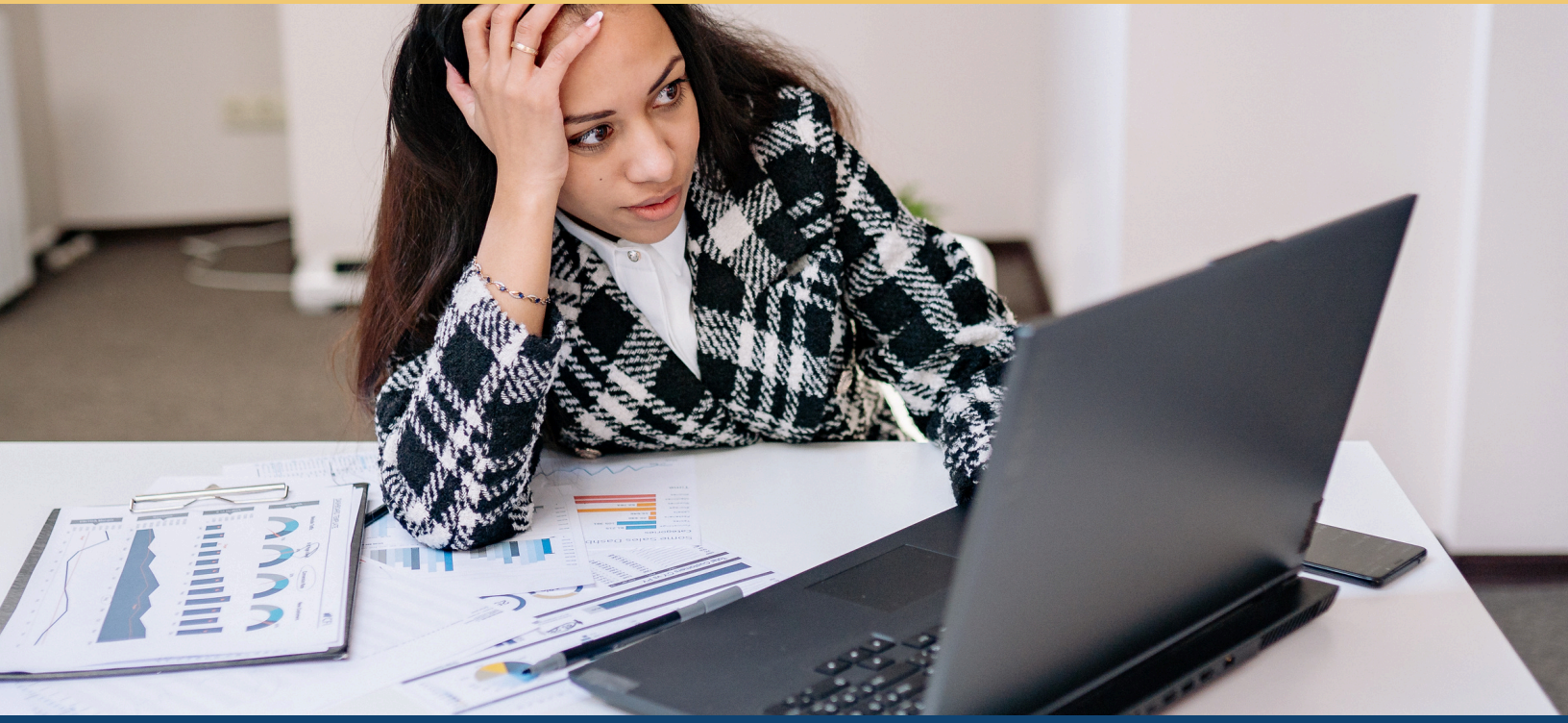
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Support • Empowerment • Growth

AUG

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission's **Employee Advisory Service (EAS)** Newsletter contains useful articles and information for managing various well-being and work-life issues in order to create a healthier, happier, and more productive workplace. EAS is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Jersey Civil Service employees by encouraging a good work-life balance.



UPCOMING WEBINAR

PROVIDING EXCELLENT SERVICE DURING STRESSFUL TIMES

About the Webinar

Stress has become an ongoing part of everyday life, making it more challenging to communicate effectively and provide exceptional service. This timely webinar explores practical strategies for managing stress while strengthening communication and interpersonal skills that foster professionalism, collaboration, and positive workplace interactions.

