

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

EMBRACING DIFFERENCES

We benefit from each other's wisdom and experiences

We live in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. Being open to the viewpoints, values, customs, and lifestyles of others from different backgrounds prepares us to be members of a global society. Moreover, learning about other cultures is interesting and can lead us to explore everything from new foods to new friendships. Art, literature, traditions, languages, music, and celebrations of different societies can expand and enrich our lives.

There are also many benefits to businesses. A diverse workforce can foster creativity and innovation with a wider range of skills and talents. Diversity can also boost employee morale and loyalty, improve the organization's reputation, and increase productivity. We all have different ideas, perceptions, and experiences to contribute.

We can show respect for individual differences by being courteous and being open to listen to others' perspectives. Listening to other points of view doesn't mean you have to change your own opinions, but it can prompt you to think about things in a different way. Sometimes fear, discomfort, or uncertainty prevent people from taking the first step toward getting to know individuals whose background or culture is unfamiliar. If language barriers are a concern, it's helpful to use plain, straightforward, jargon-free language when you're communicating with someone whose native language is not your own. If you can't understand the person, don't pretend to understand. Simply apologize and ask them to repeat.

Being willing to understand and accept people from other cultures and different walks of life helps us to become more informed and empathic, and reject stereotypes. Even "flattering" stereotypes are never true of all people within a population. Furthermore, we're likely to discover that we have more in common than we think!

