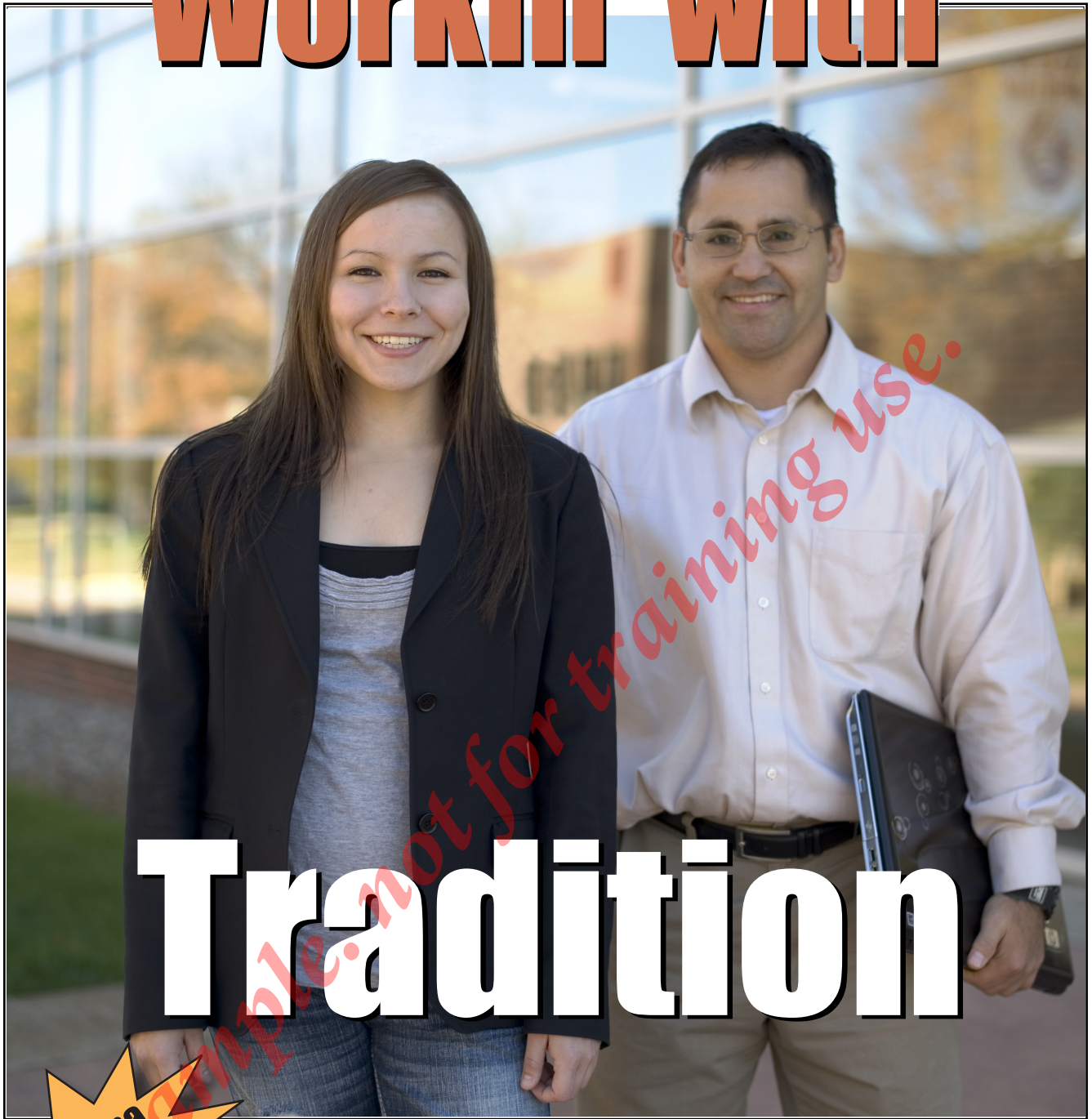


Workin' with



Tradition



Workbook

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In collaboration with Opportunity Link, Havre, MT

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WELCOME!

