Repairing a Workplace Relationship

You've had an argument with a coworker and feel the need to repair a rough patch in your relationship. How do you proceed? 1) Start with giving yourself a pat on your back. Someone needs to make the first move, so let it be you. When you're ruminating about the conflict, it can be challenging to focus on work, leading to a reduction in productivity and efficiency. Start with a statement such as "I want to talk with you about the other day." Next, take responsibility—for your part in the argument. Apologize for words, actions, tonality, or nonverbal behaviors that caused discomfort. Say you want to move forward, and listen completely to your coworker's perspective. This active listening may help you grasp their point of view, but more importantly, it may encourage your coworker to reciprocate. Focus the discussion on the things you both care about and are trying to achieve. Consider agreeing on how to handle conflict in the future—your relationship "protocols" for managing conflict. Here's a key thing about coworker conflict: It might feel difficult to make the first move toward repair, but conflict left unresolved can create a toxic work environment, where tensions are high and communication becomes even more strained. Hint: Don't let positive relationships at work "just happen." Instead, consciously build on them and nurture trust, and you will observe that they are more resilient under stress.

Workplace Posture and Performance

Don't develop a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) because of the way you sit at work. Check yourself. The common sitting mistakes are slouching, crossing your legs, leaning forward, and sitting too long. Don't settle into a posture that just feels relaxed; instead, check whether it is also ergonomically safe and preventive. Here's some motivation: One study found that proper posture at work can help you think more confidently, and this may lead to greater productivity and benefits for you and your employer. That's additional motivation to check yourself! Learn more here.

Recognizing Depression

Are you missing work for any of the following reasons? Lack of energy and motivation, making it challenging to get out of bed; not being able to concentrate at work, and feeling more exhausted if you try to do so; feelings of worthlessness or guilt, making you feel you aren't good enough to be at work; fatigue, headaches, or stomach issues that seem to zap your energy; or feeling so anxious and nervous about interacting with others that you stay home. Any of these may be related to depression. Talk to your Employee Assistance Program, a doctor, or another professional. An assessment takes only minutes, and there are helpful ways to get you back on the job. Depression is the #1 issue contributing to absenteeism, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and the behaviors above are the most common symptoms.

Work Mistakes Happen

Big mistakes can cause panic to well up inside you. Don't panic; instead, manage them with a cool head. 1) Own up to your mistake. It is the fastest way to move forward toward finding a solution. 2) Apologize to those affected by the mistake because a sincere apology rebuilds trust. You'll discover a nearly universal truth—that people want to forgive and move forward. 3) Understand why the mistake happened, and take time to reflect on what went wrong so you can avoid it in the future. 4) Develop a plan to fix the mistake and rectify the situation. 5) Be visible in the process of implementing the solution, and others will observe and remember how committed you are to fixing mistakes and moving forward. 6) Move on. You've learned from the experience. Don't dwell on mistakes. Forgive yourself because your organization needs you back.