to source links to follow. Link titles are always case sensitive.

Working Well Under Pressure



Many jobs demand the ability to work well under pressure—but few offer training on how to do it. Most employees figure it out as they go, but that can lead to poor habits, chronic stress, burnout, or even resignation. If your job is high pressure, discover whether the following tips will help you finish the day with more energy and less stress. 1) "I got this!" Attitude is everything, even if it means faking it until you make it. By viewing work under pressure as something to command and not fear, you will feel more in control with a positive mindset and experience more resilience. 2) Set regular intervals to preempt fatigue by detaching from duties, even if it's only for several minutes. Hydrate and move. For example, walking only a single flight of stairs will stimulate your body and refresh your ability to focus. 3) Focus on one task at a time. Avoid seeing what's facing you as a single, overwhelming challenge. But if this feeling wells up, stop, take a breath, step back, and regain perspective. 4) Look for support. This includes the EAP, which can help you manage stress. For example, venting your frustrations can offer relief and help you regain focus. 5) Use a pull strategy to lift mood—anticipate an exciting personal reward you can look toward when the work is completed.

You're Probably Not a Workaholic



Ever been accused of being a workaholic? The label is often overapplied, particularly by friends and family, but you can assess whether your work habits are unhealthy. It's worth reflecting on your work habits because self-awareness is the first step if you need to make a change to be happier. Consider motivation, choice, level of joy or excitement, and effects on your health. 1) The person who loves to work (work enthusiast) is motivated by passion and conscious choice, while the workaholic feels compelled and has a loss of control over work. 2) The work enthusiast can set boundaries on when and how much work they do, but the workaholic feels unable to control when and how much. 3) The work enthusiast feels joy and fulfillment, while the workaholic is not joyful about work and feels there is no choice but to continue. 4) The work enthusiast has healthy relationships, whereas the workaholic neglects relationships. 5) The work enthusiast doesn't suffer when not working, but the workaholic experiences anxiety when they can't work, along with adverse effects on their relationships and health. If you spotted signs of unhealthy work habits, take the next step. Consider a deeper assessment, set limits, and prioritize your well-being. Still unsure about your work style? Talk to a professional counselor or reach out to your EAP.

Learn more: medicalnewstoday.com/articles/workaholic

PTSD Awareness Month:

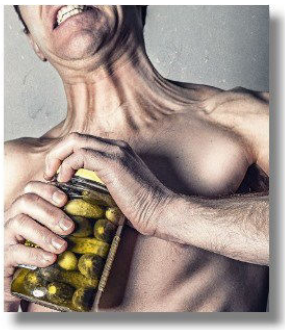
Other Events Can Cause PTSD



Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) doesn't just affect war veterans or those who have experienced life-threatening events or injuries. Don't let this myth cause you to hesitate getting treatment for symptoms you suspect could be from a past trauma. You may feel that your trauma isn't serious enough to justify treatment or that you should handle it on your own. PTSD can result from a wide range of distressing experiences. Fear, intensity of your experience, and not necessarily the type of event are what underlie the illness. Chronic abuse, domestic violence, prolonged bullying and harassment, sexual assault, traumatic childbirth, or even betrayal or a serious relationship breakup can lead to PTSD. It's impossible to predict who will develop PTSD after a traumatic experience, as many factors, including genetics, may play a role. Don't let PTSD keep you from the life you want and deserve. Treatment is for anyone who thinks they've been affected.

Learn more about symptoms: www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/what/ptsd_basics.asp

Strength Training Matters as You Age



Don't overlook strength training as you age. It's as important as aerobic exercise—especially for preventing injuries. In fact, research shows that maintaining muscle mass can improve balance, boost metabolism, and enhance overall mobility as you get older. As you age, muscles lose mass and strength. This makes muscles weaker and more prone to injury, even from everyday activities like carrying heavy objects, bending over, standing for a long period of time, moving heavy furniture, and even pulling a cord to raise a blind. With muscle atrophy, injuries may happen even with good technique. Regular strength training, however, helps counteract this decline. Strength training can also support bone density, reduce the risk of falls, and help manage chronic conditions such as arthritis or diabetes. If you're new to strength training or have health concerns, talk to your doctor before starting. With strength training, you are more likely to enjoy a healthier and more active future.