

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

July 2016

**How to de-stress
quickly at work**

**Vote Leave
result: what can
SMEs expect?**

**Getting the
most out of
networking
events**

**The perfect
colleague
revealed**

**The UK is breeding a generation of teenage tech addicts
Reinvigorating your love for the job you've started to hate**

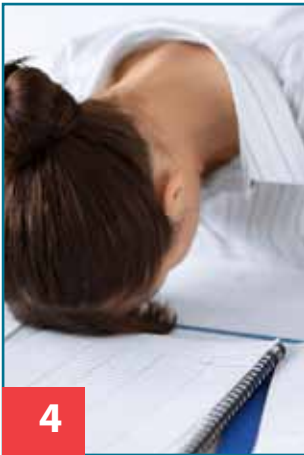
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How to de-stress quickly at work

We all have days where our stress levels soar - but the good news is we can alleviate stress symptoms without leaving our desks. Try these stress-busting tips next time it all gets a bit much.



Breathe Deeply

Sounds too simple to be true, right? Inhaling deeply and exhaling slowly is a great way to calm your nerves, regain focus, and de-stress. When we breathe deeply, we decrease our heart rate, reduce muscle tension, increase oxygen in the brain, and lower blood pressure.

Strike a Power Pose

A Harvard University research team found a link between the poses we make and how we feel. In their study, participants who did “power poses” (i.e. positions that are open and relaxed) had higher levels of testosterone – the hormone responsible for confidence – than those who had closed poses. The next time you need a quick pick-me-up, just strike a pose!

Look Away From Your Laptop or PC

Staring at electronics all day isn't just bad for your eyesight – it can stress you out. If you cannot get up and walk around at your workplace, try looking out your office window or at a far away object, preferably something green. Then blink several times and repeat as necessary!

Hold Something Warm

According to behavioral psychologist, Susan Weinschenk, people make different decisions based on the sensations they feel from objects they touch. This concept of being behaviorally influenced by our sense of touch is sometimes referred to as “haptic sensation” or “embodied cognition”. The next time you feel exhausted, the simple act of holding a mug of warm coffee may lift your spirits. Aside from warmth, another sensation that's sure to relax you is softness. I like cuddling a pillow, wrapping myself in a blanket, or petting my dog whenever I need to quickly de-stress.

Drink Milk

Have you ever had a warm cup of milk before bed? Then you've already experienced how quickly you can de-stress by drinking milk! Milk contains tryptophan, a substance known to boost the feel-good chemical serotonin in our brain. If you like the kick of caffeine, you can always add milk instead of creamer to your coffee. Don't worry! Adding it to your coffee will not reduce the effects of antioxidants.

Smile

Remember the phrase “grin and bear it”? Well, studies have shown that smiling can

temporarily alleviate small stressors and help you get past negative moods. If your nerves are shot just minutes from an important fundraising presentation or you have an uncooperative coworker, try smiling! It takes no time at all and may normalize your heart rate and help you perform better.

Laugh

You know what they say: laughter is the best medicine! Laughter stimulates your organs, such as the lungs and heart, and increases your heart rate and blood pressure to both activate and relieve your stress response. It also triggers the release of endorphins in your brain, so you quickly feel uplifted and happy.

Put on Your Headphones

Want to listen to music but your workplace doesn't have an audio system? Do you coworkers prefer peace and quiet? Simply tune everything else out by putting on your headphones! Listen to your favorite music to help soothe your nerves. This trick also works if you're feeling sleepy but still have a lot of tasks to finish. Try popping in some upbeat dance music and get ready to breeze through that deadline!

Do Stretches

If you're stuck at the office, you may not have the option of a quick 10-minute jog (unless you're okay with using your lunch hour for exercises). If you only have two minutes before crunch time, use it effectively and get a bit of workout by doing simple stretches that would help relieve neck and back pain. Try shoulder and upper arm stretches, chin tucks, head turns, and standing thigh stretches.

Vote Leave result: What can SMEs expect?