Date: Aug 27, 2026
Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2: Upcoming Webinars

Page 3: Using Interpersonal Skills to Foster a Healthy Workplace Culture

Page 5: Understanding and Addressing Stress

Page 7: 5 Tips to Avoid the Multi-Minding Trap

UPCOMING WEBINARS

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EAS Supervisor/Manager Webinar

Engaging and Motivating Your Team

Date / Time

- August 27, 2026
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

About this webinar:
This webinar focuses on practical strategies to effectively connect with, motivate, and engage team members. Participants will explore approaches for building strong workplace relationships, fostering a positive and supportive work environment, and strengthening overall team performance. Attendees will also learn the importance of utilizing workshops provided by EAS Counselors, for their agency when seeking group-based in-person sessions designed to enhance productivity and strengthen workplace effectiveness.

EAS Employee Webinar

Providing Excellent Service During Stressful Times

Date / Time

- August 27, 2026
- 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

About this webinar:
Stress has become an ongoing part of everyday life, making it more challenging to communicate effectively and provide exceptional service. This timely webinar explores practical strategies for managing stress while strengthening communication and interpersonal skills that foster professionalism, collaboration, and positive workplace interactions. Participants will learn techniques for remaining calm under pressure, responding thoughtfully in challenging situations, and maintaining a high standard of service while building positive relationships with colleagues, clients, and the public.

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How Can We Help You?



USING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TO FOSTER A HEALTHY WORKPLACE CULTURE

Healthy workplace relationships are a key part of creating a positive, productive, and engaged workplace culture. When employees feel respected, supported, and connected to their colleagues, they are more likely to collaborate effectively, communicate openly, and contribute their best work. Whether you're a manager, supervisor or not, everyone plays an important role in setting the tone for these relationships and leading by example.

The skills that help foster healthy workplace relationships are often referred to as soft skills or interpersonal skills. These skills enable people to communicate effectively, navigate challenges, build trust, and work collaboratively with others. Unlike hard skills, which focus on technical knowledge or job-specific expertise, interpersonal skills influence how we interact with those around us and are essential to long-term workplace success.

While these skills are incredibly valuable, they are not always formally taught. Fortunately, they can be developed and strengthened over time with practice and intention. Consider these strategies to help foster healthy workplace relationships:

Communicate effectively.
Clear communication helps ensure expectations, priorities, and feedback are understood. Just as important is active listening—giving others your full attention, asking thoughtful questions, and responding with empathy. Open, respectful communication helps prevent misunderstandings and builds trust.

Promote teamwork.
Encourage collaboration by bringing people together around shared goals and recognizing the unique strengths each team member contributes. Create opportunities for employees to share ideas, solve problems together, and support one another. A collaborative environment often leads to greater innovation and stronger team morale.

Develop emotional intelligence.
Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions while also recognizing and responding appropriately to the emotions of others. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence are often better equipped to navigate conflict, provide constructive feedback, and foster psychological safety. During stressful situations, taking a moment to pause before reacting can help lead to more thoughtful and productive conversations.



Create a supportive environment.
Employees perform at their best when they feel valued and supported. Check in with team members regularly, acknowledge their contributions, and encourage open dialogue. When challenges arise, approach conversations with curiosity and compassion while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

Lead by example.
Your actions set the standard for your team. Demonstrating respect, accountability, professionalism, and integrity in your daily interactions encourages others to do the same. Modeling healthy communication and collaboration helps establish a workplace culture where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas, asking questions, and working through challenges together.

Building strong workplace relationships doesn't happen overnight, but small, consistent actions can make a lasting difference. By investing in communication, collaboration, empathy, and trust, leaders can create a workplace where employees feel connected, supported, and motivated to succeed together.

MAKE TODAY GREAT

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/using-interpersonal-skills-to-foster-a-healthy-workplace-culture//



UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING STRESS

Feeling stressed? You're not alone. Research consistently shows that many people are experiencing higher levels of stress than in the past, and for longer periods of time. While some stress is a normal part of life, chronic or unmanaged stress can take a significant toll on both physical and mental well-being.

Stress is the body's natural response to challenges, demands, or changes. It can be short-term, long-term, or recurring, and it exists on a spectrum ranging from mild and manageable to severe and overwhelming.

Our stress response is wired into our biology and is commonly known as the fight, flight, or freeze response. When we encounter a stressful situation, our brain signals the release of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. These hormones prepare us to respond quickly by increasing alertness, sharpening focus, and providing a temporary boost of energy.

