

The Training Post



Spring has begun! As we shift how we engage with our colleagues and even family and friends, it's important to practice mindfulness and perseverance. Typically, in May public service employees across the nation are recognized for their hard work and dedication. It couldn't be more obvious how important public employees really are to us all. The tireless efforts and dedication put forth by public servants across New Jersey and the country responding to this pandemic is extraordinary. We want to especially honor the direct care providers and medical professionals who are continuing to care for vulnerable populations during this time. Your fellow

State workers appreciate you! It's no secret that public service jobs won't make you a millionaire. However, knowing the job you perform matters and positively impacts the people you serve is rewarding. It takes grit to be an exceptional public employee. *Angela Duckworth*, an American academic, psychologist, and author, *defines grit* as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals."

In this edition of **The Training Post**, we explore ways to stay resolute in the public sector with our featured training and development opportunities, professional growth advice, and beneficial updates and tips for the Learning Management System (LMS) and ePAR.

"Grit, the raw endurance, perseverance and passion that keeps you going despite obstacles." - Anonymous



CSC Works For You

New Courses Available on the Learning Management System

Be Well. Work Well. Series

BUNDLE 1



Remote Working

- Working from Home: Strategies for Remote Employees
- Working Remotely

BUNDLE 2



Time Management & Leadership

- Brain Bites: Time Management
- Effective Time Management: 03: How to Use the Pomodoro Technique
- Everyone is a Leader

BUNDLE 3



Resiliency

- Developing Resilience*
- Emotional Intelligence*
- How to Build Resilience*
- Raising Resiliency: Build Tolerance for Stress

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Please visit our website at www.nj.gov/csc/employees/training. For training inquiries, contact CLIPTraining.Support@csc.nj.gov.



*Because successful training programs are not just about content, each edition of **The Training Post** will spotlight an individual who has been involved in one or more of the many professional development programs offered by CLIP.*

Meet Janine Burgess, Assistant Director of Individual Audit & Audit Services at the Department of the Treasury, Division of Taxation. Ms. Burgess has 19 years of experience in public service. In her current role, she manages the Individual Tax Audit Branch, Inheritance and Estate Tax Branch, and Audit Selection and Technical Services. As a Senior Executive Service employee, Ms. Burgess had the opportunity to participate in the newly created, NJ Executive Development for Government Excellence (NJ EDGE) program.

NJ EDGE was created to expand the leadership skills of executive-level employees in the public sector. The program focuses on varied leadership styles and strategies to enhance participants' aptitudes and their organization's capacities. Ms. Burgess's desire for continuous self-development motivated her to participate in NJ EDGE. She noted that the program will enhance her leadership skills and networking with employees in other State agencies.

Emphasizing the program's impact, Ms. Burgess remarked that, "NJ EDGE helped me tailor my leadership approach to changeable situations". She specified that the Appreciative Inquiry leadership style emphasized assessing which management practices work and why. On reflection, Ms. Burgess observed that, "...no matter if you have been managing for 3 or 30 years, there's always something to learn...".

She summed up her most important take-away from NJ EDGE as "...to identify and develop my own personal leadership style/brand that will promote a work culture that is engaging, inclusive, and appreciated."



3 Ways to Stay Connected with Microsoft Teams



Microsoft Teams is a group collaboration platform in Office 365 that promotes teamwork by allowing users to share content and communicate using its dynamic tools. Teams is an ideal cloud-based application for engaging your colleagues in the office as well as

remote coworkers - and, guess what? Since Teams is a Microsoft product, it is compatible with the other Office 365 applications. Here are 3 ways you can use Teams to stay connected:

- 1. Channels and Chats.** A Channel is created within an established Team and is dedicated to a specific topic, department, or project. It allows members of the Team to communicate, share ideas, links, files, and more. You can also mention/tag someone in a Channel discussion to get their attention. Team members can also chat. Chatting is like instant messaging. You may chat privately with someone or have a group chat.
- 2. Meetings and Calls.** Meet or call from any location, using a desktop or mobile device. Schedule and conduct meetings with your team and control optional audio and video features. Use additional engaging features during meetings and calls, such as recording, file uploading, and desktop sharing.
- 3. File storage and Sharing.** Promote document transparency. Create, store, and share files within a Channel. Collaborate and coauthor documents with team members.

For more information, contact your IT department regarding use of Teams. Each department has oversight of the deployment and use of Teams. Accessing the Teams' training links will not guarantee your ability to use Teams within your organization. If your department supports the use of Teams, additional training will provide new users with a general overview of key features and uses within the application. For free Teams training resources, [click here](#).

Fun Fact

The average person walks about 7,500 steps per day. If you stick to that average step count and live to be 80 years old, you'll walk about 110,000 miles in your lifetime.