Now that the UK has voted to leave the EU, it is useful to review Vote Leave's answers to the key business questions posed by SME owners, which may hold some clues as to what the future holds.



As part of its commitment to the small and medium-sized enterprise business community, the UK200Group launched its Campaign for Clarity ahead of the EU referendum.

The UK200Group asked its members and their clients to contribute their most important business questions to a document that was then submitted to Vote Leave. The following answers are a selection from those received.

Business Growth

SME Question:

Our surveys show that the number one issue for SMEs is growth – it has been the same issue for four years. Business confidence amongst company directors drives M&A activity – whether it be the confidence of growth or the ability to raise finance. What impact will the decision to leave or stay have on the growth prospects of SMEs? How would it affect investment going forward?

Vote Leave Answer:

After we Vote Leave, the UK would improve upon the trade agreements that the EU has negotiated, which have generally proved

of limited benefit to British companies. The rate of the UK's export growth to third-party countries with which the EU has a trade agreement has fallen in the case of two out of every three free trade agreements that the Commission has negotiated.

Outside the EU, we will be able to strike free trade agreements with emerging economies, such as Brazil, India and China. This is likely to reduce prices for consumers and be good for jobs, growth and investment. If we vote to remain, the UK will be unable to make trade deals with the rest of the world as the Eurozone economy stagnates. This means that the UK may well remain unable to trade on favourable terms with major emerging economies in the years ahead, while remaining tied to the failing Eurozone.

Investment into the UK from the EU will continue after we Vote Leave. Surveys of international investors show that they want the UK to have looser links with the EU (EY, 2013). The pro-euro campaign made all sorts of claims that investment would collapse unless we joined the euro (BBC News, 12 May 2003). It didn't happen then and it won't happen if we Vote Leave.

Employment

SME Question:

Many SMEs cannot find the skills they need to do the work they have, so free movement of people is important. How will SMEs' ability to find and retain the right people be affected? This applies across the board, from minimum wage workers to skilled professionals.

Vote Leave Answer:

After we Vote Leave, the UK Government could introduce an immigration system

that is fair and works for the UK's economic interests. The EU's immigration system is immoral, expensive and out of control. EU law demands that the UK has an open door to European countries, while simultaneously stopping highly skilled people from outside the EU coming to the UK to contribute. This has resulted in large numbers of people from across Europe coming to our country.

SME Question:

There is enough red tape in operating a small limited company – will leaving the EU help or hinder this business model?

Vote Leave Answer:

After we Vote Leave, our VAT rules would no longer be determined by EU law. The Government accepts that VAT rules for cross-border trade 'can be complex and confusing' and that 'UK businesses also experience delays in the processing of cross-border VAT refunds in some EU Member States'. The annual cost of completing VAT declarations in the EU is estimated to be €40 billion (BIS, February 2014).

Outside the EU's common system of VAT, we could simplify VAT rules substantially. After 40 years of membership, only around 6% of British companies export to the EU, but 100% are caught by EU red tape and have to comply with the full burden of EU regulation (Business for Britain, January 2014). This is damaging. If we take back control we can run our economy in the interests of millions of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Continued ►

SME Question:

If the UK leaves the EU, will workers be at risk of no longer being protected by the Working Time Directive?

Vote Leave Answer:

The Working Time Directive (Directive 2003/88/EC) has given the European Court control over doctors' working hours. 71% of doctors think the Directive has had a negative impact on the continuity of patient care and has harmed medical training. 93% of surgeons did not agree with the statement that the implementation of the European Working Time Directive has benefited the NHS. An overwhelming majority of medical graduates (58% to 17%) say the Directive has not benefited the NHS. (Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, 1 March 2016). The European Court will remain in control of doctors' working hours in the event of a vote to remain.

After we Vote Leave, it would be for the UK Parliament to legislate in this field, protecting workers' rights to not be overworked in a manner which is proportionate, ensuring that this does not have the harmful effect it currently does in undermining people's health. It would be for elected politicians and UK voters, or our own domestic courts, to decide these rules rather than unelected bureaucrats in Brussels and foreign judges in the European Court.