Goals

In the “Workin’ with Tradition” program, we will:

1. Build self-esteem by reinforcing our cultural identity as members of a people rich in tradition and resources.
2. Improve self-awareness by learning how our personal perspectives impact our choices and outcomes in life.
3. Develop greater understanding of employers’ unspoken expectations.
4. Strengthen the ability to manage our emotions in challenging work situations.
5. Improve the organizational and communication skills needed to keep good jobs.

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Rationale

The original “Workin’ It Out” program series was developed to meet the needs of both employers and employees by (1) better preparing non-traditional workers, especially those from low-income neighborhoods, for the interpersonal challenges of the workplace, and (2) better preparing employers to support and manage entry-level workers.

“Workin’ with Tradition” is designed to help Native American job-seekers of NorthCentral Montana improve self-esteem while developing the self-awareness and interpersonal “soft skills” needed to successfully enter into and advance in the world of work. It was developed with funding provided from Opportunity Link of Havre, MT.

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Lesson 1

Challenge of Change

Pearl of
WISDOM

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William's Story, Part 1



William High Plains was a quiet 28-year-old Native American man who had finally found his way back home to the reservation after 10 years on his own. William hadn't been much of a student in high school, but he was a great basketball player, and led his team to the state tournament in his senior year.

William (thinking back): **“No one seemed to pay much attention to my grades or my partying, as long as I scored on the court. I was a real hero back in the day.”**

But William's drinking got out of control after basketball season ended, and at age 17, he got picked up for his first DUI. The very next day, his girlfriend Christine told him she was pregnant. It was all too much! He took the old car his Uncle Jimmy Boy had given him, and headed toward Canada with a girl he'd met at a pow-wow.

After ten years of moving around, William showed up at Gramma Sis's door, a duffle bag over one shoulder and a sad look on his face. He knew that Gramma and Uncle Jimmy Boy would welcome him home. They were overjoyed to see him again after so long. William had a big meal and good night's sleep, and the next morning sat down to talk.

Gramma Sis (worried): **“So what have you been doing in Canada for so long, grandson? We heard that you were living in Calgary. Are you back to stay?”**

Jimmy Boy (gentle): **“Don't press him so hard, Momma. Let him tell his story.”**

William (sad): **“There isn't much to tell. After I dropped out of school, I went north with that girl I met at the pow-wow. We lived in town for a couple of years, and I did odd jobs to get by. I found work as a mechanic, thanks to all the things you taught me growing up, Uncle Jimmy.”**

Jimmy Boy (pleased): **“All those busted knuckles and greasy hands really paid off, huh?”**

William (smiling): **“They sure did. But I was partying a lot, and couldn't save up much money. I lived on some of the other reservations, but I never felt like I belonged. I worked security at one of the big casinos for a while. That worked out okay until I got caught drinking on the job.”**

William's Story, Part 1

Jimmy Boy (concerned): "My boy, you know that sounds just like your father. He had a problem with the bottle too. That's what killed him last year."

Gramma Sis (with love): "William doesn't have a drinking problem, Jimmy Boy."

William (honestly): "Yes, I do, Gramma. It took me a long time to realize it, but I do. I lost my driver's license and Uncle Jimmy's old car after my second DUI. I got fired from a lot of jobs because I'd show up drunk -- or because I was too drunk to show up at all. For a long time, I just denied it, or told myself that I had it under control, that I didn't need any help."

Gramma Sis: "So have you stopped drinking, grandson?"

William (humbly): "Yes, I have Gram. Last fall I heard that my father died driving drunk. I never really knew him, but something happened to me. I wanted to be part of my tribe again. I made a commitment to the Creator to stop drinking, to change my life for the better."

Jimmy Boy (choked up): "We're here to help you, nephew."

William (proud): "I know, Uncle. I've been attending sweats and ceremonies as often as I can, and going to AA meetings. Ninety meetings in 90 days. I wanted to be sober when I came back home. I got this far by myself, but I can't do it all on my own. I'm gonna need you and Gramma Sis and everyone else here to help me make it."

Jimmy Boy: "William, you have our support. Our community will support you too. You are a 'High Plains.' To our tribe, that family name has a lot of meaning. There is a lot for you to live up to, and a lot to be proud of. Welcome home, my boy."



