

# DIFFUSING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

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## TOP STRESSORS IN THE US

- Top sources of stress were the rise in prices of everyday items due to inflation (e.g., gas prices, energy bills, grocery costs, etc.) (87%), followed by supply chain issues (81%) and global uncertainty (81%).
- The vast majority of adults reported global uncertainty (81%), the Russian invasion of Ukraine (80%) and potential retaliation from Russia (e.g., cyberattacks or nuclear threats) (80%) to be significant sources of stress.
  - American Psychological Association poll, 2/2022

## TOP STRESSORS IN THE US

- Parents overwhelmingly reported concerns regarding child(ren)'s development, including social life or development (73%), academic development (71%) and emotional health or development (71%).
- More than half of Americans (56%) have said that since the pandemic started, they could have used more emotional support than they received
  - American Psychological Association poll, 2/2022

## WHAT WASN'T MENTIONED?

- Individual stressors
- Things we don't often talk about at work
- People are stressed
- When people are stressed, they have less patience, tolerance, and focus
- People are more easily irritated and often take stress out on those in front of them in the moment

# OVERALL WORKPLACE SAFETY



**Understand the risks.** Once you know the particular hazards of your workplace you can take steps to reduce your risk and strengthen your workplace safety.



**Reduce workplace stress.** Common causes: long hours, heavy workload, conflicts with coworkers, volunteers, community members.



**Talk over any concerns.** Your supervisor or HR representative should be informed about workplace hazards and risks.



**Document situations** that have occurred or may lead to future issues.



**Know your policies.** What is the policy, who do you report it to, what do you report?

## CONFLICT DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

- **De-escalation** is aimed at calmly communicating with an agitated person in order to understand, manage and resolve their concerns.
- These actions should help reduce the person's agitation and potential for future aggression or violence.

## DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

- If in person, move to a private area, if it seems safe to do so
- Be empathetic and non-judgmental-Focus on understanding the person's feelings, whether you agree or not, they are real to the other person.
- Respect personal space-Recommended 1.5-3 feet away from the person, it decreases the person's anxiety and can help prevent acting out behavior

## DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

- Keep your tone and body language neutral-The more upset someone is, the less they hear your words and they more they react to nonverbal communication.
- Avoid over-reacting-Remain calm, rational, and professional. Emphasize with feelings, not behavior. “I understand you are angry, but it is not ok to yell.”
- Focus on the thoughts behind the feelings-Help me understand what you need.What has helped you in the past? Tell me if I have this right. Not: Tell me how you feel.



## DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

- Ignore challenging questions that result in a power struggle. “Why is \_\_\_ always making stupid decisions?” “Please tell me again how I can help you?”
- Set boundaries- “It is important for you to be calm in order for us to talk. How can that be accomplished?”
- Allow silence-Silence gives people a chance to reflect
- Allow time for decisions-When someone is upset, they may not be able to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you said.

## BOUNDARIES-HOW YOU KNOW IF THEY ARE CROSSED

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Verbal violations.

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Not allowing you to speak or be heard

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Raising their voice or screaming at you

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Saying things that are derogatory about you

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Gossiping about you

# BOUNDARIES-HOW YOU KNOW IF THEY ARE CROSSED

- Psychological and emotional boundary violations.
  - Preying on your sense of self-esteem
  - Lying to you
  - Criticizing or demeaning you
  - Judging or manipulating you
  - Making fun of you, your thoughts and feelings
  - Making demands of your time
  - Bulling you or embarrassing you

# ESTABLISHING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



Know yourself and know what is important to you. Honor your feelings.



Know that you deserve dignity and respect in all settings.



Set your boundaries. By setting them, you set limits about what you expect of others and how you want to be treated and spoken to.

# ESTABLISHING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES



Communicate your boundaries. Tell the people you work with what your expectations are. Be direct.



Bring up boundary violations right away.



Prepare for how you will respond professionally when boundaries are violated.

# PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Self-care
  - Take time for yourself to do things you love and savor them
  - Reset the basics: Eat healthy, exercise, focus on your breathing, laugh
  - Seek help if your stress is high, counseling, meditation
- Community care- Building a well workplace
  - Know who you can go to at work for support
  - Be a good colleague
  - Emphasize the importance of a well-workplace



**SURVEY FEEDBACK IS APPRECIATED**

Please scan this QR code to provide feedback on our 2-minute survey.



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