



# BalanceWorks® Newsletter

Written by the work/life experts at **eni**.

## Family Relationships



With busy schedules and multiple demands at home and work, it's easy to take your family relationships for granted. Family relationships are often overlooked, but are often the most important relationships that you will have, and can be the foundation for others. If you feel that your busy schedule at work is hindering your relationships, step back, re-evaluate your priorities, and make sure to follow these tips to improve and maintain your familial relations.

### **Spend Time Together**

After you hang up your coat and put away your briefcase or purse, dedicate your first 15 minutes at home to your children. Mark time on your calendar each weekend, to spend some private time with your children. Also, make a point to spend at least an hour alone with your spouse each day, no matter how busy you are with work and parenting.

### **Discuss Problems**

One of the first strategies to build and strengthen your family communication is to avoid letting annoyances accumulate. When frustrations are not vented, they can lead to unpleasant explosions that make the situation worse. Try setting up family meetings, perhaps once a week, as a time for open dialog. Each member of the family can use this time to get these gradual annoyances off of their chests.

### **Family Fun**

Strong family relationships are based on sharing a variety of experiences. Make a point of planning fun activities that your family can enjoy together, such as camping, bicycling, watching a movie, or going out to dinner.

### **Argue Constructively**

Arguments all too often turn into a yelling match and can get ugly. Stick to the problem at hand and avoid bringing up unrelated, past arguments. Be willing to give a little and compromise.

### **Put Yourself in Another's Shoes**

Don't lose sight of the other person's perspective. Listen and acknowledge the other person's concerns, then discuss how your view differs. Then, make an honest attempt to truly listen, and work together to find a solution for all.

For more information or advice about Family Relationships, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks by calling **1.800.327.2255**.

**eni's BalanceWorks** program is a confidential 24-7 service provided by your employer to help achieve work/life balance.

# Relationships with Coworkers

Most people see and spend time with their coworkers every day, sometimes even more than with family or friends. Because of this frequent interaction, it is important to create professional and friendly relationships with your coworkers.

A positive working environment will help you enjoy your work and make a few good friends along the way. Use the tips below to better your relationships with your coworkers.

**1. Say “Hello!” in the morning.** Do you drag yourself into your workplace with your head down, without greeting anyone? If so, your coworkers may begin ignoring or avoiding you. Get into the habit of smiling and greeting your colleagues in the morning, or as you begin your shift.

**2. Learn the art of small talk.** Ask your coworkers about their interests -- their favorite music, movies, books, as well as their hobbies. Personal information will help you find ways to relate to your co-worker and build a relationship.

**3. Join work groups.** Many offices have various leagues or clubs you can join. Activities and groups are a great way to exercise while you get to know your coworkers in an informal setting.

**4. Accept good-natured teasing.** Other workers sometimes play jokes and tease to test what kind of person you are. Let them know that you enjoy a good joke, even when it is lightly at your expense. Of course, if inappropriate teasing occurs, speak with your supervisor.



**5. Ask what they think.** People like to know that their opinions matter. Try to go out of your way to ask a coworker’s input to create or strengthen your relationship. Make sure to sincerely thank them for their advice.

**6. Avoid gossip.** If you do not want others to gossip behind your back, return the favor. When a coworker shares a juicy piece of gossip about others, respond with “Really?” and change the subject or get back to work. If you don’t show a reaction, the gossip will move on, and you will retain the trust and respect of your colleagues.

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