Stages of Change

Change takes time, and often happens in a series of predictable stages. We have to work through each stage if improvements are going to last.

1

Stage 1: RESISTANCE

In the RESISTANCE stage, we don't see or admit to the problem at all. The Resistance stage can last for years.

Tim is 50 years old, and has been a heavy smoker all his life. His kids are constantly bugging him to quit. In the Resistance Stage, Tim would probably:

- (a) Try to quit (b) Say he has no problem (c) Help others quit

>> BRIDGE: _____ <<

2

Stage 2: THINKING

In the THINKING stage, we are aware of the problem and its consequences. We might think about doing something in the next 6 months or so, but haven't made a real commitment to it yet.

Tim notices he's getting short of breath and coughing a lot more than he used to. In the Thinking Stage, he would probably:

- (a) Admit his bad cough is from smoking (b) Buy a nicotine patch (c) Refuse to talk about it with anyone

>> BRIDGE: _____ <<

3

Stage 3: PLANNING

It often takes a major event to move us from just thinking about change to seriously PLANNING for it, where we prepare to make a real change in the next 30 days.

Tim goes to see his doctor about his shortness of breath. He is scared when the doctor tells him he has emphysema. In the Planning Stage, he would probably:

- (a) Hide his smoking from others (b) Ask about ways to quit (c) Just quit cold turkey

>> BRIDGE: _____ <<

4

Stage 4: ACTION

In the ACTION stage, we change our behavior, our friends, and even our environment. It usually lasts for the first 6 months after making a change.

Tim has already made some solid plans to quit smoking. In the Action Stage, he would probably:

- (a) Use a nicotine patch to help with cravings (b) Eat carrot sticks or chew gum instead (c) Ask to sit in the non-smoking section

>> BRIDGE: _____ <<

5

Stage 5: MAINTENANCE

In the MAINTENANCE stage, we've been mostly successful in making change. New habits are fairly well established for at least 6 months.

Although Tim has slipped up a couple of times, he hasn't smoked in almost a year. His breathing has improved, he's feeling better about himself, and has actually helped two of his sons quit smoking too.

Prochaska, J. O., DiClemente, C. C., & Norcross, J. C. (1992). In search of how people change: Applications to addictive behaviors. AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST, 47(9), 1102-1114.

Recognizing Stages of Change

To begin making lasting change, we must first identify the behavior that's causing us problems, and then figure out which stage of change we're in.



A. Cheryl admits she has a temper problem.

"I never was much good at handling stress, to be honest. Aunt Emma calls me 'high strung,' but sometimes, I'm just an outright @\$%\$, and I know it. What are you gonna do though? You can't change who you are."

Which Stage is Cheryl in? _____

B. Sam helps others with their recovery from alcoholism.

"It's still a day-by-day thing sometimes. I've been clean and sober for almost 5 years now, going to AA meetings and all, but there was a time when I thought I wasn't going to make it. Now I'm a sponsor for others who are trying to get their lives back together."



Which Stage is Sam in? _____



C. William has returned home after 10 years away.

"I used to drink all the time, pretending like I didn't have a problem. But after I lost my license, my family, and my freedom, I realized that enough was enough. I'm 3 months sober now, trying to become the kind of man my family can be proud of."

Which Stage is William in? _____

D. Robby is serving 30 days in jail for public intoxication.

"If it hadn't been for Billy and his mouth, we would have been fine! I can handle MY liquor, but when HE gets going, he just doesn't know how to stop. This is the third time I've gotten picked up because of him -- he needs to get some help!"



Which Stage is Robby in? _____

.....
What behavior is holding YOU back? And what stage of change are YOU in?

KEY POINTS

in Lesson 1

1. There is a natural tendency to resist change, even when change means improvement in our lives. It takes a strong person to start the process of self-improvement.
2. Changing any habit, including habits of thinking, takes time and commitment. Lasting change involves a series of stages which cannot be rushed.

MiniQuiz #1

PART 1: Answer each question T (true) or F (false). If False, find the right answer.