Legal

SME Question:

As we have had a history of input regarding European legislation, is it expected that the UK legal profession, if we exit the EU, continue to bear strong influence from Europe, particularly in the area of Human Rights and cross border matters?

Vote Leave Answer:

While we remain in an unreformed EU, the UK lacks the power to 'break the formal link between British courts and the European Court of Human Rights', as was promised before the last election (Conservative Party Manifesto, 2015). Allowing the European Court to stay in charge of these matters will cause great uncertainty for business as it uses the Charter of Fundamental Rights to take more powers from the member states. After we Vote Leave, it would be for the UK Parliament and UK Supreme Court to decide the appropriate means and levels of UK Human Rights protections.

SME Question:

Being so closely tied to Europe, in or out, will our legal profession still have any influence on European issues, or can we return to a legal system not hampered and / or handcuffed by EU legislation?

Vote Leave Answer:

Inside the EU, the UK will remain constantly outvoted by the Eurozone, with the result that damaging EU legislation will continue to be imposed on us. The UK has been outvoted every time it has voted against an EU measure - 72 times in total. 40 of these defeats have

taken place since David Cameron became Prime Minister (Vote Leave, October 2015). The UK has no influence at present.

After we Vote Leave, we will be able to influence global standard-setting bodies more effectively and regain an influential voice on the world stage. Many EU rules are actually set at an international level. EU members have little influence on this because the Commission speaks for them in key international bodies.

The Commission often adds unnecessary bureaucracy to global rules for EU-based producers, and these EU rules are then extremely hard to change. After we Vote Leave, we would take back control of our seats in these organisations, and be better able to influence global and European policy.

Legislation and regulation

SME Question:

Changes in tax rules, and uncertainty over tax rules, cause significant problems for SMEs. Does leaving the EU give SMEs more clarity over the future of UK tax, or less?

Vote Leave Answer:

There will be more clarity. At the moment the future is very uncertain. The Five Presidents' report indicates that the EU intends to take further control over 'certain aspects of tax policy' including the 'corporate tax base', 'labour taxation' and as part of its 'Capital Markets Union'.

SME Question:

How would National Insurance work if we were not in the EU? If I work in France before

and after Brexit, what effect is there on my UK state pension?

Vote Leave Answer:

As the Government acknowledges: 'You can claim State Pension abroad if you've paid enough UK National Insurance contributions to qualify' (HM Government, 21 January 2016).

SME Question:

What, in practical terms, would change about SME VAT if the UK were to leave the EU? Would there be any effect on the amounts due, or the paper processes? Either in the short term, or in a longer timescale.

Vote Leave Answer:

This would be for UK Parliaments to determine in future. After we Vote Leave, it would not be necessary to introduce change in this area, and there is no reason to fear uncertainty in the short term.

These answers have been provided by Vote Leave, and do not reflect the views of the UK200Group, which is committed to remaining impartial in the EU referendum debate.



BT Smart Hub for most powerful wi-fi signal

BT has boosted its broadband with the launch of a new BT Smart Hub, offering the UK's most powerful wi-fi signal compared to routers from other major broadband providers. The new BT Smart Hub has a combination of unique features that will allow consumers to enjoy wi-fi in more places with fewer dropped connections and faster speeds in harder to reach rooms.



The BT Smart Hub comes with seven antennas, which is more than any other major UK broadband provider's router, giving an unbeatable wireless range. It also features the very latest AC Wi-Fi technology so multiple users can use multiple devices on a faster connection, all at the same time. The BT Smart Hub comes with a range of features designed to make getting and remaining connected as easy as possible. It also comes with the latest chipset and has built in advanced filters that automatically block interference.

It's designed to fit throughmost letterboxes so customers don't need to worry about

being home when it's delivered, and comes with a handy wi-fi card and sticker so customers can easily find their wi-fi password. Customers can also control the lights on the hub, choosing to either dim them or switch them off.

