TIP SHEET: DEALING WITH CHANGE IN THE WORKPLACE

Change is a constant part of life and with it comes stress. The changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, are unprecedented. Your employer's plan to return to shared workspaces may be causing you additional stress. It is important to know that you can find opportunities, through attitude and actions, to make changes that can help lead you to success!

ACCEPT THAT CHANGE DOES HAPPEN

Change is inevitable, including changes to our workspaces. Denying change and failing to accept the new "normal" will only make the transition more difficult. By understanding that change will happen, we are less likely to be negatively impacted when we encounter change.

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Change isn't always bad. It's important to recognize that change can occur at any time or place, including at work. Be aware of the continuously changing surroundings as you return to your workspace to help seamlessly adapt to your new work setting and policies.

RECOGNIZE THE STAGES

Change occurs in stages. Many initially find themselves in stages of avoidance or denial. By asking yourself, "What am I going to lose if I don't change?" or "How can I make this work?" you can identify the opportunities and benefits of the changes and move towards a stage of acceptance.

COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS

Communication is always important, especially when faced with change. A lack of communication will make for a difficult return to in-person work. Be receptive to information regarding new workplace policies and determine the effects of these changes to your daily routine. Avoid rumors, which are common during periods of change and learn from others who are experiencing similar changes. What difficulties did they experience and how did they deal with them? How can you adapt their experiences to your own situation?

DO A SELF-ASSESSMENT

What skills and strengths do you have? What talents do you bring to your team? What areas do you need to improve? Understanding your own strengths and areas for development will make it easier to cope with change and may help you to uncover new opportunities as a result of the change.

BE FLEXIBLE

Change requires flexibility. After you complete your self-assessment, take a look at the requirements of your new work setting. What skills do you have that are relevant to your new "normal"? Can you adapt these skills to contribute to the success of your new work environment?

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CONTINUE TO DO YOUR WORK

No matter the workspace, it is important to focus on your work. Staying busy with familiar tasks can help ease the stresses of change. Show your resilience by maintaining your strong work ethic in your new work setting.

BE POSITIVE IN YOUR ACTIONS AND ATTITUDE

Keeping a positive attitude can help you deal with many of the uncertainties of change. Instead of worrying about changes you will have to make, focus instead on how you can leverage your existing skills and experience. Become involved in the design and organization of your new workplace to help ease your adjustment fears.

MAINTAIN YOUR NETWORK

Your network of contacts, both inside and outside your organization, is extremely valuable. Build your network by keeping in touch with classmates, current and former co-workers, bosses and subordinates. Discuss post-virus workplace adjustments and learn from their own personal change-coping skills.

BE RESILIENT

Believe in your abilities to adjust to change and make the most of this opportunity to uncover new skills or strengths. Continuously build on your resilience and your natural ability to adapt and grow so that you are prepared for the next major change in your work environment.