- ___ 1. If you can't see the need for changing a behavior even though it has caused you problems, you are probably in the Resistance Stage.
- ___ 2. If you're seriously getting ready for change in the next 30 days, you are probably in the Action Stage of self-change.
- ___ 3. If you've made changes and kept them up for the past 1-2 months, you are probably in the Thinking Stage.
- ___ 4. If you've kept up your changes for more than 6 months, you are probably in the Maintenance Stage.
- ___ 5. If you make short-term changes only when someone pressures you, then go right back to your old ways, you are probably in the Action Stage.

PART 2: Read the following story about a new character, Bonnie. Decide which stage of change she is probably in.

Bonnie was an anxious 20-year-old woman who lived at home with her mother. She'd been horribly shy in high school, and now spent most of her time on the sofa in her mother's house watching DVDs.

MOTHER: "You need to get out more, Bonnie. Go into town a little... hang out with your old high school friends, maybe get a job."

Bonnie agreed that a job in town might be nice, but even the thought of leaving home filled her with panic. She wasn't about to admit that to her mother though, or even to herself.

BONNIE: "I'm fine right where I am, Momma. I like it here. Besides, the bus ride is soooo long, and the shopkeepers are always so rude. I'm happy right here -- honest!"



Lesson 5

Home vs. Work Beliefs

Pearl of
WISDOM



William's Story, Part 5



A few weeks later, William started his new job working security at the casino. Once he got to know the people and the routines, he found that he really enjoyed the work. He didn't always see eye to eye with his supervisor Star, but at least the secretary up front had stopped giving him such a hard time.

One day, a group of William's old high school basketball buddies came in.

Billy: "Hey look guys, it's William High Plains! We heard you were back. Man, it's been forever. How you been?"

As the group gathered around him, the smell of alcohol became overpowering. William knew he was supposed to turn people away if they were drinking, but it was hard to enforce the rules with his old friends.

Robby (pushy): "So what do you say, William? Can you hook us up with some extra "\$5 for \$5's"?"



William (torn): "I'm really not supposed to, Robby. In fact, I'm not even supposed to let you in if you've been drinking. But I guess you should help out your friends when they need you, right? Just don't cause any problems, or you'll get me in trouble."

William gave them several "\$5 for \$5" coupons, and let them in. An hour later, he was watching football on the big screen TV in the lounge when he heard some noise in the lobby.

William (to himself, nervous): 'I still have a couple of minutes left on my break, I think. I've been working hard today and deserve a chance to kick back, so let Star handle it. Besides, if it's Billy and Robby, I really don't want to get involved. We gotta look out for our own people, right?'

Fifteen minutes later, the cops arrived, and William's old friends were dragged out, laughing and cursing. His supervisor Star found him in the lounge, and pulled him aside.

William's Story, Part 5

Star (furious): **"I want to talk with you, William! Where have you been? The cops just dragged off a group of drunken, rowdy fools. I could have used your help."**

William (angry): **"I was on my break, Ms. Star. I've worked hard, and earned some time off my feet."**

Star (even more furious): **"First off, your break ended 20 minutes ago. And even if it didn't, you come running when you're needed, regardless! Second, those men reeked of alcohol, and had Mickey's in their pockets -- you must have noticed that when they came in! Did you check them at all? What were you thinking?"**

William (to himself, angry): *'No one has the right to talk down to me, no matter what I did or didn't do. Besides, those were my friends, and friends come first.'*

William (out loud, quietly): **"Ms. Star, I don't know what to tell you. I was on my break, like I said. Is that all? I need to use the men's room."**

William walked off calmly, leaving his supervisor steaming. True to form, he walked toward the front door, ready to walk out on this job as he had so many others.

William (to himself, sorry for self): *'How come nothing ever works out for me? Why did those guys have to come in here on my shift?? If it wasn't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all!'*



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Personal Beliefs Survey

Our personal beliefs guide our behavior in our home and community lives. These are learned from family, friends, and culture, as well as through individual life experiences.

Directions: How strongly do you believe in each statement in your PERSONAL life?