This response has been essential to human survival, particularly when facing immediate dangers. However, today's stressors are often less about short-term threats and more about ongoing responsibilities and uncertainty. Financial pressures, demanding workloads, caregiving responsibilities, health concerns, and constant exposure to news and technology can keep our stress response activated for extended periods without giving our minds and bodies the opportunity to recover.

When stress hormones remain elevated for weeks, months, or even years, they can begin to affect nearly every aspect of health. Chronic stress has been linked to fatigue, headaches, digestive issues, weakened immune function, sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, irritability, and changes in behavior. Over time, unmanaged stress can also contribute to burnout and make everyday challenges feel increasingly difficult to navigate.

While life's common stressors have long included finances, work, family responsibilities, and health concerns, many people today are also feeling the effects of broader societal challenges such as economic uncertainty, inflation, violence, and political division. These larger issues can create a sense of uncertainty because they often fall outside of our direct control.

Although it's helpful to address the sources of stress whenever possible, not every challenge has an immediate solution. Learning healthy ways to respond to stress can help reduce its impact and improve overall well-being. Consider these strategies:



Accept that uncertainty is a part of life.
While it may be uncomfortable, recognizing that not everything is within our control can reduce unnecessary worry. Instead, focus your time and energy on the choices and actions you can influence.

Challenge unhelpful thought patterns.
It's easy to become caught in cycles of rumination or worst-case thinking. When you notice your thoughts spiraling, pause and ask yourself whether there is another perspective or a more balanced way to view the situation. Shifting your attention toward realistic solutions can help reduce stress and build resilience.

Build healthy daily routines.
Consistent habits such as getting enough sleep, eating nutritious foods, staying physically active, maintaining social connections, and making time for enjoyable activities all help strengthen your ability to cope with stress. Small, sustainable habits often have the greatest long-term impact.

Take meaningful action.
Stress often feels more manageable when we focus on what we can do rather than what we can't. Volunteering, participating in community activities, staying informed without becoming overwhelmed, reaching out to friends or family, or working toward personal goals can all create a greater sense of purpose and control.

Make time to recharge.
Rest is not a luxury—it's an important part of maintaining overall health. Whether it's spending time outdoors, practicing mindfulness, pursuing hobbies, or simply taking regular breaks throughout the day, intentionally creating moments of recovery can help replenish your physical and emotional energy.

Remember that stress is a normal part of life, but it doesn't have to define your well-being. By recognizing the signs of stress early and practicing healthy coping strategies, you can build resilience, improve your overall health, and feel better equipped to navigate life's challenges—both the expected and the unexpected.

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/understanding-and-addressing-stress/



5 TIPS TO AVOID THE MULTI-MINDING TRAP

In today's always-connected world, it's easy to split our attention between multiple tasks at once. You might be answering emails while watching TV, checking social media during a meeting, or switching back and forth between projects. While multitasking can feel productive, constantly dividing your attention often reduces focus, slows productivity, and makes it harder to think critically and retain information.

The ability to focus is a skill—and like any skill, it can be strengthened with practice. Here are five strategies to help minimize distractions and improve concentration:

Create a focused workspace.
Your environment has a significant impact on your ability to concentrate. Keep your workspace organized, well-lit, and stocked with the tools you need. Whenever possible, minimize distractions by silencing notifications, limiting background noise, or using headphones if you share a space with others.

Tackle your most important work first.
Save your peak energy for your most challenging or meaningful tasks. Breaking large projects into smaller, manageable steps can make them feel less overwhelming and help you maintain momentum without jumping from task to task.

Aim for progress, not perfection.
Set realistic goals for each day instead of trying to accomplish everything at once. Prioritize a few important tasks, build in flexibility for unexpected interruptions, and remember that consistent progress is more sustainable than perfection.

Protect your time.
It's okay to say no to commitments that don't align with your priorities. Creating healthy boundaries helps preserve the time and mental energy needed for your most important responsibilities.

Schedule time to recharge.
Focus requires recovery. Whether it's taking a short walk, stretching, reading, practicing mindfulness, or simply stepping away from your screen for a few minutes, regular breaks can improve concentration and help prevent mental fatigue.

Distractions are an unavoidable part of modern life, but they don't have to control your attention. By creating intentional habits and focusing on one task at a time, you can improve productivity, reduce stress, and make your work feel more manageable.

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/boosting-financial-wellness-for-a-healthier-less-stressed-life/