

30 July 2015


WHAT'S UP!

Get out of the office during your lunch break!

Have you fallen into the habit of not taking lunch, like ever!? Then this message is for you.

It is important that you take a break from the office environment and it is therefore strongly suggested that you take the 45minute break that you're entitled to every day. Research revealed that creativity takes a plunge when you don't change environments. As Dr Kimberly Elsbach says: *"Staying inside, in the same location, is really detrimental to creative thinking. It's also detrimental to doing that rumination that's needed for ideas to percolate and gestate and allow a person to arrive at an 'aha' moment. To reap the benefits of a lunch break, you don't actually need to go eat, you just need to get out. And it doesn't have to be between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to have a positive impact. It can be just going outside and taking a walk around the block. That in itself is really restorative."*

So break this nasty habit and take your lunch break from now on. You'll get back to the office refreshed and ready to face the rest of your (hctic) day.



Dealing with a rude and disrespectful colleague

Do you know someone in your working environment who is an excellent worker, but just cannot keep quiet, but is obnoxious, condescending and judgmental instead?

In many instances, employers put their concern about individuals above all other people in the department. We often hold on to problematic colleagues at the expense of fellow colleagues. If the employer allows this and it results in others being abused, they're actually sacrificing team values. They must balance their concern for ALL staff. If the colleague's language is not acceptable and that person makes life at the office very uncomfortable for the rest of the group, then being tolerant is not showing compassion – it is negligence on the part of the line-manager.

Though concern for an individual is an important starting point for solving such a problem, a line-manager should speak to the colleague. Be specific. Be factual. Point out the pattern of behavior. Also provide a comparison of what you expected to occur instead.

Sometimes hard choices must be made. If an employee doesn't heed the requests to change certain behaviours, assistance could include training, coaching, pairing him/her with a partner, or frequent feedback sessions to determine progress made. If unsuccessful, a more formal process of corrective counselling must follow. At the end of the day the choice is up to the employee to make a concerted effort to change unacceptable behaviours, to stop hurtful comments, the intolerable language, the arrogance.

Responsible line-managers must show care about all of their employees—the individuals and the group. They should not allow single employees to disrespect, abuse or negatively impact others.

Responsible line-managers don't demand change without making tools available to the employee to make a change and they allow for a reasonable time to achieve change.

Responsible line-managers give feedback and recognize progress. And they follow through and take a stand if no positive progress is made – for the sake of the whole group.

Hours of work @ NMMU ~

Permanent staff members have some flexibility when it comes to working from campus. They must either be on campus on Mondays – Fridays from 08:00 – 16:30 or 07:30 – 16:00 or 08:30 – 17:00. Operational requirements will determine to what extent flexibility will be allowed and, in addition, a line-manager's approval is required.

Managers could therefore approach staff at the beginning of a year to establish which section/s of the department's staff would be here until 16:00 or until 17:00 to ensure continued service until the close of business every day during that particular year.

Sub-ordinates should not misuse the leniency granted by the institution and leave before they should. It is the line-managers' responsibility to ensure that all staff are treated fairly and equally. They cannot allow some staff members to disregard this and then act sternly towards others for doing the same.