

# The Successful SUPERVISOR

2011

December

Tips from  LifeSolutions

***"It is December and the end of another year is at hand. In many ways it has been a challenging year. I feel the need to mark the passing of time for myself and my staff. Any ideas?"*** The end of another year often leads us to pause and reflect on our personal and workplace challenges and successes. It provides us with an opportunity to congratulate ourselves on jobs well done, accomplishments achieved, and growth. It also allows us to look back on problems we have encountered, how we resolved them, and what learning we take away for the future. This final issue of 2011 offers suggestions on how to make the most of this time of reflection. As always, we are interested in your feedback. Please e-mail EAP at [ask@lifesolutionsforyou.com](mailto:ask@lifesolutionsforyou.com) or contact an EAP account manager at 1-800-647-3327.

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## **"The pause that refreshes ..."**

That old commercial was right. Pausing to reflect is a great way to wind down the year. Reflection is also important to creating a sense of closure, maintaining balance, and renewing energy for the coming year.

- ◆ Close your office door. Get comfortable and relax. Breathe deeply from your belly and slowly take in air to fill up your belly, chest, and throat. Then slowly release the breath. Do this several times and then just breathe normally.
- ◆ Think about the year's highlights ... something funny, a touching moment, a personal achievement, or a team goal accomplished. Don't force it ... just allow whatever comes to mind to enter your awareness and continue breathing.
- ◆ Allow yourself to pause at each memory to briefly relive it and cherish it. Then let it go ... don't try to hold onto it.
- ◆ Notice how you feel as memories come and go. Allow yourself to enjoy whatever positive feelings you have.
- ◆ You won't need a lot of time ... even 5 minutes will be enough.
- ◆ Afterwards, jot down the memories that came to you.

## **Build reflection into a meeting or end-of-year celebration for your staff.**

- ◆ Share the above exercise with your staff.
- ◆ Ask staff to think about something they are proud of and are willing to share with the team/department.
- ◆ Like your own reflection, it could be a personal triumph, a team goal accomplished, or the positive resolution of a difficult problem.
- ◆ Affirm the effort and commitment it took to achieve the success or solve the problem.
- ◆ If someone brings up an unresolved problem or a something viewed as unsuccessful, acknowledge the difficulty involved in the situation and ask staff to share what they have learned and what positive outcomes they think resulted from the situation.
- ◆ Write up your successes, both group and individual, on a whiteboard or flip chart and *celebrate* them!

## **Practice gratitude.**

- ◆ "Thank you ... I appreciate what you did" is a gift that is free and available to and from everyone.
- ◆ Prior to the staff meeting, think about each of your employees. You may have a large staff and you may have struggled with some of them. Make a point to identify a contribution that each has made.

- ◆ At the staff meeting, in addition to sharing reflections, consider expressing a thank-you to each employee for a contribution he or she has made. Be genuine. Make it specific by sharing how this helped support a successful year, project, or team effort. Don't say, "You were a big help this year"; tell each employee *how* he or she helped.
- ◆ In a small group, this can be done out loud. In a larger group, thank the group as a whole ... and, again, be specific. Follow up with a personal thank-you note to each member.
- ◆ Establish a process or ritual for employees to also share thanks and gratitude with their co-workers. For example, staff could be encouraged to leave thank-you notes on co-worker's desks.

## **Give yourself a pat on the back!**

- ◆ Remember, the supervisor's role is essential in creating and maintaining a successful workplace.
- ◆ You've spent the past year supporting others, going the extra mile, and challenging yourself to grow and learn.
- ◆ It's time to express gratitude to *yourself* ... so go ahead. You deserve it!
- ◆ Consider that these moments of self-care and appreciation are revitalizing and will help you start the New Year engaged and refreshed.

We, the staff at *LifeSolutions*, want to express our gratitude to you for supporting this newsletter. We wish you a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year. See you in 2012!

**If you have any questions or would like to share your year-end reflections, please contact us at 1.800.647.3327.**

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