Customers can register their interest for the new BT Smart Hub at www.bt.com/smarthub and the very first BT Smart Hubs will be available for existing BT customers. Existing BT Infinity customers will be able to get a BT Smart Hub for free by recontracting or can buy one for just £50.

Virgin Trains' new executive chef James Martin serves up sweet surprise

Newly appointed Virgin Trains' executive chef, **James Martin**, introduces customers to his new menu now available to First Class customers on the east coast route

Award winning chef James Martin was on board Virgin Trains serving up treats from his new seasonal menu to surprised customers in a newly refurbished First Class Carriage.

The train operator's new executive chef then put his catering skills back into action as he travelled from King's Cross to Leeds, delighting customers with samples from the new menu.

On arrival in Leeds, James met suppliers whose food is featured on his recently launched First Class menu, which is currently being served to Virgin Trains' customers on the east coast route. Amongst these was award winning rare-breed farmers, Taste Tradition.

James said: "It was great to hear from the local suppliers whose produce has gone into



making the new Virgin Trains seasonal menu and to be able to share with them the great feedback we have had so far from customers".

Alison Watson, Customer Experience Director at Virgin Trains on the east coast, added: "We're delighted that James' new menu showcases the delicious foods produced on our route. It gives us an opportunity to support our local communities and offer a fine dining experience to our First Class customers."

A new James Martin menu is being rolled out to Standard Class customers in autumn as part of Virgin Trains' ongoing £40m investment in its fleet.

Getting the most out of networking events

Check out this advice for successfully navigating a networking event and making the most of your time there

Attending networking events can be a daunting experience, but it is a valuable way to meet new contacts and progress in your personal and professional spheres.

Steven D'Souza, author of ***Brilliant Networking***, explains that both introverts and extroverts can find networking an enjoyable activity, as long as a bit of effort is put in before, during and after the event.

Here are some of his tips:

Show up first

"If you are going to event and are nervous about making conversation with people, I always advise being one of the first people to go," said D'Souza.

"You will arrive before clusters and groups are formed, making it much easier to strike up conversation with the one or two people that are there, then if you go into a room already full of people."

Talk to the host

Not only does talking to the host show your gratitude for their effort to host the event, D'Souza notes that attendees of networking sessions should use the opportunity to be

introduced to other people by the organisers.

"Many people go to events and they don't leverage the host. They can introduce you to other people if you let them know what kind of professionals you are looking to meet."

Don't try to 'work the room'

"I don't advise trying to meet as many people as possible," said D'Souza. "Before people want to disclose information, they want to get to know, like and trust you – and trust is not built by seeing as many people in as little time as possible."

He notes that it is better to develop in-depth conversations with just a few people, rather than simply collecting as many business cards as you can. "And don't just talk about work – get to know them personally to form a stronger bond and leave a lasting impression."

Understand that networking is a two-way process

"Networking isn't selling or telling," he said. "Some people try to sell you their ideas or convince you of something, and others just talk at you."

Instead, it's about creating mutually



beneficial relationships. You should avoid speaking just about yourself and your activities, and instead do an equal amount of listening and talking.

Meet people who are different

It is common to go to events and meet like-minded colleagues, people you have worked with in the past, or just end up talking to the people that you went with – but you should avoid sticking together.

The real networking doesn't happen at the event, it happens afterwards. It is best to separate from those you know so you have more of a chance to open up conversations.

We have an unconscious bias which attracts us towards similarity: people who look like us, have the same background, or report the same form of journalism. Notice that tendency, and make a conscious effort to walk towards difference.

By approaching people of a different age, background or specialism, you will get more

value from the event and it might lead to more 'serendipitous encounters'.

Don't judge anyone

It is common to meet others at networking events who might not personally be able to help you achieve your personal or professional goals, but D'Souza recommends giving each encounter a fair amount of time to establish this, rather than exiting the conversation too early.

