



ISSUE: Recognizing how emotions affect employees and the workplace.

THINGS TO CONSIDER: Employees may not be fully present at work due to unresolved emotions carried over from their personal lives. Many recognize the more common notion to 'not take your work home' as it can negatively affect family and friends. On the flipside, there is the notion to 'not take your personal issues to work you' which is common for employees with barriers often rooted in unresolved emotions from their personal lives. These employees may not have a lot of employment experience, nor a lot of experience in how emotions and personal issues can affect their workplace and co-workers. These employees typically frustrate easily, may be impatient and even angry. Employers and co-workers can assist these employees to improve in this area by demonstrating patience, acceptance, guidance and support.

- **Personal Feelings:** These can and will occasionally affect workplace behaviour and performance.
- **People Skills:** These are more critical in the workplace as the workplace and expectations in the workplace change.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Is equally as important as technical competency or intellectual brilliance. It is important that employers encourage this competency as these are the skills that people need to succeed and to help others to succeed.
- **Companies where people work well together** have a competitive edge.

THINGS TO DO: Emotional Intelligence is the ability to quickly recognize emotional responses to situations and people, and to use that knowledge in effective ways. Take some time to consider what your level of Emotional Intelligence is in yourself, your managers and supervisors and the overall EI in your workplace culture. Trust, communication, listening, cooperation and sharing are all characteristics of strong Emotional Intelligence.

- **Manage Distressing Feelings:** Just by being present, acknowledging, and validating what an employee is feeling is an important step.
- **Calm yourself when you feel Anxious:** Employees are able to read your body language and pick up on your anxiety. They may notice physical signals such as muscle tension, rapid heart rates, different breathing patterns, and when someone is getting hot and bothered.
- **Manage & Diffuse Anger:** Encourage employees to talk about what is making them angry so that minor irritations don't fester and build up into an angry explosive outburst.
- **Maintain Hope when Setbacks Arise:** Especially for an employee with many personal issues, these employees have experienced a lot of setbacks in life and may believe that a setback on the job is just another reason to give up again. With encouragement by an employer and speaking with them about the things they have accomplished and done well will give them hope to keep going.
- **Demonstrate Empathy:** For the average person there are always challenges in life. For people with multiple barriers these employees have experienced even more life challenges. Understand that many of these employees have faced severe and continued poverty, homelessness, abuse, racism, oppression, addictions or a combination of all of these things. An empathetic employer recognizes that these employees are doing the best they can at any given moment in time.

For more info on Potluck Recipes for Success:

Heather O'Hara - Executive Director

T: 604.683.0073 ext. 379

E: heather@potluckcatering.com

W: www.potluckcatering.com