At CLIP, we strive to provide our participants with innovative and cutting-edge learning experiences. **"The Buzz"** features the latest training trends and noteworthy "buzz" on various professional developmental themes. In this edition, we present the inside scoop about a new learning management system (LMS) that CLIP will launch this year. Among other things, this collaborative project exemplifies the resolve of CLIP's staff and management to deliver an enhanced LMS to enhance state employees' professional development.

The New LMS: Getting it Done with Grit

A significant trend in professional development is selecting an organizational LMS that will meet the growing needs of the State workforce, especially in light of recent events. Whether it's instructor-led or web-based training, employees' learning has a direct impact on their effectiveness to perform their jobs.

Recognizing that a state-of-the-art LMS platform is a critical tool to foster workplace learning, CLIP has engaged the SABA Cloud Solution to enhance State employees' professional development. The Saba Cloud Solution is a secure cloud-based, off-the-shelf LMS that will centralize State training processes and delivery.

Next to ePAR, CLIP's electronic Performance Assessment Review system, the new LMS is a tool that will further support employees and supervisors across-the-board to actualize professional development goals. The new LMS is also a learner-driven system, so employees will be at the center of their professional development. Working closely with their supervisors as well as agency training coordinators, State employees will have opportunities to explore the options available in the training circuit and catapult their learning into high gear. The new LMS will provide more free and affordable online courses. Employees can set and easily track their learning and career development plans. Supervisors and managers will have analytic tools right at their fingertips.

The CLIP staff is working tirelessly to configure the new LMS to ensure it meets the diverse needs and changing requirements of the state workforce. Recognizing that for many of you, it takes a lot of grit to perform the daily tasks of providing critical, necessary services and/or assist your customer base, especially during these trying times. CLIP wants to honor those public employees by ensuring the LMS can address those needs. Leading theorist on grit, Angela Duckworth points out that the four elements of grit include passion, practice, purpose and hope. Despite which element is driving your grit, CLIP will continue to provide access and technology to allow the State employees to explore their own professional development journeys.



The Road Less Traveled is Often Paved with Grit

As noted by Angela Duckworth, an important difference between those who succeed and those who don't, may be attributed to a character trait known as grit. A person with grit is described as having a combination of perseverance and passion over a long period of time. She argues that this learnable quality is a better predictor of success than IQ or talent. A primary reason people don't achieve their goals is because they give up prematurely. Lack of persistence makes grit a critical skill to achieve professional and personal aspirations.

Ways to Build Your Inner Grit:

- 1. Strive for excellence not perfection.** Perfection is an unattainable ideal that is unforgiving of failure and keeps people from moving forward. By contrast, excellence is an attitude that prioritizes progress. Put in the effort to always produce your best work without being fearful of failure.
- 2. Work with purpose.** Grit is essentially about stamina, and how consistently you work in a certain direction over time. Find ways to stay interested and motivated. Set challenges and goals for yourself. A minor shift in how you view your job can make a huge difference in your progression.
- 3. Be courageous.** A gritty person never forgets that there are always opportunities to improve. They also believe that they are capable of doing more. Don't be afraid to take risks and get out of your comfort zone. Keep in mind that getting good at new things will take some practice and that highs and lows are both part of the process.
- 4. Turn lemons into lemonade.** People with true grit have gotten knocked down several times on their way to the top. The difference is that they didn't stop trying. Take your toughest obstacles and setbacks and find the opportunities they present for getting stronger and smarter. List everything you learned from the experience. Note all the lessons and everything that went wrong, and why. They're bad memories only if you don't grow from the experiences.

To see where you fall on the grit scale, go to: angeladuckworth.com/grit-scale/

References:

What is Grit? 5 Signs you have it and 4 Tips for Developing It. PersonalityPerfect.com. 2019 Retrieved from personalityperfect.com/grit-5-signs-4-tips-developing/

M. Perlis 5 Characteristics of Grit -How Many Do You Have? Forbes.com 2019 Retrieved from forbes.com/sites/margaretperlis/2013/10/29/5-characteristics-of-grit-what-it-is-why-you-need-it-and-do-you-have-it/#5c966d124f7b



In each edition of *The Training Post*, ePAR Insider readers can expect to see relevant news and helpful tips about the PAR program and the Electronic Performance Assessment Review (ePAR) system.

Practicing Self-Evaluation

As more employees are working remotely, leaders face unique challenges managing employee performance. This is not business as usual. Here are some suggestions to maintain employee productivity and engagement.

Use technology to engage your team. Utilizing Microsoft Teams or similar applications are effective ways to communicate with your entire staff and allow for interaction of all members.

Start each day with an icebreaker. Questions such as "what is your favorite movie?" or "what hidden talent do you possess?" can build morale and compensate for the lack of in-person connections that employees are accustomed to at the office.