"Never rush to judge the value of a relationship, because it is often not the person in front of you that is useful or not useful, but it is the person that person could connect you to," he said.

Follow up

The real networking doesn't happen at the event, it happens after. This often doesn't get done, but it will strengthen your connection if you simply send them an email or invite them for a coffee."

It's the little things that count...

New survey from DeskDemon and Nestlé Professional® reveals top office coffee break frustrations



For most office workers, a coffee break promises five minutes of calm in a busy working day. However, a new survey from DeskDemon and Nestlé Professional® has revealed that sometimes small frustrations can get in the way. Among some of the biggest complaints are:

The kitchen's a mess (61%)

There's no fresh milk (49%)

There's no clean spoons (35%)

Lids are missing (13%)

However, when it comes to the office coffee break, it really is 'the little things that count', with half of workers (49%) saying a great cup of coffee can improve their working day.

According to those surveyed, a 'great' cup of coffee at work boils down to this: It tastes good, it's made just the way you like it, it's quick and easy to prepare and it's a brand you can trust.

Now, thanks to new ground-breaking innovation from Nestlé Professional®, the workplace coffee break can be brought back to its former glory...

Lynn Little, Standard Ingredients Lead at Nestlé Professional® says:

"Since launching the world's first instant coffee in 1938, NESCAFÉ® has continually listening to customers to find new ways to make their lives that little bit easier. The NEW NESCAFÉ® 'Simply Better' tin is the latest innovation, and one we believe has the power to completely transform the way offices are able to present, store and serve coffee. The curvy newcomer is at the forefront of ease and convenience, with a 'squround' shape that is easy to hold and pour, a hinged lid to seal in flavour, and a new contemporary look and feel, making the office coffee break 'simply better'."

The new NESCAFÉ® 'Simply Better' tin is available now across all the most popular ranges including NESCAFÉ® Original, NESCAFÉ® GOLD BLEND® and NESCAFÉ® AZERA®.

For further information, call the NESCAFÉ® Consumer Services line on 0800 745 845 or visit www.simplybettertin.co.uk

The perfect colleague revealed

Social traits like optimism, empathy and trustworthiness have dominated a list of the top ten qualities British workers desire the most in their colleagues.

A survey of 2009 UK adults by the One4all Rewards Spotlight Awards quizzed respondents on the traits they value the most in co-workers, to craft a picture of the 'perfect colleague.'

The data revealed that the ideal desk-mate would not only be good at their job, but also a confidante with a sunny disposition.

The ability to deliver results was voted the number one (37%) trait, but it was also important to Brits that they possessed social skills, such as optimism and enthusiasm, to keep the rest of the team in good spirits (31%), and that they were trustworthy enough to keep secret or listen to worries (30%).

In addition to these more social traits, the perfect co-worker would also display initiative and be knowledgeable about what they do.

Other qualities UK workers deemed important in their ideal colleague included the ability to meet deadlines and be organised as well as being empathetic enough to offer a shoulder to cry on.

The more dominant traits, such as leadership and competitiveness were less popular, with 13% and 4% respectively considering them important traits in colleagues.

Dedication, including putting in extra hours or arriving early, was not something that



workers consider significantly important - suggesting those late nights in the office you spend in the office are not likely to score you brownie points with colleagues.

Declan Byrne, managing director at One4all Rewards, said: "We spend so much of our lives at work that our colleagues have a huge impact on us. What is interesting from this research is that British workers really are quite focussed - they rated effectiveness the number one most important trait in their ideal colleague."