1: Not at all
2: A little

3: Somewhat

4: A lot
5: Very Strongly

IN MY PERSONAL LIFE, I BELIEVE THAT:

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

A. Family and friends come first, no matter what the cost.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

B. Rude people need to be put in their place.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

C. No one has the right to talk down to you, no matter what you've done.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

D. Life is unpredictable, so people should be understanding when you're running late.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

E. Be your own person. Don't change who you are just to make others happy.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

F. Your problems are your private business. Keep personal things to yourself.

Personal Perspective

William works security at a casino. Some of his old friends ask him to let them by and give them some extra "\$5 for \$5" coupons.



William (to Robby): **"I'm really not supposed to, Robby. In fact, I'm not even supposed to let you in if you've been drinking. But I guess you should help out your friends when they need you, right? Just don't cause any problems, or you'll get me in trouble."**

Which personal belief is William using at work? _____

Unspoken Rules of Work

Every workplace has its written policies and procedures, but there are also UNSPOKEN RULES. Unfortunately, they are not always obvious, and they sometimes conflict with our personal beliefs. It can be hard to abide by these unspoken rules without betraying our own sense of right and wrong.

AT WORK, WE ARE EXPECTED TO:

- _____ **1. Be dependable. Come on time and be ready to work when your shift begins.**
- _____ **2. Be loyal to your employer. Put work first and do your job, leaving your friendships or grudges at home.**
- _____ **3. Be honest about problems and do your best to fix them.**
- _____ **4. Be open to criticism or redirection from supervisors without making excuses.**
- _____ **5. Be polite to customers, even if they are rude to you.**
- _____ **6. Be a team player. Try to fit in and get along.**

Professional Perspective

Star supervises security at a casino. The police had to be called to drag out four drunken men who came through William's checkpoint.

Star (to William): **"Those men reeked of alcohol, and had Mickey's in their pockets -- you must have noticed that when they came in! Did you check them at all? What were you thinking?"**



Which workplace rule is Star using? _____

Home v. Work Conflicts

1. Lori works as a clerk in a supermarket. Her supervisor got all over her case for being 15 minutes late.

Lori: **"But I was here on time! I looked at the clock on my radio when my boyfriend dropped me off and it was 8 o'clock on the dot. He has no idea how hard it is for me to get up and going this early -- I'm just not a morning person!"**

Which personal belief is Lori using at work? _____

Supervisor: **"Being in the parking lot at 8 o'clock isn't good enough -- she needs to be at her register at 8 o'clock. The night shift guy had to stay an extra 15 minutes while she used the ladies' room to change and get herself ready."**

What workplace rule is the supervisor using? _____

2. Angel answers phones at a call center. His shift manager Bill reprimands him up for hanging up on an irate customer.

Angel: **"They don't pay me enough to put up with jerks like that! That guy needed to learn that he can't push people around! So I hung up on him! Serves him right!"**

Which personal belief is Angel using at work? _____

Supervisor: **"People don't call here with compliments-- they call with problems! Of course they're going to be irritable, but you do your best to be polite anyway."**

What workplace rule is the supervisor using? _____



3. Elizabeth's sister Teresa is in the hospital, struggling through her first chemo treatment for breast cancer. Elizabeth wants to be there with her, but doesn't want to have to explain why she needs a couple of days off her job in the school kitchen.

Elizabeth (later): **"I knew my supervisor would ask for details, and wouldn't understand that it was private. So I just took the time off, and ended up losing the job. It's a shame. It was a good job, but it was really none of his business."**

Which personal belief is Elizabeth using at work? _____

Boss (later): **"When I heard later that she had a sister with cancer, I felt bad about letting her go. If she'd told me about it, we could have worked something out."**

What workplace rule is the supervisor using? _____

KEY POINTS

in Lesson 5

1. We all have powerful personal beliefs about what is right and wrong. The workplace has its own set of unspoken expectations of behavior at work, some of which may be very different from our personal ideas.
2. Serious problems can happen when we use personal beliefs to judge what is appropriate at work. To be successful at work, we must look at things from BOTH perspectives and choose a path between.

MiniQuiz #5

PART 1: Answer T (true) or F (false).

