



## Ideas for Leaders to Reduce Office Stress

Leaders are responsible for establishing the culture of their departments and companies. Unconsciously, many leaders signal expectations for unhealthy actions or behavior patterns. If you work late, eat at your desk, rarely make a child's sporting event, email late at night or fail to exercise, it is likely that your employees will follow your lead and model what you do. Your actions may be creating work stress and reducing employee productivity.

### Lead by example and encourage the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Set clear goals for each day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Offer flexible hours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Encourage employees to take short breaks throughout the day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Exercise as a team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Listen to understand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Encourage employees to stand up and move every hour.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Give time off to volunteer for a favorite nonprofit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Establish an exercise team challenge (steps per day).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Discourage multitasking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Ask employees to turn off phone and computer notifications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Send a short article about a relaxation technique.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Encourage meditation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Take screen breaks to rest their eyes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Bring in a new favorite recipe to share.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Offer a stretch break.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Demonstrate exercises to do at your desk or on the plane.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Walk outside or down the stairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Ask someone else to take a short break *with* you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Recommend a TED Talk on stress management or meditation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Identify and minimize distractions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Establish "no technology" zones/times.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Ask employees to provide *their* favorite stress reduction techniques.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Ask for the best time to disturb others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Discuss work-life balance and what it means.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Let others know when *you* need uninterrupted time.