The One4all Rewards Spotlight Awards give bosses and colleagues the opportunity to nominate staff who have made exceptional contributions at work for rewards. For more information and to nominate a worker, visit www.spotlightawards.one4allrewards.co.uk

The UK is breeding a generation of teenage tech addicts

83% of UK teenagers would struggle to go 'cold turkey' from social media and their other vices for a month



Research published by Allen Carr Addiction Clinics emphasises that the explosion of social media, selfies and mobile devices is priming a generation of UK teenagers for a lifelong struggle with technology addiction. The study, which questioned 1,000 UK teenagers aged 12 - 18, unveiled a worrying trend, highlighting:

- **83% of UK teenagers admit they would struggle to give up their vices for a whole month.**
- **The average teen checks social media 11 times a day, sends 17 text/ WhatsApp messages and takes a 'selfie' picture every three days.**

When asked which behaviours they could abstain from, UK teens said they would most struggle living without texting (66%), followed by social networking (58%), junk food (28%) and alcohol (6%).

Mobile phones (79%), junk food (44%) and alcohol (9%) are the three activities teenagers were most likely to spend the most time on. One in five (20%) of teenagers admitted that they had drunk alcohol in the past seven days.

UK teenagers spend an average of £15.81 a week funding their various vices, meaning that they have to find £62 a month before they even consider paying for other pursuits such as sport or other recreational activities.

The average teen spends £6.64 a week on texting, mobile phones and data, junk food spending comes second with alcohol coming in as the third most expensive vice.

Shockingly, 14% of teens have lied to their families to get money to fund this area of

spending, with 7% having gone as far as stealing from a relative!

- **There are obvious regional variations on the habits of UK teenagers. East Anglian teens are the most social media obsessed - 16% admit they check social media more than 30 times a day. The South East is the 'selfie' capital of the UK - 1 in 4 admit they take more than 20 selfies a month.**
- **72% of youngsters remain oblivious to the dangers of over-use and potential addiction to social media, apps, games, and technology and don't believe it is possible to develop an addiction to technology.**

This constant pursuit of stimulation, peer approval, instant gratification, and elements of narcissism are all potential indicators of addictive behaviour. The study highlights that parents across the UK are inadvertently becoming 'co-dependents' enabling their child's addictions by providing them with cash albeit with the best of intentions.

The growing number of ever-changing, ever-updating tech and gadgets available to UK teens in 2016 run alongside established potentially addictive activities such as alcohol-use and consumption of junk food - creating an environment where young people experience the compulsion to consume and engage more than they can legitimately fund, leading to desperate often risky behaviour - a hallmark of addiction.

John Dicey, Global Managing Director & Senior Therapist of Allen Carr Addiction Clinics comments;

"The findings of this report are cause for concern and highlight a generation of young

people exhibiting many of the hallmarks of addictive behaviour. The explosion of technology we have seen since the late 90's offers incredible opportunities to our youth – the constant stimulation provided by access to the internet for example can be a good or a bad thing. There's a price to pay. This study indicates that huge numbers of young people are developing compulsions and behaviours that they're not entirely in control of and cannot financially support. Unless we educate our young people as to the dangers of constant stimulation and consumption, we are sleepwalking towards an epidemic of adulthood addiction in the future, as well as damaging childhood."

John Dicey offers the following tips for teens and parents:

1. Teach yourself to resist routinely checking your phone and email. Set small challenges, such as 15 minutes without checking and gradually expand before you get into a groove of being able to spend a few hours without the need to be online.
2. Set aside daily periods of self-imposed non-screen time. One of the secrets to scaling back technology use to acceptable levels is to keep aside certain times of the day technology-free (mealtimes and bedtime, for example are a good starting place. In fact, kitchens and bedrooms should be made technology-free).
3. Only respond to emails and texts at specific times of the day. Some people do have jobs where they are tied to emails all day, but if you are not one of them, why not decide to look at email, say, just three times a day (9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.) It will save lots of time in the long run and create time for constructive, proactive and progressive work. Turning off email and social media, disabling push notifications, or simply turning the volume setting to silent on electronic devices will also reduce the urge to constantly check mobile devices.
4. Don't use your smartphone or tablet as an alarm clock. By using a standard alarm clock to wake you in the morning, you will avoid the temptation to look at email and texts just as you are about to go to sleep or just wake up. Ideally young teens won't take their phones to bed with them.
5. Attempt a family digital detox – so the whole family study and are made aware of their technology habits.
6. Delete games and apps that can be time consuming and repetitively dumbing, such as Candy Crush, Angry Birds, etc.
7. Start to use a wrist watch again, which will stop you constantly checking your phone.
8. There is no void – just having a few moments a day where you can use your imagination or just think a few things through is wonderful. It requires some 'space' that only putting down technology for a while can provide.
9. Embrace tech to support change. It sounds contradictory, given that we are trying to cut down on tech, but tech lovers can download apps that tell them how much time they're spending online. Being made aware of a problem is often the first step in enabling behavioural change.
10. Parents should lead by example – you can't tell your kids off for constantly checking their phones if you do the same.