- _____ 1. When a rule is “unspoken,” we are not allowed to talk about it.
- _____ 2. Many employers simply EXPECT new workers to understand their unspoken rules.
- _____ 3. Every workplace has exactly the same unspoken rules.
- _____ 4. Personal beliefs often conflict with what is expected in the workplace.

PART 2: Read the following story about Bonnie. Underline TWO unspoken rules of her new workplace that Leah warns her about.

Bonnie’s Employment Director got her an interview at the movie theater in town. At first, she was very nervous, but the theater manager started by asking: “What’s your favorite movie?” They started chatting way about films, and before she left, she was offered the job!

Bonnie liked her new job most of the time, but she had a hard time with some of the preteen kids who made noise and threw popcorn on the floor, then ignored her when she told them to behave. A few weeks later, she was complaining to her co-worker Leah, who worked the concession stand.

Bonnie: “These little brats are just asking for it! I’d never put up with that kind of behavior from my little brother or sister. One of these days I’m going to grab one of them by the ear and drag him to the manager --right in front of all their friends, too! I’ll tell him that he either bars these kids from the theater or I quit. That’ll teach them!”

Leah: “Bonnie, I understand how you feel. But you know that you can’t EVER go off on a customer like that, right? No matter how rude the kids are, you can’t lose your temper! And you can’t make the manager choose between you and them. You might be out of a job! Do you understand what I’m saying?”



Notes

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Lesson 9

Expressing Concerns

Pearl of
WISDOM



Emma's Story, Part 2

Emma's caseworker Mr. Johnson called her back the next day, and apologized for putting her on the spot. He was very understanding, and taught her a few tricks for organizing her time better. He even called his friend Gene Stevens.

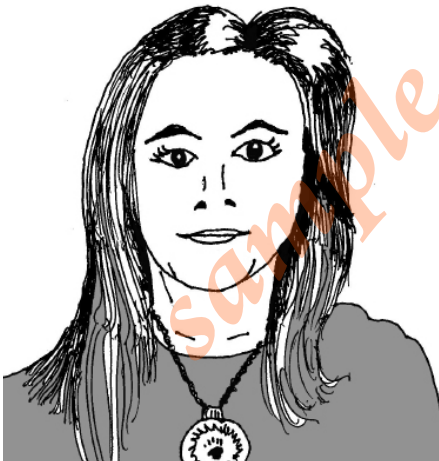
Mr. Johnson (on phone): **"Sorry, Gene. We had a little mix-up about the time. Can you see her tomorrow? At 10:00AM? I'll be sure to let Emma know."**



The second interview at the American Inn worked out well, and the next week Emma began her new job as a desk clerk. Once she got to know the people and the routines, she found that she really liked her job: checking people in and out, dealing with minor problems, setting up reservations.

Emma talked to her sister Elizabeth a couple of months after she started the new job.

Emma (upbeat): **"It really isn't that much different than running a family! My co-workers are a lot of fun, even the non-Native ones, and we all get along pretty good. I'm a little nervous around my boss, Mr. Stevens, though. He's nice - he never yells or insults anyone. But he doesn't understand Indian ways, so I just keep to myself when he's around."**



Elizabeth (worried): **"What are you going to do about the memorial feed for Teresa next week? Will he understand about that?"**

Emma (unsure): **"I honestly don't know. But family comes first, so if he doesn't understand, I'll just do what I have to do."**

Emma tried to sound confident, but in truth she felt very nervous. The one-year anniversary of her sister's death was coming up next week, and her family had planned a big memorial feed.

On the one hand, she knew that she was supposed to talk with management about time off requests.

Emma's Story, Part 2

But on the other, she felt pretty sure that Mr. Stevens would question her about it, probably make her feel bad. Emma wasn't an in-your-face kind of person, like some of her nieces. She was more traditional, and found it easier to avoid conflicts.

So on the morning of the feed, she called in to the American Inn and asked to speak to her clan aunt, who was working an earlier shift. Her head was pounding and her stomach was in a knot as she waited for her aunt to come to the phone.