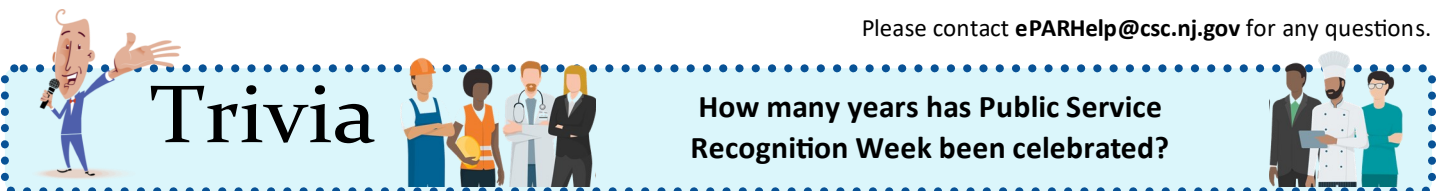
Set clear goals. Try to be task-oriented rather than process-oriented. At times like these it is more important to focus on the end result rather than the process that leads to the result. Offer support and encouragement.

Follow up. Set specific times for status reports and providing assistance.

Say "thank you" to your staff. We are all in this together. Kind words can go a long way.

If we remain steadfast, we will return to the office where water cooler conversations will be the norm again. In the meantime, we can embrace new management perspectives and improve our personal management style.

Please contact ePARHelp@csc.nj.gov for any questions.



How many years has Public Service Recognition Week been celebrated?

This May it will be 36 years. It has been celebrated on the first Sunday in May since 1985.



What's Brewing

FEATURED COURSES (Available until June 12, 2020)

Free Online Courses from Open Sesame Vendor

BUILDING POSITIVE CONNECTIONS

BUNDLE 1: Customer Service & Communication

- Business Power Skills - Customer Service
- Customer Service Success *
- Effective Email Writing and Office Communication Tips*
- Service Simulations: Raging Bull-calls with Angry Customers
- Tough Customers: The Bully

BUNDLE 2: Diversity & Inclusion

- Cross-Cultural Considerations: 01. What is Culture
- Introduction to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity*
- Unconscious Bias*
- Why Diversity Matters

SELF-DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

BUNDLE 1: Personal Growth Path

- Interview Tips*
- Moving Up: 02. Maintaining Your Resume
- Networking & Building Relationships

BUNDLE 2: Improve Your Worth

- Becoming a Great Leader: 13. Developing Yourself Communicating Effectively*
- The Growth Mindset 01. The Growth Mindset: Embracing Yet
- The Growth Mindset 02. The Growth Mindset: Developing the Growth Mindset

COMING SOON: Release of Micro-learning videos of relevant topics from your favorite CLIP Instructors

QUICK CLIP VIRTUAL TRAINING: The Transition to Telecommuting

How to be Productive at Home

Rita Williams-Bogar

Maintain a Stress-Free Remote Workspace

Ed Andriessen

Thrive in Change

Mylena Sutton

Technology at Work

Rob Usdin

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WRITING @ WORK

Restore and Renew - Writing to Manage Stress

To paraphrase the writer Anais Nin, 'we live to experience life twice - first in the moment and second in retrospect'. Nin's point about the value of writing to reflect on our life experiences resonates with significance during this challenging time.

Writing is more than a skill; it can be an outlet. It provides a way to refocus, rebalance, and reignite our energy. Equally important, writing can serve to remind us about our plans, positive experiences, and milestones. Ultimately, writing can be a form of self-care that we choose to adapt as a routine part of our lives.

So, as you think about ways to enhance your well-being during this time, consider writing as one way to do it. Here are a few ways to get started:

Tip - Expressive Writing. Expressive writing involves: asking yourself questions, making plans, forming solutions, and describing your emotions.

Tip - Free Writing. Free writing is like brainstorming. Instead of jotting words or short phrases, write full sentences for 15 to 20 minutes without stopping.

Tip - Journaling. You can create and/or combine these types of personal journals to record your expressive, free writings:

- **Reflection Journal.** What are you thinking, feeling?
- **Gratitude Journal.** What are you thankful for?
- **Project Journal.** What do you want to accomplish?

Did you know? April 21st was National Library Workers Day

Question Corner

Spring Question:
What does grit mean to you?

[\(Click here to respond\)](#)

**Respond to be entered into our
"Free Single-day Training" drawing - \$159.00 value!*

By submitting to the Question Corner, you are authorizing CLIP to publish your response.

Winter Question:

What was your favorite workplace memory from 2019?

Thank you to all of our fall "Question Corner" respondents. Congratulations to **Sharon Siao** from the Office of Information Technology! You have been selected to receive the "Free Single-Day Training".

Winter Responses

Click on Winter Responses to view all the responses.

The Training Post Credits