Reinvigorating your love for the job you've started to hate

By Jhia Jackson, Idealist Careers

Have you ever read a job description and thought, “yes! This is it! They’ve just described me, I’m passionate about the cause, and the specifics sound great”?

You apply, the interviews go well, and next thing you know, you’ve landed a job that gets you excited to wake up for each Monday! Then, time goes on and you find yourself dreading the start of the work week...the job you loved has somehow become the job you hate.

Luckily, we can do something about that! For the second year in a row, “respectful treatment of all employees at all levels” was rated as the top contributor to employee job satisfaction in the research report released by the Society for Human



Resource Management. Respect and good communication practices go hand-in-hand. Let's explore some communication strategies you can use to create a respectful, communicative work culture and become re-engaged with the job you love!

Listen, Pause, Speak

Active listening is the most difficult strategy for me to do consistently, but it always leads to immediate, effective results! Next time you are in a meeting or chatting with a coworker about a project on which you are collaborating, allow yourself to focus solely on what they are saying – pause whatever activity you were in the middle of

Continued ►

and try not to let any emotions distract you. Then comes the tricky part – pause before responding. This pause changes everything! It creates space for the other person to come to a definite conclusion and for you to think about what they've said and how you should respond. If you can use this skill in the workplace, you'll find that conversations feel more productive, information retention is improved, and people- including you- will feel their time is respected.

Make it Personal

Blending the personal with the professional often comes with the territory of nonprofit organisations. It's likely that most of the staff have a personal connection to the cause, and the success of your work is reliant on the success of others. It's possible to achieve a blend that respects the diversity of personal boundaries and experiences within the organisation. Try these three tips:

- **Connect with people by using their names, not their title or department.** This opens up the possibility for building positive relationships, open-minded interactions, and collaborative teams. If you are starting a new project, ask people to introduce themselves to the group with their name and an accomplishment or skill they are proud of.
- **Notice how individuals prefer to communicate and try to mirror it.** This is really useful if you are feeling unheard. Mirroring their language, mode (e-mail, scheduled meeting, slideshow, etc) of communication, and time-of-day preferences are small ways you can create a situation where they are likely to be open and receptive to new ideas. If

it isn't the same way you usually like to communicate this type of information, you can let them know that you adapted for this particular instance because it was important to you that this goes well – people will appreciate the personal attention and take note of what your preferred style is!

- **Use your workspace to showcase things about your personal life you feel comfortable talking about.** These conversation starters give others some idea of your boundaries AND can serve as energising, motivational tools when work gets stressful.

Create Space for Yourself

You know you best. Be honest with yourself about your workplace stressors and motivators. Workplace stressors are things that send up distracting red flags that prevent you from actively listening or trigger emotions you can't seem to control in the moment. Workplace motivators are things that spark your can-do attitude and remind you of why you love your job! Once you're honest with yourself about these, you can figure out how to communicate these to others.

Saying "no" to a project, even when the request seems unreasonable or better suited for someone else, is a stressor for some of us. Try hearing what they have to say and get back to them with a well thought-out response. This gives you time to go over your schedule and see how the new project might fit. It's also an opportunity for you to deliver your response in your ideal communication method – whether that means a well-written e-mail, scheduled meeting time, or something else.