Emma (nervous): **“Just leave a note on his door saying that I won't be in today or tomorrow. You don't even have to sign it, okay? He'll probably fire me when I get back, but whatever happens happens, you know? I can't miss Teresa's feed.”**

When Emma came back in two days later, she wasn't surprised to find that Mr. Stevens was upset. He tried hard to stay calm and not raise his voice, but she could feel the tension as they sat down in his office.



Mr. Stevens (upset): **“How could you do that to me, when you knew we had a basketball tournament in town? I thought I could count on you, Emma. I'm disappointed. I thought you were different....”**

Emma went off to start her shift, confused and a little hurt. She wasn't sure what her boss meant by that last comment, or if this job was going to work out after all now that things had turned sour.

Steps to “Expressing a Concern”

It’s hard to express a concern without slipping into Fight, Flight, or Freeze mode and making a situation worse. These steps help you express yourself professionally at work.

Step 1. Stop & Think

Be sure you’re calm and thinking clearly before addressing the problem -- and give the other person time to calm down as well.

Step 2. Ask to Talk

Pick a good time, a private place, and be polite. If the time isn’t right, wait or ask for a better one.

Step 3. Explain Without Blame

Explain the situation without blaming anyone, or demanding an immediate solution. Simply describe what is happening and how it is affecting you.

Step 4. Ask For Help

First, state a goal of working it out. Then, ask for the other person’s help understanding or solving the problem. Listen to their ideas, then offer your own, and find an agreeable solution.

Step 5. End Positively

End on a good note, if possible. If not, at least be professional.

Describe a work-related situation where you might need to explain a problem or express a concern without making the situation worse.

Your example: _____

Step 3. Explain Without Blame

Professional concerns shouldn't sound like accusations. Find a good time and place, ask to talk, then simply explain what's going on and how it's honestly affecting you.

Introduction: What you want to talk about.

Situation: Just the facts of the situation.

Effects: How it is honestly affecting you.

EXAMPLE: Marie's kids have the day off school, and are at home with her teenage sister. The kids have called several times this morning complaining they have nothing to do. Marie stays calm, then calls her sister at lunch:



Introduction: "Sis, I need to talk with you about the calls I'm getting.

Situation: "The kids have called 5 times today complaining they're bored.

Effects: "To be honest, I'm getting some looks from my boss. I'm worried I'm going to get in trouble if they keep bothering me."

John works for a landscaping company. He doesn't ask for many special favors, but his son's last basketball game is coming up and John doesn't want to disappoint him. He asked to get off a little early Friday afternoon, but it's been 2 days and he hasn't heard back from his supervisor James yet.

Step 2: Ask to Talk:

"Boss, can I see you when you have a minute?"

Step 3: Explain without Blame:

Introduction: "I want to ask you about _____"

Situation: "My son's last game is Friday, and I haven't _____"

Effects: "I don't want to put you in a bad spot, but _____"

Step 4. Ask for Help

After explaining your situation, you may be tempted to tell the other person exactly what you want them to do. Instead, state a goal of working it out, then ask for their help resolving the problem.

John finishes explaining himself, then puts the ball in his supervisor's court:

Step 4: Ask for Help:

"I really want to work this out. What _____?"

Step 5. End Positively

Try to end positively and professionally, no matter how the other person behaved.

Workin' the Steps



1. Tom and the Practical Jokers

Tom is the new guy on a drywall crew, and has had a hard time fitting in. When he opens his lunch box today, he sees that it is filled with wet spackling compound ("mud") -- yet another practical joke. He looks over at Sam, who smiles and says: "Hey, no hard feelings, right? Just a joke!"

Step 1: Stop & Think: *Tom feels like fighting, but instead he calms down.*

Step 2: Ask to Talk: "Sam, have you got _____?"

Step 3: Explain without Blame:

Introduction: "Listen, I want to talk to you about all these _____"

Situation: "Today, I opened my lunchbox and _____"

Effects: "To be honest, I'm getting _____"

Step 4: Ask for Help: "I just want to do my job and get along. What _____?"

Step 5: End Positively: *Sam apologizes for going too far, and agrees to lay off a little.*

2. Angel and the Angry Callers

Angel answers phones at a call center, handling home appliance issues. Last week, he got reprimanded for hanging up on a caller and nearly quit his job. After taking some time to think, he decides to talk with his supervisor about getting more training in how to manage angry customers.



Step 1: Stop & Think: *Angel feels nervous, but he calms down and approaches his supervisor 15 minutes before his shift begins.*

Step 2: Ask to Talk: "Excuse me, Bill _____?"

Step 3: Explain without Blame:

Introduction: "I'd like to talk to you about what happened _____"

Situation: "I'm sure you remember that _____"

Effects: "To be honest, I think I could use _____"

Step 4: Ask for Help: "I want to do a good job here. What _____?"

Step 5: End Positively: *Bill is impressed, and says he'll schedule Angel to join the next class on customer service skills.*

Emma Expresses Her Concern

Elizabeth: “What are you going to do about the memorial feed for Teresa next week? Will your boss understand about that?”

Emma: “I honestly don’t know. Family comes first. I can’t miss the feed... maybe I can find a way to work it out, to help him understand.”



1. STOP & THINK

Emma felt very nervous, but she calmed her nerves and waited till the end of her shift. She knocked on her boss’s door.

2. ASK TO TALK

Emma: “Mr. Stevens? Do you have a minute?”

Mr. Stevens: “Sure, Emma. Come on in. Just give me a minute to finish this up..... There. What can I do for you?”

3. EXPLAIN WITHOUT BLAME

Emma: “I wanted to talk with you about taking some personal time off next week. I know I’ve only been here a month or so and haven’t earned any paid time yet, but my sister’s memorial feed is on Wednesday. I don’t want to put you in a bad spot, but I really can’t miss it.”

4. ASK FOR HELP

Emma: “I’d like to figure this out somehow. What do you think? Can we work it out?”

Mr. Stevens: “I’m sorry. A ‘memorial feed?’ What is that?”

Emma explained about her tribe’s custom of holding a feast to celebrate the life of a loved one exactly one year after their passing. She told her boss a little bit about her younger sister Teresa, who’d died of breast cancer a year ago, and how important this ceremony was to all the people who had loved her.



Mr. Stevens: “Emma, I’m so sorry about your sister. This feed of yours sounds like a wonderful way to remember her. I lost a sister to cancer too, and I know how painful it is. Let’s see if we can do some juggling with the schedule. How much time do you need?”

The two worked together to find coverage for Emma, who was grateful for her employer’s flexibility.

5. END POSITIVELY

Emma: “Thank you, Mr. Stevens. I’m glad I brought this to you.”

Mr. Stevens: “I’m glad it worked out this time, Emma. We may not be able to do this every time there is a cultural or family event, so be prepared to compromise if we can’t find coverage. But keep me in the loop about things that are coming up, and we’ll try to work it out.”

KEY POINTS

in Lesson 9

1. Expressing our concerns calmly helps others understand what we need from them without making a difficult situation worse. It takes a great deal of composure and self-control to do this well.
2. It is hard to express a concern without sounding defensive. Doing it professionally increases the chance that we will be heard, and possibly even get what we want.

MiniQuiz #9

PART 1: Answer TRUE or FALSE.

- ___ 1. The main reason for expressing ourselves is to put others in their place.
- ___ 2. We should always Stop & Think before trying to express ourselves.
- ___ 3. "Explain Without Blame" means that WE should take the blame for all problems.
- ___ 4. These steps help us handle stressful situations in a calm, professional way.

PART 2: After talking with Leah, Bonnie decided to tell the theater manager about what happened with the group of boys over the weekend. She is scared, but she knows it is the right thing to do, and feels sure that her boss won't fire her.



- Step # _____ "Thanks for helping me out, Mr. B. I'll be glad to point them out if they come back so that YOU can talk to them."
- Step # _____ "I'm worried about something that happened last weekend. Some boys were cutting up in Theater #3, throwing popcorn and making a mess, and getting rude to me when I asked them to stop. I ALMOST lost my temper with them, and probably would have if Leah hadn't stopped me."
- Step # _____ Bonnie knocks on the door and says, "Do you have a minute to see me, Mr. B?"
- Step # _____ Bonnie takes several deep breaths and calms down.
- Step # _____ "I really want to keep this job. What should I do now?"